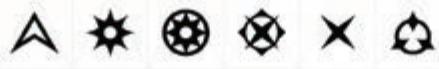


GENESYS™

EXPANDED PLAYER'S GUIDE





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INTRODUCTION

Hello again, and welcome back to GENESYS! This is the **EXPANDED PLAYER'S GUIDE**, the first expansion book that is for Genesys as a whole, rather than focusing on a specific setting.

This book takes some of the most interesting elements of the **GENESYS** Core Rulebook and further fleshes them out. These pages contain additional alternate rules and new tones, vehicles, creatures, adversaries, and example settings that can be added to your games. Basically, it's additional useful material to help you build your own setting and run your own game.

So Is This a Book for Players, or Game Masters?

The short answer is both! We consider the Game Master to be just as much a player as the rest of the people in their group. Some of this book contains material that players with player characters may find useful. Other elements are going to be more helpful for Game Masters. Finally, some material is going to be useful for everyone.

How Does This Book Work With Your Setting Expansions?

Good question! **GENESYS** has several expansions that explore specific settings in more detail, such as **REALMS OF TERRINOTH**, which is our own version of a fantasy setting, and **SHADOW OF THE BEANSTALK**, our take on a dystopian but plausible science fiction setting. Each

of these, together with the rules found in the **GENESYS** Core Rulebook, provides everything you need to run a game set in the world it depicts.

The **EXPANDED PLAYER'S GUIDE**, on the other hand, is intended to work with a wide range of settings, not specific setting sourcebooks. So you don't need this book to use one of our specific setting sourcebooks.

However, you might find it useful. For example, the new noir tone we provide starting on page 111 would make a great addition to stories told in the seedy underbelly of New Angeles through **SHADOW OF THE BEANSTALK**. Likewise, some of the new spells and magical talents found starting on page 95 might provide some interesting new options for magic users adventuring in **REALMS OF TERRINOTH**.

Of course, what does and does not get used in a game is ultimately up to the GM. This is especially important when dealing with games that are already in play!

How Do I Use This Book?

This book is organized following a layout similar to that of the Core Rulebook. The major difference is that this book doesn't have a core rules section.

Instead, **Part I** of this book introduces three new example settings in which you could run a game of **GENESYS**. These settings work the same way as the example settings in the **GENESYS** Core Rulebook and are additional interesting possibilities for your games. In

addition, this part has a step-by-step guide for creating your own settings. This is a great way to start a process that may seem overwhelming at first.

Part II fleshes out some of the rules found in **Part III: Game Master's Toolkit** in the Core Rulebook. Specifically, this section has rules for creating your own vehicles and an extensive list of premade vehicles for you to use. It also has quick rules for building adversaries that work with our new challenge level system and an extensive list of adversaries for your game.

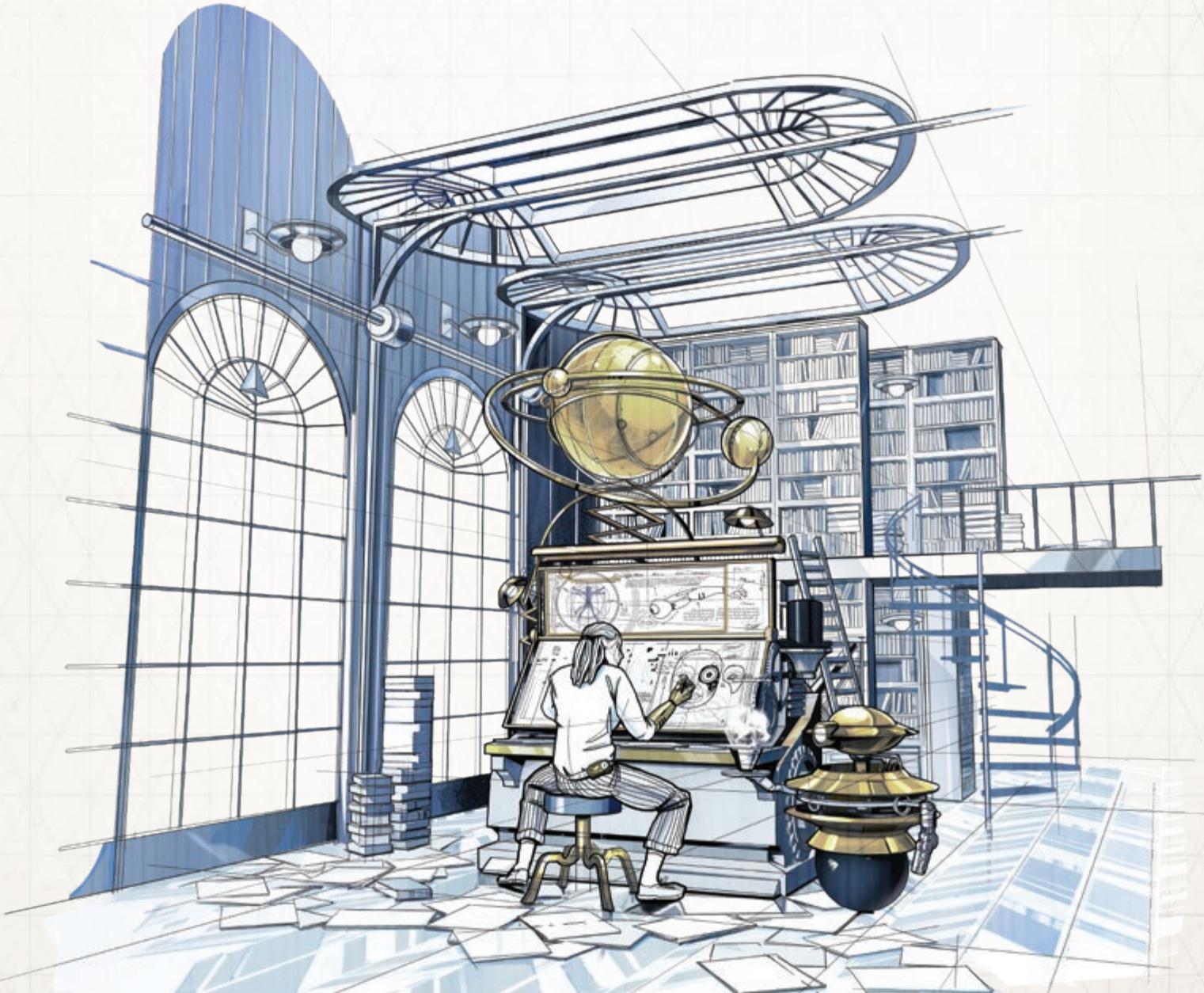
Finally, in **Part III**, we have additional alternate rules, also corresponding to the Core Rulebook's **Part III**. This section includes new talents and spells designed to work with our magic rules, some alternate rules for character advancement and social encounters, and new tones.

POWER LEVELS IN ADVERSARY PROFILES

As you read through this book, you'll notice that all of the adversary profiles have these symbols with numbers alongside the name of the adversary:



These are the adversary's **power levels**. The fist is the adversary's **combat** power level, the head within the circle is the adversary's **social** power level, and the diamond shape is the adversary's **general** power level. These power levels are a measure of how capable the adversary is. They are explained in much more detail on page 84.



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NEW SETTINGS

In the first part of this book, we cover three new settings that are potential locations for games of **GENESYS**. Unlike most of our original settings in Part II of the **GENESYS** Core Rulebook, we present these settings without notable examples from amongst our own intellectual properties. Instead, these settings draw inspiration from a diverse range of media—from the epic legends and myths of past civilizations, to the classic horror literature and films of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, to the desperate stories of societal collapse that captivate our imaginations today.

As with the settings in the Core Rulebook, none of the settings here are entirely complete. Instead, they provide a broad overview and starting point for building your own games in these universes. Throughout this section, you'll find rules, tips, tropes, and character information to help you get your own settings off the ground.

However, building your own setting doesn't have to be a matter of taking one of our examples and expanding it. For those of you who want to build your own setting from the ground up, **Chapter 5** of this part should be useful. This chapter lays out a process for setting creation, along with plenty of options for picking the right era, technology level, environment, adversaries, and more.

WHAT'S IN THIS PART OF THE Book?

Let's go over what you're going to find in this part of the book in a bit more detail:

- **Chapter 1: Age of Myth.** From the heroic epics of ancient Greece to Norse sagas, Arabian legends, and Egyptian myth cycles, the myths of past civilizations offer fertile ground for exciting games. In these stories, the players take on the roles of cunning and epic heroes performing larger than life deeds.
- **Chapter 2: Monsterworld.** In a setting where science breeds monstrous abominations and horrors arise from the distant past, only a few brave heroes can hunt the creatures that lurk in the shadows. This setting exemplifies Gothic horror and fighting frightening and powerful adversaries.
- **Chapter 3: Post Apocalypse.** The end has come and gone, and now only a few survivors live among the ashes. Recklessness, scavenging, and throwing off the rules of the old world typify this setting.
- **Chapter 4: Skills and Talents.** This contains a list of what Core Rulebook skills and talents are used with the new settings.
- **Chapter 5: Creating a Setting.** When it's time to create your own setting, use this chapter as your guide and starting point.

CHAPTER 1: AGE OF MYTH

From the time of humanity's first words, we have told stories of epic heroes, magic swords, dire monsters, and treasure hoards. Real-world mythology provides richly detailed settings filled with exciting characters ranging from superpowered demigods to quick-witted tricksters. Some of these stories, like that of Jason and the Argonauts—whose quest for the golden fleece pitched them against islands of vicious killers, fire-breathing oxen, and monstrous dragons—could have been plucked directly from a tabletop RPG.

However, mythological epics have some key differences in comparison to the fantasy settings of many roleplaying games. In many ways, what we think of as the “traditional” high fantasy setting has its roots in mythology—which is why most gamers are familiar with Gorgons and minotaurs, for example. But while fantasy and the age of myths share some details, it’s the core themes that set them apart. The way magic is presented, the definition of a hero (or player character), and the roles of gods and the supernatural are all approached differently in the age of myths and in fantasy.

TROPS

Every culture’s mythology is different, emerging from the unique needs of its particular society. Polynesian and Norse myths are as different as military sci-fi and space opera. However, myths from across the world do share a number of tropes, even if they are used in very different ways. Myths have long been our way of addressing great unknowns and answering the questions of human existence. The magic of a mythic world reflects the struggles of the culture from which it was born and seeks to explain what was, at that time and for that culture, unexplainable.

This section addresses a few of these tropes through the lenses of several different mythologies. In it, you may notice a focus on certain mythic cycles. These are stories that have entered the Western literary canon, ones with which we the writers have had the most experience. Our focus is not meant to devalue the incredibly rich storytelling traditions around the world, but to explore different mythologies and discuss how they can be transformed into the settings of roleplaying games. The advice presented here is often broadly applicable for a wide range of myths of different cultures.



GODS AMONG US

Always powerful, often fallible, and usually a present force in daily life, gods may be the defining feature of a mythic setting. The vast majority of mythologies feature a pantheon of gods, with each often controlling particular facets of existence. Individual gods may rise and fall in prominence and power depending on the story, but it is their interactions with each other that shape the world.

In the age of myth, gods are involved in much of what happens to characters. They tend to meddle in the affairs of mortals, particularly in the adventures of heroes. They send heroes out on quests, bestow magical gifts and items of power on their favorites, and work to ruin the lives of anyone who displeases them. They're too powerful to fight directly, so any character who wants to defy a god has to be very clever about it.

When you create a game in the age of myth, you should make sure that gods feature heavily in your setting. To help you figure out how to incorporate gods, here are overviews of some real-world mythologies.

NORSE GODS

The Norse gods are split into two sometimes-warring factions. The *Æsir*, the principal pantheon, are the most well known. They are led by Odin, the god of knowledge. The second faction, the *Vanir*, is associated with fertility and the harvest. The *Vanir* are led by Freyja, the goddess of love, beauty, and death.

Norse legends often depict the gods appearing to humans as teachers and testers. Odin in particular wanders the world of mortals in the guise of an old, gray-bearded man with a low-brimmed hat and a ragged gray cloak. He arrives at a hall or home seeking food and lodging. If he is treated with hospitality, then Odin shares his gifts of foresight and wisdom. However, should he be denied, Odin may wreak a terrible vengeance.

Norse gods are often depicted as selfish (a trait shared with several other mythological pantheons) and more focused on their own gain than on helping others. According to legend, Odin sacrificed one of his eyes to gain cosmic knowledge and enhance his own power. Thor is often depicted as boastful and demanding (even if he is also seen as a protector of common folk).

Finally, Norse gods tend to respect strength and bravery. Bold deeds and fearlessness may result in rewards in the afterlife. This means that if a mortal ends up facing off against a god, the mortal is probably better off fighting bravely, even if they have no chance of success. The god is more likely to respect them—but they'll still smite them down for their impudence.

GRECO-ROMAN GODS

In Greek mythology (from which the later Romans borrowed heavily), the pantheon, or Olympians, are the youngest generation of gods who rule from Mount Olympus. The Greeks believed in lesser deities and spirits as well. The nymphs were elemental beings of the water, air, fire, or land; dryads were the living embodiments of trees and nature; and the Erinyes, or Furies, were the three goddesses of vengeance and retribution.

Greek mythology speaks of the gods as beings with an idealized human form who were immortal and invulnerable and could shapeshift into animals or even objects. Each god had their own personality and area of specialization: Athena was the goddess of knowledge, cleverness, and warcraft; Poseidon was the god of the ocean and earthquakes; and Zeus was the god of the sky, thunder, and justice. Mortals offered prayers and worship to whichever god could aid them in a particular task. A soldier might offer a sacrifice to Ares, the god of war, before a battle, while a farmer would pray to Demeter, goddess of agriculture, for a bountiful harvest.

Greek gods could often be spiteful or petty, especially in their dealings with mortals. Many of the secrets of civilization, such as fire and agriculture, had to be stolen from the gods, and rarely did the thieves endure their wrath unscathed. Greek myths also contain many stories of mortals who prided themselves on being particularly good at something, only to be laid low by a god who felt challenged by the human's skills.

SUMERIAN GODS

In Sumerian legends, the gods were birthed from the earth, water, and heavens but separated the worlds so that they could claim their own domains. The god Enki created humans to carry out all menial tasks so that he, and the other gods, could lead lives of luxury.

Sumerian gods interacted with humans through their vessels: statues that were kept within temples. The priests prepared feasts for, bathed, and otherwise venerated these vessels. In exchange, the gods could inhabit the statues in times of need. The gods were surrounded by a luminous nimbus called *melam*, which inspired a feeling of terrified awe in all who gazed upon them. They could bestow a measure of melam on those mortals they favored.

In Sumerian mythology, the gods were not to be defied or challenged. Only by obeying them could one earn their blessing. There's also a fatalistic element to Sumerian mythology—in the end, no matter what one's deeds were in life, all mortals ended up in the same bleak underworld.

THE HEROIC IDEAL

Another staple of the age of myth setting is that the player characters should be cast from the mold of a “traditional” heroic archetype. They are simply stronger, faster, more attractive, and more clever than everyone else around them and thus are marked for great deeds. In many ways, this means they’re archetypal PCs, but it’s important to note that the heroic ideal should emphasize this even more than in other settings.

Heroes are not mundane individuals, and even those who come from normal backgrounds are destined for greatness. They can possess any of the personality traits of a regular person, just amplified to extremes, and these extremes tend to define their character. A hero isn’t just brave, they are absolutely fearless. If they’re clever, they are smart enough to outwit the gods. If they are attractive or charming, their presence may be enough to start wars or charm the beasts of the wilderness. Their heroic traits are held up as ideals for the average person to aspire to.

Heroes don’t tend to worry about their next meal, running afoul of the town guards, or even amassing wealth. What they do focus on are appropriately heroic deeds to fit their larger-than-life personalities. Heroes tend to find vicious monsters to slay, quest for lost knowledge and powerful secrets, claim artifacts of legend, or defy their fate and the gods.

GREEK HEROES

Just as the gods in Greek mythology tend to have an area of specialization, so too do Greek heroes tend to be exemplars of a specific heroic ideal. Hercules, for example, was far stronger than any mortal human, and most of his heroic feats featured his strength in some way. Achilles was an exemplar of a warrior, unable to lose in combat until laid low by a treacherous shot from afar. Odysseus was supremely clever, able to think his way out of nearly any situation. And Orpheus was considered the most talented musician and poet in the world, able to sway the gods with his songs.

However, most Greek heroes had a tragic element woven into their character. Often this was some personal failing such as hubris or wrath that led to their downfall. The tragic elements of their stories reminded those who heard them not to be too sure of themselves, defy the gods, or forget that the world was full of forces far more powerful than they were.

ARABIAN HEROES

The mythic heroes of Arabian stories tend to be less overtly powerful, strong, or warlike than heroes of other mythologies. The most powerful characters in

Arabian myths are often the antagonists. Instead, the heroes tend to be clever and quick on their feet. They are almost always opposed by someone stronger than themselves. Arabian heroes must succeed by using their wits, or by relying on their friends and allies.

Arabian mythology provides a great backdrop for more political or social stories, as the heroes are more likely to talk and think their way out of problems than they are to fight. Scheherazade, the metaheroine of the *1001 Nights*, is a master storyteller whose ability to spin tales keeps her alive, while Sinbad the Sailor must use his wits to survive his famed seven voyages.

THE FATES

Fate is a powerful force in many myths. Almost all cultures have some form of divination, from the casting of arrows before a shrine to the reading of runes or entrails. However, once the future is known, it cannot be changed. In many myths, it is the act of trying to change fate that brings it about.

Fate is an important element of the age of myth setting, but you don’t want it to limit the agency of your players. In most mythologies, fate is mysterious, with a certain vagueness that can be exploited. A common narrative trope is the prophecy that can be interpreted multiple ways or can be overcome without being proven incorrect. One example is the famous prophecy the Oracle of Apollo at Delphi gave to King Croesus before his battle against the Persian Empire—that should he attack the Persians, he would destroy a great empire (he lost the battle, which indeed destroyed a great empire: his own). Another is the common prophecy given to powerful individuals—that no man can slay them. This still leaves the individual vulnerable to anyone (or anything) who is not a man.

NORSE FATE

In Norse mythology, fate is the province of the Norns, powerful goddesses who live at the base of the world tree, Yggdrasil. Thanks to the Norns, Norse characters know that Ragnarok (the end of their world) will come. The gods will die, and the world tree will burn, but a few humans will hide and survive the cataclysm, enough to start the world again.

Norse mythology focuses heavily on fate’s inevitability. As a result, what is important is how bravely one faces their fate, rather than trying to overcome or avoid it. Games set in a Norse or Norse-derived age of myth should play up this element of fate, with characters ready to face challenges head-on and unafraid to die if they can do so bravely.



HERE THERE BE MONSTERS

Monsters are a staple of any mythology. Mysterious creatures haunt the shadowed places in the world, the depths of the oceans, and the peaks of foreboding mountains. Some monsters are one of a kind, cursed by gods. Others are part of civilizations older than human memory.

What monsters appear, and in what context, are part of what differentiates a mythic game from a fantasy game. Monsters exist in both settings. However, most fantasy settings present monsters as part of an established ecology or environment. Goblins are just another race of humanoids, and dragons give birth, grow old, and sometimes die just like more mundane beasts.

In the age of myth, the world is full of normal creatures and regular humans. Monsters are rarer, and their appearance is important. When a hero goes out to fight a hydra or a minotaur, there may only be one such monster in existence. It should be dangerous and difficult to overcome, and its defeat should be historic and celebrated. Monsters have a greater storytelling weight, and characters may have to experience some sort of personal growth or sacrifice in order to win.

MAGIC

In the age of myth setting, as in the fantasy setting, magic plays a major role. However, these settings tend to present their magic elements differently. In many versions of the fantasy setting, magic is an integral part of the setting. This also means that in most fantasy settings, magic is generally accepted by the inhabitants as part of the natural order of the world.

In the age of myth on the other hand, magic is outside of the natural order. It's important to remember that one of the reasons myths exist is to explain elements of the real world that, to ancient cultures, were unexplainable. Unlike magic in a fantasy setting, magic in myth exists as an additional layer on the mundane world. In the age of myth, most people are likely to accept that magic is something that happens, but it's still a frightening, mysterious thing that they may never interact with.

Magic in the age of myth should be significant and rare. For example, most variations of this setting won't have trinkets and talismans with minor enhancements or buffs. Instead, a magical item would automatically be legendary and renowned, with powers that reflect its status. Likewise, average people can't use magic, and even most heroes do not have that skill. Magic is the province of the otherworldly, the supernatural, and sorcerers and witches who have grown beyond being merely mortal.

EGYPTIAN MYTH CYCLES AND FATE

In Egyptian mythology, fate and history have cyclical elements; what has happened before will happen again. In Egyptian legends, fate determines not what will happen, but what must happen in order for the world to continue, as part of the eternal struggle in the balance between order and chaos. Thus, the myths of the past chart out the trials that the heroes of the present must overcome to preserve creation. The Egyptians believed that to keep the chaos of the desert from overwhelming the order of the life-giving river valley, the world must reenact the mythic patterns of history.

A setting inspired by Egyptian mythology might focus on the heroes being chosen to reenact the great deeds of the past. In this situation, learning how their ancestors were victorious may be key to vanquishing their present foes. However, even if the heroes triumph, they know that their adversaries are merely defeated for a time. The battles must be fought again in the future.

NEW STARTING CHARACTER OPTIONS

Heroes of myth may have origins or skills that set them apart from normal people, so new starting character options are appropriate for this setting. You can also use the human archetypes found starting on page 36 of the GENESYS Core Rulebook.

DEMIGOD

This character might have been born of a union between a mortal and a god, or perhaps they are the child of gods stolen at birth and robbed of some of their divine majesty.

ARCHETYPE ABILITIES



- **Starting Wound Threshold:** 12 + Brawn
- **Starting Strain Threshold:** 8 + Willpower
- **Starting Experience:** 85
- **Starting Skills:** A demigod starts with a single rank in Athletics during character creation. They obtain this rank before spending experience points, and Athletics may not be increased above rank 2 during character creation.
- **Tragic Fate:** When preparing the Story pools at the beginning of a game session, add one Story Point to the GM pool instead of the player pool.

SORCERER

In many mythologies, a person is born a magic user; magic is not a skill that can be learned or taught. This archetype plays into this concept, and should only be used if the game is using the magic alternate rules starting on page 210 of the GENESYS Core Rulebook. It also plays with the idea that magic is something that is feared in most mythologies.

ARCHETYPE ABILITIES



- **Starting Wound Threshold:** 9 + Brawn
- **Starting Strain Threshold:** 11 + Willpower
- **Starting Experience:** 115

- **Starting Skills:** A sorcerer starts the game with Arcana, Divine, or Primal as a career skill. Sorcerers also start with a single rank in the magic skill they select as a career skill during character creation. They obtain this rank before spending experience points, and these skills may not be increased above rank 2 during character creation.

- **Supernatural Suspicion:** Once per session after this character makes a magic skill check, you may spend a Story Point to reroll one or more dice of your choice in the pool. After doing so, all NPCs in the current encounter gain an aversion of this character and their supernatural nature as a Fear facet of their Motivation.

TRICKSTER

Without powers from birth, native magic, or even particular strength at arms, some mortals are still able to rise to greatness through their brainpower.

ARCHETYPE ABILITIES



- **Wound Threshold:** 10 + Brawn
- **Strain Threshold:** 10 + Willpower
- **Starting Experience:** 100
- **Starting Skills:** A trickster starts with a single rank in Deception, Knowledge, Skulduggery, or Streetwise during character creation. They obtain this rank before spending experience points, and these skills may not be increased above rank 2 during character creation.
- **Too Clever by Half:** Once per session before your character makes a skill check with □ in the dice pool, you may spend a Story Point to double the number of □ currently in the dice pool. If your character fails the check, they suffer 6 strain in addition to any other penalties.

SETTING-SPECIFIC GEAR

Myths are full of weapons and objects that can be just as important as the heroes who wield them. This section covers a few of these from various mythologies.

Of course, the age of myth setting also has more mundane items such as bows, swords, cloaks, and leather armor. For these, use the items starting on page 143 in the fantasy setting presented in the Core Rulebook.

WEAPONS

A legendary weapon is sometimes bestowed on the favored follower of a god, or it may become the object of a quest in and of itself.

ANCILE (ROME)

The Ancile is a large leather shield that fell from heaven and was brought to Rome, where it served to protect the city from outside harm. It was said that as long as the Ancile remained in Rome, the city would never fall.

When your character wields this shield, all engaged allies increase their melee and ranged defense by 3.

BOW OF APOLLO (GREEK)

Apollo's bow was said to be so accurate, the god could not miss a shot. In addition, the merest graze from an arrow could bring on a terrible plague.

Before your character makes a combat check using the Bow of Apollo, remove all \blacksquare from the pool. When a character suffers a Critical Injury from the Bow of

Apollo, your character must choose to inflict the Debilitating Illness Critical Injury if the target is not already suffering from this Critical Injury.

Debilitating Illness (Hard [♦♦♦] Severity): The target's wound threshold and strain threshold are halved (rounding up) until this Critical Injury is healed.

DÁINSLEIF (NORSE)

Engraved with runes of hunger and power, Dáinsleif is a vicious longsword with a short hilt and a heavy steel pommel.

Increase the difficulty of checks to heal any Critical Injuries inflicted by Dáinsleif by two, to a maximum of **Formidable (♦♦♦♦♦)**.

PASHA (HINDU)

An infinitely looping cord, the Pasha twists and writhes in the hand like a living thing. The Pasha is commonly depicted as being held by the Hindu god Ganesha, representing his power to create and remove obstacles.

Your character may use the Pasha to attack targets at short range. The difficulty of this combat check is still **Average (♦♦)**. If the attack is successful, your character may activate the Ensnare item quality without spending Δ . A character ensnared by the Pasha must make a successful **Formidable (♦♦♦♦♦) Athletics check** to break free (instead of the **Hard [♦♦♦]** check normally associated with the Ensnare quality).

TABLE I.1–1: AGE OF MYTH WEAPONS

Name	Skill	Dam	Crit	Range	Encum	Price	Rarity	Special
MELEE WEAPONS								
Ancile	Melee (Light)	+1	4	Engaged	2	Priceless	10	Defensive 3, Deflection 3, Knockdown, Reinforced
Dáinsleif	Melee (Light)	+5	2	Engaged	2	Priceless	10	Defensive 1, Reinforced, Vicious 4
Pasha	Melee (Heavy)	+2	1	Short	1	Priceless	9	Ensnare 3, Reinforced, Stun Damage
Mjölnir (melee)	Melee (Light)	+8	4	Engaged	10	Priceless	10	Concussive 2, Cumbersome 6, Reinforced, Superior
Ruyi Jingu Bang	Melee (Heavy)	+6	4	Special	0	Priceless	10	Defensive 2, Deflection 2, Knockdown, Reinforced, Superior
Sword of Peleus	Melee (Light)	+2	2	Engaged	2	Priceless	10	Defensive 2, Reinforced, Sunder, Superior
Thrysus	Melee (Light)	+2	4	Engaged	2	Priceless	7	Disorient 3, Stun Damage
RANGED WEAPONS								
Bow of Apollo	Ranged	10	2	Extreme	4	Priceless	10	Reinforced, Unwieldy 3
Mjölnir (ranged)	Ranged	10	4	Medium	10	Priceless	10	Concussive 2, Cumbersome 6, Guided 3, Limited Ammo 1, Reinforced, Superior

MJÖLNIR (NORSE)

This hammer is so heavy that it would take a strong person two hands to swing, but the dwarves forging it were distracted by Loki and only made the shaft long enough for a single-hand grip. Thor himself can only wield the hammer in one hand thanks to the Járngreiper gauntlets.

When making a combat check using Mjölnir, your character increases the damage dealt by +2 per \star (rather than by +1). When your character makes a ranged combat check with Mjölnir, they may spend $\Delta \Delta$ or \otimes to have it return to their hand at the beginning of their next turn.

RUYI JINGU BANG (CHINESE)

Sun Wukong, the Monkey King, is a warrior, shapeshifter, and trickster who stole immortality from the inhabitants of the Heavens (several times over), defied the Kings of Hell, and undertook a legendary journey to protect the monk Tang Sanzang from flesh-eating demons. Sun Wukong's arsenal of mythical artifacts is extensive, but his favored weapon is one as versatile as he is: the staff called Ruyi Jingu Bang. Given to him by the dragon-king Ao Kuang, this pillar of iron was used in ancient days as a measuring stick for the primordial sea. When he took possession of it, Sun Wukong found that it could be transformed in size, shrinking to fit behind his ear or stretching across vast distances, or even split into multiple copies of itself. Ruyi Jingu Bang recognizes a worthy user, emitting a glow when in the presence of such an individual; others cannot lift it, let alone wield it.

When making a combat check using Ruyi Jingu Bang, your character may target any opponent within extreme range, increasing the difficulty of the check once for each range band beyond short range. As an action, your character may plant Ruyi Jingu in place and set its size at any silhouette from 0 to 6 and its encumbrance at any value from 1 to 1000, alter either of these values, or remove it.

SWORD OF PELEUS (GREEK)

Peleus's sword, crafted by Hephaestus, god of the forge, is said to guarantee the wielder victory in combat.

While wielding the Sword of Peleus, your character reduces any wounds they suffer as a result of a combat

check to 0. However, whenever your character is hit by an attack while they wield the Sword of Peleus, they suffer 2 strain.

THYRSUS (GREEK)

The sacred weapon of Dionysus, the Thrysus is a rod with a pine cone on the end. Honey drips from the pine cone, and a steel tip is hidden within the cone's scales. This rare, but not unique, weapon can induce a sacred frenzy in its targets, and it has been carried by satyrs, maenads, and the god himself.

While wielding the Thrysus, if your character makes a combat check that would incapacitate a character, the character instead heals all strain, then lashes out in a frenzied, ecstatic rampage for the remainder of the encounter. During their turn, they must make a Brawl combat check targeting the closest engaged character (if they are engaged with multiple characters, select the target randomly). If they are not engaged with any character, they move in a random direction performing random nonsensical acts determined by your GM.

ARMOR

The gods protect their champions through enchanted armor as often as through direct intercession. The following are some examples of enchanted armor from various mythologies.

AEGIS (GREEK)

The Aegis is the armor of the gods: a skin of golden scales worn off one shoulder, with the head of a Gorgon attached to the front. While the Gorgon's severed head no longer turns those who look at it into stone, it does strike fear into enemies and inspire courage in allies.

While wearing the Aegis, your character and any allies within medium range add \star to any Discipline and Leadership checks they make. Any enemies within medium range must make a **Daunting ($\spadesuit \clubsuit \diamondsuit \heartsuit$) Discipline check** at the start of their turn as an incidental. If they fail, they are immobilized until the end of the round, plus one additional round per \clubsuit . If they succeed, they do not need to make this check again. (If your group is using the **Fear** rules found on page 243 of the Core Rulebook, this can be a fear check instead.)

TABLE I.1–2: AGE OF MYTH ARMOR

Name	Defense	Soak	Encumbrance	Price	Rarity	Special
Aegis	0	+3	3	Priceless	10	Reinforced
Green Armor	1	+4	4	Priceless	10	
Járngreiper	3	+0	1	Priceless	10	

GREEN ARMOR (BRETON)

Worn by the Green Knight of Arthurian legend, the Green Armor is a suit of heavy plate mail forged from some unidentifiable deep-green metal. The armor makes the wearer effectively immortal and invulnerable. It is said that some wearers can even lose their head or limb, pick it up, and effortlessly reattach it.

While wearing the Green Armor, Critical Injuries cannot be inflicted on your character. In addition, whenever your character would suffer wounds, they suffer strain instead. If your character's strain exceeds their strain threshold, they are not incapacitated. However, they must concede victory to the enemy combatant and leave the encounter as quickly as possible.

JÁRNGREIPER (NORSE)

The dwarves forged these iron gauntlets for Thor so that he would have the strength to wield his hammer one-handed. Even by themselves, the gauntlets can make the wearer into a fearsome weapon, greatly increasing the individual's arm and grip strength, as well as protecting their hands and forearms from harm.

While wearing Járngreiper, your character increases their Brawn by two, to a maximum of 6.

GEAR

In the age of myth, even the simplest items—rings, boots, and iron pots—can be wondrous items of immense power.

BAG OF WIND (GREEK)

This large, cumbersome bag, made from the tanned hides of several mismatched sea creatures, contains all the winds of the whole world. The bag was given to Odysseus by Aeolus, king of the four winds, but was lost in a storm when Odysseus' crew fought over it, thinking that it contained gold.

While your character holds the Bag of Wind, they reduce the difficulty of any Operating skill checks they make to direct sailing vessels by three, to a minimum of Easy (♦). In addition, once per encounter, your character may briefly open the Bag of Wind as a maneuver. All characters and any objects that are not secured in front of your character and within medium range are pushed one range band away from your character and knocked prone.

TABLE I.1–3: AGE OF MYTH GEAR

NAME	ENCUM	PRICE	RARITY
Bag of Wind	2	Priceless	10
Blessed Ruyi	1	Priceless	9
Seal of Solomon	0	Priceless	10
Seven-League Boots/ Winged Sandals	1	Priceless	9

BLESSED RUYI (HINDU)

A Ruyi is a ceremonial scepter with an S-shaped handle and a head that is often fashioned into a fist or cloud. They can be crafted out of all manner of valuable materials, from gold, to jade, to coral. A Ruyi that has been divinely blessed is said to bring good luck to the bearer.

While holding a Blessed Ruyi, your character may reroll one or more ♦ in their pool once when making a check.

SEAL OF SOLOMON (ARABIAN)

This elaborate signet ring bears two interlaced triangles forming a star. It was forged by God in brass and iron and given to King Solomon. The seal gives the wearer the ability to speak to animals and supernatural beings such as jinn. The seal can also be used to stamp written directives that supernatural creatures and beings are compelled to obey.

While wearing the Seal of Solomon, your character may speak with and understand all living and supernatural creatures and beings (this does not give the target any additional intelligence, so it's up to your GM what they can discuss). In addition, once per session, your character may write out a directive for a single supernatural creature or being within extreme range and stamp it with the Seal of Solomon. That entity must make a successful **Formidable** (♦♦♦♦♦) Discipline check or do exactly what the directive instructs it to do.

SEVEN-LEAGUE BOOTS/WINGED SANDALS (BRETON/GREEK)

Shoes that allow the wearer to move very fast feature in several mythologies. Wearing these Seelie (fairy) boots or winged sandals of the gods, a traveler can cover immense distances impossibly quickly.

During narrative encounters while wearing the Seven-League Boots or Winged Sandals, your character may walk supernaturally quickly (the exact speeds are up to the GM, but should be in the range of a kilometer every few steps). During structured encounters, your character may spend a move maneuver to move to any location within extreme range of their current position.

SETTING-SPECIFIC ADVERSARIES

Here are a few adversaries specific to a variety of mythic settings.

GORGON [GREEK] [NEMESIS]

The gorgons appear as ageless women with snakes in place of hair, their skin gray-green and cracked. Already dangerous, they are also wrapped in such sacred majesty that any mortal who looks on one turns to stone.

	8		4		3
	3		4		2
	CRAZY		AGILITY		INTELLECT
	3		3		3
	CUNNING		WILLPOWER		PRESENCE
	SOAK VALUE 4		WOUND THRESHOLD 15		STRAIN THRESHOLD 12
	M/R DEFENSE 2				

Skills: Cool 4, Coercion 2, Knowledge 3, Melee (Light) 4.

Talents: Parry 2 (when this character suffers a hit from a melee combat check, after damage is calculated [but before soak is applied], they may suffer 3 strain to reduce damage suffered by 4).

Abilities: Petrifying Gaze (as an action, may make an **opposed Cool versus Coordination check** targeting one character within medium range to immobilize the target until the end of this character's next turn, plus one additional turn for each additional ; may spend to stagger target until the end of this character's next turn and may spend to turn target to stone), Terrifying (at the start of the encounter, all opponents must make a **Daunting** [] **fear check** as an out-of-turn incidental, as per page 243 of the GENESYS Core Rulebook; if there are multiple sources of fear in the encounter, opponents only make one fear check against the most terrifying enemy).

Equipment: Gorgon blade (Melee [Light]; Damage 6; Critical 2; Vicious 2).

JINN [ARABIAN] [NEMESIS]

Beings of smokeless fire, jinn are spirits in Arabian myth. They often appear as an upper torso or disembodied head dissolving into colored fumes below the belt or neck. Jinn are nearly immune to conventional weapons, and they can wield dangerous magics.

	2		3		5
	CRAZY		AGILITY		INTELLECT
	5		2		3
	CUNNING		WILLPOWER		PRESENCE
	SOAK VALUE 2		WOUND THRESHOLD 20		STRAIN THRESHOLD 20
	M/R DEFENSE 2				

Skills: Charm 3, Coercion 3, Deception 3, Divine 4, Knowledge 4, Perception 3, Ranged 4, Vigilance 4.

Talents: Adversary 2 (upgrade the difficulty of all combat checks against this target twice).

SURVIVING PETRIFICATION

Petrification, like death, can be a very frustrating experience for your players. To avoid an unexpected character death, you should be willing to turn your players' characters to stone but have a way for them to be restored to life later on. Magic is always a good solution: a **Daunting** () **Arcana**, **Divine**, or **Primal** check should restore a petrified character. Another option is restoring the character upon the Gorgon's defeat. Perhaps daubing the gorgon's blood on the statue can restore the stone to flesh.

Smart characters may fight a gorgon without looking at it. They act as though they had the **Blinded** Critical Injury, on page 115 of the Core Rulebook, but can't be targeted by **Petrifying Gaze**.

Abilities: Flyer (can fly; see the **Flying** sidebar on page 100 of the GENESYS Core Rulebook), Ghostly (may move over or through terrain [including doors and walls] without penalty; halve the damage dealt to this character before applying soak, unless the attack came from a magical source such as a spell or legendary weapon), Spirit (does not need to breathe, eat, or drink, and can survive underwater; immune to poisons and toxins).

Spells: This character may choose any magic action allowed for by the **Divine** skill, and may select additional spell effects, as normal. The spell they use most often is the following unique spell:

Eye of the Jinn (this character chooses one target within medium range and makes an **Average** [] **Divine check**; if the check is successful, until the end of this character's next turn, after the target makes a check, this character may choose one type of die in the pool and reroll all of the dice of that type; can sustain the effects of this spell by performing a concentrate maneuver).

Equipment: Lightning and flame (Ranged; Damage 8; Critical 3; Range [Medium]; Auto-fire, Burn 4), several enchanted trinkets.

KORRIGAN [BRETON] [NEMESIS]



In the dark, korrigan are ethereal, dancing around fountains and at crossroads. They delight in luring travelers into their dance, until their victims die of exhaustion. In daylight, their true shape is revealed: hunched and withered humanoids with red eyes and tangled white hair.



Skills: Charm 2, Primal 3, Skulduggery 2, Stealth 3.

Talents: Can't We Talk about This? (this character can make an **opposed Charm versus Discipline** check targeting a character within medium range; if successful, the target cannot attack this character until the end of this character's next turn; may spend $\Delta \Delta$ to increase the effect's duration by one additional turn; this effect ends immediately if this character attacks the target).

Abilities: Moonlit Glamor (during the night, this character's Presence is 5 instead of 1).

Spells: This character may choose any magic action allowed for by the Primal skill, and may select additional spell effects, as normal. The spell they use most often is the following unique spell:

Endless Dance (this character chooses one target within short range and makes an **Average [♦♦] Primal** check; upon success, the target is immobilized, suffers 1 strain and 1 wound at the start of their turn, and adds ■■ to all checks they make; on their turn, the target may make a **Daunting [♦♦♦♦] Discipline** or **Resilience** check to end these effects; can sustain the effects of this spell by performing the concentrate maneuver).

Equipment: Piles of leaves or twine that appear to be valuables.



MINOTAUR [GREEK] [NEMESIS]



The minotaur is a monstrous abomination who is half-man, half bull. The original minotaur lived in a labyrinth on Crete, eating all who were exiled into the maze. Though this monster was slain by Theseus, who knows if others lurk in the lightless corners of the earth?



Skills: Athletics 3, Brawl 3, Coercion 3, Melee (Heavy) 2, Perception 3.

Talents: Bullrush (when making a Brawl, Melee (Heavy), or Melee (Light) combat check after using a maneuver to engage a target, may spend $\Delta \Delta \Delta$ or \otimes to knock the target prone and move them up to one range band away from this character).

Abilities: Gore (after making a successful combat check using its vicious axe, this character may spend $\Delta \Delta$ or \otimes to inflict one hit with its bloody horns on the target or another target this character is engaged with, dealing base damage +1 damage per \star).

Equipment: Bloody horns (Brawl; Damage 6; Critical 3; Range [Engaged]; Concussive 1, Knockdown), vicious axe (Melee [Heavy]; Damage 9; Critical 3; Range [Engaged]; Vicious 3).

SIREN [GREEK] [RIVAL]



These beings look like captivating women perched on rocks and treacherous shores, singing with great (and supernatural) skill to lure sailors to their deaths.



Skills: Brawl 3, Charm 3, Cool 1, Deception 4.

Talents: None.

Abilities: Siren's Song (this character may make an **opposed Charm versus Discipline** check targeting one character within long range; if successful, the target must spend all of its available maneuvers [including spending an action to gain a second maneuver or suffering strain] to move into engaged range, and the target may not make combat checks targeting this character until after this character makes a combat check targeting them).

Equipment: Vicious claws (Brawl; Damage 4; Critical 2; Range [Engaged]; Pierce 3, Vicious 3).

CHAPTER 2: MONSTERWORLD

Horror has been a part of human storytelling since the time of cave paintings. In the eighteen hundreds, a new form emerged featuring a series of monsters whose legacy has echoed across the years, most importantly in film. Today, nearly everyone is familiar with these terrors: stitched-together corpses reanimated via chemicals and electricity, beings neither dead nor alive and damned for eternity to drink blood, shapeshifters cursed to dread the coming of the full moon, and many more.

This horror isn't just about monsters. It is also about the people who have become monsters, often in a quest for power. In their hubris, they have conducted experi-

ments on animals, humans, and even themselves that go far beyond the limits of safety and morality.

Though such horror goes by many names, we'll call this setting monsterworld. In it, you'll find horrors aplenty, both supernatural and human-made. It makes for a wonderful genre of roleplaying games, in which you can create characters ranging from fearless vampire hunters, to experts on supernatural lore, to even those unnatural creations who seek to right the wrongs of their sociopathic creators. So sharpen the stakes, light the torches, grab a silver-headed cane, and make ready for a new world of gods and monsters!

TROPS

Monsterworld encompasses quite a few tropes to cover the style of horror it represents. The monsters here are fantastical, yet are presented in an utterly serious manner. Science is ascendant, but its creations threaten its practitioners. The supernatural is emerging from folktales and entering modern life. Only a brave few know of these dangers, but they are sworn to defeat them or die trying—as they also know there are worse fates than death.

Monsterworld is a flexible setting, and other elements can be added to mix up the horrors characters face. You can include horrible beings from other dimensions who break into our reality (probably because a mad scientist opened a portal) or monsters from other worlds who regard Earth with envious eyes. Creatures from non-European sources can also be used, of course. As we'll see, the important thing is the overall tone of the story, not the specific monsters being fought. Similarly, while monsterworld is nominally set in the 1800s, there is no reason it cannot function in other eras, as it is people and monsters, not technology, that define the setting.

Here are but a few of the tropes that make up monsterworld. Enter it, if you dare...

THE MONSTERS

As the name suggests, monsters have a strong presence in this setting. However, unlike in other horror settings,

the humans who create these monsters (or worse, become monsters themselves) are also defining aspects. To begin, let's review some of their creations.

IT'S ALIVE! ALIVE!

One of the foundational themes of monsterworld is the dangers posed by unchecked science and the monsters it produces. In monsterworld, many scientists aren't content with just revealing the secrets of nature: they seek to conquer nature entirely. As brilliant as they are, such

DON'T SWEAT THE IMPOSSIBLE DETAILS

Though this setting draws heavily on science fiction and fantasy, it deals primarily with unfathomable science and unexplainable supernatural beings. This means their exact nature isn't actually important. Going into the minutiae of the process by which a corpse is reanimated or of the magic that turns humans into wolves doesn't add to the horror of the story—it's the mood it evokes and what happens afterward that engages players. Instead, have characters focus their research on areas of immediate importance: the powers and weaknesses of the supernatural creatures. Of course, any studying had better happen before night falls, before the monsters come out...

experimenters are often blind to the consequences of their actions. They may realize that there are things humanity was never meant to know, but usually too late, of course.

Such individuals range from those obsessed with creating new life to those working to create new species of intelligent animals. Their monstrous experiments have a variety of forms, but all owe their existence to the hubris of their creators and the forbidden science they employ. It is debatable which are more dangerous: the experiments that were unsuccessful, or those that were deemed perfect.

Note that despite their brilliance and employment of electrical wonders or potent chemical concoctions, these creators should very rarely devise fantastical items for combat. They are scientists, after all, not weapon designers. They do have some weapons of their own design, however: the very monsters they create.

CREATURES OF THE NIGHT

Supernatural creatures are in many ways the opposite of those made by wayward scientists. They can have many forms, including those of immortal vampires and cursed mortals who become beasts as the full moon rises. They might also be former humans who were entombed thousands of years ago as punishment, but

have now been freed through accident or design. Some may have enthralled retinues or entire villages of loyal followers ready to do their bidding, allowing their evil to spread far beyond their lairs.

Common to these monsters is a thread of magic, though it is less spellcraft and more an unnatural force that empowers them. Their supernatural existence owes nothing to science, making them in some ways even more difficult to counter in this age of rational advancement. Electrically animated corpses and creatures who drink blood or turn into wolves likely strike many as simple tales to frighten children. Scientific attempts to explain and codify the supernatural are, of course, always doomed to failure.

FROM UNCHARTED REALMS

Monsterworld includes many possibilities for exploration narratives. In this setting, expeditions venture into uncharted areas in search of new discoveries. What they uncover is shocking: unsettling beings of ancient lineage no human has seen before. Some, disturbingly humanoid, belong to evolutionary branches that have flourished unchanged in isolated environments for millennia. They are of the natural world, but outside science's understanding of the natural order.



IN ALL SERIOUSNESS...

One of the most difficult parts of running horror-themed games is maintaining tension. It is easy for players to break character to make jokes, even more so when they face creatures in monsterworld—many of which have been made into children’s cartoons, comedy songs, and even breakfast cereals.

To set the right tone, everyone involved should limit any joking around unless their characters are the ones doing the joking. Characters exhibiting gallows humor create a different atmosphere than players making jokes. Monsterworld thrives best in a charged atmosphere of Gothic drama, so discuss this with your players to ensure they’re on board.

However, one of the traditional rhythms of horror movies is the steady rise of tension keying up participants in a scene. Then, the tension is broken with unexpected humor—before everyone is thrown unexpectedly back into an extremely serious, tense situation. As the GM, it’s up to you to introduce those opportunities to cut the tension with some humor every now and then, without impeding or ruining the overall mood. The best way to do this without breaking immersion is to discourage table chatter and out-of-character joking, in favor of in-character chatter and nervous banter between the PCs.

Now, their dank lairs and primordial jungles become battlegrounds between explorers eager for glory and creatures striving to eradicate the interlopers. If such beings are captured and brought back to civilization, they often escape to walk among humanity, struggling merely to live and return home—making them possibly the most sympathetic monsters of this setting.

GOTHIC HORROR

The adversaries in monsterworld are all quite formidable, but this setting is more than just the monsters. It also calls upon a form of literature known as Gothic fiction. This style is filled with dark, brooding suspense, often with a supernatural and macabre bent. Emotions are dialed up with heightened levels of drama, romance and, of course, terror. It’s a perfect fit for monsterworld, and characters can embrace its strong emotional states to make the horrors of the setting even more powerful.

This doesn’t mean everyone is always morose and moody (though this can work as a character’s favored disposition). Gothic fiction is more about emotional intensity than just moodiness. Humans and monsters alike emote powerfully to portray depth of feeling. GMs should model emotional intensity in NPCs frequently to get players to adopt this style of character portrayal as well.

FEARLESS MONSTER HUNTERS

Many monsterworld characters embody a powerful trope, that of brave individuals from all sorts of backgrounds and professions who have cast aside their previous life to face monstrous threats. They might be scientists outraged at the behavior of their peers, stalwart adventurers from exploration societies, amateur

devotees of ancient folklore, or creators out to responsibly eradicate their misbegotten experiments. They can even be people who have escaped the thrall of a monster or are monsters themselves.

These options allow for a wide variety of characters, all of whom can offer something to the never-ending battle (especially as many of their foes refuse to stay dead). Players should be encouraged to select seemingly unsuited characters for monsterworld, from upper-class nobility to street beggars, for anyone can be drawn into the struggle against evil and contribute to the fight. Fashioning backgrounds explaining how their characters learned of the threat, and how they banded together, should be a vital part of a monsterworld campaigns.

PERSONAL HORROR

The horror in monsterworld is quite personal. There are no gigantic monsters destroying cities, zombified corpses in search of brains, or blank-faced slashers slaughtering households (though these are all valid tropes for other horror adventures). Monsterworld is more about individual monsters (and their creators) who require hunting, research, and bravery to confront. These foes often can be engaged in social encounters in which outright violence is not possible. They can appear quite intellectual and charming to the unwary—thus making them even more dangerous opponents.

These monsters pose a threat not just to the hunters, but to those near and dear to them. A relative or loved one may have created or fallen prey to such a monster, driving their survivors to hunt the things that stalk the night. Even worse, PCs may be forced to fight against those who have become monsters themselves.

DESPERATE CONFLICTS

One theme that should be a part of all monsterworld adventures is desperation. The foes the characters face are usually incredibly strong, extremely intelligent, or both. They often also have an inhuman or supernatural nature that makes them nearly impossible to kill, or centuries of experience to draw on. Worse, other characters typically either do not comprehend the nature or seriousness of such threats or outright refuse to believe that they even exist. This is an era of science, after all, not of fanciful stories. This means as a result, the hunters are usually on their own when they go into battle.

As such, the playing field tends to be uneven, the mere humans hopelessly outmatched by their monstrous antagonists. This makes for conflicts in which the hunters are very aware of their foes' power, yet still choose to face down something that outclasses them in every way. Hunters must rely on their research and bravery, but these often are not enough. Not everyone survives, and this should be a major part of campaigns.

CREepy LOCATIONS, NIGHTTIME ACTION

Few monsters in this setting live in bright, sunny pastures. Characters are more likely to find them in remote villages, isolated laboratories atop tall mountains, or ancient ancestral castles.

Many monsters appear only at night (they may even be repulsed or harmed by sunlight). As a result, the majority of the action happens in the dark. This increases the tension in both combat and social encounters, and it should be a major part of the environmental factors brought into play. Flashes of lightning in the pouring rain, layers of thick fog, and other unsettling weather should be included in most adventures, especially in the thrilling climactic battles!

Limiting the action to nighttime hours also creates an interesting rhythm to games in this setting. Characters know that the day is relatively "safe," and they have time to prepare, rest, and recuperate before the next night. But as the sun sets and the shadows grow, the tension builds. Everyone knows that when darkness falls, the deadly struggle begins.

NEW STARTING CHARACTER OPTIONS

While many player characters in monsterworld are humans, the efforts of mad scientists and supernatural beings allow for non-human PC options as well. These options can replace those starting on page 36 of the Core Rulebook, or they can supplement those options.

CURSED SHIFTER

The curse could have come from a family legacy or a bite from a feral monster, but the result is the same: an individual who transforms into a beast when the moon is full. Some search for a cure, while others embrace their feral nature. A few seek to use their terrible curse to battle others like themselves, knowing it is better to fall that way than to let the call of the beast consume their soul.

ARCHETYPE ABILITIES



- **Starting Wound Threshold:** $10 + \text{Brawn}$
- **Starting Strain Threshold:** $10 + \text{Willpower}$
- **Starting Experience:** 105 XP

- **Starting Skills:** A cursed shifter begins with one rank in Perception. They obtain this rank before spending experience points, and Perception may not be increased above rank 2 during character creation.

- **Curse of the Beast:** While cursed shifters normally are human, when the full moon rises, they transform into a monstrous wolf or great cat (whether they can see the moon or not). The cursed shifter changes into their Beast Form as an out-of-turn incidental. This transformation lasts until the following dawn or until the cursed shifter is incapacitated due to exceeding their wound threshold.

- **Beast Form:** When the cursed shifter transforms into Beast Form, they heal all strain they are currently suffering, increase their Brawn and Agility by one to a maximum of 5, and reduce their Intellect and Willpower by one to a minimum of 1. Their unarmed attacks deal +3 damage and have a Critical rating of 2. All opponents must halve the damage dealt to a cursed shifter in Beast Form before applying soak, unless the weapon is made of silver or uses silver ammunition. Finally, the cursed shifter must make a **Hard (♦♦♦) Discipline check** as an out-of-turn incidental when they transform. If they succeed, they may act normally,

but if they fail, they give in to their animal instincts and must attack anyone around them with frenzied savagery (you should discuss the specifics of how they act with your GM, and it is up to your GM if they can make another attempt to regain control).

- **Bite of the Wolf:** When a cursed shifter in their Beast Form makes an unarmed attack and inflicts a Critical Injury result of 51 or higher on a human PC or nemesis human NPC (your GM determines what counts as human), the human gains the Bite of the Wolf, Curse of the Beast, and Beast Form abilities. You may spend one Story Point after your cursed shifter character inflicts a Critical Injury to prevent this from happening.

DHAMPIR

The dhampir, or half vampire, can be either the child of a union between a vampire and a living person or a human who has not yet fully succumbed to the thirst for blood. Dhampirs inherit some of the strengths (and weaknesses) of their vampire progenitors.

ARCHETYPE ABILITIES



- **Starting Wound Threshold:** 11 + Brawn
- **Starting Strain Threshold:** 11 + Willpower
- **Starting Experience:** 85 XP
- **Starting Skills:** A dhampir begins the game with one rank in Vigilance. They obtain this rank before spending experience points, and Vigilance may not be increased above rank 2 during character creation.
- **Blood Call:** A dhampir has fangs and can use them as a weapon with the following profile: (Brawl; Damage +0; Critical 2; Range [Engaged]; Ensnare 1, Pierce 2, Vicious 2). When a dhampir inflicts wounds with their fangs (or narratively drinks blood), you may spend a Story Point to have them heal 4 strain and 4 wounds. However, if a dhampir kills a person with their fangs, the dhampir becomes a vampire, maintaining their profile but becoming an evil spawn of darkness (what this means for your character is up to your GM).
- **Sunlight Sensitivity:** While a dhampir character is exposed to direct sunlight, they reduce their wound and strain thresholds by four.
- **Vulnerable Heart:** When a dhampir suffers a Critical Injury from a weapon made of wood, such as a stake or crossbow bolt, add 40 to the Critical Injury result.

FEARLESS SLAYER

Those who stalk the monsters of the night can be terrifying individuals themselves. Consumed with vengeance, they attack with all the fury of the creatures they hunt. One day, they will also fall, but not before they end the existence of as many of their hated foes as possible.

ARCHETYPE ABILITIES



- **Starting Wound Threshold:** 10 + Brawn
- **Starting Strain Threshold:** 9 + Willpower
- **Starting Experience:** 90 XP
- **Starting Skills:** A fearless slayer begins the game with two ranks in Discipline and one rank in a combat skill of your choice. They obtain these ranks before spending experience points, and these skills may not be increased above rank 2 during character creation.
- **Strike True:** Once per session, when a fearless slayer inflicts a Critical Injury, you may spend one Story Point to roll two separate results and choose which result to apply.

LOREMASTER

Even in a modern age, there is power to be gleaned from ancient knowledge. Loremasters know the importance of crosses, silver, and other items against the supernatural, and often take the lead in defeating monsters.

ARCHETYPE ABILITIES



- **Starting Wound Threshold:** 8 + Brawn
- **Starting Strain Threshold:** 11 + Willpower
- **Starting Experience:** 100 XP
- **Starting Skills:** A loremaster begins the game with two ranks in Knowledge (Supernatural) or one rank in Arcana (if using the magic rules). They obtain this rank before spending experience points, and these skills may not be increased above rank 2 during character creation.
- **Know Its Weakness:** Once per session, you may spend a Story Point to have your loremaster character increase the damage dealt by all allies' combat checks by the loremaster's ranks in Knowledge (Supernatural) until the end of the loremaster's next turn.

SETTING-SPECIFIC SKILLS

Given the nature of this setting, we encourage the use of two new skills in monsterworld: Knowledge (Supernatural) and Knowledge (Science). Both skills are knowledge skills and thus are linked to Intellect.

Knowledge (Supernatural) represents knowledge of strange, mysterious, arcane, and generally supernatural forces that exist in this setting. If you are using the alternate magic rules, then this skill, instead of the generic Knowledge skill, can also be used to determine the magnitude of some spell effects.

Knowledge (Science) represents the knowledge of the knowable and understandable forces that govern our reality. However, it also represents science run amok, or the “mad” science of popular media.

If your character is using a career that has access to Knowledge as a career skill, they may take Knowledge

MAGIC IN MONSTERWORLD

Given the many supernatural creatures that exist in this setting, GMs may wish to incorporate magic and magical abilities as well by including the Arcana skill. Magic here should be less potent and effective than in more traditional fantasy settings, however. To represent this, we suggest using the following rule:

Low Magic: Whenever at least one ♀ is generated as part of a check to use magic, add ♀ to the results.

(Supernatural) or Knowledge (Science) as a career skill instead, at your GM’s discretion.

SETTING-SPECIFIC GEAR

While technology is rising in sophistication, the old ways of fighting the forces of darkness are still being passed down through the generations. With mixes of bullets and bolts, new inventions and ancient practices, humanity may yet survive this age of horrors.

WEAPONS

Though many of the supernatural foes in monsterworld seem immune to mere bullets, their minions are not. So it never hurts for a character to bring a trusty revolver or hunting rifle on their adventures.

Depending on the era in which the campaign is set, weapons from the steampunk or weird war settings in the Core Rulebook could also be used in a monsterworld game.

CAVALRY SABER

Cavalry sabers are single-edged swords with curved blades designed to deliver sweeping, punishing strikes.

CROSSBOW

Crossbows are becoming antiquated and replaced with guns as the latter grow more reliable and easier to use, but some people have discovered wood can be more effective than lead against certain creatures.

DUELIST'S FOIL

A duelist's foil is an ideal weapon for an upper-crust individual. Although it is not as sturdy as a saber, the needle-thin blade can pierce through most armor.

When a duelist's foil is used to make a combat check, your GM may spend ♀ ♀ to cause it to become damaged one step (see page 89 of the Core Rulebook).

HUNTING RIFLE

Rifles have a longer range than revolvers, though their size means they are difficult to conceal. As military weapons tend to arouse suspicion, the rifles carried by protagonists in this setting tend to be hunting weapons.

JUG OF BLESSED WATER

Water, when blessed or sanctified by holy individuals, can be an effective weapon against certain creatures of the night. When it comes in contact with the undead, it burns their flesh like a powerful acid. Otherwise, it can quench the thirst of an irreverent hunter.

This weapon is only effective against undead creatures. Against all other targets, it should be treated as normal water.

TABLE I.2–1: MONSTERWORLD WEAPONS

Name	Skill	DAM	Crit	Range	Encum	Price	Rarity	Special
BRAWL WEAPONS								
Jug of Blessed Water	Brawl	6	2	Engaged	1	50	6	Breach 1, Burn 1, Inaccurate 2, Limited Ammo 1
MELEE WEAPONS								
Cavalry Saber	Melee	+3	3	Engaged	1	90	2	Defensive 1
Duelist's Foil	Melee	+1	2	Engaged	1	90	2	Pierce 3
Stake	Melee	+1	5	Engaged	1	5	0	Pierce 1
RANGED WEAPONS								
Crossbow	Ranged (Heavy)	7	2	Medium	3	600	2	Limited Ammo 1, Pierce 2, Prepare 1
Hunting Rifle	Ranged (Heavy)	8	3	Long	3	300	3	Accurate 1, Limited Ammo 2
Pistol	Ranged (Light)	6	4	Medium	2	350	4	Accurate 1
Sunlight Grenade	Ranged (Light)	–	–	Short	1	800	4	Limited Ammo 1

PISTOL

A recent improvement on traditional pistols, pistol revolvers allow for multiple shots—a useful feature when facing a horde of supernaturally resilient creatures.

STAKE

Though they are awkward weapons, stakes are quite potent against certain otherwise invulnerable creatures.

SUNLIGHT GRENADE

There was no need for devices to mimic the effects of full daylight until the discovery that it is repugnant to those who haunt the night. Though sunlight grenades are difficult to create, these inventions have proven deadly to some things that science cannot explain.

When a sunlight grenade explodes, until the end of the current round, it acts as direct sunlight on all characters within medium range. Characters in cover who have the Sunlight Sensitivity ability suffer 3 wounds and 6 strain instead of the ability's normal effects.

GEAR

For those who hunt the monsters that the hubris of science and the ignorance of forgotten ages have awakened, it is best to be equipped for anything.

BANEFUL ITEMS

For reasons no scholar of the supernatural can fathom, certain substances cause negative reactions among

supernatural beings. Strands of garlic, wolf's bane, substances used in religious ceremonies, and other items can repel even the most fearsome of creatures but have no effect on humans. Until they somehow remove such an item (often via their minions), a monster affected by it is utterly stymied.



Baneful items may form a barrier (laid in a line, hung over a threshold, or poured in a circle). Supernatural creatures may not cross barriers created by baneful items.

GALVANIC BATTERY

Based on Professor Volta's wondrous electrical storage devices, a galvanic battery can deliver a steady current to power arcane devices or can give off a mighty discharge that can fell a human or revive things that were once human. In a pinch, it can even help bring someone back from the brink of death.

While equipped with a galvanic battery, your character may target one other engaged character and make a **Hard (♦♦♦) Mechanics check**. If the check is successful and the target is not incapacitated, the target suffers 6 strain. If the check is successful and the target is incapacitated, the target heals enough wounds to reduce the wounds it is currently suffering to its wound threshold. If the target is currently suffering The End is Nigh Critical Injury, that Critical Injury is also healed.

Once a battery has been used, it may not be used again until it has been recharged. This requires hooking it up to a power source such as a lightning rod or dynamo with a successful **Average (♦♦) Mechanics check**.

SCIENCE KIT

Filled with assorted small books, vivisection and sample-collecting tools, charcoals for sketching new findings, vials for chemical analysis, and other essentials, this

THE RIGHT EQUIPMENT FOR THE JOB

Some of the weapons and gear listed here are very potent against the monsters in this section, to the point where if a party of PCs shows up fully equipped, they may make short work of a mummy or vampire.

However, this is a situation where player knowledge may be very different than character knowledge. While players may realize that the strange noble who lurks in their castle all night, never comes out during the day, and is very pale is a vampire, their characters should only know that something is extremely off-putting about the situation. Often, having a talk with your players beforehand can deal with any potential problems of metaknowledge. However, you can also require your party to make Knowledge (Supernatural) skill checks before they can obtain these items.

SILVER WEAPONS

Most melee weapons can be made with a silver alloy or have a silver-inlaid blade. Likewise, bullets and the heads of crossbow bolts can be made out of silver.

Your character can forge or plate a Brawl or Melee weapon with silver by spending 200 currency and making an **Average (♦♦) Mechanics check**.

Your character can also buy (or make) silver bullets or crossbow bolts if they spend 100 currency on silver. 100 currency is enough to create a supply of bullets that will last for one encounter. During the encounter as a maneuver, your character can choose to load their weapon with silver ammunition, which lasts for the rest of the encounter.

kit allows a scientist to act effectively even when away from their familiar laboratory.

Your character adds □ to all Knowledge checks they make while using a science kit.

SYMBOL OF FAITH

Symbols of faith appear to call upon higher powers, either through their innate form or their user's belief, to repel the supernatural. These items rely on a character's belief in a certain faith, creed, or religion (which we leave up to you and your GM). But they do give characters a needed defensive boost.

During a combat encounter, if your character is wearing a symbol of faith openly and they believe in the faith or religion represented by the symbol, they gain a ranged and melee defense of 2 against monsters, undead, and other supernatural creatures.

In addition, once per session, if your character believes in the faith or religion represented by the symbol of faith, they may make a **Hard (♦♦♦) Discipline check** as an action. If they succeed, all monsters, undead, and other supernatural creatures within medium range suffer 4 strain.

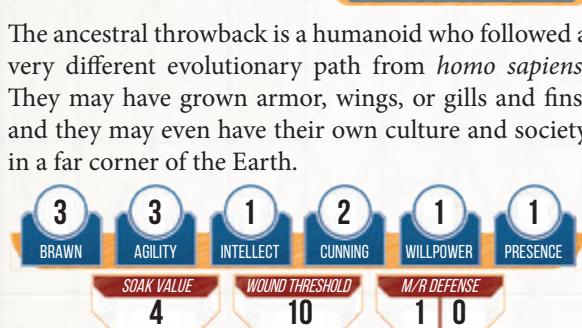
TABLE I.2–2: MONSTERWORLD GEAR

NAME	ENCUM	PRICE	RARITY
Baneful Items	2	10-200 (depending on item)	1-5 (depending on item)
Galvanic Battery	2	500	5
Science Kit	2	200	3
Symbol of Faith	0	200	2

SETTING-SPECIFIC ADVERSARIES

The setting of monsterworld offers a wide range of perils: scientists who have abandoned morality to create monsters, the very monsters they have created, threats from the distant past, and supernatural beings.

ANCESTRAL THROWBACK (RIVAL)



Skills: Athletics 3, Brawl 2, Stealth 2, Survival 3, Vigilance 2.

Talents: None.

Abilities: Evolutionary Niche (before using this character, choose one of the following abilities: Arthropod [has a thick exoskeleton and adds +2 to its soak value], Aquatic [never treats water as difficult terrain and can breathe underwater], Arboreal [treats vertical surfaces and forested areas as normal terrain], or Avian [may fly, as per page 100 of the GENESYS Core Rulebook]).

Equipment: Claws (Brawl; Damage 5; Critical 4; Range [Engaged]; Pierce 1).

ANGRY VILLAGER (MINION)

Enraged locals are a common trope in the monsterworld setting. These are average people who have been pushed to violence after being plagued by horrors. Appropriately, they are only dangerous in large numbers.



Skills (group only): Athletics, Melee, Ranged (Light).

Talents: None.

Abilities: Flames of Fury (increase the damage of a thrown torch by +1 for each additional minion in this minion group, to a maximum of +7).

Equipment: Pitchfork (Melee; Damage 5; Critical 4; Range [Engaged]; Pierce 2), thrown torch (Ranged [Light]; Damage 3; Critical 3; Range [Short]; Burn 3, Limited Ammo 1).

FAILED EXPERIMENT (RIVAL)



Where a mad scientist operates, their failed experiments soon accumulate. These monsters may take the form of misshapen humans built from parts of cadavers, primates, or even large arthropods. Our failed experiment is a big brute, and could represent a large animal or a reanimated humanoid.



Skills: Brawl 3, Coercion 3, Resilience 4, Survival 3, Vigilance 2.

Talents: Adversary 1 (upgrade difficulty of all combat checks against this target once).

Abilities: Terrifying (at the start of the encounter, all opponents must make a Hard [♦♦♦] fear check as an out-of-turn incidental, as per page 243 of the GENESYS Core Rulebook; if there are multiple sources of fear in the encounter, the opponents only make one fear check against the most terrifying enemy), Unnatural Resilience (after suffering a Critical Injury, may spend one Story Point to reduce the Critical Injury result by -50; if this reduces the Critical Injury result to less than 01, the failed experiment does not suffer a Critical Injury), We Belong Dead (characters targeting this character with a social skill check suffer 3 strain).

Equipment: Huge fists (Brawl; Damage 7; Critical 3; Range [Engaged]; Knockdown, Vicious 2), ill-fitting clothing.

FERAL LYCANTHROPE (NEMESIS)



While many shapeshifters would give anything to escape their curse, there are those who have renounced normal humanity for what they see as an elevated existence at the top of the food chain. Having transformed so often, they have claws deadlier than those of true wolves and even may have learned how to shift at will.



Skills: Athletics 3, Brawl 3, Charm 2, Coercion 2, Cool 3, Coordination 2, Deception 2, Perception 3, Ranged (Light) 2, Stealth 3, Survival 2.

Talents: Adversary 2 (upgrade difficulty of all combat checks against this target twice).

HUNTING THE MONSTERS

A game set in the monsterworld setting tends to feature a dangerous monster as the main villain by default. However, adventures can become boring if the PCs only encounter the main monster once during a final showdown. In most RPGs, the solution is to introduce a number of lesser enemies for the PCs to fight. However, while this setting does have some less dangerous enemies, hordes of minor foes can detract from the spooky Gothic horror atmosphere.

Instead, we recommend treating the monster in the same way that books and film do: have it confront the PCs several times, but create an excuse for the monster (or the PCs) to survive these encounters. The narrative elements are up to you, but you can implement this rule to make the survival feel less contrived:

ULTIMATE VILLAIN

During an encounter, if a nemesis adversary would suffer wounds or strain in excess of their wound or strain threshold, you may spend two Story Points.

The nemesis suffers no damage from the attack and no damage from further combat checks, but spends their next turn escaping from the encounter. Most supernatural monsters have some means of escape, whether it is turning into bats or mist, exploding into a howling sandstorm, or simply leaping across impassable terrain with impressive agility.

Likewise, during an encounter with a nemesis adversary, if at least one PC has been incapacitated (two PCs in a group of five or more), any player may spend two Story Points to force the nemesis to spend their next turn leaving the encounter. This may be because it no longer considers the PCs a threat or because environmental circumstances force it to retreat.

EXTRA ACTIVATION RULE

We also recommend using the **Nemesis Extra Activation Rules** found on page 204 of the GENESYS Core Rulebook, to make your monster feel more dangerous while facing off against a group of PCs.

Abilities: Bite of the Wolf (when a feral lycanthrope in their animal form makes an unarmed attack and inflicts a Critical Injury result of 51 or higher on a human PC or human nemesis NPC [your GM has final say on what counts as human], the character gains the Bite of the Wolf and Call of the Moon abilities [if the target is a PC, use the abilities listed in the cursed shifter archetype found on page 20 instead]).

Call of the Moon (when the full moon rises, this character transforms into a monstrous wolf or giant hunting cat as an out-of-turn incidental; they heal all strain they are currently suffering, increase their Brawn and Agility by one to a maximum of 5, and reduce their Intellect and Willpower by one to a minimum of 1; all opponents must halve the damage dealt to this character while transformed before applying soak, unless their weapon is made of silver or uses silver ammunition; the transformation lasts until the following dawn or until this character is incapacitated due to exceeding their wound threshold).

Heart of Darkness (once per session, spend a Story Point to have this character transform, no matter the circumstances; the transformation lasts until the following dawn).

Equipment: Pistol (Ranged; Damage 6; Critical 4; Range [Medium]; Accurate 1), monstrous claws and fangs (Brawl; Damage 8; Critical 2; Range [Engaged]; Knockdown), hand-made leather clothing.

MAD SCIENTIST (NEMESIS)



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In this era of scientific revolution, some people are so brilliant and driven that they ignore ethics in their quest to claim the mysteries of nature for themselves. This drives many of them away from respected centers of learning to remote locations where they can conduct prohibited experiments away from worried eyes of loved ones and the prying eyes of the law. This mad scientist is a brilliant doctor and engineer, both of which make them a surprisingly vicious combatant.



Skills: Charm 2, Deception 3, Discipline 2, Knowledge (Science) 4, Mechanics 3, Medicine 4, Melee 2, Skulduggery 1, Vigilance 3.

Talents: Adversary 2 (upgrade difficulty of all combat checks against this target twice).

Abilities: Arterial Strike (when this character inflicts a Critical Injury with a Melee combat check, spend a Story Point to inflict the Bleeding Out Critical Injury instead of rolling a result), Master of the Lightning (once per encounter, may make a Hard [♦♦♦] Knowledge [Science] check as an action; if successful, one target within long range suffers 10 damage to their strain

threshold [+1 damage per ♦] and a Critical Injury; may spend ▲ ▲ or ♦ to inflict the same damage and a Critical Injury on an additional target within long range), They Dare Call Me Mad? (characters targeting this character with a social skill check suffer 2 strain). **Equipment:** Scalpels (Melee; Damage 3; Critical 2; Range [Engaged]; Pierce 3), heavy lab coat (+1 soak), galvanic device of terrifying potential, notebook filled with results of forbidden experiments.

MUMMY (NEMESIS)



Explorations of ancient temples and stone monuments have unearthed great historical discoveries, but they have also brought forth monsters best left undisturbed. Buried alive untold centuries ago, they slowly but inexorably emerge to extract revenge on the descendants of those who entombed them.

BRAWN	AGILITY	INTELLECT	CUNNING	WILLPOWER	PRESENCE
5	2	4	2	4	2
SOAK VALUE	WOUND THRESHOLD	STRAIN THRESHOLD	M/R DEFENSE		
9	25	22	0 0		

Skills: Brawl 3, Cool 3, Discipline 4, Knowledge (Supernatural) 4, Perception 4, Stealth 3, Survival 3, Vigilance 3.

Talents: Adversary 3 (upgrade difficulty of all combat checks against this target three times).

Abilities: Magical Reanimation (does not need to breathe, eat, or drink; immune to poisons and toxins), Vulnerable to Fire (hits from fire or a weapon with the Burn item quality ignore this character's soak).

Equipment: Grasping hands (Brawl; Damage 10; Critical



FEAR

The horror tone is very appropriate for monster-world, and we encourage you to use the tone's fear rules, starting on page 243 of the GENESYS Core Rulebook. As part of those rules, when your party encounters one of these monsters, they should all be required to make a Hard (♦♦♦) or even Daunting (♦♦♦♦) fear check as an out-of-turn incidental. As the PCs hunt the monster, you can begin lowering the difficulty of the check or dispensing with it altogether, unless other circumstances make the monster frightening once again.

4; Range [Engaged]; Concussive 1, Ensnare 1, Knock-down, enchanted bandages (+4 soak).

VAMPIRE (NEMESIS)



Vampires are terrors that lurk in the night, seeking out the blood they require to continue their eternal life. In most folktales, vampires create more of their kind by drinking the blood of hapless humans, which kills the humans but later causes them to rise again. Anyone a vampire kills should be fair game to be brought back later as another vampire.

BRAWN	AGILITY	INTELLECT	CUNNING	WILLPOWER	PRESENCE
4	4	4	4	4	4
SOAK VALUE	WOUND THRESHOLD	STRAIN THRESHOLD	M/R DEFENSE		
5	20	20	0 0		

Skills: Athletics 2, Brawl 4, Cool 3, Coordination 4, Deception 3, Discipline 4, Knowledge (Supernatural) 2, Perception 3, Stealth 4, Survival 3, Vigilance 3.

Talents: Adversary 3 (upgrade difficulty of all combat checks against this target three times).

Abilities: Blood Call (when this character inflicts wounds on a target using their fangs, they heal 4 strain and 4 wounds), Sunlight Sensitivity (while exposed to direct sunlight, this character halves their strain threshold and wound threshold), Undead (does not need to breathe, eat, or drink [except blood], can survive underwater, and is immune to poisons and toxins), Vulnerable Heart (when this character suffers a Critical Injury from a weapon made of wood, such as a stake or crossbow bolt, they add +40 to the Critical Injury result).

Equipment: Fangs (Brawl; Damage 5; Critical 2; Range [Engaged]; Ensnare 1, Pierce 2, Vicious 2), claws (Brawl; Damage 7; Critical 3; Range [Engaged]; Knock-down, Vicious 3), ancient but well-preserved clothing, deeds to assorted estates.

CHAPTER 3: POST APOCALYPSE

The post-apocalyptic genre is a setting in which a world's society has collapsed, and the remaining populace must survive in a strange and dangerous new world. One of the oldest fiction genres, post-apocalyptic stories can be found throughout the founding myths and religious stories of various real-world cultures. As far back as the Babylonians and the ancient Judaic cultures, people were telling tales of the end of the world.

Post-apocalyptic stories as we know them today gained popularity in the wake of World War II. With the development of nuclear weapons and the constant

threat of mutually assured destruction, the idea that the world could be wiped out at a moment's notice became the defining cultural anxiety of the twentieth century. Apocalyptic and post-apocalyptic themes were rampant in all forms of media, from books and films to popular music.

However, post-apocalyptic stories aren't limited to the aftermath of nuclear wars. Numerous natural and human-made cataclysms are used as ways to change the face of the world and present new and terrible obstacles for players to overcome, and we've included some here.

TYPES OF APOCALYPSE

There's a flavor of apocalypse for every palate. The following are a selection of different types of world-ending cataclysms found throughout post-apocalyptic

literature. You can use one or a combination of two or more to flesh out your setting and provide a base from which you and your players can build your world.

AFTER NUCLEAR WAR

Since probably the start of the Manhattan Project, and certainly since the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, nuclear annihilation has loomed large in the world's collective consciousness. The threat of mutually assured destruction has moved countless authors, artists, musicians, filmmakers, and other creatively inclined people to create various post-nuclear hellscares. The post-nuclear apocalypse is perhaps the most common kind of apocalypse in fiction, though it is slowly being overtaken by the pandemic and environmental collapse types.

Post-nuclear apocalypses are predicated on a world-ending, mutually-assured-destruction type of nuclear exchange between world superpowers. They are defined by resource scarcity, varying levels of environmental destruction, and often, the rise of mutants. Playing in a post-nuclear setting can, depending on how far in time and distance the setting is from the initial nuclear exchange, involve dealing with societal collapse and widespread warfare, or with the rebuilding of society. Playing in such a setting may be complicated by varying levels of lingering nuclear fallout, a scientifically dubious but narratively fantastic nuclear winter, and an abundance of nuclear and toxic waste.



A CERTAIN GLOW

Lingering radiation is a common trope of the nuclear post apocalypse. Radiation can come from old and unexploded nuclear ordnance, piles of radioactive waste, bomb craters, irradiated water sources, and just about anywhere you can think of. Radiation sickness is nasty and, in real life, often fatal. It involves a gradual and painful breakdown of the body and includes things like hair loss, organ failure, and various forms of cancer. In short, it is awful.

We're not dealing with that kind of real-life radiation sickness in this setting, however. That said, radiation is still a big part of an after the bomb-type setting, so here are some simple radiation rules for your post-apocalypse setting.

RADIATION

When the radiation rules are in effect, whenever a character is exposed to radiation (or for every day they spend in an environment with significant ambient radiation), they must make a **Hard** (♦♦♦) **Resilience check**. You can increase or decrease the difficulty of the check based on the level of radiation the character is exposed to. If they fail, they suffer one level of radiation.

Characters reduce their strain and wound thresholds by an amount equal to the number of levels of radiation they are currently suffering. If their wound or strain threshold ever drops to 0, they die.

Some gear (such as radiation suits) can protect characters from suffering levels of radiation. However, removing levels of radiation is extremely difficult (it's important to note that treatments for curing radiation poisoning do not currently exist). Anti-rad drugs on page 36 are one way to remove radiation.

ZOMBIE APOCALYPSE

In a zombie apocalypse, the dead have risen from the grave to feast on human flesh. Perhaps a weaponized virus that turns people into mindless flesh-eating ferals escaped from a secret government lab, or a meteor full of alien microbes that animate corpses crashed to Earth.

Whatever the case may be, in a zombie apocalypse the dead have risen from the grave and are consuming most of the world's population. This, of course, has given rise to more zombies; the undead population has

expanded exponentially, while the survivors huddle together and try their best to stem the onslaught of flesh-eating monsters. While a zombie apocalypse typically doesn't suffer from the more debilitating aftereffects of other apocalypses, such as lingering fallout and uninhabitable wastelands, it does present a unique and deadly obstacle to survivors.

This unique obstacle is, of course, the zombies themselves. Whether slow and shambling or fast and agile, the zombies in a zombie apocalypse setting are the primary threat, as well as the engine that moves the story along. Depending on the tone of your zombie apocalypse game, you might just have basic living dead-type zombies (especially if it's a grittier or more "grounded" style of game), or you may have creatures that spit toxins, explode like bombs, or have the ability to throw cars around. Other post-apocalyptic threats might include a complete collapse of society, roving packs of looters and raiders, or simple internal strife as bands of survivors start to unravel due to stress and paranoia.

MACHINE UPRISING

Machine uprisings are relatively modern apocalypses that can be summed up with the saying, "Just because you *can* do something doesn't mean you *should*." In a machine uprising, humankind has been destroyed primarily by its own hubris. In attempting to play God—by creating artificially intelligent supercomputers or races of sentient robots—humanity's reach exceeded its grasp and the world was destroyed by its own creations. Two common tropes in a machine uprising are the self-aware computer and rebellious servile robots.

In the first trope, humanity creates an artificial intelligence and hands over most or all control of important societal functions to the machine. For some reason—misinterpreting a command, deciding humans are a threat, or giving in to simple boredom—the AI brings about a world-ending calamity (possibly a nuclear exchange, pandemic, or environmental collapse). The second trope usually involves humanity building a race of synthetic humanoids to do their dirty work for them. This ends in the synthetics rebelling and defeating their former overlords. Either way, human society is eradicated, and the world falls under control of the machines.

Survivors of a machine uprising could be slaves, kept as pets or curiosities by their new robot masters, or be hunted by massive hunter-killer machines as the computer attempts to completely exterminate all of humanity. Whatever the case, life is exceedingly grim for humans after the rise of the machines.

PANDEMIC

There are, roughly, two kinds of pandemics: natural and human-made. Natural pandemics spread from deep rainforests, fetid swamps, or beneath thawing ice caps. They can be something as simple as a mutant strain of the common cold to an exotic malady that causes a victim to erupt in a fountain of diseased blood or to slough all of their skin off. Man-made pandemics may come from secret military bioweapon laboratories or drug research facilities. Weaponized forms of smallpox and anthrax, exotic drugs that turn addicts into raging ferals, or viruses that scramble a victim's DNA are all examples of terrible maladies that might be caused by humanity's hubris.

Much like a zombie apocalypse, a pandemic is a slow-moving cataclysm in which society collapses while huge swaths of the population die off. Characters surviving a pandemic might be faced with mutants and zombies, death cults, and the constant threat of either contracting the disease that destroyed the world, or the appearance of some new, even worse malady.

CONTAGION

A setting where the apocalypse was caused by a pandemic can be especially deadly because the disease may still be around! The following are rules that represent a generically deadly disease.

DISEASE

When this rule is in effect, if a character engages a character who is infected or comes in contact with another disease vector (some diseases are waterborne, present in animals, or in some horrifying cases, airborne), they must make a **Daunting (♦ ♦ ♦ ♦) Resilience check**. Failure means the character suffers 3 wounds and 3 strain. They also suffer 1 wound and 1 strain for each ♣. If the check generates ♣, the character doubles the total wounds and strain suffered.

In addition, the character is now infected with the disease. They can make other characters sick, and at the start of each day, they must make another **Daunting (♦ ♦ ♦ ♦) Resilience check** with the same consequences for failure. If the check succeeds and generates ♣, the character has overcome the disease and is no longer sick (although depending on the nature of the disease, they could get infected again in the future).

ENVIRONMENTAL COLLAPSE

Whereas in most types of apocalypses, drastic world-altering environmental change is an effect of apocalyptic events, in an environmental collapse setting, environmental change is the reason for the end of the world as we know it.

In an environmental collapse apocalypse, nature itself is the enemy. Seas dry up, or they rise and consume continents. Glaciers swallow whole countries, volcanoes cover the world in a foot of ash, or earthquakes shatter tectonic plates, and change the very face of the Earth. Food chains collapse, humans die by the billions, and the survivors are left to forage what they can from the ruins.

Environmental collapse can be natural or human-made. A good example of a natural environmental collapse apocalypse is the hypothetical eruption of the Yellowstone Caldera. Others include massive tidal waves, "The Big One"—an earthquake that shatters the West Coast of the United States—and even the onset of a new ice age. Depending on the type of collapse, such as a creeping ice age, humankind may have enough warning to mitigate some of the disaster. They might tunnel beneath the ground or flee to the stars to save the majority of the population. However, something like a supervolcano or massive earthquake provides little warning, and the casualties of such an event could be staggering.

STELLAR PHENOMENA

In a stellar phenomena apocalypse, something comes from—or beyond—the stars to lay waste to the world. As far back as the early nineteenth century, popular authors were writing stories about world-ending calamities brought on by someone or something from outer space. While probably the most common is an invasion by aggressive and technologically superior aliens, there are plenty of cosmic threats to the planet. Maybe a huge asteroid impact causes an extinction-level event, or a comet seeds the planet with deadly alien microbes. Whatever it is, something beyond our control destroys the Earth, and the survivors are left to make sense of it.

Stellar phenomena apocalypses often share much in common with nuclear and pandemic events. In the aftermath of a stellar phenomena, the skies might be choked with ash and radiation might blanket the land, or strange alien pathogens might mutate wildlife and create dead zones where nothing can live. The planet's geography might even change: a massive asteroid collision, for instance, could create new landmasses or cause the seas to drain away.

ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

In a post apocalypse caused by environmental collapse, the environment should be as much an adversary as the inhabitants within it. If you want to make the environment more than a narrative element of your game, you can implement the following environmental hazard rules in your setting.

DEHYDRATION

When this rule is in effect, characters cannot heal strain at the end of encounters or through resting unless they are able to have a drink of water each time they heal strain.

You do not have to keep track of your party's water supply as long as each character makes a point

of carrying water. However, whenever a character's check generates $\Delta \Delta \Delta$ or \otimes , you can spend it to have the character run out of water.

HEAT AND COLD

It is up to you which temperature extremes affect the environment, but the results are the same. When this rule is in effect, characters add $\square \square$ to all checks they make.

Plenty of gear (and a few talents) remove \square added to a character's checks, and they often specifically remove \square imposed due to heat or cold. The party will need to stock up on the proper clothing and gear to avoid the heat and cold penalty.

TROPS

Now that you've decided how and why the world ended, let's talk about a few elements that make a good post apocalypse. As post-apocalyptic settings have risen in popularity, numerous tropes have come to define the genre.

RESOURCE SCARCITY

Resource scarcity, one of the more popular tropes in post-apocalyptic settings, is one of the most important components in setting the tone of your game. In a post-apocalyptic setting, society grinds to a halt. When the world's population is decimated and survivors are reduced to grubbing among the ruins for canned goods and rags, no one is staffing the means of production. As the years pass, resources become increasingly scarce as scavengers strip the ruins of anything of value.

Just how scarce various resources are depends largely on timing. Has it been days or years since the apocalypse? Players will have to tighten their belts and make do with what they can find. Decades, generations, or centuries? The basics—food, clothes, clean water, ammunition, fuel—may be in production again, albeit at much lower levels of sophistication, quality, and efficiency.

Resource scarcity also informs a setting's technology level. It doesn't matter how advanced a society used to be when factories are buried deep beneath the rubble. By controlling the availability of resources, you control the technology players have access to.

THE WASTELAND

The wasteland is the ultimate expression of humanity versus nature in a post-apocalyptic setting. It is the backdrop against which the characters' struggles play out, and it is often as important as any powerful adversary. What the wasteland is, and how the players interact with it, largely depends on the nature of your apocalypse.

For example, in a post-nuclear or stellar phenomena setting, much of the world might be a radioactive desert dotted here and there with the remains of cities. This differs wildly from, say, a pandemic that simply empties the world out while leaving cities and infrastructure largely intact, or from a zombie apocalypse in which a shambling horror hides behind every door and under every rock.

On the other hand, rising sea levels from runaway climate change could create a very different wasteland. Your PCs might adventure among the remnants of flooded coastal towns or sail between the crumbling edifices of half-drowned skyscrapers. But inland, society may have broken down due to the rampant influx of refugees from the coast, and towns and cities may resemble war zones. In cases of extreme environmental collapse, enormous swaths of land may become sand-swept deserts, frozen glacial wastes, or flooded under meters of water.

When designing your setting, make sure your wasteland reflects its tone and has plenty of character in order to draw the characters into your game world.



SOCIAL BREAKDOWN

There's an old saying that society is only two missed meals from total barbarism. This idea plays out again and again in post-apocalyptic settings. When the world ends and the social order collapses, the survivors scramble to collect what power and resources they can with little consideration for law and order. Might makes right, survival becomes more important than morality, and humankind becomes its own worst enemy.

Instead of a world-spanning, multicultural society, post-apocalyptic settings often have small, isolated communities separated by miles of dangerous wasteland. Some might be hardscrabble mining or salvage towns, others attempted utopias or compounds home to strange apocalyptic cults. Outside their relative safety might be packs of roving bandits and savage marauders, feral mutants, and the armies of feuding warlords.

However your apocalypse shakes out, the collapse of society wipes the slate clean for everyone. What a person was before doesn't matter; what they are now does.

PRE-FALL TECHNOLOGY

An enduring theme of post-apocalyptic settings is the reverence in which precataclysm technology is held. Depending on the length of time since your apocalypse and

when your game takes place, ample amounts of precataclysm tech could be lying around, or there could be nothing but scraps and distant memories.

Salvaging the technology of the past is a common goal in post-apocalyptic settings. Old ruins need to be explored and exploited, as the remains of the old civilization are invaluable to the survivors.

On the other hand, there might be a backlash against the technologies of the old world. This is especially common in settings where rampant technological growth caused the end of the world. In these settings, survivors may have consciously left the technologies of the old world behind. Old-world technologies might be forbidden, and even carrying a book around might get a player burned as a witch.

MUTANTS

The idea that exposure to radiation (or cosmic rays, or alien microbes, or weaponized viruses) can reshape humans into something else entirely, instead of killing them outright, is extremely compelling. Who doesn't like a good mutant horde?

Including mutants in your setting is also a good way to diversify the options for your players. Mutants can allow your players to play characters who are ostensibly not human in a human-dominated setting.

NEW STARTING CHARACTER OPTIONS

Your setting can use only the following archetypes for character options, or it can also use the options found on page 36 of the Core Rulebook if you want a wider variety of humans.

MUTANT

The mutant presented here is a basic brute. Since mutation is so fickle, we've given the mutant low starting characteristics and a fair amount of experience. Using this basic template, players can customize their mutant to their heart's content to make the perfect character.

ARCHETYPE ABILITIES



- **Starting Wound Threshold:** 10 + Brawn
- **Starting Strain Threshold:** 10 + Willpower
- **Starting Experience:** 160 XP
- **Starting Skills:** A mutant begins the game with one rank in Resilience. They obtain this rank before spending experience points, and Resilience may not be increased above rank 2 during character creation.
- **Just a Scratch:** When making a check to recover strain at the end of an encounter, a mutant may use Resilience instead of Discipline or Cool. In addition, a mutant may spend $\Delta \Delta$ from that check to heal 1 wound (and they may do so multiple times).
- **Mutation:** Before spending starting experience, choose one of the following abilities for your mutant character:
 - **Flyer:** Your mutant character can fly. See page 100 of the GENESYS Core Rulebook for details on flying.
 - **Amphibious:** Your mutant character can breathe underwater and move through water without penalty.
 - **Scaly Hide:** Increase your mutant character's soak by +1.
 - **Multiple Limbs:** Your mutant character gains an additional free maneuver per turn. They still may not perform more than two maneuvers during their turn.
 - **Natural Weapons:** Your mutant character's unarmed attacks have their damage increased by +2 and have a Critical rating of 3.

SLEEPER

Sleepers are the near-perfect remnants of the humanity that existed before the apocalypse. Perhaps they were sealed in underground shelters, or they have just been thawed out of cryosleep. Sleepers are unique thanks to their lack of mutations and general good health.

ARCHETYPE ABILITIES



- **Starting Wound Threshold:** 12 + Brawn
- **Starting Strain Threshold:** 12 + Willpower
- **Starting Experience:** 100 XP
- **Starting Skills:** A sleeper begins the game with one rank in Mechanics or one rank in Computers. They obtain this rank before spending experience points, and these skills may not be increased above rank 2 during character creation.
- **Remember This?:** A sleeper adds Δ to the results of any checks they make to identify, use, or repair pre-apocalypse items, equipment, or media (including combat checks).

SURVIVOR

Most of the people one finds in the post apocalypse are survivors, average people who through luck and skill have managed to ride out the calamity that destroyed civilization. Now they're trying to master the most valuable skill in this new era: staying alive.

ARCHETYPE ABILITIES



- **Starting Wound Threshold:** 10 + Brawn
- **Starting Strain Threshold:** 7 + Willpower
- **Starting Experience:** 100 XP
- **Starting Skills:** A survivor begins the game with one rank in Survival. They obtain this rank before spending experience points, and Survival may not be increased above rank 2 during character creation.
- **Always Prepared:** When a survivor makes a check to heal strain at the end of an encounter, they heal 1 additional strain.

SETTING-SPECIFIC GEAR

Since a good apocalypse can ruin any setting—fantasy, modern, steampunk, or any other—the post apocalypse setting borrows the majority of its equipment from the setting that came before it. That said, a post apocalyptic setting based on any relatively high-tech setting might have some of the following gear lying about the wasteland for the characters to pick up.

WEAPONS AND GEAR FROM THE OLD DAYS

Depending on what the world was like before the apocalypse, characters could have access to anything from swords and crossbows to laser pistols and railguns. Game Masters are encouraged to pick a pre-apocalypse setting—either from existing *GENESYS* settings or from their own imagination—and set that as the “default” for pre-apocalyptic gear. These pre-apocalyptic items may be added to the setting (although they may be very rare).

BARTER ECONOMIES

Although we do list prices for gear, we expect most post-apocalyptic settings to have a barter-based economy. This means characters are unlikely to be carrying around currency of any form, but rather will trade gear, supplies, and services for other gear, supplies, and services they need.

To represent this, use the price of the gear and items in this section to determine their value, and exchange them for other gear or items of similar value. Of course, a certain amount of haggling exists in a barter economy, and your characters can make an **opposed Negotiation versus Negotiation check** if they want to try to trade something less valuable for something more valuable.

We have also included a few items in this gear section that exist mainly because they are valuable in a barter economy and can serve as trade goods.

WEAPONS

In addition to any pre-apocalyptic weapons, the following are some examples of scavenged weapons.

LEAF-SPRING SWORD

If your setting has lots of abandoned vehicles, characters can rip the leaf springs from a truck’s suspension and, with time and effort, straighten and sharpen them. The resulting sword is a heavier version of a regular sword.

NAILBAT

A nailbat is a length of wood with nails, spikes, or barbed wire driven into it or wrapped around it to increase its bloodiness. It’s a simple but vicious weapon.

SCAVENGED WEAPONS AND ARMOR

One popular trope of the post apocalypse setting is that most weapons and gear are scavenged or homemade versions of the real deal. All of the weapons and armor listed in this section are scavenged, which comes with the following rule (and is reflected in the listed cost):

Whenever a character makes a skill check while using, wearing, or carrying a scavenged weapon or piece of armor, your GM may spend ⚧ ⚧ or ⚧ from that check to have that weapon or piece of armor become damaged one step (see page 89 of the *GENESYS* Core Rulebook).

HOMEMADE VERSIONS OF REGULAR ITEMS

As mentioned in **Weapons and Gear from the Old Days**, the setting may include a whole list of items from an additional setting. However, it’s not

unreasonable for PCs to attempt to build homemade versions of pre-apocalyptic items.

Attempting this requires your GM’s approval (some items just can’t be built from scratch). Then, your character must find some raw materials that logically could be used to make the item and must make a Mechanics check with the difficulty set by Table I.5-1: **Rarity** on page 82 of the Core Rulebook (your GM can modify the difficulty for common items that are extremely complex, or rare items that are fairly simple). If your character succeeds, they obtain the item. However, its price is half the listed value, and it is a scavenged item subject to the rule for scavenged items.

Your GM may also allow you to use homemade rules to make weapons and armor found in this section, using the same guidelines.

TABLE I.3–1: POST APOCALYPSE WEAPONS

Name	Skill	Dam	Crit	Range	Encum	Price	Rarity	Special
MELEE WEAPONS								
Leaf-Spring Sword	Melee	+3	2	Engaged	2	150	3	Cumbersome 2, Defensive 1
Nailbat	Melee	+3	3	Engaged	2	100	2	Vicious 2
Shiv	Melee	+1	4	Engaged	1	50	3	Vicious 1
Thunderstick (melee)	Melee	8	3	Engaged	3	250	5	Blast 4, Breach 1, Defensive 1, Limited Ammo 1
RANGED WEAPONS								
Pipe Rifle	Ranged (Heavy)	7	4	Medium	4	100	3	Inferior, Limited Ammo 2
Powder Charge	Ranged (Heavy)	12	3	Short	2	200	4	Blast 9, Limited Ammo 1, Prepare 2, Vicious 3
Thunderstick (Thrown)	Ranged (Light)	8	3	Short	3	250	5	Blast 4, Breach 1, Limited Ammo 1
Zipgun	Ranged (Light)	5	4	Short	1	20	2	Inferior, Limited Ammo 1

POWDER CHARGE

A typical powder charge consists of a sack, bottle, or other container packed with gunpowder and detonated with a fuse. Various other sharp and deadly materials are often added to the charge to give it a little extra viciousness. However, these weapons are heavy and hard to throw, and may go off in your character's hands.

When your character uses a powder charge, your GM may spend ♀ ♀ ♀ ♀ or ⚡ to have the weapon fail to explode, or to explode prematurely and deal its base damage to all engaged targets (including your character).

SHIV

Shivs are homemade knives made from anything that can be sharpened to a point, such as an eating utensil, piece of scrap metal, glass shard, or toothbrush. Your character can make a shiv out of nearly any piece of scrap.

THUNDERSTICK

Thundersticks are simple and brutal weapons that are little more than an explosive charge tied to the end of a long pole. While typically thrown like javelins, they can be wielded as melee weapons in dire circumstances.

When your character makes a combat check with a thunderstick, your GM may spend ♀ ♀ or ⚡ to have your character suffer 4 wounds.

ZIGGUNS AND PIPE RIFLES

These weapons are common among the desperate and destitute. They are handmade guns made from pipes, scrap metal, reclaimed wood, and other scavenged materials (hence their lower damage and Inferior quality).

ARMOR

Armor in the post apocalypse tends to be anything from the previous era with padding or protection.

HOMESPUN ARMOR

Homespun armor is a makeshift full suit of armor composed of salvaged and recycled materials. Each suit is handmade and typically includes various types of hides and leather, old rubber, metal plates, and anything else the builder thinks might offer them a defensive edge.

SPORTS PADS

The various shoulder, chest, arm, groin, and leg protection used in pre-apocalypse sports can, in a pinch, make decent armor. Sports pads are often paired with heavy clothing, but just as often are accessorized with spikes, feathers, and motorcycle boots. The combination of shock absorbers and hard pads gives this armor both defense and soak.

TABLE I.3–2: POST APOCALYPSE ARMOR

Name	Defense	Soak	Encumbrance	Price	Rarity	Qualities
Homespun Armor	0	+2	3	200	4	
Sports Pads	1	+1	2	100	3	

GEAR

This gear is a sample of items that could prove vital for surviving in a wasteland.

ANTI-RAD DRUGS

For groups playing in a post apocalypse where radiation is a threat, we encourage including this item as the single potential way to get rid of radiation. Such drugs could be pills or an injection.

When your character consumes a dose of anti-rad drugs, they remove one level of radiation (see **A Certain Glow**, on page 29). A character may only benefit from consuming one dose of anti-rad drugs over a twenty-four-hour period.

CLEAN WATER

Clean water can be immeasurably valuable in settings where potable water is scarce. Characters may need clean water to avoid suffering dehydration or want it as something valuable to trade for.

CLEANSUIT

“Cleansuit” is a catchall term for a variety of coveralls with breathing protection designed to protect a wearer from radiation, chemicals, or contagious diseases.

While a character is wearing a cleansuit, they automatically succeed on Resilience checks to see if they suffer levels of radiation (see **A Certain Glow**, on page 29) or if they become infected (see **Contagion**, on page 30). When worn, a cleansuit’s encumbrance is 2.

COLD OR HOT WEATHER GEAR

Cold weather gear features multiple layers of fur, leather, or thick fabric to resist wind and trap body heat. Meanwhile, hot weather gear tends to be loose, flowing, and made from light fabric, to allow the skin to breathe while protecting it from the sun. However, both versions have roughly the same value and rules.

While your character is wearing cold or hot weather gear, they remove ■■ added to checks they make due to cold or hot weather. When worn, cold or hot weather gear’s encumbrance is 1.

GEIGER COUNTER

These are handheld sensors used to detect radiation.

While your character is holding a Geiger counter, they know when they are about to enter an area that could force them to suffer a level of radiation (see **A Certain Glow**, on page 29).

PRE-APOCALYPSE RATIONS

Relatively safe and clean food from before the apocalypse can be extremely valuable. These could be processed, packaged foodstuffs with decades-long shelf lives, or crated military rations found in an old bunker.

SALT

People need salt to survive, and it is a fantastic preservative agent. In most post-apocalyptic settings, with a lack of modern conveniences and technology, the value of salt is sure to increase. Salt has been included here entirely as a trade good or commodity as value.

SCRAP

Scrap can be all sorts of ruined, broken, or scavenged trash and gear. Although they have no intrinsic value, some pieces of scrap can be fashioned into useful items. Some cultures may even use smaller pieces of scrap (such as keys, paper clips, or the caps from bottles) as currency.

When your character is attempting to make a home-made version of a regular item (see page 34), your GM should have pieces of scrap be the default raw material (how much scrap and if anything else is needed is up to the GM). What exactly each piece of scrap is has been left up to you and your GM to decide.

SURVIVAL KIT

A survival kit is a collection of items—a first-aid kit, fire starter, fishing lines and hooks, a compass—contained in a portable case. These kits may be made of scavenged items, or salvaged intact from pre-apocalypse stores.

Characters with a survival kit add ▲ to all Survival skill checks they make. Pre-apocalypse kits add ★ ▲ instead.

TABLE I.3–3: POST APOCALYPSE GEAR

NAME	ENCUM	PRICE	RARITY
Anti-Rad Drugs	0	1,000	7
Clean Water (1 gallon)	2	25	3
Cleansuit	5	1,000	6
Cold or Hot Weather Gear	4	100	3
Geiger Counter	1	200	5
Pre-Apocalypse Rations	1	20	3
Salt (1 pound)	1	50	4
Scrap (1 piece)	1	2	0
Survival Kit	2	45	2
Survival Kit (Pre-Apocalypse)	2	250	6

SETTING-SPECIFIC ADVERSARIES

These are a few adversaries for post-apocalyptic settings. They can serve as examples as you create NPCs for your own setting.

APOCALYPTIC RAIDER (Minion)



This profile represents the common ruffians found throughout a post-apocalyptic wasteland. They could be motorcycle-mounted marauders, drug-addled gangers, or the shock troops of a wasteland warlord.



Skills (group only): Athletics, Brawl, Drive, Melee, Ranged (Light).

Talents: None.

Abilities: Momentum (if this character performs a move maneuver, they add +3 to the damage of one hit of any successful Brawl or Melee combat checks they make during the same turn).

Equipment: Heavy blade (Melee; Damage 6; Critical 2; Range [Engaged]; Vicious 1), zipgun (Ranged [Light]; Damage 5; Critical 4; Range [Short]; Inferior, Limited Ammo 1), sports pads (+1 soak, 1 defense).

FREEHOLDER (Rival)



A freeholder is the leader of a small community who fills its numerous leadership roles. Many are mayor, doctor, judge, jury, executioner, and undertaker all in one.



Skills: Coercion 2, Cool 2, Discipline 2, Leadership 2, Medicine 2, Ranged (Heavy) 2, Vigilance 2.

Talents: None.

Abilities: Jack of All Trades (once per session, may spend a Story Point to increase ranks in one skill by two for the remainder of the encounter).

Equipment: Old shotgun (Ranged [Heavy]; Damage 7; Critical 3; Range [Short]; Blast 4, Knockdown, Vicious 2), homespun armor (+2 soak), badge of office, ledger book.

IRRADIATED MUTANT (Minion)



Irradiated mutants are humans who were exposed to what should have been lethal radiation. Instead of killing them, the radiation turned them into near-mindless

feral creatures who live only to destroy. The radiation that infuses them is as much a threat as their dirty claws.



Skills (group only): Athletics, Brawl, Resilience, Survival, Vigilance.

Talents: None.

Abilities: Radioactive (at the end of an encounter in which a target was hit by a combat check from this character, that target must make a Hard [♦♦♦] Resilience check or suffer one level of radiation [See A Certain Glow, on page 29])

Equipment: Filthy claws (Brawl; Damage 5; Critical 3; Range [Engaged]; Vicious 2), rags, several pieces of scrap.



HAVE A NICE APOCALYPSE!

When it comes right down to it, there are generally two kinds of post apocalypse settings—the fun kind, and the not-fun kind.

The fun kind is the more common and, obviously, the more popular kind. In these settings, the players get to stomp around abandoned cities mowing down waves of zombies with machine guns, or hunt down nomad bikers with a supercharged V8 hot rod and a sawed-off shotgun. Fun settings allow the characters to be larger-than-life heroes standing tall in a world gone mad.

Not-fun apocalypses are, well, no fun at all. These tend to be grittier, more hopeless narratives in which it is a monumental struggle simply to survive, and the living envy the dead. Often dark meditations on human nature, they feature extreme resource shortages, endless nuclear winters, and colossal dangers, and they offer few opportunities for heroics. It takes a special kind of GM and player to successfully pull off one of these grim, hardscrabble survival games.

While it is certainly not the place of this book to tell you how you should run your games, we do suggest that you think long and hard before running a game in which, for example, players have only one round for their pistol, and they are saving it for themselves.

RAD-GATOR (NEMESIS)



In the aftermath of a nuclear war, even the animals could be warped by radiation into strange and terrifying new forms. Our “rad-gator” could have started out as any reptile or amphibian, before mutating into an eight-legged, acid-spitting monster.



Skills: Athletics 3, Brawl 2, Cool 4, Perception 3, Ranged (Heavy) 1, Stealth 3, Vigilance 2.

Talents: None.

Abilities: Amphibious (may breathe underwater and never suffers movement penalties for traveling through water), Death Roll (when this character makes a successful Brawl combat check against an immobilized target, it may inflict a Critical Injury without spending Δ or \otimes ; it may still spend $\Delta\Delta\Delta$ or $\otimes\otimes$ to add +10 to the results), Eight-legged (cannot be knocked prone or immobilized), Silhouette 2.

Equipment: Huge crushing jaws (Brawl; Damage 10; Critical 3; Range [Engaged]; Ensnare 2, Vicious 2), acid blast (Ranged (Heavy); Damage 5; Critical 2; Range [Short]; Burn 2, Pierce 4, Sunder).

WARLORD (NEMESIS)



Warlords are brutal tyrants who, along with packs of raiders and other undesirables, carve out little kingdoms for themselves in the wasteland. While their troops might be degenerate savages, warlords are often extremely dangerous and cunning opponents who should not be underestimated.



Skills: Brawl 3, Coercion 4, Leadership 2, Melee 2, Ranged (Light) 2, Survival 3, Vigilance 2.

Talents: Adversary 2 (upgrade difficulty of all combat checks against the warlord twice).

Abilities: Might Makes Right (after this character inflicts a Critical Injury, decrease the difficulty of all Coercion and Leadership checks they make by one, to a minimum of Easy (\diamond), until the end of the encounter; this ability may be triggered multiple times), ...and I'm Always Right (may make a Hard ($\diamond\diamond\diamond$) Leadership check; if successful, allies within medium range may perform a second maneuver during their turn without suffering strain; this character may spend Δ to increase the damage of affected allies' attacks by an amount equal to the Δ spent; both of these effects last until the end of this character's next turn).

Equipment: Heavy revolver (Ranged [Light]; Damage 7; Critical 3; Range [Medium]; Accurate 1, Limited Ammo 5), aluminum bat wrapped in barbed wire (Melee; Damage 7; Critical 3; Range [Engaged]; Vicious 3), spiky armor (+2 soak, when targeted by a melee combat check, may spend $\Delta\Delta$ or $\otimes\otimes$ to have the attacker suffer 2 wounds), megaphone.

CHAPTER 4: SKILLS AND TALENTS

In the **GENESYS** Core Rulebook, we discussed what skills and talents best fit in each setting. Since the **EXPANDED PLAYER'S GUIDE** introduces three new and varied settings, we expect that you will be using most of the skills and talents from the Core Rulebook in them.

TABLE I.3–4: APPROPRIATE SKILLS FOR NEW SETTINGS

SKILL	SETTINGS
Alchemy	Monsterworld.
Arcana	Age of myth, monsterworld.
Astrocartography	No new settings.
Athletics	All settings.
Brawl	All settings.
Charm	All settings.
Coercion	All settings.
Computers	Post apocalypse.
Cool	All settings.
Coordination	All settings.
Deception	All settings.
Discipline	All settings.
Divine	Age of myth.
Driving	Post apocalypse.
Gunnery	Post apocalypse.
Knowledge	All settings.
Leadership	All settings.
Mechanics	All settings.
Medicine	All settings.
Melee	Monsterworld, post apocalypse.
Melee (Heavy)	Age of myth.
Melee (Light)	Age of myth.
Negotiation	All settings.
Operating	All settings.
Perception	All settings.
Piloting	Post apocalypse.
Primal	Age of myth.
Ranged	Age of myth.
Ranged (Heavy)	Monsterworld, post apocalypse.
Ranged (Light)	Monsterworld, post apocalypse.
Resilience	All settings.
Riding	Age of myth, monsterworld, post apocalypse.
Skulduggery	All settings.
Stealth	All settings.
Streetwise	All settings.
Survival	All settings.
Vigilance	All settings.

TABLE I.3–5: APPROPRIATE TALENTS FOR NEW SETTINGS

TALENT	SETTINGS
TIER 1	
Bought Info	All settings.
Clever Retort	All settings.
Defensive Sysops	No new settings.
Desperate Recovery	All settings.
Duelist	All settings.
Durable	All settings.
Forager	All settings.
Grit	All settings.
Hamstring Shot	All settings.
Jump Up	All settings.
Knack for It	All settings.
Know Somebody	All settings.
Let's Ride	All settings.
One with Nature	All settings.
Parry	All settings.
Proper Upbringing	All settings.
Quick Draw	All settings.
Quick Strike	All settings.
Rapid Reaction	All settings.
Second Wind	All settings.
Surgeon	All settings.
Swift	All settings.
Toughened	All settings.
Unremarkable	All settings.
TIER 2	
Basic Military Training	Post apocalypse.
Berserk	Age of myth, monsterworld, and post apocalypse.
Coordinated Assault	All settings.
Counteroffer	All settings.
Daring Aviator	Post apocalypse.
Defensive Stance	All settings.
Defensive Sysops (Improved)	No new settings.
Dual Wielder	All settings.
Fan the Hammer	Monsterworld and post apocalypse.
Heightened Awareness	All settings.
Inspiring Rhetoric	All settings.
Inventor	All settings.
TIER 3	
Lucky Strike	All settings.
Scathing Tirade	All settings.
Side Step	All settings.
Animal Companion	All settings.
Barrel Roll	Post apocalypse.
Distinctive Style	No new settings.
Dodge	All settings.
Eagle Eyes	All settings.
Field Commander	All settings.
Forgot to Count?	Monsterworld and post apocalypse.
Full Throttle	Post apocalypse.
Grenadier	Monsterworld and post apocalypse.
Heroic Will	All settings.
Inspiring Rhetoric (Improved)	All settings.
Natural	All settings.
Painkiller Specialization	All settings.
Parry (Improved)	All settings.
Rapid Archery	Age of myth.
Scathing Tirade (Improved)	All settings.
TIER 4	
Can't We Talk About This?	All settings.
Deadeye	All settings.
Defensive	All settings.
Defensive Driving	Post apocalypse.
Enduring	All settings.
Field Commander (Improved)	All settings.
How Convenient!	All settings.
Inspiring Rhetoric (Supreme)	All settings.
Mad Inventor	Monsterworld.
Overcharge	No new settings.
Scathing Tirade (Supreme)	All settings.
TIER 5	
Dedication	All settings.
Indomitable	All settings.
Master	All settings.
Overcharge (Improved)	No new settings.
Ruinous Repartee	All settings.

Table I.3–4: Appropriate Skills for New Settings

Table I.3–5: Appropriate Talents for New Settings

CHAPTER 5: CREATING A SETTING

Creating a new setting gets to the heart of the **GENESYS** roleplaying game. Even if you are using one of the established settings provided in the Core Rulebook or one of the campaign setting books, you may want to further develop or expand that world. This section provides additional instructions and expanded guidance for creating new settings or modifying existing settings.

Creating your own setting is challenging but enjoyable, as you decide exactly what kind of game you want to play; create your world; and develop items, elements, and situations that you and your players will have a lot of fun using and exploring. The amount of work involved depends on the amount of detail you wish to produce. This can range from building your world completely from scratch to taking an existing setting and modifying it to better match your vision. If you’re just starting to create settings, you may wish to modify one of the existing settings in the **GENESYS** Core Rulebook to test things out and become familiar with how your changes can affect the overall game.

This section provides a step-by-step process for creating and developing your setting, from how to document it to laying out the world, society, characters, and rules. The process is organized around the optional Expanded Setting Creation Sheet from www.FantasyFlightGames.com. This sheet expands the Setting Creation Sheet on page 137 of the **GENESYS** Core Rulebook.

BEFORE BEGINNING: DOCUMENTING YOUR SETTING

You will need a way to record your ideas as you develop your setting. The aforementioned Setting Sheet or Expanded Setting Sheet provides a good starting point for writing down the basics. However, you may find you need some additional space to record details.

For physical media, index cards and notebooks are a good start. Three-ring binders are the most adaptable, as you can rearrange material as you develop it. Sketchbooks are great for creating maps or thumbnail sketches of characters and locations.

Electronic media provide a wide range of options. Word processors have obvious advantages, and online services can allow you to group a collection of files and access them anywhere you have a connection to the Internet. These services can be a combination of personal wikis, database software, and campaign organizers.

RANDOM GENERATION

All of the tables in this chapter come with the option of rolling randomly to determine a result. You don’t have to roll for random results when designing your setting, but sometimes it can be more fun (or a good way to get the creative juices flowing) to roll for a random result rather than trying to pick the “best” option.

Online note-taking software that stores material in the cloud and is accessible via a variety of devices is very handy and often free of charge. Just be sure that you can create reliable backups that can be accessed without the original service.

ORGANIZATIONAL METHODS

Whatever your method of documentation, it is very important that you are able to locate the information you need exactly when you need it. It is one thing to have time to search through a notebook full of ideas when you are developing a new adventure, but it is another thing altogether if, in the middle of a session, you need to find a character you created a month ago.

Organization can be as in-depth as creating a table of contents or an index for your work (maybe the front sheet of a binder with your setting inside, or even an index page on a website with hyperlinks). It can also be much simpler, like making sure the shared drive or website you use to document your setting has a search feature. Just make sure that the organization system is convenient enough that you will use it consistently!

As you document your material, you should always think about what is just for you and what your players should have access to. Whenever possible, you should create things in a way that lets you share them with the players with minimal redaction of secret information. It saves time in the long run.

SETTING CREATION OVERVIEW

When creating a setting, you can follow these six steps. Each step is summarized here, and then fully explained later in the chapter.

BRAINSTORMING

Before you begin developing your setting, you may want to spend a few minutes brainstorming some ideas that you want to explore or include.

Take a few minutes with a sheet of paper or a word processor and jot down whatever interests you or comes to mind. You may want to think about the setting (and the game you'll eventually run in it) at a basic level. What do you want to get out of this setting? What makes it fun and interesting to you and your players? Are there any preexisting settings (such as the ones earlier in this part of the book or the settings presented in the *GENESYS* Core Rulebook) that you want to use as a basis for your setting? Are there any tones or themes you want to explore or incorporate?

After you have a range of ideas, you can move on to developing your setting. Don't worry if some of your ideas conflict with each other at this stage. You're just trying to get ideas out there to toy with, and you can refine their interaction as the setting develops. Of course, it is possible (and likely) that you will drop some of the ideas altogether. That's okay! You'll come up with new ones as part of the process, and you can save those other ideas for your next setting.

You might not want to follow these steps in order as you generate and develop your ideas, which is fine. Setting and story creation is never a linear process, as new ideas alter or inform previous ones.

STEP 1: CHOOSE TROPS AND THEMES

Many settings have several tropes that end up being integral parts of the setting, and we present a few to consider here. Your setting doesn't need to have any of these tropes to function. However, if you want to use them, we recommend choosing some early in the process, so the rest of your setting can develop around them.

More on this step starts on page 42.

STEP 2: SELECT A TECHNOLOGY LEVEL

A major defining part of your setting is its level of technology. After all, a Stone Age setting is going to look very different from an intragalactic space age!

More on this step can be found on page 44.

STEP 3: BUILD YOUR WORLD

This step is where you get into building the physical elements of your setting. Your setting might be a single world or a specific region on a world. Alternatively, it might be dozens or even hundreds of individual planets. This step offers some considerations for what you want your world or worlds to look like.

More on this step starts on page 44.

STEP 4: DETERMINE A RELIGION AND COSMOLOGY

Religion is often a major part of a setting, although it is not essential. During this step, you decide whether you want your setting to have zero, one, or multiple religious and gods, and what form these may take.

More on this step can be found on page 50.

STEP 5: SELECT A GOVERNMENT AND GENERAL SOCIETY

What form does society take in your setting? Do you have fractured city-states, organized nations, or a pan-world government? Are they democratic, authoritarian, or something stranger? This step also offers a chance to figure out details about who lives in your setting.

Governments don't have to be the only major organizations in your setting. This stage also lets you invent some other groups for your setting, and figure out their goals and leaders.

More on this step starts on page 51.

STEP 6: FILL IN DETAILS AND DETERMINE RULES

With all the hard work done, it's time to come up with a name and see if you've missed any details! This step also offers a chance to start figuring out mechanical elements for your setting.

More on this step can be found on page 56.

EXAMPLE: MAX'S SETTING

Max has decided to create his own setting for a game he's going to run. Not sure what he wants to make, he prints out the *GENESYS* Expanded Setting Creation Sheet from www.FantasyFlight-Games.com, grabs a pencil and notepad, and starts following the steps presented here.

STEP 1: CHOOSE TROPS AND THEMES

Once you've spent a few minutes brainstorming, it's time to pick a trope or tropes that you want to see appear in your setting. The Setting Creation Sheet asks you to refine your setting by listing which tropes you are including, which you're purposely excluding, and which you're subverting or otherwise modifying.

WHAT IS A TROPE?

Tropes are common storytelling devices, clichés, or both. They can help define a genre, like steampunk or alternate history, or they can define morality, like good versus evil. Tropes can be refined all the way down to specific elements within classic stories, but you should stay more general when developing a setting.

Tropes help give your setting an easily recognizable element for your players to identify with. If, say, your setting has the gritty realism trope, this helps your players know what kind of game they're going to be playing in. It informs how they build their characters and what kind of adventures they can expect.

Your setting doesn't have to have a trope, of course. You may skip this step entirely, or to come back to it after you develop the rest of your setting. However, selecting a trope early can help inform your choices as you create the rest of your setting. Remember, you can always discard a trope and pick something new.

Use **Table I.4-1: Common Tropes** to help you identify some tropes you wish to use or omit in your setting. These are but a few of the myriad possibilities, of course. Feel free to use any tropes from literature or popular media to suit your setting.

SUBVERTING TROPS

One creative way to customize a trope is to twist it in a unique way. This involves taking the expectations a trope brings with it, and deliberately doing something different.

For example, instead of robots created and controlled by humans, maybe PCs play humans re-created by advanced artificial beings in a bid to study a long-extinct society. Or perhaps your setting employs the trope of gritty realism, but the player characters are idealistic heroes—and their idealism is exactly what allows them to succeed in their adventures.

WHAT IS A THEME?

Themes are similar to tropes; however, they speak to the types of stories you want to feature. Themes are primarily broad ideas or questions, often tied to specific conditions

PLAYER BUY-IN

As you work on your setting, try to sell your ideas to some of your likely players. What piques their interest? Are they excited about any aspect of it? If they're not as interested in it as you are, that might indicate you need to tweak your ideas. You may even find that your players are offended or disturbed by elements or the direction of your setting, so you should consider revising or eliminating those elements altogether.

Just don't be afraid to involve your players throughout this process. After all, they're also going to be playing in this game. It won't matter how well crafted your setting is if you don't have buy-in from your group. Besides, creating a setting is a lot of work and takes some serious creative energy—you'll appreciate being able to share the load!

and emotions. For example, a major theme of the Android setting is "what it might mean to be human in a world where intelligent, empathetic beings can be created artificially." Likewise, a theme in the Twilight Imperium setting is "what is it like to live in the shadow of a great forgotten civilization, and can you ever live up to its lost ideals?"

Themes can be infinitely varied, even more so than tropes. A good way to think of a theme is to come up with a question you want all your players to ask themselves when interacting with your setting. This should be something broad, like "what kind of legacy will my character leave after they die?" or "in this world, is there any reason not to just look out for myself?" This question can be the start of a theme, and you can amplify it through the development of your setting.

EXAMPLE: MAX'S SETTING TROPS

Max decides to try rolling randomly for a trope for his setting. He rolls some percentile dice and gets a result of 44: Knights. He's not sure how knights are going to feature into his setting yet, but he makes a note that they're important.

Max then decides he wants a second trope and rolls again. This time he gets 78: Robots. He decides to subvert this a bit; instead of robots being commonplace, their rarity is what makes them a major factor.

TABLE I.4–1: COMMON TROPS

D100	NAME	DESCRIPTION AND IDEAS
01–05	Aliens	Intelligent aliens that threaten the world, come to uplift humanity in peace, or are secretly snooping on local society.
06–10	Afterlife	Characters have direct contact with the afterlife, either personally or via conduits such as mediums or magic items.
11–12	Alternate History	“What if” real-world scenarios with a few changes that, over time, have resulted in major divergences from our reality.
13–14	Automation	A world dominated by more automatic vehicles, devices, computers, and nonsentient robots than human beings.
15–16	Betrayal	Betrayal is commonplace in the world, with backstabbing courtiers, vengeful noble houses, and greedy individuals.
17–18	Believable Tech	The world features technology that is realistic based on our reality, and any unusual technology is still logical and feasible.
19–20	Castles	Some type of castle holds a central role in the setting. These could range from traditional castles to futuristic fortresses.
21–22	Cyberspace	Cyberspace is as “real” as reality here, with holographic displays of the virtual realm, VR headsets, or even full neural immersion.
23–24	Dungeons	These locations range from real-world dungeons to the tombs, caverns, and evil lairs of hack-and-slash adventures.
25–28	Environmental Disaster	A natural or human-made disaster has dramatically altered the world or is currently doing so. Some of the options could include mega-volcanoes, widespread massive earthquakes, global flooding, climate change causing amplified weather events, an incredibly destructive meteor impact, solar flares, or a new ice age.
29–32	Gods	A pantheon of gods takes an active interest in the world, influencing and interfering with the lives of the inhabitants.
33–36	Good versus Evil	In this setting, some factions or individuals are clearly and objectively good, while others are unambiguously evil. Stories revolve around the struggle between those aligned with good and those aligned with evil.
37–41	Historical Aesthetics	The setting is draped in a classical historic look and feel, much like a period piece. Some examples include Victorian England, the Cold War, the 1970s, or medieval times.
42–45	Knights	The setting features a class of individuals who are capable combatants. They usually wear armor, carry a sword, and adhere to a code of honor. They could be medieval European knights, Japanese samurai, steampunk knights riding clockwork horses, modern knights hiding their existence in today’s world, or futuristic knights piloting giant robots.
46–47	Lost	A major element of the setting has been lost for a long time, and searching for it is a major theme of the setting.
48–51	Magic	Magic is an element in the setting, and the acquisition of magic is the goal of most major characters.
52–53	Mad Science	The setting features weird pseudoscientific devices and theories, usually championed by eccentric, reckless individuals.
54–55	Mental Powers	Characters can do things with their mind, such as ESP, telekinesis, psionics, mind control, or they may have ultra-high intelligence (to the point that their intellect is basically supernatural).
56–57	Monsters	Weird, fantastic, otherworldly, and dangerous creatures are a major threat to the setting. Cultures have to work to accommodate or protect against these creatures, and those who can defeat the monsters can become heroes and legends.
58–59	Monster Army	An army or horde of monsters under the command of a powerful leader threatens part or all of the setting. Such armies usually include a variety of groups ranging from hordes of relatively weak creatures to a few massive monstrosities that are terrible threats. However, if someone could defeat the leader, they would defeat the entire monster army.
60–61	Movie Realism	Realism takes a back seat to movie-inspired scenes. Heroes survive or fight through debilitating injuries, explosions are bigger than normal, and characters make decisions based on advancing the plot instead of on common sense.
62–64	Mutants	Genetically modified humans or other creatures are commonplace. They may be advanced versions of normal people, or terrifying creatures resulting from radiation or other environmental effects.
65–69	New Frontier	The setting takes place at the edge of civilization and beyond, whether in space, the deep ocean, or a new dimension.
70–73	Post Apocalyptic	The civilized world has effectively ended, and the survivors are trying to pick up the pieces. Broken leftover technology, abandoned cities, anarchy, warlords, and fights for survival are frequent.
74–77	Gritty Realism	This setting has a prevalent theme of gritty realism. Things go wrong for the major characters, villains sometimes win, people act out of self-interest, and decisions can be motivated by misinformation, bias, fear, and irrational hatred.
78–79	Robots	Sentient robots or androids are a major factor in everyday life in the setting. They may be threatening, benign, or both.
80–81	Steampunk	A pseudoscience fiction setting in which advanced technology is replaced with monstrous, steam-powered equivalents with a Victorian England aesthetic.
82–83	Superheroes	In this setting, a special group of individuals who possess superhuman powers and abilities exists. These individuals have taken it upon themselves to protect or guide society either openly or from the shadows. They fight against similarly-powered villains whose goals are usually nefarious. Costumes, capes, and secret identities are highly recommended.
84–88	Interplanetary Travel	No matter what the setting’s tech level is, its primary civilizations have some way to travel to different worlds. In a fantasy setting this may be through dimensional rifts, teleportation, or something esoteric, like ships that sail on the aether of space. In a setting with an 1800s technology level, travel may be accomplished through clockwork and brass rockets, while a setting that takes place in our modern day may use alien technology or ancient gates that link worlds.
89–94	Occult	Supernatural creatures such as demons, devils, and possibly angels are prominent characters, often supported by mortal allies.
95–98	Undead	The setting features creatures that live beyond death, such as vampires, spirits, zombies, ghosts, and animated skeletons.
99–00	Underwater	Significant aspects of the setting occur underwater, whether cultures, civilizations, or entire worlds.

STEP 2: SELECT A TECHNOLOGY LEVEL

Your setting's level of technology affects every element of it, from the equipment available to the feel and tone. So selecting a tech level should occur early on in the setting creation process.

Technology levels range from the historical to the fanciful. Most settings have a primary technology level that applies to most, if not all, of the setting. Some settings may have access to multiple levels of technology, as some parts of a world advance at a quicker pace than others. However, you should put some thought into exactly how far apart those levels are, and how much it matters to the stories you're telling.

We've provided a list of tech levels in **Table I.4-2: Technology Levels**. While some of these levels (primarily everything from the Stone Age through the Iron Age) apply to societies across the world, some of the others focus primarily on European and Mediterranean societies. The table includes futuristic fictional tech levels as well. These aren't intended to be an exhaustive list, but a series of examples that you can use or that can inspire your own creativity.

PREMODERN TECHNOLOGY

When you're trying to figure out which technology level to use, premodern technological eras based on real-world history are one good place to start. Even if your setting has magic or supernatural powers, you can

layer these on top of the setting's historical basis. In the real world, historical technological eras span anywhere from millions of years to decades, typically becoming shorter closer to modern times.

FICTITIONAL TECHNOLOGY

Of course, real-world history doesn't help much if you're trying to come up with a futuristic technology level! As you get beyond modern-day eras, you need to create your own technology levels. **Table I.4-2: Technology Levels** offers some suggestions for futuristic technological eras based on some of the most popular technology levels in science fiction and other speculative fiction. You can use these as-is, or expand on them to create your own technology level. Also, although we discuss futuristic technological eras from the perspective of humanity, you can replace humans with any species you like from your own setting.

EXAMPLE: MAX'S SETTING'S TECH LEVEL

Having been fairly satisfied with random rolling so far, Max decides to continue when choosing his setting's technology level. He rolls 88: Intragalactic Age. That's an interesting mix with knights and robots, and it is already giving Max some ideas about what to do with his setting.

STEP 3: BUILD YOUR WORLD

What kind of physical world does your setting exist in? The natural or artificial environment characters deal with every day affects adventure and story construction, at least to some degree. Interesting worlds provide an enjoyable backdrop for your stories and can draw the players further into the setting, hopefully enticing them into discovering memorable locations.

ONE WORLD OR MANY?

This step discusses the rules for building a single planet. However, your setting can be much larger (or much smaller) than one world. If you want your setting to consist of multiple worlds, you can use these rules to build several different planets. Likewise, if you want your setting to be smaller, such as a single continent on

a larger world, you can narrow your focus and use this step for developing that continent only.

However, in either case, there are a few things you may want to keep in mind.

MANY WORLDS: KEEP IT SIMPLE

If you're using these rules to develop multiple planets to populate a sector of space, we suggest keeping each planet simple. Roll on **Table I.4-3** and **Table I.4-4** to determine the planet's size and general climate. Then, roll once on **Table I.4-5 Environments**, but apply the result to the entire world (or note that environment as a defining feature of that world). Do the same with **Table I.5-6: Population**: use the table to determine the population of the entire planet. If you want to roll on **Table I.4-7:**

TABLE I.4–2: TECHNOLOGY LEVELS

D100	NAME	DESCRIPTION
01–07	Stone Age	The Stone Age (which can be further divided into the Paleolithic, Mesolithic, and Neolithic eras) spanned millions of years and included the Ice Age. This age saw the first production of stone tools and artifacts, followed by relatively simple art and ornamentation. It had hunter-gatherer societies, predominately living in caves and rock shelters, that used fire and simple tools like flint knives. By the end of the Stone Age, some societies had evolved into a seminomadic state, participating in farming as well as hunting and gathering. Pottery, bone tools, the bow and arrow, and even irrigation came with the establishment of more complex societal structures.
08–14	Bronze Age	This age saw the development of copper and bronze, which supplanted stone for tools and weapons. It brought about mining and metallurgical advancements. Larger cities grew, along with trade, and some societies developed writing.
15–21	Iron Age	This age began with the development of iron weapons and implements. Widespread writing and economic systems enabled more complex forms of government and society. Art styles developed further. Some settlements became fortified as warfare evolved, and some cultures began fighting on horseback and with chariots.
22–28	Classical Antiquity	This age covered the cultural history of the societies of several thousand years ago around the Mediterranean Sea, including the ancient Greek, Persian, and Roman societies. It saw the continued development of established city-states, professional militaries, new forms of government, and several major empires.
29–35	Medieval	Also known as the Middle Ages, this age focuses on Europe and extended from the fall of the Roman Empire up until the Renaissance. Classic Western fantasy is typically inspired by this period. Most city-states in this time used a feudal system, forgoing organized governmental systems with bureaucracies in favor of a single ruler. Standing armies were often replaced with small numbers of well-equipped and highly trained individual warriors who were also part of the nobility.
36–40	Renaissance	This age featured the revival of classical learning and brought about significant developments in science, art, architecture, religion, and political ideas in Europe. Gunpowder spread throughout Europe from China, and the feudal system of government began to vanish in Europe, replaced with protomodern governmental organizations.
41–46	Early Industrial Revolution	Beginning in mid-eighteenth-century Britain and spreading to the rest of the world through the early twentieth century, this period marks a switch from an agrarian society to one dominated by industries and machinery. It saw the development of coal-powered steam engines, railroads, machined parts, and factories.
47–52	Late Industrial Revolution	The second half of the Industrial Revolution encompassed the first half of the twentieth century and saw the development of petroleum as a fuel source, automobiles, and aircraft.
53–57	Atomic Age	This age began with the emergence of atomic weapons in World War II and followed on with nuclear power plants. It covered the Cold War and the dominant threat of mutually assured destruction, ending with the fall of the Soviet Union.
58–63	Space Age	This age marks the early days of space exploration, from simple satellites, to crewed spaceflight and the moon landing, and up through the beginning of the twenty-first century. It also marks the development of jet-engine and rocket technology and the related social developments due to cheap and expanding air travel.
64–69	Information Age	This age represents the shift in the late twentieth century and beyond to industries based on information technology. It includes rapid and culture-shifting computing and technological advancements.
70–77	Interplanetary Age	Civilization leaves Earth and spreads across the solar system. Space travel is difficult and time-consuming, with trips between planets taking weeks or months. Rudimentary terraforming technology may be implemented on worlds such as Mars and Venus, taking centuries to realize. Humanity begins mining asteroids and planetoids for valuable resources.
78–84	Transhuman Age	Cybernetic enhancement and genetic manipulation or augmentation becomes commonplace and dominates everyday living. Unenhanced individuals are dismissed or pitied, as most of humanity becomes transhuman.
85–90	Intragalactic Age	Faster-than-light travel allows humanity to reach beyond its solar system and visit the rest of the galaxy. The invention of FTL technology heralds other marvelous inventions that may seem almost magical to modern society, such as gravity manipulation, macroengineering of planetary megastructures, and the manipulation of force or energy fields.
91–97	Quantum Age	Technology advances to a point where the large-scale manipulation of matter on an atomic and astronomical level becomes possible. Stellar mega-structures such as ringworlds, Dyson spheres, and matrioshka brains become commonplace, civilizations are established on a galactic scale, and species transcend mortality or even physical existence.
98–00	The Psychic Awakening	Humans unlock an ability to use psychic powers such as telekinesis and telepathy, and even more esoteric abilities such as pyrokinesis, divination, and astral projection. The direction of human advancement shifts from pursuing technological advancements to enhancing the powers of an individual's mind. Many technologies are replaced by psychic abilities.

Other Inhabitants and Oddities, again you should either apply the result to the entire planet, or note it as one of the world's distinguishing features.

The reason we recommend this is that if you're inventing multiple planets, you may not want to spend too much time fleshing out any one of them. Instead, you may want each planet to feel distinct from the others. We discuss this further in the **Mono-Environment Versus Varied Biosphere** sidebar on page 47.

SINGLE REGION: GET ELABORATE

If you're using these rules to develop a single region on a world, you may want to default to the Earthlike Planet result on **Table I.4–3** (that way, your entire setting doesn't have to deal with the rules for higher or lower gravity. In addition, when rolling on **Table I.4–4: Climate**, you can just select the climate for your continent, and not the rest of the world.

TABLE I.4–3: WORLD STRUCTURE

D10	STRUCTURE
1	Mere Moon: This world is small enough to be the satellite of a much larger world that dominates its skies. This larger world is likely a gas giant, but could be a solid planet instead. Characters add ■ to checks they perform on this world that involve physical activity.
2	Small World: This world is small enough that gravity is less than normal, leading to larger-than-usual plants and animals, as well as soaring geological formations impossible on a higher-gravity world. Characters add ■ to checks they perform on this world that involve physical activity.
3–5	Earthlike Planet: This world matches our own in size and mass, and even has one or two large moons that create tides. You can use Earth as a template when creating this world.
6–7	Large World: The planet is very large and has a great deal of mass. Things here may be squat and incredibly strong to resist the pull of extreme gravity, and geological features may be smoothed and flattened after collapsing under their own weight. Characters add ■ to checks they perform on this world that involve physical activity.
8	Rings: This planet has a prominent ring system. If the world is technologically advanced enough, it may interfere with space travel.
9	Tidally Locked World: This planet is gravitationally locked with its star, meaning that one side is always in daylight, and the other is in perpetual darkness. The day side may be incredibly hot to the point of being uninhabitable, and the night side is likely to be impossibly cold. Life as we know it may only exist in the “twilight zone” running around the planet, where the sun is low in the sky.
10	Artificial Construction: This planet is some sort of fantastic artificial structure. It may be a huge ring that spins for gravity and maintains a biosphere on the inner edge, a gigantic Dyson sphere with civilization on the inside or on the outside, or something stranger like a disk, a pocket dimension, or a construction that completely defies the laws of physics (or even needs magic to exist).

Once you get into determining environments, populations, and other inhabitants and oddities, it makes more sense to divide your setting into a number of regions and then make different choices for each. Since you are focusing on a single part of a single world, you can spend plenty of time making different parts of each region feel varied and interesting.

DESIGNING A PLANET

To help provide you with some guidance when designing a planet, we've broken the process down into several substeps.

PLANET STRUCTURE

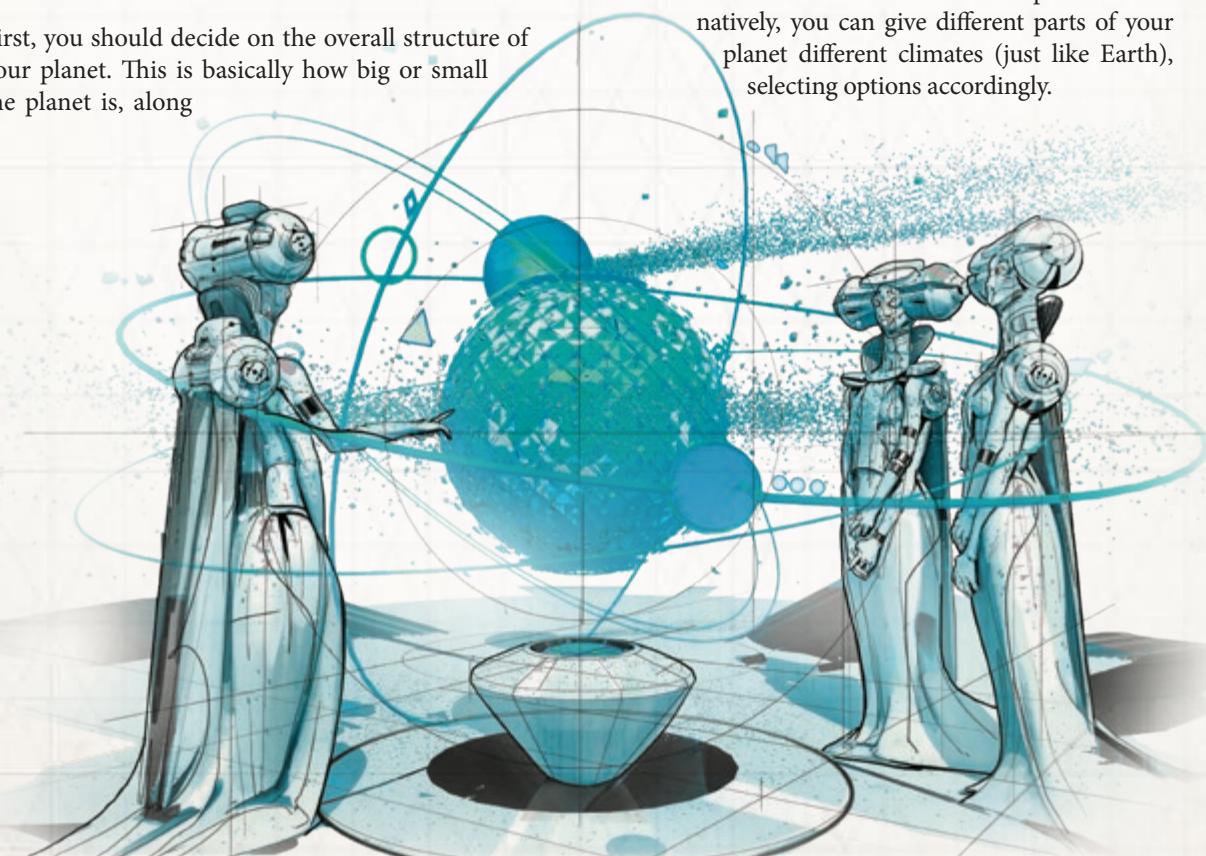
First, you should decide on the overall structure of your planet. This is basically how big or small the planet is, along

with some other interesting elements that may define it and make it distinct. **Table I.4–3: World Structure** can provide some inspiration.

One note, if your entire setting is a single world, you may want to forgo the mechanical rules that accompany larger or smaller worlds. Without travel to other planets, these rules would always be in play, and their novelty could wear off.

PLANET CLIMATE

Once you settle on a structure for your world, think about its climate (how hot or cold it is). **Table I.4–4: Climate** provides some example climates for planets. You can roll once on this table for the entire planet. Alternatively, you can give different parts of your planet different climates (just like Earth), selecting options accordingly.



Mono-Environment Versus Varied Biosphere

Despite what we see in many films and books, most worlds do not have a single environment from pole to pole. Most have a wide variety of environments, just like Earth does. So why are mono-environment worlds such a staple? Here are a few reasons why:

Worlds with single environments are distinctive. In a setting where there may be hundreds of planets, a world stands out if it is branded with a single biosphere. The “desert planet,” the “ocean planet,” and the “volcano world” stick in people’s minds. This is especially popular in settings where people visit a lot of worlds often. In these cases, different planets take on the same role that different locales would back on Earth. Instead of an adventure starting in the Sahara, going to temperate England, and ending in frozen Siberia, players visit a desert planet and then a garden world, and have their finale on an ice world.

Worlds with single environments are easy. When you need to invent multiple planets, trying to

determine a range of varied biomes for each can be very time-consuming. You can save a lot of time by picking one environment for each world.

Worlds with single environments seem exotic. Creating a world with a single dominant environment is a quick way to make that world seem interesting while still being relatable. Making a world with a mono-environment is something that people will understand, because they can grasp the basics of a desert or an ocean or a glacier. But something about saying “imagine this...everywhere” makes the setting feel strange and marvelous.

If you do decide you want to pursue the mono-environment trope, you may want to have a reason why. Just saying “this world is farther from its star, so it’s cold,” “the planet became a desert after the apocalyptic war destroyed the ecosystem,” or “this is a world sculpted by magic at the whims of the gods” may help your players suspend disbelief.

PLANET ENVIRONMENTS

Next, you can roll to generate environments for your world on **Table I.4–5: Environments**, or choose environments that you feel are the most appropriate. If you want, your world can be dominated by a single environment of your choosing. Another option is to divide your world into a series of regions, and generate a different environment for each.

If you do the latter, after you’ve generated an environment for each region, spend a few minutes thinking about what the borders of those regions look like. Nature seldom has hard boundaries between two different biomes.

So for example, a desert is likely to gradually transition into a forest with more grass, then bushes, then small clumps of trees, or a mountain range may level down into rolling foothills before becoming a river valley.

REGIONAL POPULATION

Once you’ve generated an environment for each region, you can also determine how inhabited it is. First roll on **Table I.4–6: Population** (or select whatever seems appropriate to you) to determine how inhabited it is. Later on, when you develop your setting’s factions, organizations, and government, you can use that to figure out what those populations look like.

TABLE I.4–4: CLIMATE

D10	CLIMATES
1	Searing Temperatures: The world’s median temperatures are very hot; too warm for comfort except to hardy life that has specifically evolved to deal with the heat. This world is likely to have extensive deserts, oppressively humid rainforests near sources of water, and seas full of salts and minerals. Characters add ■■ to any checks they perform outside because of the extreme heat.
2–3	Hot World: Most of the world tends towards hotter-than-average climates, though some regions may be temperate or cool. This world is more likely to have deserts, savannas, plains, lush jungles, and tropical biomes. Characters add ■ to any checks they perform outside because of the heat.
4–7	Temperate World: This world sees a wide range of temperatures across its surface, but most regions tend to be comfortable for human life. This world is likely to have a wide range of biomes, ranging from the tropical to the arctic.
8–9	Cold World: The world tends towards cooler-than-average climates. While a few regions and microclimates may be temperate or even hot, most of the planet is cool or cold. This world is more likely to have alpine meadows, coniferous and hardy deciduous forests, taiga, tundra, and colder seas and oceans. Characters add ■ to any checks they perform outside because of the cold.
10	Frozen Wastes: The world is so cold that it can barely support life. Only rare regions have liquid water, and the life that has evolved on this world has specific ways of dealing with the cold. Most of this world is likely to be covered in snow, ice, glaciers, and other arctic conditions. Characters add ■■ to any checks they perform outside because of the extreme cold.

TABLE I.4–5: ENVIRONMENTS

D10	ENVIRONMENT
1	Fractured Land: This region has been split and fractured by some sort of cataclysm: violent earthquakes, volcanoes, other geological effects, or something stranger or even supernatural. In any case, this region is unstable and dangerous.
2	Wasteland: A wasteland can be a frozen tundra, or a scorching desert. In either case, it is defined by its lack of liquid water, its extreme temperatures, and its hostility to life.
3	Forest: The one element common to all forests is a large number of trees. Beyond that, a forest can be a tropical rainforest, deciduous forest, or pine taiga. You could even have oversized mushrooms, gigantic creeper vines, or even stranger plants.
4	Plains: Plains are typically some form of grassland, savanna, scrubland, plateau, or other expanse of flattened ground. The plants tend to be grasses or bushes, with few trees to be found.
5	Mountains: Mountains can be found as vast ranks of serrated peaks, a few rocky outcroppings, or even a single massive summit. Cliffs and steep rock-covered slopes make up much of this environment, punctuated by swift-flowing streams, high-altitude meadows, and hardy plant and animal life.
6	Swamp: Swamps are wet, waterlogged environments full of sluggish, stagnant water. They tend to be full of disease and decay, but also teeming living creatures who have adapted to live in them.
7	River Valley: The region is dominated by a single massive river and the lands that drain into it. The land around the river is likely to be flat and may be prone to flooding. If there are inhabitants, they likely use it for trade and travel.
8	Ocean: The region is a vast ocean, or an ocean and the coastal regions alongside it. Most life is aquatic, and any inhabitants either live under the water or spend a lot of time on the water.
9	Lake: The region is dominated by a large, freshwater lake. The lake is big enough that crossing it can take days, and local inhabitants probably spend a lot of time on, in, or under the water.
10	Landmark: This region is dominated by a notable landmark, such as a huge canyon, an extensive network of caves, a massive crater, huge glaciers, a towering mountain, gorgeous ocean reefs, or an active volcano. Roll on this table again, rerolling this result. Once you have determined an environment for this region, pick a suitable landmark to put in it.

STRANGER THINGS

Finally, you can choose to roll on or take a result from **Table I.4–7: Other Inhabitants and Oddities**. This table lists some other creatures, people, and even stranger things that could exist in your settings. It is only included to add interest to your world, and you do not have to use it. You can also decide whether you want to have this apply to a specific region or to your world as a whole.

MAPPING OUT YOUR WORLD

Once you have the general traits of your world figured out, you may want to draw out a map.

Based on what you've rolled or chosen, decide where those major features and population centers exist in relation to each other. Then you can flesh out details. Decide what the borders between regions look like, add additional major natural features, and figure out where the population centers you generated are located. You can also start thinking about how those communities are connected.

Finally, based on some of the environments you chose or rolled and on the planet's climate, you can extrapolate what the rest of the world looks like. If you've created a cold world with lots of oceans, lakes, and swamps in the regions you specified, it's likely the rest of the world is equally cold and wet.

TABLE I.4–6: POPULATION

D10	STRUCTURE
1–2	Uninhabited: There are no people (whether human or other sentient species) living in this region.
3	Isolated Low-Tech Groups: This region is mostly uninhabited, but a few small tribes, families, or bands of people live here, cut off from the rest of your world. Reduce the technology level of people in this region by two steps (for example, if the rest of your setting is in the Iron Age, the inhabitants of this region would have Stone Age technology).
4	Scattered Individuals: This region is mostly uninhabited, but a few brave individuals do live here. They may live on isolated farmsteads, in hunting lodges, or simply in homes away from any major population centers. However, no towns or hamlets exist.
5–6	Small Communities: This region has some small towns or hamlets, with scattered homes or farms in between. The population centers tend to be only a few hundred people at the most.
7	Midsized Towns: This region has some moderately sized towns with smaller towns or hamlets on their outskirts. The population centers tend to be a few thousand people. If your technology level is Stone Age, consider rerolling this result.
8	City: This region has one major city with a population measured in the tens of thousands or more. It also has several small or mid-sized towns scattered throughout the region. If your technology level is Stone Age, consider rerolling this result.
9	Cities: This region has several large cities. Each has a sizable population that may be measured in the tens or hundreds of thousands (maybe millions). The region is heavily urbanized and developed. If your technology level is Medieval or lower, consider rerolling this result.
10	Megalopolis: This region is completely urbanized into a single, massive city with millions of inhabitants. Little remains of the natural elements of this region, unless they are artificially preserved. If your technology level is Late Industrial Revolution or lower, consider rerolling this result.

TABLE I.4–7: OTHER INHABITANTS AND ODDITIES

D100	DESCRIPTION
1–6	Warlike Wanderers: This region is plagued by wandering groups of warlike nomads. It is difficult, if not impossible, to treat with these groups or negotiate with them. They either avoid being engaged in a pitched battle with military forces or are too strong to defeat militarily.
7–11	Sky Islands: Mountain-sized chunks of rock float above this region. They are so large that they have entire ecosystems that grow and develop on them. Local inhabitants may have explored these rocks and built communities on (or inside) them.
12–19	Megafauna: This region has populations of extremely large animals living in it. At minimum, they are the size of the largest dinosaurs from Earth's history, but they could be even bigger! Some may have been domesticated by local inhabitants, but others may pose a threat.
20–26	Spectacular Natural Beauty: This region is extremely beautiful, a jewel of nature. Locals treasure the resplendence that they live among, and other individuals journey to this region to bask in its splendor.
27–34	Megaflora: The plant life in this region grows to be extremely large. It could include trees kilometers tall and tens of meters wide, fungi the size of houses, vines that choke square kilometers of land, and other plants big enough to build homes inside.
35–36	The Pit: A bottomless pit sits in a prominent location in this region. Nobody knows how it came to be, or whether it's natural or artificial. Any attempts to map it or find out how deep it is have failed so far.
37–47	Valuable Resource: An extremely valuable resource of your choosing exists in this region. It may make the locals rich, or it may cause outsiders to venture into the region to exploit them.
48–50	Incomprehensible Intelligences: The local inhabitants share the region with some sort of other life that, while seemingly intelligent, is so different that interacting with it is impossible. This life is not hostile to the locals, although its actions are so apparently arbitrary that it may do things that put the locals in danger. Why and how the local inhabitants and this other life form coexist is up to you.
51–59	The Ruins of Elder Races: This region is dominated by the ruins from some older species or previous culture. Their technology was likely more advanced than that of the current inhabitants, or at least their constructions remain marvels of engineering that dominate the terrain.
60–64	Gestalt Life Form: Nearly all local life in the region is linked psychically or biologically, so that it actually is all part of one vast organism. This doesn't apply to the local inhabitants of the society you generated, but it does apply to everything else.
65–69	Elaborate Cave System: Underneath the ground in this region is an extensive and extremely elaborate cave system. The system has its own complex ecosystem, and local inhabitants may even live within the caves.
70–71	Localized Anomalies: For some reason, physics don't quite behave correctly in some parts of this region. Gravity may be stronger or weaker than normal, time may move more quickly or more slowly in some places, or even stranger things may occur.
72–76	Secret Base: An organization that has no local ties to the region has set up some sort of facility in it. Roll once on Table I.4–10 to find out what organization it might be. Whatever it is, its members actively discourage anyone from becoming involved in their business.
77–79	Dragons: The region is home to several giant and intelligent lizards who fly and breathe fire. They have their own culture and society, and they regard the other local inhabitants with some mixture of annoyance, disdain, or active dislike.
80–85	Constant Storms: The region is plagued by continuous storm systems that are powerful and violent.
86–89	Site of a Great Historical Event: Long ago, something incredibly important happened in a location in this region. This could be a battle, the signing of a treaty, or a scientific or philosophical discovery. Whatever it was, a monument has been erected to memorialize it.
90–93	War Zone: This region is plagued by constant (if potentially intermittent) war between two factions. Locals work hard to try and survive the battles and skirmishes going on around them.
94–98	Monastery: An organization has set up a monastery or retreat of some sort in the region. Roll once on Table I.4–10 to find out what organization this might be. The organization's members are welcoming and open about their presence and work hard to be good neighbors.
99–00	The Hunter: Something lives in this region that hunts the inhabitants for some reason. This thing may be a creature, a person, or something stranger (perhaps a ghost or an artificial being). Whatever it is, society has been unable to eliminate it and is forced to live around it instead.

EXAMPLE: THE WORLD OF MAX'S SETTING

Max decides that although his setting is intragalactic, he's going to start by focusing on one world. His first roll is to determine the world's structure. He gets an 8: Rings, which he decides mean the world is hard (but not impossible) to access with spacecraft. Next he rolls for climate and gets a 3: Hot World, so his world tends to have a hotter climate than Earth. Max figures the planet has lots of savanna and deserts.

Now, Max wants to plot out some regions for his world. He rolls for the environment and population for four regions and gets the following:

2: Wasteland and 5: Small Communities.

8: Ocean and 9: Cities.

7: River Valley and 4: Scattered Individuals.

4: Plains and 1: Uninhabited.

Finally, he decides to roll once for other inhabitants and oddities. He gets 18: Megafauna.

Max thinks about the results and figures the reason people tend to live in the most inhospitable regions of the planet are because of the huge (dangerous?) animals that occupy the most uninhabitable portions.

STEP 4: DETERMINE A RELIGION AND COSMOLOGY

One important element of most societies are their religious practices. Gods and religion are a prominent part of most settings, just as they play a prominent role in our actual history. In some settings, the gods are going to be real, tangible beings with their own desires, fears, and agendas. In other settings, there may be little evidence of the existence of the divine, but that doesn't stop society from having established religious practices.

When brainstorming what role religion plays in your setting, you can use **Table I.4–8: Religions and Cosmologies** as a starting point and inspiration. The results on this table establish some of the basics of whatever religion ends up in your setting, but leave you with plenty of room to infuse the religion (or religions) with your own unique ideas.

Once you've got a good idea of what the religion and cosmology in your setting broadly look like, you can start asking yourself some additional questions. How prominent is religion in your setting? Are you adapting real religions, or are you creating new ones? Does the setting have an active pantheon of gods meddling in the affairs of mortals, or are the setting's deities inscrutable and unknowable? Or is your setting entirely secular, with no religious beliefs at all? Finally, how do the religions in your setting affect the societies there?

As you answer these questions, you can begin to plot out the religion or religions in your setting. Keep in

mind that a society can have multiple religions existing within it, and religions don't have to be limited to a single species or geographic location. You can design a single world-spanning religious order, or dozens of smaller faith practices. It's all up to you.

It's also worth considering that if your setting has deities who are demonstrably present and take an active role in people's lives, religions based around those deities are likely to be dominant. Basically, if gods are real and perceivable, most people will believe in them.

When determining religions for your setting, you can use **Table I.4–8: Religions and Cosmologies** as a starting point and inspiration. You can either roll randomly on the table, or select the option you prefer.

EXAMPLE: MAX'S SETTING'S RELIGION

For religion, Max rolls a 7: Many Spirits. He decides that major locations in this world each have a spirit who is venerated by the local inhabitants. Max applies this to his world's cities (some of which are constructions that float on its oceans) as well as to its natural locations, so citizens literally worship the city they live in.

Max also decides that the robots from step 1 that exist on this world also each have their own spirit.

TABLE I.4–8: RELIGIONS AND COSMOLOGIES

D10	DESCRIPTION
1-2	No Divine Spark: Religion is entirely absent from this setting. There are no gods and no beliefs in the divine. Instead, societies are secular. It is up to you whether religious beliefs did exist once but have been forgotten or excised, or if your setting never had a belief in the divine.
3-5	Polytheistic Pantheon: This religion focuses around a pantheon of powerful deities, each of which has a different portfolio of responsibilities. These responsibilities may be natural phenomena or features (oceans, mountains, thunder, rain), concepts (war, peace, justice, knowledge, beauty), or a combination of both. However, each god has a different responsibility or responsibilities, so societies likely believe in and worship the pantheon as a whole. Meanwhile, individuals believe in the pantheon, but tend to pray to the deity who is most relevant to their current situation (farmers pray to a god of fertility and bounty, while soldiers pray to a god of war, for example). If you choose or roll this result, roll a further d10 die. On a 1, your pantheon is composed entirely of good deities. On a 2–5, your pantheon is composed of a mix of good and evil deities. On a 6–9, the deities in your pantheon are amoral, neither good nor evil. And on a 10, your pantheon is composed entirely of evil deities. It's up to you to interpret what good and evil means in your setting.
6	World Spirit: This religion believes that all of the souls or spiritual energies of all living things on a world combine into a single gestalt "world spirit." This spirit's motives may be inscrutable, and it may not have a personification or communicate with people. However, the religion promotes the idea that all lives are linked, and balance and harmony with nature and the wider world are likely to be important concepts.
7	Many Spirits: This religion believes that most things have a spirit that is a discrete and identifiable entity. Things with a spirit include people, animals, and plants, but also rivers, mountains, forests, fields, and crafted items. This religion may draw the line at mass-produced, disposable, or consumable items, but anything with a significant presence in the physical world also has a significant presence in the spiritual one.
8-10	Monotheistic Religion: This religion venerates a single deity. The deity may be visualized as an ideal form of the principal species that worships it, or it may be more of a concept or an idea. The deity may take an active role in directing its followers' lives, or it may grant its followers free will and the autonomy to do what they want. Whatever the case, this deity is the source and example of any divine power in the setting. If you choose or roll this result, roll a further d10 die. On a 1–4, your deity is good. On a 5–8, your deity is amoral, neither good nor evil. On a 9–0, your deity is evil. It's up to you to interpret what good and evil means in your setting.

STEP 5: SELECT A GOVERNMENT AND GENERAL SOCIETY

How do the people in your setting organize themselves politically and socially? It's time to figure out the government and society of your setting.

GOVERNMENT

Government is one of the first things we think of when we think of a society. While society is usually much more than just the way it is organized and run, government tends to define a lot about how the rest of a society operates, so we recommend determining that first.

When figuring out what government exists in your world, you can use **Table I.4–9: Governments** as a starting point and inspiration. However, governments exist in a wide range of forms. Don't be afraid to use the many examples from history as inspiration or to invent your own! You can choose different governments for each region or figure out one type of governance for your setting as a whole. After you do so, you can use **Table I.4–11: Objectives** to determine some goals for your government or governments.

TABLE I.4–9: GOVERNMENTS

D10	DESCRIPTION
1	Anarchy: Here, there is no organized political structure. Everyone looks out for themselves, their family, and their friends, without any larger government at work. If your setting is Iron Age or higher, you may consider rerolling this result (unless your setting is post apocalyptic).
2–3	Local Rulers and Councils: This is slightly more organized than pure anarchy. Here, government exists on a small scale, with groups of several hundred people electing mayors and councils, being ruled by hereditary lords, or following the banner of small, enterprising warlords. It is up to you what form your social groups take (small townships, roving tribes, or even neighborhoods in a larger city, for example). If you choose or roll this result, roll a d10 die (either for the region as a whole, or for each social group individually). On a 1–4, your social groups are mostly democratic and elect their leaders. On a 5–8, your social groups are controlled by hereditary rulers. On a 9–0, your social groups are organized around charismatic or terrifying warlords and bandit kings.
4–5	City-States: Here, each city is also its own state. Cities control the territory around them, trade with their neighbors, make war on their enemies, and generally perform all the tasks of a national government on a more limited scale. Forms of the various city-states' governments may be wildly different, or they may follow a similar pattern across the region or world. If your setting is Stone Age, consider rerolling this result. If you choose or roll this result, roll a d10 die (either for the region as a whole, or for each city-state individually). On a 1–3, your city-states practice direct or representative democracy. On a 4–6, your city-states are controlled by hereditary rulers. On a 7–8, your city-states are controlled by guilds or other organized interest groups. On a 9–10, your city-states are run by nonelected individuals who have power through money, military backing, or other means that are not necessarily hereditary.
6–8	Nation-States and Nations: Nation-states are larger than city-states, and they often control several cities and other population centers within their borders. However, each individual nation-state has a shared culture and ethnic heritage, which may vary wildly from nation-state to nation-state. Alternatively, your governments may be organized into nations that host multiple cultures and ethnicities in their borders and are unified under a shared history or an ideal, rather than a shared culture. If your setting is Bronze Age or lower, consider rerolling this result. If you choose or roll this result, roll a d10 die (either for the region as a whole or for each nation-state individually). On a 1–3, your nation-states practice direct or representative democracy. On a 4–6, your nation-states are controlled by hereditary rulers. On a 7–8, your nation-states are controlled by guilds or other organized interest groups. On a 9–10, your nation-states are run by nonelected individuals who have power through money, military backing, or other means that are not necessarily hereditary (these can either be open—and probably totalitarian—rulers, or you can roll again to see what kind of government these individuals manipulate clandestinely).
9–10	World Government: Here, the world is unified under a single government. Society likely has multiple cultures and ethnicities coexisting side by side (though not necessarily harmoniously). If your setting is a single region on a world, this may apply to the region, or your region may be a small part of a larger government. If your setting is multiple worlds, this result can represent a multi-world governmental system. If your setting is Bronze Age or lower, consider rerolling this result. If you choose or roll this result, roll a d10 die. On a 1–4, your world government is mostly democratic or representatively democratic. On a 5–8, your world government is controlled by a hereditary ruler. On a 9–0, your world government is a mix or derivative of both (perhaps an elected leader-for-life, a hereditary ruler who must be approved by representatives of the population, or a totalitarian ruler who is not hereditary).

EXAMPLE: MAX'S SETTING'S GOVERNMENT

Based on the rest of his setting, Max decides to choose a type of government for his setting instead of rolling it. Max selects 4: City States. He figures each community in his world is its own, self-contained political entity. He also decides they tend to be controlled by hereditary rulers. As he creates each city-state, he plans to roll to figure out its objectives.

OTHER FACTIONS AND ORGANIZATIONS

While important, government is seldom the only organization in a society. Other factions and organizations could include everything from a local criminal gang to megacorporations, political parties, and unions. You don't have to add factions and organizations to your setting, but unless it has very few social structures at all, they are going to go a long way toward making it seem more realistic and "lived in."

TABLE I.4–10: FACTIONS AND ORGANIZATIONS

D100	NAME	DESCRIPTION
01–08	Academics	Individuals dedicated to learning and research, who may band together to work against corporate exploitation or government restrictions. An academic faction may have ties to some institute of learning or repository of information, but likely is loosely organized, without a strict hierarchical structure.
09–15	Caste System	Social stratification of a society based on heredity. Members of the same caste may support each other and may work to protect or counter the caste system itself. Caste systems can be formalized in a legal system or can be purely social constructs. They can exist without a more organized structure, since someone is either born into a caste or not.
16–22	Clans	Traditionally, clans are based on an extended family grouping. However, a clan may extend beyond family ties, either through some sort of pro forma adoption system or through an oath of allegiance. Most clans are hierarchical in nature, with a patriarch, matriarch, or other elder holding most of the authority.
23–30	Corporation	A formal business with executives, board members, officers, employees, and usually stockholders and investors. Corporations can be relatively small companies to international, nongovernmental organizations.
31–37	Fans/Fanatics	Fans of specific sports teams, cultural elements, pop culture, and influential companies can band together over their common interests and may struggle against similar groups that do not share their beliefs. Fan organizations can be structured or chaotic.
38–46	Guild	An organization of merchants or tradespeople could be a monopoly designed to corner the market on a particular item or items. Alternatively, a guild could be a loose collective of individuals who just want to look out for one another when a greater threat looms. In both cases, it is loosely structured, since the merchants are nominally still competing with each other.
47–56	Military	Most militaries operate under government control, though personal security, paramilitary, and mercenary groups may exist outside of governments. Militaries tend to follow a very strict hierarchy, with professional codes of conduct.
57–65	Pirates	A pirate “faction” may be limited to a single ship and its crew, but larger organizations are possible if the pirates have a common enemy that they need to rally against. The leadership of a larger pirate organization is likely determined based on which pirate captains are the most charismatic or terrifying (or both).
66–74	Political Faction	A group or individuals who share common overall political viewpoints but are not necessarily formal members of a political party. Issue-based factions can cross major political party lines.
75–83	Rebels or Terrorists	Groups working towards the violent overthrow of an organization or government. A rebellion might wage a guerrilla campaign of terrorism, sabotage, and hit-and-run attacks against a government, in which case it is likely disorganized and fractured. Alternatively, it might be a large group of people with a sizable territory that splits off from a larger state and has infrastructure, organization, and even something of a standing army.
84–91	Religious Organization	A group of believers or individuals with the same religious beliefs. The level of organization in this group depends on the level of organization in the religion as a whole, and can range from a strong hierarchy to very disorganized. This could also be a smaller faction within a wider religious group. In that case, they may support reform ideas, have liturgical differences, and support or oppose specific leaders.
92–00	Union	A group of workers or employees in a capitalist system who have banded together to lobby for better working conditions, increased compensation, or other benefits. Their collective bargaining power is their primary strength, as they can threaten to stop an industry if their demands are not met. Unions require at least a certain amount of organization to be effective.

ORGANIZATIONS

Organizations tend to be heavily structured. They have relatively strong leaders who guide the organization to meet its objectives. Most organizations have some kind of legal basis, though informal clubs and criminal syndicates are examples of strong groups that exist outside of the law.

Whatever the size, each organization has one or more leaders, a hierarchy of members, a reason for existence, and multiple objectives and goals. This hierarchy may provide members with resources or perks, and the more structured the hierarchy is, the more likely it is that climbing up the hierarchy rewards an individual with better perks.

FACTIONS

While a faction may be a formal organization, many are more loosely associated, lacking a strong hierarchy, and often contentious. Political parties are a good example: they usually have a definite leadership within or

attempting to join a government, but the vast majority of their members are everyday citizens who share similar viewpoints and push for related ideas. Loose factions also hold a variety of similar views, which may differ significantly in the details. Individuals can be part of several different loose factions with differing goals.

CREATING A FACTION OR ORGANIZATION

When determining what factions or organizations exist in your setting, you can use **Table I.4–10: Factions and Organizations** as a good starting point or for inspiration. You can roll on this table as many times as you like, but remember that each additional organization or faction brings additional complexity to your setting. You can always add in new factions or organizations later (which also adds to the feeling that your setting grows organically).

Once you have a broad idea about a faction or organization, first determine their reason for existence, and

TABLE I.4–11: OBJECTIVES

D100	NAME	DESCRIPTION
01–07	Assassination	The organization attempts to secretly murder influential individuals to eliminate anyone who threatens its existence.
08–15	Economic Growth	The organization is maximizing its potential for monetary earnings. Its means of doing so may include acquisitions, bribery, political influence, or complex deal making.
16–22	Exploration	The organization wants to explore specific regions for raw materials, new discoveries, isolated societies, and glory.
23–30	Illicit Activities	Criminal syndicates run rackets such as smuggling, gambling, or extortion or take similar measures to make money and control certain areas or types of operations.
31–36	Investigation	The organization carries out investigations of controversial or criminal activities in order to protect the public or to further other objectives.
37–45	Law Enforcement	The organization enforces the laws of the land. Corrupt forces or individuals may use their position to exploit those they are supposed to protect.
46–54	Military Expansion	The organization expands its power using military means, such as invasions and conquests.
55–64	Monopoly	The organization seeks to corner the market for specific goods and services.
65–72	Overthrow	The organization seeks to overthrow the head of a government or other powerful entity.
73–81	Protection	The organization seeks to protect a specific group of people or allied organizations.
82–88	Research	The organization researches specific subjects to facilitate cutting-edge scientific, technological, or medical developments.
89–94	Territory	The organization seeks to expand the territory it controls or influences and to protect what it already has.
95–00	Terrorism	Terrorist organizations are trained and funded to achieve change through violent attacks against the population.

its primary objectives. Does the faction or organization exist to provide something important in the setting's background? Does it also have a direct influence in the adventures and campaigns?

Table I.4–11: Objectives offers a good way to figure out what an organization's or faction's goals are. You can either roll randomly or select the goal that seems most appropriate.

ORGANIZATION OBJECTIVES

Every faction and organization has its own objectives. **Table I.4–11: Objectives** provides a good way to figure out what an organization or faction's goals are. You can either roll randomly or select the goal or goals that seem most appropriate.

Whenever you create a new faction or organization, note its major known objectives. Many factions and organizations also have secret objectives that you should be aware of (although these may or may not be nefarious; a group may have a perfectly good reason for keeping their objectives a secret).

CREATING PRINCIPLE NPCs

Every setting needs influential characters who drive the world and perhaps the story along, giving the setting life and interest. They can be distant leaders, legendary figures, major deities, or influential celebrities.

While it's possible for individuals to operate on their own and still achieve this status, it's more common for them to be part of or to command a larger faction, organization, or government division. This gives them

additional resources with which to achieve their goals, as well as to counter or aid the PCs as desired. When creating a new significant NPC, think about the potential resources at their disposal and how they work into your adventures. If the NPC is a government official, decide how much power they have, and over what parts of the government. Also think about the character's enemies and allies and how they factor into the story.

Movers and shakers are typically most interested in achieving their objectives and expanding their influence. This gives you the opportunity to use them as both antagonists and allies in your adventures.

GIVING THESE CHARACTERS PERSONALITIES

Multifaceted characters give you a lot of options and ways for the PCs to interact with them. However, even giving a character a single dominant personality goes a long way toward making them more memorable and interesting to your players. It also helps you figure out what their response to an unexpected situation might be, allowing your NPC to respond more naturally to changing events.

COMPLEX PERSONALITIES

To help flesh out the character, we've provided two different options. If you want a very detailed character, you can use the same motivations that are available to the PCs. See the **Determine Character Motivation** section starting on page 46 of the **GENESYS** Core Rulebook. They should have their own Desire, Fear, Strength, and Flaw that can be detailed and manipulated.

TABLE I.4–12: SINGLE PERSONALITY TRAITS

D100	TRAIT
01–05	Amicable: This person is friendly and easygoing. They prefer to work in cooperation with others rather than against them.
06–10	Cowardly: This person is primarily motivated through fear, whether it's fear for themselves or fear of losing what they care about.
11–15	Caring: Compassion for those around them motivates this character's actions. This caring may not extend to people outside of their organization.
16–20	Courageous: Fear has no place in this person's heart. When faced with a decision, they always stand up for themselves, no matter the odds stacked against them. If given a choice to fight a foe or flee (or make a deal), they always choose to fight.
21–25	Calculating: The mind of this individual is like a computer, always factoring odds and probabilities and able to remember the smallest details. They maintain their power through logic and information.
26–30	Dreadful: This person uses fear to motivate enemies and allies alike. They are as ruthless and as cruel as they need to be to instill the proper fear.
31–35	Clever: This person has a sharp personality and is keen to play tricks and fool people into doing what they want. They always have a cunning plan in operation, and sometimes more than one.
36–40	Serene: A deep calm permeates this person's being. They may not be a leader in their organization, but they could be its spiritual heart.
41–45	Charming: This person operates by being friendly, which often makes other people like them and want to please them.
46–50	Lighthearted: This person is genuinely happy and carefree, and likely doesn't care much about maintaining power or status in their organization.
51–55	Corrupt: If you offer this person something valuable, it's likely they'll quickly betray their principles and their organization to do your bidding.
56–60	Annoying: This person has some sort of personality trait that most people find bothersome. Maybe it's the tone of their voice, the comments they make, or a bad habit (such as chewing too loudly), but whatever it is, it makes them hard to ignore.
61–65	Frugal: Saving and conserving is this person's primary concern. They're unlikely to offer aid or resources without careful consideration.
66–70	Generous: If there's something you need, this person is usually more than happy to help. They're willing to dole out the resources of their organization to help with a good cause.
71–75	Ambitious: The thing this person wants more than anything is to gain more authority in their organization.
76–80	Excitable: This person can bring a lot of enthusiasm to projects and their work, but they can also be easily distracted.
81–85	Methodical: Process and procedure are this person's watchwords. They always do everything in proper order and take their time to do it right.
86–90	Suspicious: This person always assumes that anyone they work with has an ulterior motive. They may welcome a true enemy, because at least that person or group is openly against them.
91–95	Angry: This person wakes up angry at the world, and that bleeds into their interactions with everyone. They scream at their allies, berate their underlings, and fly into a furious rage at their foes.
96–00	Quietly Deadly: This person seems calm, quiet, and mild mannered—but they do not hesitate to kill anyone who fails them or stands in their way.

One of the benefits of giving an NPC the same four Motivation facets as a PC is that it makes their personality richer and more detailed. It also allows PCs to fully engage them in social encounters, as many social encounters involve figuring out what Motivations drive an opponent and how to exploit that information.

SIMPLE PERSONALITIES

However, determining the full suite of Motivations for every NPC with whom characters interact can be time-consuming. Sometimes you just need a simple personality trait that shapes an NPC's actions.

In these cases, you can use **Table I.4–12: Single Personality Traits** to determine a trait that defines an NPC (either by selecting one or rolling randomly). The descriptions of these traits have been written assuming these characters are part of an organization, and they talk briefly on how their personalities drive the characters when interacting with people inside and outside of the organization. However, this table works perfectly fine for determining a single dominant personality trait for any character.

EXAMPLE: MAX'S SETTING'S ORGANIZATIONS

Max decides to start fleshing out his setting by generating two different organizations that will be important across the entire world he's created. Each one will have an objective and a principle NPC leader with a simple personality trait. To spur his creativity, he decides to roll randomly again.

His first organization is 95: Union. Their objective is 78: Protection. Its leader, a woman Max names "Samantha Howle," gets the personality trait 17: Courageous.

His second organization is 33: Fans/Fanatics. Their objective is 68: Overthrow. Max decides its leader is a man named "Cornelius Von Dorgle," and when he rolls for a personality trait, he gets 22: Calculating.

At this point, Max decides that his protective union is going to be involved with the robots in his setting, and the fanatic organization is its enemy.

GENERAL SOCIETY

With your government and organizations figured out, now it's time to put some thought into what the rest of your setting's society is like. What is it like to live, work, and succeed in the major society of your setting? Just as importantly, does your setting have one society, or more than one? The real world has multiple societies that interact in a variety of ways, but you may want your setting to have a single dominant society.

At this stage, you should give some serious thought to what sentient species exist within your society as well. Is it just humans in all our varied forms? Or are there other sentient species that live alongside humanity? Maybe humans don't exist in your society at all. Whatever your answers are, establishing what species exist in your society and what their cultures are like is going to be important. After all, the cultures of these species are likely going to be the cultures of their society.

ARCHETYPES AND SPECIES

Archetypes and species are central to customizing any setting. If your setting uses humans as its only playable species, use archetypes as a way to expand player choice beyond the average human. If your setting has multiple species, archetypes are unnecessary, as each species profile represents its own average individual, and humans should be treated the same way.

Species are more than just a set of stats. Each one has a culture, home, environment, and long history connecting to the setting's other species. When developing your species, think about what makes them fun to play and how that fits into your setting. Are they entertaining because they have a strange ability that somehow dominates their actions, or do they hold an interesting place within the setting's lore that influences their interactions with other characters?

Finally, it's worth remembering that not all species need to be player characters. If you are creating a non-playable species, you're still going to spend some time thinking about their home, culture, physiology, and history. However, to develop their mechanics, you should treat the species as an NPC. See **Create an Adversary** on page 202 of the **GENESYS** Core Rulebook, and the expanded adversary creation rules on page 74.

ESTABLISHING YOUR SOCIETIES AND CULTURES

At this stage, you should have a good idea of who is living in your world and a general overview of their society. Now comes the hard work and fun of expanding these bullet points into details.

As you create the society or societies in your setting and start to flesh them out, the creative process comes to the fore. At this stage, instead of offering up some charts for inspiration, we have provided a series of questions that can help you figure out the important elements of the societies you're creating and their cultures:

If you had to pick one thing about your society or its culture that you would call its ideal (or its stereotype), what would it be? If you want to explore this further, think of one way that this ideal affects the society positively, and one way it affects it negatively.

What is the story your society tells itself about its origins? Then, how does reality differ from the myth, and what are ways your society fails to live up to its ideals?

What is the geographical location of this society? What are three ways that the setting affects the population's physiology, mindset, or religious elements?

Pick three things about your society that you love.
Then, pick three things that you hate.

What is one specific action, habit, or ritual this culture or species has? And how do its members react when someone breaks it?

What is your society's strongest ally?
What is its most dangerous foe?

What is the social fabric of the society? Is there a strong age or wealth-based hierarchy? Are there major warring factions? Is there a strict class structure? What happens to those who break the norms?

How does the overall economy operate? Is it a free market, barter based, or some kind of moneyless utopia? What is the money called?

As you answer these questions, it's all right to create the broad strokes, then fill in the details later as you get to know it better.



STEP 6: FILL IN DETAILS AND DETERMINE RULES

At this point, you have done most of the work for creating a setting. Now it's time to fill in the details.

RULES

GENESYS lets you mix and match the rules that are most appropriate to your setting, discarding the rest.

SKILLS AND TALENTS

In **GENESYS**, not all skills fit into all settings. However, the game allows you to drop the skills you don't need and even invent new skills that you feel are lacking from your setting.

Start by selecting the relevant skills from **Table 1.3 – 1: Complete Skill List**, on page 53 of the **GENESYS** Core Rulebook. The table offers advice on what skills are appropriate with what settings, but don't let that stop you from using one that could be important to yours. If you feel there are any skills missing once you've assembled your skill list, check out page 190 of the **GENESYS** Core Rulebook for information on making a skill.

Likewise, the talents in the **GENESYS** Core Rulebook specify what types of settings they may be most appropriate in. Review the talent list, and decide which talents you want to use. As with skills, if you feel like some talents are missing, check out page 194 of the **GENESYS** Core Rulebook for information on creating your own.

CAREERS AND ARCHETYPES/SPECIES

What careers are going to be appropriate for your setting depends a lot on the setting itself. Luckily, making a career is very simple. Start with the careers on page 40

of the **GENESYS** Core Rulebook. If you need more, you can make your own by selecting the eight most appropriate skills from your setting as career skills.

We've already discussed developing the narrative elements for a species or an archetype. Now it's time to take those narrative ideas and use the guidance on page 192 of the **GENESYS** Core Rulebook to invent the appropriate mechanics.

ALTERNATE OR OPTIONAL RULES

Finally, it's time to decide whether you want to use any additional alternate or optional rules in your setting. **Part III** of the **GENESYS** Core Rulebook is full of alternate rules, so read through the section starting on page 204 and decide which rules make sense for your setting.

Some of these will be obvious; a setting with space travel probably needs the vehicle rules, while a setting with magic should use the magic rules! Others are up to you. After you come up with some of the items in your setting, do you want to also use the item attachment rules? Or do you prefer to keep your gear simpler?

THE OVERVIEW

Finally, put together an overview of the setting you've created. Start with a couple sentence description: the "elevator pitch" that describes the basics of your creation. Then go into a couple paragraphs listing the most pertinent and compelling details.

The last step should be coming up with a name. It could be the name of the physical location of your setting, or it could be descriptive of the setting's nature. The choice is yours; it is your setting, after all!

MAX'S SETTING: "NEW AVALON"

"On the edge of space, the Mechs' Union and the robots they pilot to war are the only ones who stand between civilization and its utter destruction."

New Avalon is a world on the edge of the civilized galaxy. A hot, harsh world, New Avalon's greatest dangers are massive predatory beasts the size of starships. To avoid them, the bulk of humanity has fled to floating cities on New Avalon's vast oceans.

But some humans must live on land to grow food and forage for supplies. These small communities would perish if not for the brave and noble warriors of the Mechs' Union. Originally union workers piloting huge construction robots, they outfitted their mechs for war centuries ago. Now the former mechanics are

more like a knightly order, even if their terminology fits a modern labor union. Their mechs are the only things capable of slaying the beasts, and they have become the protectors of New Avalon's city-states.

In the centuries since, the mechs (some hundreds of years old) have come to feature heavily in New Avalon's religion (which holds that everything in the setting, including the cities and mechs, has its own spirit). However, this veneration has created a new threat. A fanatical group, the Godslayers, believes the beasts are the true rulers of New Avalon. They want to see human civilization cast down, and thus view the destruction of the Mech's Union as their primary goal.

EXPANDED RULE CREATION

In this chapter, we expand on some of the rules found in **Part III** of the **GENESYS** Core Rulebook. This section also includes a collection of generic adversaries, as well as a collection of common vehicles that can be used in a variety of settings. You can think of these as expansions on the example adversaries found on page 134 of the Core Rulebook and the example vehicles found on page 231 of the Core Rulebook.

One thing to note about the new adversaries is that they fit in as many settings as possible, which is the main difference between them and the ones you can find in each setting section. This means that you can use these adversaries with most of the included settings to flesh things out.

The new vehicles mark the first time we've published an extensive vehicle guide (although some of the **GENESYS** sourcebooks have their own sections on vehicles). As with the adversaries, we wanted to include vehicles that can be used in as wide a range of settings and games as possible (while still including some vehicles we think are particularly iconic or interesting).

WHAT'S IN THIS PART OF THE BOOK?

Let's go over what you're going to find in this part of the book in a bit more depth:

- **Chapter 1: Vehicle Creation.** This chapter has two sections. The first contains rules designed to help you create your own vehicle profiles. The second section is a collection of new vehicles usable in a variety of settings. This chapter relies on the vehicle rules starting on page 220 of **Chapter 2: Alternate Rules** in **Part III** of the Core Rulebook.
- **Chapter 2: Adversary Creation.** This chapter also has two sections. The first contains additional and expanded rules for creating your own adversary profiles, including rules for giving your adversaries a power level to help build encounters for your PCs. The adversary creation rules expand on those starting on page 202 of **Chapter 1: Customizing Rules**, in **Part III** of the Core Rulebook. The second section is a collection of new adversaries usable in a variety of settings. This is the first time we've made a collection of "generic" adversaries (if you don't count the three example adversaries found on page 134 of the Core Rulebook).

CHAPTER 1: VEHICLE CREATION

Similar to the other “create your own” sections in the **GENESYS** Core Rulebook, this chapter is less a rule set and more a set of guidelines. If you’ve read the **Vehicle Rules** section starting on page 220 of the **GENESYS** Core Rulebook, you already know all the basic elements of vehicle profiles (silhouette, maximum speed, handling, etc.) and how they affect combat and chase sequences.

If you want, you can plug any numbers you like into a vehicle profile, or take an existing vehicle and alter a few values to suit your needs. However, these guidelines ensure vehicles you create don’t unbalance your game, particularly when used with other vehicles we have designed.

VEHICLE PROFILE CONSTRUCTION

These are the rules for constructing profiles for most of the vehicles you want to include in your game. You start by figuring out your vehicle’s function and size and the skill the driver or pilot uses to control it. You then select values for each of the vehicle’s characteristics, which we discuss further later in this section.

Most of the choices you make are accompanied by a modifier for the vehicle’s price. The higher a vehicle’s characteristics are, generally the better it is. The price calculations we provide help you set a reasonable price for a vehicle based on its quality. You should also keep a target price for your vehicle in mind. If you end up exceeding it, your vehicle might be too good for what you intended. After all, not every vehicle needs to be a high-performance custom sports car or the fastest starship in the galaxy.

NARRATIVE VEHICLES

While many vehicles in your game require a full profile for combat encounters, many can feature as a major set piece without a profile. This is particularly true when PCs have no control over the vehicle (such as in a self-driving car or elevator) or when the vehicle serves primarily as an environment or a plot device (such as during a fight on a large vessel or in a massive battle station). Using a vehicle solely as an environment can make for a more cinematic scene and avoid bogging down the encounter with rules that are extraneous to it.

FUNCTION

The first step in vehicle construction is figuring out just what your vehicle is supposed to do. Vehicles often get used for transportation, but they are also employed for exploration, racing, construction, demolition, and of course, combat. Figuring out what your vehicle is used for is the first step in creating its profile.

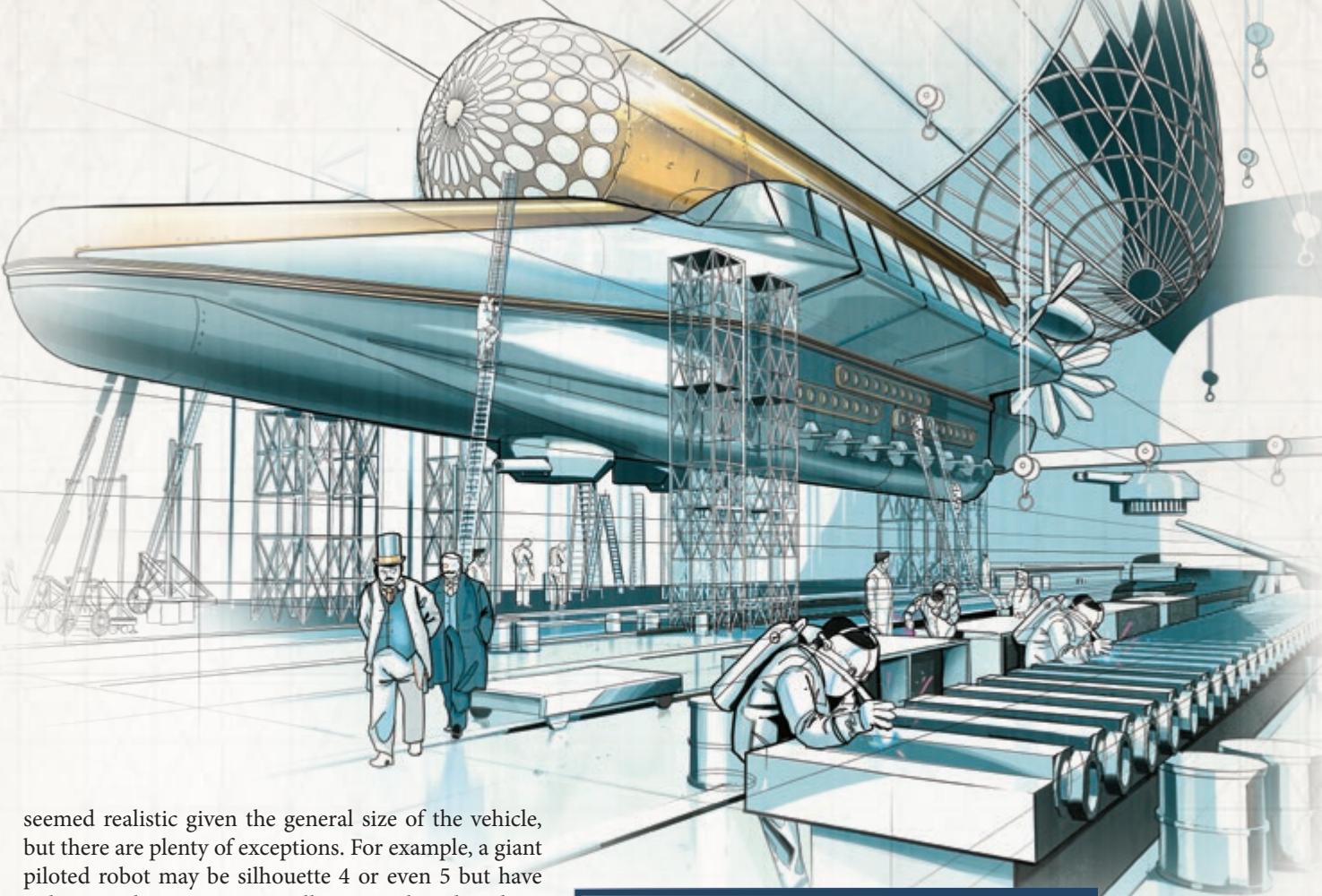
The next question is what kind of terrain your vehicle operates on or in—does it fly in the air, float on the water, drive on land, or soar through space? This is a largely narrative element of your vehicle’s design, but it also helps shape the rules for its profile. Also, when you use the vehicle in your games, you’ll want to know whether it’s intended to be driven, sailed, or flown. (Vehicle profiles don’t have specific rules that define the terrain they operate in; we just expect that your group will use common sense in that regard.)

SILHOUETTE

Most of you should already be familiar with silhouettes as they apply to characters, creatures, and vehicles, but in case you are not, a vehicle’s silhouette is a number that represents how big the vehicle is (see pages 109 and 222 of the **GENESYS** Core Rulebook). When you build a vehicle, the silhouette determines its relative size. See **Table II.1-1: Vehicle Silhouettes and Suggested Characteristics** on page 60 for a list of available silhouettes and the types of vehicles they describe.

When you select a silhouette, **Table II.1-1: Vehicle Silhouettes and Suggested Characteristics** also provides a number of suggestions for your vehicle’s characteristics. These are only suggestions, but they are designed to help you figure out what makes sense for a vehicle of a certain size (with some exceptions, of course, depending on the vehicle in question). Some of these values overlap; because silhouettes are an estimate, the line between a small silhouette 3 vehicle and a large silhouette 2 vehicle, for example, can get blurry.

All of the values in the table are set to a range that an average vehicle of that size should fall within. These are the values that best fit based on the system mechanics, but you’re more than welcome to go outside of our suggestions if you have an interesting concept. You should particularly consider this with the suggested number of occupants category. We based these values on what



seemed realistic given the general size of the vehicle, but there are plenty of exceptions. For example, a giant piloted robot may be silhouette 4 or even 5 but have only a single occupant. Finally, remember that these are just suggestions. You actually purchase characteristics for your vehicle during a later step.

PRICE MODIFIER

Table II.1-1: Vehicle Silhouettes and Suggested Characteristics includes an entry for price modifiers. This exists because in most settings the smallest vehicles cost exponentially less time, resources, and money to make, while the very largest vehicles cost exponentially more. To reflect this, we provided a price modifier based on silhouette. After you have completed calculating all other costs for your vehicle, apply the price modifier (if any) to the total.

CONTROL SKILL

When building your vehicle, you must select the skill characters use to control it. You can choose between Driving, Operating, and Piloting. Driving is reserved for ground vehicles, unless they're truly massive (such as some sort of land battleship of silhouette 4 or greater). Piloting is used for aircraft and spacecraft, again unless they are huge (a zeppelin or space cruiser of silhouette 4 or greater). If the vehicle uses Driving or Piloting, that means it can be controlled by one or two characters, who use their quick reflexes and spatial awareness as much as their training.

UNORTHODOX CONTROL SKILLS

There are some exceptions to the guidelines laid out for what control skill works with what vehicle. For example, a motorized speedboat that handles like a car could require the Driving skill to operate, while even a small sailboat would use Operating because of all the information (wind speed, heading, sail area) that goes into making a sailboat travel in the right direction. It's even possible that a bicycle, rowboat, or parachute would be controlled by the Athletics or Coordination skill, since they rely much more on a person's raw strength or reflexes.

The Operating skill covers most waterborne craft, as well as those really large vehicles we mentioned previously. If a vehicle uses Operating, that means it probably has a crew of more than two characters, and the characters controlling it use their brains and knowledge of the vehicle's handling capabilities to control it. Many of these vehicles are ponderous enough that the controller must think more about where it will be in a few minutes than where it is now.

What control skill you choose has no effect on the vehicle's price.

TABLE II.1–1: VEHICLE SILHOUETTES AND SUGGESTED CHARACTERISTICS

SILHOUETTE	HULL TRAUMA	SYSTEM STRAIN	OCCUPANTS	CONSUMABLES	ENCUMBRANCE	PRICE MODIFIER	EXAMPLES
1	1–4	1–5	1–2	6 hours	0–5	x0.5	Motorcycle, scooter, sled
2	4–10	3–11	1–5	1 day	5–20	x1	Car, carriage, small escape pod, fishing boat
3	10–20	10–16	1–30	1 day to 1 week	10–100	x1	Semitruck, fighter plane, starfighter, speedboat, single train car, small plane
4	18–35	15–25	4–100	1 week to 1 month	100–1,000	x1	Bomber, passenger aircraft, train, single-masted ship, light interstellar freighter, space shuttle, blimp
5	35–70	20–50	50–200	1–3 months	200–1,000	x2	Three-masted sailing ship, modern destroyer, interstellar medium transport, war zeppelin
6	70–100	45–65	400–1,000	3–6 months	500–2,000	x10	Five-masted ship of the line, ocean liner, Aegis cruiser, freighter
7–8	100–150	60–80	1000–5,000	6+ months	5,000+	x100	Aircraft carrier, oceangoing battleship, megacarrier, deep-space bulk transport, space warship
9–10	150+	75–100	10,000+	1+ year	10,000+	x100	Large space stations, the very largest spacegoing starships

MAXIMUM SPEED AND HANDLING

Every vehicle begins at maximum speed 1 and handling 0, and can potentially increase its maximum speed to 6 and handling to +4 or reduce its handling to -4. In theory, any vehicle can have any maximum speed and handling. However, you should keep your vehicle's function and size in mind when you set these values. In addition, note that when you decrease handling below 0, you actually reduce the price of your vehicle.

Cars, trucks, and most ground vehicles have a slower maximum speed and worse handling. Smaller vehicles are often faster with better handling. Air vehicles tend to have high speeds (between 3 and 6) and positive handling, while water vehicles are usually slower (maximum speeds between 1 and 3), with negative handling. Spaceships are either designed like aircraft (fast and agile) or

ships (slow and plodding). Of course, there are always exceptions. Despite being air vehicles, hot air balloons have terrible speed and handling, while modern aircraft carriers have surprising speed despite their size.

After you select your maximum speed and handling, use **Table II.1–2: Max Speed and Handling Costs** to calculate how much these increase the price.

DESIGN NOTES

Remember that, like silhouette, maximum speed is abstract and exponential, not incremental. Two cars that may have slightly different top speeds in real life would still have the same maximum speed in this game.

Handling, while an abstract measure of a vehicle's maneuverability, is only used when making checks to operate a vehicle using specific actions, such as the Gain the Advantage action, the Dangerous Driving action, or any other times when failing to maintain control of a vehicle could have serious consequences.

DEFENSE, ARMOR, HULL TRAUMA THRESHOLD, AND SYSTEM STRAIN THRESHOLD

Your vehicle begins with 0 defense and 0 armor. Generally, your vehicle shouldn't have any defense or armor unless it's designed for combat. Remember that, given the way vehicle armor and hull trauma thresholds work, it takes 10 damage from a personal-scale attack to do one point of damage to a vehicle. That built-in durability is fine for most civilian vehicles.

Smaller combat vehicles have 1 to 3 armor, while silhouette 4 or 5 combat vehicles might have 2 to 4 armor. The largest armored combat vehicles, with up to 5 to 7 armor, can seem almost invulnerable.

TABLE II.1–2: MAX SPEED AND HANDLING COSTS

CHARACTERISTIC	COST
Maximum Speed 2	1,000
Maximum Speed 3	2,500
Maximum Speed 4	5,000
Maximum Speed 5	10,000
-4 Handling	-4,000
-3 Handling	-2,000
-2 Handling	-1,500
-1 Handling	-1,000
+1 Handling	1,000
+2 Handling	2,000
+3 Handling	5,000
+4 Handling	10,000

Narratively, defense is often explained as energy shielding, the angle of armored plates, a magical protective field, sensor-baffling technology, camouflage, or some other invention beyond “more heavy plating.” It may be very rare in some settings but much more common in others.

Your vehicle also begins with hull trauma and system strain thresholds of 1. You can consult **Table II.1–1: Vehicle Silhouettes and Suggested Characteristics** if you want a good starting point for what these values should be for your vehicle.

Finally, take these characteristics and use **Table II.1–3: Defense, Armor, Hull Trauma Thresholds, and System Strain Thresholds** to calculate how much they increase the price of your vehicle.

DESIGN NOTES

When you design a vehicle, consider what kinds of weapons you want it to be resistant or impervious to. Vehicles without armor are still hard to damage with small arms, and 1 armor generally makes a vehicle immune to small-arms fire. Two armor makes a vehicle resistant to most human-portable missiles. Vehicles with 3 armor or more are extremely tough, vulnerable only to well-placed shots and powerful weapons.

We recommend a trade-off between armor, maximum speed, and handling. Basically, armor is heavy, and vehicles with heavy armor should be slower and harder to control!

OCCUPANTS, ENCUMBRANCE CAPACITY, AND CONSUMABLES

Generally speaking, use your best judgment when deciding how large a crew your vehicle needs. Larger-silhouette vehicles typically require larger crews. Of course, more technologically-enhanced settings require fewer crew members to handle more responsibilities, thanks to machines, computers, and even artificial intelligence. Look to sample vehicles that have a similar function in a setting with a comparative technology level to gauge your own crew requirements.

That said, vehicles require a pilot, at minimum, to control their vehicle’s movement, and weapons usually require separate gunners for operation. How many co-pilots, sensor operators, engineers, and other crew your vehicles have is entirely up to you.

Consumables are fuel, fresh food and water, and even air for spacecraft and submarines. Consumables are tracked very loosely; the consumables line in a vehicle profile indicates roughly how long it can operate before it needs to refuel or the occupants need to find food.

Your vehicle starts out with a single crew member and no passengers (occupancy 0), no encumbrance

TABLE II.1–3: DEFENSE, ARMOR, HULL TRAUMA THRESHOLDS, AND SYSTEM STRAIN THRESHOLDS

CHARACTERISTIC	COST
1 Defense	100
2 Defense	1,000
3 Defense	3,000
4 Defense	6,000
1 Armor	2,500
2 Armor	5,000
3 Armor	10,000
4 Armor	25,000
5 Armor	50,000
6 Armor	100,000
7 Armor	200,000
+1 Hull Trauma Threshold	100
+1 System Strain Threshold	100
+1 HT or SS Threshold over 50	1,000

capacity, and six hours’ worth of consumables. You can consult **Table II.1–1: Vehicle Silhouettes and Suggested Characteristics** if you want a good starting point for what these values should be for your vehicle.

Finally, take your characteristics and use **Table II.1–4: Occupants, Encumbrance Capacity, and Consumables** to calculate how much these increase the vehicle’s price.

WEAPONS

Regarding weapons for vehicle profiles, you’re best served duplicating existing vehicle weapons found later in this chapter. However, custom weapons can be created using the **Create an Item** rules in the **GENESYS** Core Rulebook, page 197. The only difference is that if you create a weapon that’s at planetary scale, it’s ten times as powerful as a regular weapon. Thus, multiply its final cost by 10. If you want to mount a personal scale weapon on a vehicle, give it the Personal Scale quality to denote that it’s not dealing planetary scale damage.

In a fighter plane or post-apocalyptic roadster with mounted machine guns, the driver probably controls the weapons. In a larger vehicle, such as a tank, the driver may focus on driving and a dedicated gunner on operating the weapons. Warships, battle zeppelins, and armed freighters may have multiple weapons scattered all over the vehicle, each operated by a different gunner. It’s up to you how many weapons your vehicle has, and who controls them.

DESIGN NOTES

In most real-world combat vehicle designs, engineers design vehicles to defeat a single type of target. Tanks take out other vehicles and tanks. Warships try to sink

TABLE II.1–4: OCCUPANTS, ENCUMBRANCE CAPACITY, AND CONSUMABLES

CHARACTERISTIC	PRICE
2–4 Occupants	100
5–10 Occupants	250
11–20 Occupants	500
21–50 Occupants	1,000
51–250 Occupants	5,000
251–1,000 Occupants	25,000
1,001+ Occupants	50,000
2–4 Encumbrance Capacity	10
5–10 Encumbrance Capacity	50
11–25 Encumbrance Capacity	100
26–50 Encumbrance Capacity	1,000
51–100 Encumbrance Capacity	2,500
101–250 Encumbrance Capacity	5,000
251–1000 Encumbrance Capacity	10,000
1,000+ Encumbrance Capacity	20,000
1–6 days consumables for silhouette 1–4	10
1–6 days consumables for silhouette 5+	100
1–3 weeks consumables for silhouette 1–4	200
1–3 weeks consumables for silhouette 5+	2,000
1–5 months consumables for silhouette 1–4	400
1–5 months consumables for silhouette 5+	4,000
6+ months consumables for silhouette 1–4	1,000
6+ months consumables for silhouette 5+	10,000

other ships. Jeeps with machine guns attack enemy troops. When designing your vehicle, consider what it is intended to defeat. Does it shoot down other vehicles just like itself? Does it take out smaller agile targets or larger armored targets? Once you know what it attacks, equip it with a weapon capable of causing serious harm to the primary opponent. For the most part, other weaponry should be defensive in nature and added sparingly to keep combat rounds moving quickly.

Remember that each character can only take one action during their turn, so they can fire a maximum of one gun a round. This means that while it may be cool to put multiple weapons on a single-person vehicle, a single character may not get use out of all of them. This is also why when we create profiles for single-pilot vehicles that traditionally do have multiple weapons, we create a single weapon profile that represents multiple guns. We highly encourage you to do the same.

PRICE AND RARITY

To help calculate the price for a vehicle, we have included costs in the previous tables that let you determine the price of each characteristic in turn.

Generally speaking, price is a mitigating factor when determining the “strength” of a vehicle. Basically, better vehicles cost more than worse ones. Even if you follow this chapter’s guidelines explicitly, be certain to check the price against vehicles in a similar niche within your setting and increase or decrease the price as necessary. Also, consider that how you price vehicles in general reflects how common they are in your setting and how much access to them you want PCs to have.

Rarity should be a reflection of how common the item is in your setting and is thus entirely up to you.

SPECIAL RULES

When creating a vehicle, we generally rely on the mechanics of their basic profile to differentiate them from other vehicles. However, we occasionally give vehicles a unique rule to reflect a specific element of that vehicle’s design or to add some interesting flavor.

You should only give a few rare vehicles special rules (most vehicles are plenty complex without them). If you want to do this, we’ve provided a few examples of some special rules you may want to consider.

Special rules should affect the vehicle’s price. Since these rules can cover a wide range of mechanics and modifiers, rather than trying to come up with a price for each, we suggest you use the following guidelines when you determine modifications to price: if a special rule provides a positive benefit, increase the price of the vehicle by 10%. If it’s a penalty, decrease the price by 10%.

SPECIAL RULE EXAMPLES

Vulnerable: This vehicle is particularly vulnerable to incoming fire. All successful combat checks targeting the vehicle add ▲▲ to the results.

Resilient: This vehicle is particularly durable, perhaps due to the materials used in its construction or because of redundant systems and solid design. When this vehicle suffers a Critical Hit while your character is operating it, you may spend a Story Point to roll a second result and choose the result you prefer.

All-Terrain: This vehicle is particularly adept at navigating difficult terrain. When making a Driving, Piloting, or Operating check to direct the vehicle, your character may remove ■■ added to the check due to terrain.

Massive: This vehicle is huge and unlikely to be destroyed by a single lucky hit. When making an attack targeting this vehicle, the Critical rating of any weapons used counts as 2 higher. (Note: this rule is specifically designed to make the very largest vehicles less likely to be destroyed by a few well-rolled Critical Hits. Only give it to vehicles of silhouette 7 or higher.)

SAMPLE VEHICLES

Vehicles provide transportation, unique encounters, and even a home away from home for some PCs. Listed in this section are several vehicles suitable for use in most GENESYS roleplaying game settings.

We have calculated the prices of these vehicles using our vehicle creation system. However, when you use these vehicles in your own setting, feel free to adjust those prices as necessary. You might wish to do so because of the specifics of your setting (perhaps in your post-apocalyptic world, internal combustion engines can no longer be made, so people pay incredible sums for a working car), or because of the circumstances of your adventure (if the characters visit a used bike shop in a modern day setting, they may find bicycles that are far less expensive than the one listed here, while being functionally identical).

GROUND VEHICLES

While most settings have ground vehicles with internal combustion engines that ride on rubber wheels, futuristic settings might have cars that hover and run on electricity or nuclear energy. Other settings might describe steam- or magic-powered propulsion.

CHARIOT

Chariots are two-wheeled vehicles drawn by two or four horses, used in ancient cultures as transportation for the nobility and for warfare and racing. Despite depictions in popular cinema, most war chariots served as mobile archery platforms for nobles, not as blade-covered battering rams. The chariot uses Riding as its control skill, but you can use Driving if you prefer (see *Unorthodox Control Skills* on page 59).



Control Skill: Riding.
Complement: 1 driver.
Passenger Capacity: 1.
Consumables: None.
Encumbrance Capacity: 8.
Price/Rarity: 650/2.
Weapons: None.

You should use this vehicle in the **age of myth** and **fantasy** settings.

COACH

Coaches are covered, four-wheeled vehicles pulled by a team of two or more horses. Unlike wagons, coaches are designed for speed and transporting passengers. Coaches could range from the carriages of nobles to frontier stage-coaches. The coach uses Riding as its control skill, but you can use Driving if you prefer (see *Unorthodox Control Skills* on page 59). You could also use this profile to represent a wagon by dropping the max speed to 1, reducing passenger capacity to 0, increasing encumbrance capacity to 60, and decreasing the price to 300.



Control Skill: Riding.
Complement: 1 driver, 1 guard.
Passenger Capacity: 6.
Consumables: None.
Encumbrance Capacity: 8.
Price/Rarity: 1,100/3.
Weapons: None.

You should use this vehicle in the **age of myth**, **fantasy**, and **steampunk** settings.

MOTORCYCLE

The motorcycle has been around since the earliest steam-powered bicycles in the mid-1800s. The modern version is small, maneuverable, and fuel efficient, having seen civilian and military use for centuries. This profile can represent a Jet Ski in a modern setting, or if you change the control skill to Piloting, it can represent a hover bike (or hopperbike) in a science fiction setting.



Control Skill: Driving.
Complement: 1 driver.
Passenger Capacity: 0 (1 uncomfortably).
Consumables: 5 hours.
Encumbrance Capacity: 4.
Price/Rarity: 3,255/4.
Weapons: None.

You should use this vehicle in the **steampunk**, **weird war**, **modern day**, **science fiction**, **space opera**, and **post apocalypse** settings.

SPORTS CAR

Often painted bright, attention-grabbing red, sports cars provide superior speed and handling at the expense of durability, safety, and passenger and cargo space.



Control Skill: Driving.

Complement: 1 driver.

Passenger Capacity: 1.

Consumables: 3 hours.

Encumbrance Capacity: 12.

Price/Rarity: 8,000/5.

Weapons: None.

You should use this vehicle in the **steampunk**, **weird war**, **modern day**, **science fiction**, **space opera**, and **post apocalypse** settings.

Bus

From ferrying children to forming the backbone of local public transit, the bus is a metropolitan people mover.



Control Skill: Driving.

Complement: 1 driver.

Passenger Capacity: 48.

Consumables: 6 hours.

Encumbrance Capacity: 10.

Price/Rarity: 2,500/4.

Weapons: None.

You should use this vehicle in the **steampunk**, **weird war**, **modern day**, **science fiction**, **space opera**, and **post apocalypse** settings.

Truck

Trucks are larger vehicles that haul loads of goods and supplies. This truck is midsized; it may need a higher encumbrance capacity to represent a semitruck.



Control Skill: Driving.

Complement: 1 driver.

Passenger Capacity: 2.

Consumables: 1 day.

Encumbrance Capacity: 125.

Price/Rarity: 8,100/4.

Weapons: None.

You should use this vehicle in the **modern day**, **science fiction**, **space opera**, and **post apocalypse** settings.

LOCOMOTIVE

This profile might represent a classic steam engine; a more modern diesel, electric, or maglev train; or even a more futuristic design. Regardless, trains run on a pre-laid track, and require certain crew members to activate track switches to manage their route.



Control Skill: Operating.

Complement: 1 conductor, 1 engineer, 2 spotters.

Passenger Capacity: None.

Consumables: 1 day.

Encumbrance Capacity: 20.

Price/Rarity: 50,000/7.

Weapons: None.

TRAIN CARS

A locomotive usually hauls a number of train cars. Each car has the same hull trauma threshold, silhouette, defense, and armor as the locomotive and must be targeted individually. Passenger train cars can carry 100 people, while cargo train cars have an encumbrance capacity of 200. Each costs 5,000 currency.

You should use this vehicle in the **steampunk**, **weird war**, **modern day**, **science fiction**, **space opera**, **monster horror**, and **post apocalypse** settings.

WASTELAND BUGGY

In the wastelands of some post-apocalyptic settings, gangs of marauders have salvaged vehicles into rickety engines of destruction. Although these could take nearly any form, we have included an example built from the chassis of a pre-apocalypse automobile and heavily modified with weapons and a supercharged engine.



Control Skill: Driving.

Complement: 1 driver, 1 gunner.

Passenger Capacity: 2.

Consumables: 2 days.

Encumbrance Capacity: 15.

Price/Rarity: 12,100/8.

Weapons: 1 scrap-shooter cannon (Fire Arc Forward, Left, and Right; Gunnery; Damage 1; Critical 4; Range [Medium]; Inaccurate 1, Vicious 2).

1 grille-mounted light machine gun (Fire Arc All; Gunnery; Damage 10; Critical 3; Range [Long]; Auto-fire, Inaccurate 1, Personal Scale).

VULNERABLE

All successful combat checks targeting the wasteland buggy add $\Delta \Delta$ to the results.

SPIKEY BITS

When the wasteland buggy is involved in a collision (see page 222 of the **GENESYS** Core Rulebook) all other vehicles and characters involved in the collision add +30 to the results of any Critical Hit or Critical Injury they suffer.

You should use this vehicle in the **post apocalypse** setting.

WASTELAND NOMAD RIG

Nomadic inhabitants of post-apocalyptic settings may roam the wastelands in salvaged semitrucks retrofitted into heavily armored rigs. These can also take nearly any form; this is a typical example.



Control Skill: Driving.

Complement: 1 driver, 2 gunners, 1 mechanic.

Passenger Capacity: 10.

Consumables: 2 weeks.

Encumbrance Capacity: 100.

Price / Rarity:



20,800/7.

Weapons: 1 harpoon launcher (Fire Arc Rear, Left, and Right; Gunnery; Damage 1; Critical 2; Range [Medium]; Ensnare 2, if target is silhouette 3 or less, gunner may spend $\Delta \Delta$ or \otimes from combat checks made with this weapon to move target one range band closer to the wasteland nomad rig).

1 spike-shooter turret (Fire Arc Forward, Left, and Right; Gunnery; Damage 8; Critical 2; Range [Medium]; Personal Scale, Pierce 3, Vicious 3).

RESILIENT

When the wasteland nomad rig suffers a Critical Hit and your character is operating it, you may spend a Story Point to roll a second result and choose the result you prefer.

SPIKEY BITS

When the wasteland nomad rig is involved in a collision (see page 222 of the **GENESYS** Core Rulebook), all other vehicles and characters involved in the collision add +30 to the results of any Critical Hit or Critical Injury they suffer.

You should use this vehicle in the **post apocalypse** setting.

ARMORED PERSONNEL CARRIER

The APC is an armored (and usually armed) military vehicle designed to transport soldiers on the battlefield without getting them killed. Some APCs have been equipped to the point that they are almost miniature tanks, but the APC here represents a basic version.



Control Skill: Driving.

Complement: 1 driver, 1 gunner.

Passenger Capacity: 10.

Consumables: 6 hours.

Encumbrance Capacity: 30.

Price/Rarity: 16,000/5(R).

Weapons: 1 heavy machine gun (Fire Arc All; Gunnery; Damage 12; Critical 3; Range [Long]; Auto-fire, Personal Scale, Pierce 2, Vicious 2).

ALL-TERRAIN

When making a Driving check to direct this vehicle, your character may remove $\blacksquare \blacksquare$ added to the check due to terrain.

You should use this vehicle in the **weird war, modern day, science fiction, space opera, and post apocalypse** settings.

TANK

The armored tank rose to prominence in World War I, riding a pair of rugged treads capable of overcoming most obstacles. Its heavy armor makes the tank immune to most small-arms fire. It carries a main cannon capable of destroying armored vehicles and bunkers, as well as some defensive anti-personnel weaponry to keep enemy soldiers away.



Control Skill: Driving.

Complement: 1 driver, 2 gunners, 1 commander.

Passenger Capacity: None.

Consumables: 6 hours.

Encumbrance Capacity: 5.

Price/Rarity: 25,000/6(R).

Weapons: Main tank gun (Fire Arc All; Gunnery; Damage 3; Critical 3; Range [Extreme]; Breach 1, Vicious 3).

Pintle-mounted heavy machine gun (Fire Arc All; Gunnery; Damage 12; Critical 3; Range [Long]; Auto-fire, Personal Scale, Pierce 2, Vicious 2).

Coaxial light machine gun (Fire Arc All; Gunnery; Damage 10; Critical 3; Range [Long]; Auto-fire, Personal Scale).

ALL-TERRAIN

When making a Driving check to direct this vehicle, your character may remove ■ ■ added to the check due to terrain.

You should use this vehicle in the **weird war, modern day, science fiction, space opera, and post apocalypse** settings.

TACTICAL STRIDER

The tactical strider is a medium-sized (six-meter-tall) pilable humanoid mech. This profile could represent anything from a steam- and clockwork-powered walker, to a cumbersome military strider invented with weird science, to a powered suit neurally linked to the pilot. We've given ours a heavy rifle and a rocket pod.



Control Skill: Driving.

Complement: 1 driver.

Passenger Capacity: None.

Consumables: 3 days.

Encumbrance Capacity: 5.

Price/Rarity: 40,000/6(R).

Weapons: Armored strider fist (Fire Arc All; Brawl; Damage 1; Critical 4; Range [Engaged]; Concussive 1, Knockdown).

Shoulder-mounted rocket pod (Fire Arc Forward; Gunnery; Damage 2; Critical 4; Range [Extreme]; Blast 1, Knockdown).

Anti-strider rifle (Fire Arc All; Gunnery; Damage 1; Critical 3; Range [Long]; Auto-fire).

ALL-TERRAIN

When making a Driving check to direct this vehicle, your character may remove ■ ■ added to the check due to terrain.

You should use this vehicle in the **steampunk, weird war, science fiction, and space opera** settings.

MECHA

Mechas are thirty-meter-tall humanoid vehicles that resemble gigantic power-armored soldiers. While most rely on a single pilot to operate via manual controls or AI assist, others use some form of neural interface technology, enabling pilots to treat the vehicle as an extension of their own body. They often wield scaled-up versions of personal weapons: huge swords, shields the size of rooftops, and rifles that look like heavy artillery pieces.



Control Skill: Driving.

Complement: 1 driver.

Passenger Capacity: None.

Consumables: 3 days.

Encumbrance Capacity: 5.

Price/Rarity: 52,000/7(R).

Weapons: Mech-fist (Fire Arc All; Brawl; Damage 3; Critical 4; Range [Engaged]; Concussive 1, Knockdown).

Hullbreaker sword (Fire Arc All; Melee; Damage 4; Critical 2; Range [Engaged]; Breach 3, Prepare 2, Vicious 3).

Giga cannon (Fire Arc All; Gunnery; Damage 4; Critical 3; Range [Extreme]; Blast 2, Breach 2, Slow-Firing 1).

ALL-TERRAIN

When making a Driving check to direct this vehicle, your character may remove ■ ■ added to the check due to terrain.

You should use this vehicle in the **space opera** setting.

WATER VEHICLES

This section includes ancient ships of the Age of Sail, modern naval vessels, and beyond.

THIRD-RATE SHIP OF THE LINE

Just under seventy meters long, third-rate ships of the line spread their guns across three decks. These sailing vessels were considered the premiere combat vessels of their day, balancing armament with maneuverability.



Control Skill: Operating.

Complement: 500–700 crew.

Passenger Capacity: 25.

Consumables: 6 months.

Encumbrance Capacity: 200.

Price/Rarity: 1,158,000/7(R).

Weapons: 14 port and 14 starboard 36-pounder cannons (Fire Arc Port or Fire Arc Starboard; Gunnery; Damage 6; Critical 2; Range [Long]).

15 port and 15 starboard 24-pounder cannons (Fire Arc Port or Fire Arc Starboard; Gunnery; Damage 6; Critical 3; Range [Long]).

7 port and 7 starboard 9-pounder cannons (Fire Arc Port or Fire Arc Starboard; Gunnery; Damage 4; Critical 5; Range [Medium]).

You should use this vehicle in the **fantasy**, **steampunk**, and **monsterworld** settings.

LONGSHIP

Infamously employed by Norse raiders, the longship is an iconic fifteen- to thirty-meter-long thin wooden ship with a single square sail. Offense is limited to the bows, slings, and spears of the warriors aboard.



Control Skill: Operating.

Complement: 40 crew.

Passenger Capacity: 10.

Consumables: 1 day.

Encumbrance Capacity: 50.

Price/Rarity: 5,400/5.

Weapons: None.

You should use this vehicle in the **age of myth** and **fantasy** settings.



TRIREME/GALLEY

The warships of antiquity, these vessels feature a large square sail and over a hundred oars. Soldiers on the top deck can launch projectiles and lead boarding actions. However, their main weapon is their fearsome ram.



Control Skill: Operating.

Complement: 200 crew.

Passenger Capacity: 30 soldiers.

Consumables: 2 weeks.

Encumbrance Capacity: None.

Price/Rarity: 24,000/6.

Weapons: 1 forward and 1 aft ballista (Fire Arc Forward, Port, and Starboard or Fire Arc Aft, Port, and Starboard; Ranged; Damage 1; Critical 2; Range [Long]; Inaccurate 1).

RAM

When the trireme or galley deliberately collides with another ship (see page 222 of the **GENESYS** Core Rulebook), the other ship suffers 8 damage to its hull trauma threshold and adds +40 to the Critical Hit result it suffers. The trireme or galley reduces the results of the Critical Hit it suffers by -20.

You should use this vehicle in the **age of myth** and **fantasy** settings.

SMALL CARGO FREIGHTER

Typically between sixty and ninety meters long, small freighters hire out independently to move cargo and passengers. This ship might be a river steamboat, an ocean cargo vessel, or a convoy ship in the midst of a war.



Control Skill: Operating.

Complement: 15 crew.

Passenger Capacity: 40.

Consumables: 2 months.

Encumbrance Capacity: 4,000.

Price/Rarity: 100,000/7.

Weapons: None.

You should use this vehicle in the **steampunk**, **weird war**, **modern day**, **monsterworld**, and **post-apocalypse** settings.

WORLD WAR II-Era DESTROYER

Nearly one hundred and twenty-five meters long, destroyers target enemy ships with five-inch guns, launch torpedoes at larger warships, and also hunt submarines.



Control Skill: Operating.

Complement: 300 crew.

Passenger Capacity: 50.

Consumables: 2 months.

Encumbrance Capacity: 125.

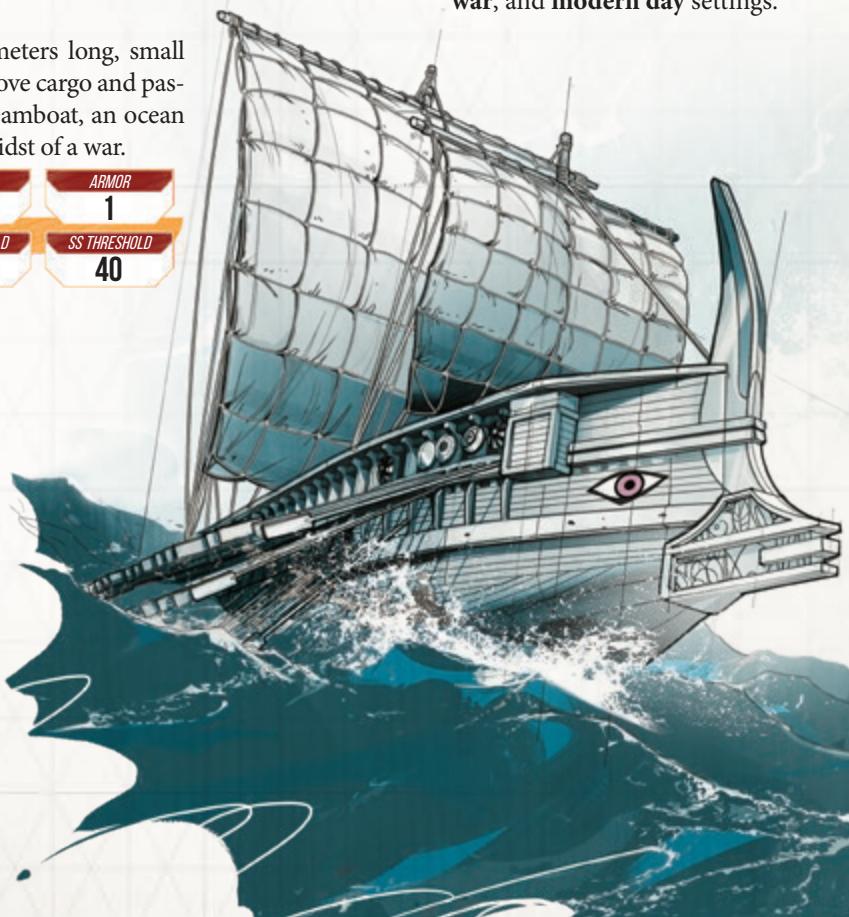
Price/Rarity: 380,000/7(R).

Weapons: 2 forward and 2 aft 5-inch gun turrets (Fire Arc Forward, Port, and Starboard or Fire Arc Aft, Port, and Starboard; Gunnery; Damage 7; Critical 3; Range [Long]; Blast 2).

8 40mm anti-air guns (Fire Arc All; Gunnery; Damage 1; Critical 4; Range [Medium]).

1 port and 1 starboard torpedo tube launcher (Fire Arc Port and Fire Arc Starboard; Gunnery; Damage 10; Critical 2; Range [Extreme]; Breach 2, Limited Ammo 5, Slow-Firing 1. When making an attack with this weapon, spend an action to determine the dice pool, but do not make the check. Then, at the end of the round, make the combat check as an out-of-turn incidental. If the target is no longer in range or could not be hit by the attack for some other reason, the check fails.)

You should use this vehicle in the **steampunk**, **weird war**, and **modern day** settings.



WORLD WAR II-Era Battleship

For years, the ultimate weapon of the world's navies was the battleship, a massive ship carrying the largest cannons ever deployed at sea. They were a symbol of national pride as well as hideously expensive.

SILHOUETTE	7	MAX SPEED	4	HANDLING	-4
DEFENSE	0	HT THRESHOLD	120	ARMOR	7
SS THRESHOLD	90				

Control Skill: Operating.

Complement: 1,800 crew.

Passenger Capacity: 200.

Consumables: 3 months.

Encumbrance Capacity: 400.

Price/Rarity: 90,000,000/9(R).

Weapons: 2 forward and 1 aft 16-inch gun turrets (Fire Arc Forward; Gunnery; Damage 9; Critical 1; Range [Extreme]; Breach 2, Guided 4, Limited Ammo 1, Slow-Firing 1. When making an attack with this weapon, spend an action to determine the dice pool, but do not make the check. Then at the end of the round, make the combat check as an out-of-turn incidental. If the target is no longer in range or could not be hit by the attack for some other reason, the check fails.)

10 port and 10 starboard 5-inch gun turrets (Fire Arc Starboard or Fire Arc Port; Gunnery; Damage 7; Critical 3; Range [Long]; Blast 5, Breach 3, Linked 2).

20 forward, 20 aft, 20 port, and 20 starboard 40mm anti-air guns (Fire Arc Port or Fire Arc Starboard or Fire Arc Fore or Fire Arc Aft; Ranged [Gunnery]; Damage 1; Critical 4; Range [Medium]).

MASSIVE

When making an attack targeting this vehicle, the Critical rating of any weapons used count as 2 higher.

You should use this vehicle in the **steampunk**, **weird war**, and **modern day** settings.

SUBMARINE

From their concealed position under water, submarines can launch surprise attacks, gather intelligence, or infiltrate special forces units. This example uses guided torpedoes; if you want a military submarine from before the 1950s, remove the Guided item quality from the torpedo tube launchers, reduce the hull trauma threshold by ten, and change the crew compliment to 50 (reduce price by 40,000 as well).

SILHOUETTE	5	MAX SPEED	2	HANDLING	-2
DEFENSE	0	HT THRESHOLD	60	ARMOR	3
SS THRESHOLD	40				

Control Skill: Operating.

Complement: 120 crew.

Passenger Capacity: 10.

Consumables: 3 months.

Encumbrance Capacity: 60.

Price/Rarity: 300,000/7(R).

Weapons: 4 forward torpedo tube launchers (Fire Arc Forward; Gunnery; Damage 9; Critical 1; Range [Extreme]; Breach 2, Guided 4, Limited Ammo 1, Slow-Firing 1. When making an attack with this weapon, spend an action to determine the dice pool, but do not make the check. Then at the end of the round, make the combat check as an out-of-turn incidental. If the target is no longer in range or could not be hit by the attack for some other reason, the check fails.)

You should use this vehicle in the **steampunk**, **weird war**, **modern day**, and **science fiction** settings.

MODERN FRIGATE

Modern frigates escort larger ships and hunt submarines. They tend to have less armor, but they possess other defenses such as jamming systems, chaff rockets, and defensive weapons (represented by the ship's high defense rating).

SILHOUETTE	5	MAX SPEED	4	HANDLING	-1
DEFENSE	2	HT THRESHOLD	75	ARMOR	3
SS THRESHOLD	65				

Control Skill: Operating.

Complement: 250 crew.

Passenger Capacity: 25.

Consumables: 2 months.

Encumbrance Capacity: 150 (plus 1 helicopter).

Price/Rarity: 400,000/7(R).

Weapons: 1 port and 1 starboard dual torpedo tube launcher (Fire Arc Forward and Starboard or Fire Arc Forward and Port; Gunnery; Damage 9; Critical 1; Range [Extreme]; Breach 2, Guided 4, Limited Ammo 2, Slow-Firing 1. When making an attack with this weapon, spend an action to determine the dice pool, but do not make the check. Then at the end of the round, make the combat check as an out-of-turn incidental. If the target is no longer in range or could not be hit by the attack for some other reason, the check fails.)

5-inch gun turret (Fire Arc Forward, Port, and Starboard; Gunnery; Damage 7; Critical 3; Range [Long]; Blast 2).

1 Anti-ship missile pod (Fire Arc Forward; Gunnery; Damage 12; Critical 2; Range [Strategic]; Blast 3, Breach 5, Guided 3, Limited Ammo 8, Slow-Firing 2).

1 CIWS mount (Fire Arc All; Gunnery; Damage 1; Critical 5; Range [Medium]; Accurate 2, Auto-fire).

You should use this vehicle in the **modern day** and **science fiction** settings.

MOTORBOAT

The motorboat might be a speedboat, fishing boat, or a shallow water patrol boat (with some light guns).



Control Skill: Driving.

Complement: 1 driver.

Passenger Capacity: 6.

Consumables: 12 hours.

Encumbrance Capacity: 10 (40 in lieu of passengers).

Price/Rarity: 6,500 (9,250 with guns)/4.

Weapons: None or 1 light machine gun (Fire Arc Forward, Port, and Starboard; Gunnery; Damage 10; Critical 3; Range [Long]; Auto-fire, Personal Scale), and 1 grenade launcher (Fire Arc Forward, Port, and Starboard; Gunnery; Damage 8; Critical 4; Range [Medium]; Blast 6, Personal Scale).

You should use this vehicle in the **steampunk, weird war, modern day, science fiction, space opera, and post apocalypse** settings.

GUIDED MISSILE CRUISER

Modern cruisers take advantage of advanced radar equipment and anti-air missiles to protect whole fleets.



Control Skill: Operating.

Complement: 350 crew.

Passenger Capacity: 25.

Consumables: 3 months.

Encumbrance Capacity: 160 (plus 2 helicopters).

Price/Rarity: 1,850,000/7(R).

Weapons: 1 anti-air missile system (Fire Arc All; Gunnery; Damage 5; Critical 3; Range [Extreme]; Guided 4).

1 forward and 1 aft 5-inch gun turret (Fire Arc Forward, Port, and Starboard or Fire Arc Aft, Port, Starboard; Gunnery; Damage 7; Critical 3; Range [Long]; Blast 2).

1 strategic missile system (Fire Arc All; Gunnery; Damage 15; Critical 2; Range [Strategic]; Blast 5, Breach 5, Guided 3, Limited Ammo 6)

2 CIWS mounts (Fire Arc All; Gunnery; Damage 1; Critical 5; Range [Medium]; Accurate 2, Auto-fire).

MASSIVE

When making an attack targeting this vehicle, the Critical rating of any weapons used counts as 2 higher.

You should use this vehicle in the **modern day and science fiction** settings.

AIR VEHICLES

This section presents a variety of aircraft to support campaigns spent in frantic dogfights and globe-hopping adventures.

ARMORED WAR ZEPPELIN

In some settings, zeppelins or other dirigibles have become the preeminent airborne vehicles. This is our take on a fanciful “war zeppelin,” which sports turret-mounted cannons and armored plates while still being “lighter than air.” This type of vehicle would probably replace sea-going warships in the setting it’s used in.



Control Skill: Operating.

Complement: 100 crew.

Passenger Capacity: 50.

Consumables: 3 weeks.

Encumbrance Capacity: 100.

Price/Rarity: 925,000/6(R).

Weapons: 1 forward and 1 aft twin 25-pounder gun turret (Fire Arc Forward, Port, and Starboard, or Fire Arc Aft, Port, and Starboard; Gunnery; Damage 6; Critical 3; Range [Long]; Blast 2, Linked 1).

2 port and 2 starboard 6-pounder defensive gun turrets (Fire Arc Port or Fire Arc Starboard; Gunnery; Damage 2; Critical 4; Range [Long]).

1 forward, 1 port, 1 starboard, and 1 aft defensive Maxim gun (Fire Arc Forward, Fire Arc Port, Fire Arc Starboard, or Fire Arc Aft; Ranged [Heavy]; Damage 8; Critical 4; Range [Medium]; Auto-fire, Inaccurate 1, Personal Scale).

MASSIVE

When making an attack targeting this vehicle, the Critical rating of any weapons used counts as 2 higher.

You should use this vehicle in the **steampunk, weird war, and monsterworld** settings.

TRANSPORT ZEPPELIN

This is our take on a steampunk setting’s rigid airship that has been designed to transport cargo and passengers or is outfitted for exploration (hence the small armaments). It is somewhat fanciful, since it manages to be armored while still being an airship.



Control Skill: Operating.

Complement: 20 crew.

Passenger Capacity: 40.

Consumables: 6 months.

Encumbrance Capacity: 600.

Price/Rarity: 40,000/5.

Weapons: 1 forward 6-pounder defensive gun turret (Fire Arc Forward, Port, and Starboard; Gunnery; Damage 2; Critical 4; Range [Long]).

1 port and 1 starboard defensive Maxim gun (Fire Arc Port or Fire Arc Starboard; Ranged [Heavy]; Damage 8; Critical 4; Range [Medium]; Auto-fire, Inaccurate 1, Personal Scale).

You should use this vehicle in the **steampunk**, **weird war**, and **monsterworld** settings.

CARGO PLANE

The cargo plane is a workhorse of air travel and logistics. Militaries use cargo planes to air-drop supplies, transport vehicles, and troops, and plenty of individuals use cargo planes to ship their goods around the globe.



Control Skill: Piloting.

Complement: 1 pilot, 1 copilot.

Passenger Capacity: 4.

Consumables: 1 day.

Encumbrance Capacity: 120 (or 30 passengers).

Price/Rarity: 11,750/5.

Weapons: None.

You should use this vehicle in the **weird war**, **modern day**, **science fiction**, and **post apocalypse** settings.

WORLD WAR II-Era FIGHTER PLANE

This is a prop-driven fighter aircraft from the 1940s designed to shoot down other fighter planes, escort heavy bombers, and attack ground targets. Fighters in this era typically had multiple machine guns (our fighter treats all of its guns as a single weapon system).



Control Skill: Piloting.

Complement: 1 pilot.

Passenger Capacity: None.

Consumables: 6 hours.

OPTIONAL RULE: CRASHING AND/OR SINKING

Table III.2—19: Critical Hit Result, on page 230 of the Core Rulebook, is designed to be a generic table of severe damage that can affect a vehicle. However, one thing it does not represent is the possibility of crashing or sinking (in the case of aircraft and watercraft, respectively).

To better represent this threat, we present the following optional rule. When a ship or aircraft suffers a Critical Hit, the attacker may spend an additional $\Delta \Delta \Delta$ or \otimes to inflict a separate unique Crashing/Sinking Critical Hit on the target.

Crashing/Sinking (Hard [♦ ♦ ♦] Critical Hit): The vehicle has a major leak in its hull, or its control surfaces are shredded. Roll 1d5; this is the number of rounds the vehicle remains afloat or in the air (not including the current round). If the Critical Hit has not been repaired by the end of the last round, the vehicle sinks or crashes and counts as having been destroyed.

What happens to the passengers depends on the vehicle in question (and may be modified by you accordingly). In the case of most ships, passengers and crew can swim away from the sinking vessel; as long as they abandon ship before it sinks, they are not lost. In the case of most aircraft, survival depends on how hard the aircraft hits the ground. You may use the falling rules to represent a crash, with the “height” of the fall depending on the severity of the crash. PCs could even use Resilience, instead of Athletics or Coordination, to reduce damage.

However in some cases, (such as a submerged submarine) when the vehicle sinks or crashes, nobody survives.

Encumbrance Capacity: 4.

Price/Rarity: 40,000/4(R).

Weapons: Multiple wing-mounted heavy machine guns (Fire Arc Forward; Gunnery; Damage 12; Critical 3; Range [Medium]; Accurate 2, Auto-fire, Personal Scale, Pierce 2).

Ground-attack rocket (Fire Arc Forward; Gunnery; Damage 5; Critical 4; Range [Long]; Blast 2, Inaccurate 2, Limited Ammo 2).

You should use this vehicle in the **weird war** and **modern day** settings.

WORLD WAR II-Era Heavy Bomber

In World War II, heavy bombers were well equipped with defensive machine guns to drive off attacking fighters and could carry heavy payloads of explosives.



Control Skill: Piloting.

Complement: 1 pilot, 1 copilot, 1 navigator, 1 bombardier/gunner, 1 radio operator/gunner, 2 gunners.

Passenger Capacity: 2.

Consumables: 12 hours.

Encumbrance Capacity: 30.

Price/Rarity: 80,000/5(R).

Weapons: Nose-mounted heavy machine guns (Fire Arc Forward; Gunnery; Damage 12; Critical 3; Range [Medium]; Accurate 2, Auto-fire, Personal Scale, Pierce 2).

Tail-mounted heavy machine gun (Fire Arc Aft; Gunnery; Damage 12; Critical 3; Range [Medium]; Auto-fire, Personal Scale, Pierce 2).

Two twin heavy machine gun turrets (Fire Arc All; Gunnery; Damage 10; Critical 3; Range [Medium]; Accurate 1, Auto-fire, Personal Scale, Pierce 2).

BOMBING RUN

The bombardier may pick a point on the ground beneath the bomber, then spend an action and perform a **Hard (♦♦♦) Gunnery check**. If the check is successful, all characters and vehicles within medium range of that point suffer a hit dealing 15 damage, plus 1 damage per ♦. The gunner may spend ▲ or ♠ to inflict a Critical Hit or Critical Injury on one vehicle or character affected by the bombing run, and may do so multiple times, selecting a different character or vehicle each time. At your GM's discretion, the bombing run may also destroy structures, shatter the landscape, or do other damage. Once this vehicle has made a bombing run, it cannot do so again until it has returned to base and has been reloaded with bombs.

You should use this vehicle in the **weird war** and **modern day** settings.

ADJUSTED COSTS

Some of these vehicles' prices do not match the actual costs of their real-world equivalents. This is because our pricing system evaluates vehicles across different historical eras with a single metric. However, other prices exceed what they should be based on the price-calculation system. In some cases, we have adjusted prices to account for intangibles such as modern computers or interstellar drives.

CIVILIAN HELICOPTER

Civilian helicopters transport VIPs, local news reporters, and police officers around cities.



Control Skill: Piloting.

Complement: 1 pilot, 1 copilot.

Passenger Capacity: 4.

Consumables: 1 day.

Encumbrance Capacity: 20.

Price/Rarity: 20,000/6.

Weapons: None.

You should use this vehicle in the **modern day** and **science fiction** settings.

HELICOPTER GUNSHIP

Attack helicopters support troops on the ground with close-in mobile firepower. Some rare variants can even transport soldiers into battle. To make this a transport gunship, reduce the handling by 2 and increase the passenger capacity to 8 (the cost remains unchanged).



Control Skill: Piloting.

Complement: 2 crew.

Passenger Capacity: None.

Consumables: 1 day.

Encumbrance Capacity: None.

Price/Rarity: 127,000/7(R).

Weapons: Anti-tank missiles (Fire Arc Forward; Gunnery; Damage 3; Critical 3; Range [Extreme]; Blast 1, Breach 2, Limited Ammo 4).

Anti-personnel rocket pods (Fire Arc Forward; Gunnery; Damage 12; Critical 4; Range [Medium]; Blast 12, Limited Ammo 8, Personal Scale).

Chain gun (Fire Arc Forward; Gunnery; Damage 1; Critical 3; Range [Medium]; Auto-fire, Vicious 1).

You should use this vehicle in the **steampunk**, **weird war**, **modern day**, **science fiction**, **space opera**, **monsterworld**, and **post apocalypse** settings.

SPACE VEHICLES

From early rockets to futuristic long-range exploration craft, space vehicles open up access to a variety of new environments for your campaigns to explore.

ORBITAL SHUTTLE

Ground-to-orbit shuttles are essential to reach dedicated starships in space. Shuttles must be aerodynamic and armored or shielded for reentry.



Control Skill: Piloting.

Complement: 1 pilot, 1 copilot.

Passenger Capacity: 12.

Consumables: 3 days.

Encumbrance Capacity: 80 (160 without passengers).

Price/Rarity: 25,000/4.

Weapons: None.

You should use this vehicle in the **science fiction** and **space opera** settings.

INTERSTELLAR FREIGHTER

For every military starship, there are a thousand freighters transporting goods. Our take on the space freighter is similar to a small oceangoing freighter, with a small crew, large cargo holds, and limited maneuverability.



Control Skill: Operating.

Complement: 5 crew.

Passenger Capacity: 5.

Consumables: 3 months.

Encumbrance Capacity: 600.

Price/Rarity: 75,000/5.

Weapons: Defensive laser projector (Fire Arc Forward; Gunnery; Damage 4; Critical 5; Range [Extreme]; Accurate 2).

You should use this vehicle in the **science fiction** and **space opera** settings.

SPACE CRUISER

Intended for more futuristic settings, our take on the space cruiser might serve as a frontline combatant, enforce blockades, secure logistical routes, raid enemy supply lines, or conduct customs patrols.



Control Skill: Operating.

Complement: 175 crew.

Passenger Capacity: 40.

Consumables: 9 months.

Encumbrance Capacity: 200 (plus 2 shuttles).

Price/Rarity: 4,200,000/7(R).

Weapons: Spinal "shipbreaker" railgun (Fire Arc Forward; Gunnery; Damage 12; Critical 2; Range [Extreme]; Breach 4, Slow-Firing 1, Vicious 3).

2 fusion missile launch tubes (Fire Arc All; Gunnery; Damage 15; Critical 3; Range [Strategic]; Blast 10, Guided 4, Slow-Firing 2, Vicious 1, when the Blast quality is triggered, all vehicles within medium range suffer a hit).

10 heavy laser projectors (Fire Arc All; Gunnery; Damage 5; Critical 4; Range [Extreme]; Accurate 2, these weapons are scattered across the hull of the vessel, so only two may be fired at any one target).

MASSIVE

When making an attack targeting this vehicle, the Critical rating of any weapons used counts as 2 higher.

You should use this vehicle in the **science fiction** and **space opera** settings.

LONG-RANGE EXPLORATION CRUISER

Humanity's efforts to explore the stars—to investigate, map, and study alien planets and life forms—ultimately rely on large, deep-space exploration vessels. Given their long-term mission, these spacecraft carry scientists, family members, and even pets. Such ships are perfect as settings for an entire campaign.



Control Skill: Operating.

Complement: 660 crew.

Passenger Capacity: 314.

Consumables: 3 years.

Encumbrance Capacity: 500 (plus 3 ground-to-orbit shuttlecraft).

Price/Rarity: 2,400,000/8.

Weapons: 2 ship-hunter missile launch tubes (Fire Arc All; Gunnery; Damage 8; Critical 1; Range [Strategic]; Blast 2, Guided 5, Slow-Firing 2).

4 heavy laser projectors (Fire Arc All; Gunnery; Damage 5; Critical 4; Range [Extreme]; Accurate 2, these weapons are scattered across the hull of the vessel, so only two may be fired at any one target).

MASSIVE

When making an attack targeting this vehicle, the Critical rating of any weapons used counts as 2 higher.

You should use this vehicle in the **science fiction** and **space opera** settings.

CHAPTER 2: ADVERSARY CREATION

Adversaries are a huge part of most encounters in a game. In fact, they make up the bulk of the characters that inhabit the world. Technically, not every character that isn't a player character is an adversary (someone opposed to the PCs), but usually the ones we need rules for are. As such, when you see the word **adversary**, know we're referring to all non-player characters.

In the **GENESYS** Core Rulebook, pages 202–203, we provided some guidelines for creating your own adversaries. These rules don't override that guidance; instead, they provide a quick-start way of constructing adversaries using pre-created packages. This section also provides rules for a challenge rating system that helps balance combat and social encounters against your party.

QUICKLY CONSTRUCTING AN ADVERSARY

The following section is a step-by-step process that helps you quickly build an adversary. These rules sacrifice some of the customizability and freedom found in the adversary creation guidelines in the **GENESYS** Core Rulebook. In exchange they let you construct your own adversaries rapidly and calculate their power levels.

If you want to use these rules, follow the steps presented here. Each choice you make at each step comes with a listed increase to the adversary's power levels, which are used with our power level rules (see page 84) to create more balanced **GENESYS** encounters. Right now, all you need to know is that there are three power levels that we

track: **combat power level**, **social power level**, and **general power level**. Each starts this process at 0, and at the end of the process, each must be a minimum of 1 (raise them if they are lower).

Before you create an adversary, take a few minutes to think about what role you want them to play in your game. Is this character an ally or an obstacle? Are they intended to pose a challenge in combat, in social encounters, or be competent with general skills? The purpose of an adversary determines much of what goes in their profile, so the more thought you give to what you want your adversary to look like beforehand, the smoother the process is.

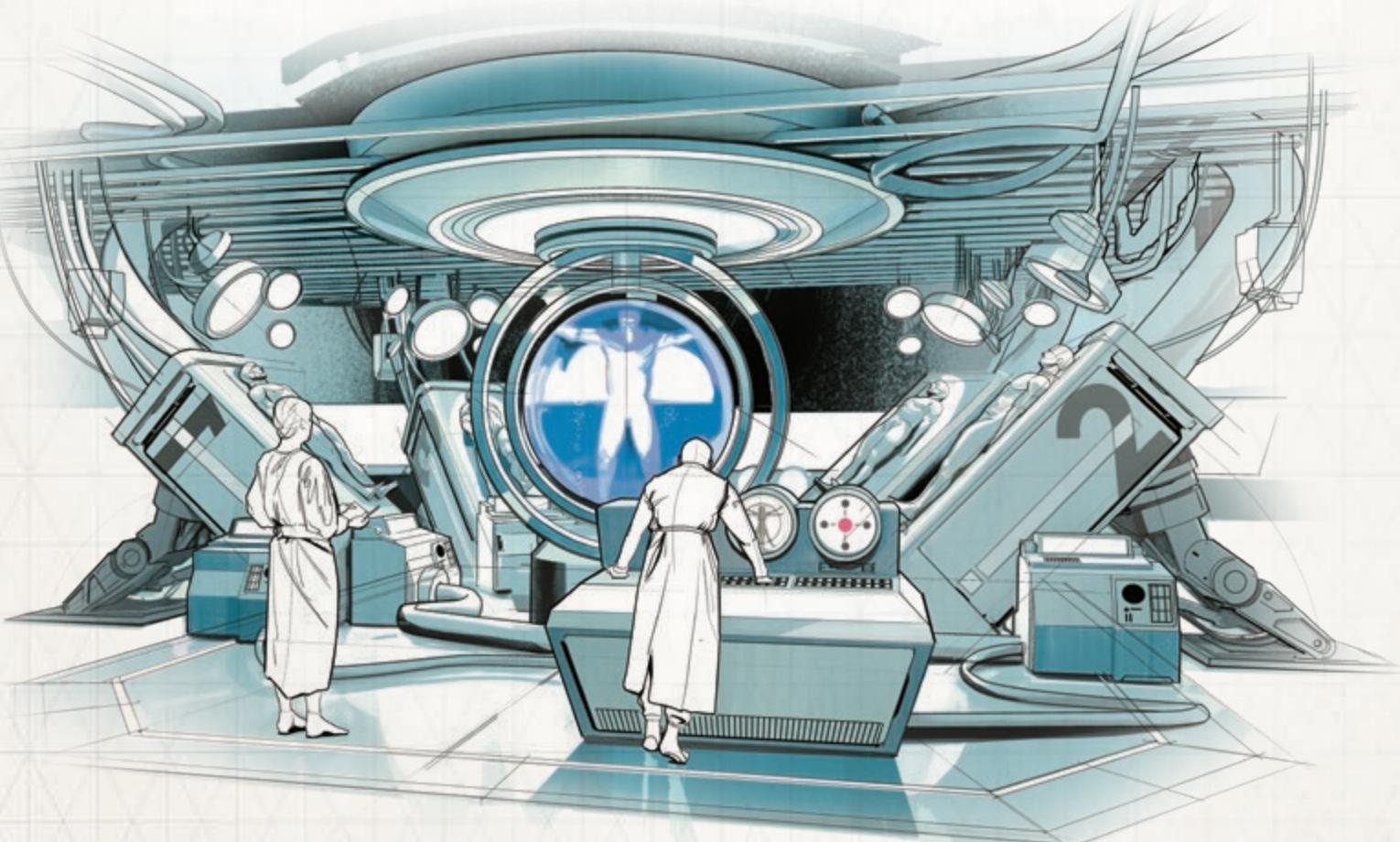


TABLE II.2–1: CHARACTERISTIC ARRAYS

NAME	CHARACTERISTICS	POWER LEVELS	EXAMPLES
Small Creature	Brawn 1, Agility 2, Intellect 3, Cunning 1, Willpower 1, Presence 1	Combat -1, Social -1, General +0	Mouse, bird, snake, cat
Large Creature	Brawn 4, Agility 2, Intellect 2, Cunning 1, Willpower 1, Presence 1	Combat +1, Social -1, General +0	Bear, ox, horse, cow, ram
Stealthy Creature	Brawn 2, Agility 3, Intellect 3, Cunning 1, Willpower 1, Presence 1	Combat +0, Social -1, General +0	Puma, deer, shark
Huge Creature	Brawn 5, Agility 1, Intellect 1, Cunning 1, Willpower 1, Presence 1	Combat +1, Social -1, General -1	Elephant, dinosaur
Average Person	Brawn 2, Agility 2, Intellect 2, Cunning 2, Willpower 2, Presence 2	Combat +0, Social +0, General +0	Any regular person
Tough Person	Brawn 3, Agility 2, Intellect 2, Cunning 2, Willpower 2, Presence 1	Combat +0, Social -1, General +0	Laborer, mob tough, soldier
Smart Person	Brawn 1, Agility 2, Intellect 2, Cunning 3, Willpower 2, Presence 2	Combat -1, Social +0, General +0	Student, medic, hacker
Sociable Person	Brawn 2, Agility 2, Intellect 2, Cunning 2, Willpower 1, Presence 3	Combat +0, Social +0, General +0	Politician, manager
Jack of All Trades	Brawn 3, Agility 3, Intellect 3, Cunning 3, Willpower 3, Presence 3	Combat +1, Social +1, General +1	Any competent person
Skilled Warrior	Brawn 4, Agility 3, Intellect 2, Cunning 2, Willpower 3, Presence 1	Combat +2, Social +0, General +0	Knight, berserker, veteran
Savant	Brawn 2, Agility 1, Intellect 2, Cunning 5, Willpower 2, Presence 1	Combat -1, Social -1, General +1	Scholar, researcher, surgeon
Born Leader	Brawn 2, Agility 2, Intellect 3, Cunning 2, Willpower 3, Presence 5	Combat +0, Social +2, General +0	President, ruler, general
Cunning Foe	Brawn 2, Agility 4, Intellect 4, Cunning 2, Willpower 2, Presence 2	Combat +1, Social +0, General +1	Spy, assassin, military scout
Mastermind	Brawn 3, Agility 3, Intellect 4, Cunning 4, Willpower 5, Presence 3	Combat +1, Social +2, General +2	The main villain in a story

STEP 1: ADVERSARY TYPE

The first step in this process is deciding what type of adversary you want to create: a minion, a rival, or a nemesis. For full information regarding the mechanics differentiating these three, see page 131 to 133 of the **GENESYS** Core Rulebook. The rest of this section offers a briefer overview that may help you make your decision.

MINION

Minions are adversaries who are weak individually but can be dangerous opponents as a group. Your adversary is probably a minion if they:

- Don't have a name, like Emily, Xavier, or Tim, but instead are just a type, like "soldier" or "hostage."
- Rely on strength in numbers.
- Act as faceless support for a named character.

RIVAL

Rivals are worthy foes, able to match PCs within an area of expertise or to act as a force multiplier to other adversaries. Your adversary is probably a rival if they:

- Are competent alone in a single area of focus.
- Lead or assist minions in a planned encounter.
- Challenge one PC in a head-to-head engagement.

NEMESIS

Nemeses are important adversaries who are often major obstacles in a campaign. A nemesis is at least equal to a PC and may be a threat for a whole group. Your adversary is probably a nemesis if they:

- Challenge a group of PCs in an encounter.
- Have more than one area of expertise.
- Have a unique name that your players will actually remember (and probably learn to hate), an established backstory, and perhaps even a character arc.
- Can support multiple rivals or minion groups.

STEP 2: CHARACTERISTICS

Although an adversary's characteristics can be any numbers you choose, for the sake of simplicity, we have provided a range of characteristic arrays in **Table II.2–1: Characteristic Arrays**. Each comes with adjustments for your adversary's power levels, and some examples of what kind of adversaries that might use that characteristic array. Select one array for your adversary.

STEP 3: SOAK, DEFENSE, AND WOUND AND STRAIN THRESHOLDS

Once you have determined an adversary's characteristics, you can figure out their derived attributes: wound and strain thresholds, soak, and melee and ranged defense. **Table II.2–2: Soak, Defense, and Wound and Strain Thresholds**, on page 76, has multiple options for increasing these attributes. You may select up to two options from this table (unless your adversary is a minion; then, you should select zero or one).

SOAK

When determining a soak rating for your adversary, start with a value equal to their Brawn characteristic. You will be able to add armor to your adversary later, so remember that its soak will go up.

If you feel like your adversary needs a higher soak (or if it is a creature that doesn't wear armor but is naturally armored), **Table II.2–2** provides some options for increasing it. Just remember that a soak of 4 or 5 is good for a combat-focused adversary, and if your adversary's soak increases beyond 7, your PCs' basic weapons will have a hard time doing any meaningful damage to your adversary. For this reason, we recommend not increasing your adversary's total soak value above 7.

MELEE AND RANGED DEFENSE

When determining a melee and ranged defense for your adversary, start with 0 for both ratings. Your adversary's ranged defense may go up based on your gear choice in step 7 on page 81. However, it's perfectly acceptable for your adversary to have no defense.

If you do feel your adversary needs a higher ranged or melee defense, **Table II.2–2: Soak, Defense, and Wound and Strain Thresholds** does provide options for increasing them. Just remember that a defense rating cannot be increased above 4 for any reason.

WOUND THRESHOLD AND STRAIN THRESHOLD

When using these rules, use these starting wound threshold and strain threshold values for each adversary type. Wound and strain thresholds can be increased based on the options provided in **Table II.2–2: Soak, Defense, and Wound and Strain Thresholds**.

- Minions:** A minion with a Brawn of 1 should have a wound threshold of 3. Otherwise, a minion should have a wound threshold of 5.
- Rivals:** Rivals should have a wound threshold of 8 plus their Brawn rating.
- Nemeses:** A nemesis should have a wound threshold of 12 plus their Brawn rating, and a strain threshold of 10 plus their Willpower rating.

AVOID COMPOUNDED DEFENSES

When creating your adversary, you have multiple opportunities to make them tougher in combat encounters. You can increase their soak, or their defense, or their wound threshold, or you can give them the Adversary talent. However, we recommend not doing all of these. Too many defenses not only pose a risk of making the adversary frustratingly difficult to combat, but can be annoying to track when you sit down and run your adversary at the table.

ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE

Whether an adversary is a minion, a rival, or a nemesis has a big impact on its wound and strain thresholds. For example, minions usually work in groups with combined wound thresholds, so their individual wound threshold is relatively small (3 to 6). Rivals tend to have a wound threshold that is roughly equivalent to the wound thresholds of most PCs (between 10 and 15).

Finally, a nemesis should have a wound threshold that matches or exceeds a PC's threshold (10 to 20). However, a nemesis also has a strain threshold (minions and rivals just suffer strain to their wound thresholds). A nemesis's strain threshold should be a bit smaller than their wound threshold unless they are specifically designed for social encounters.

MONSTERS AND GIGANTIC CREATURES

The exception to this advice is monsters or other large creatures, who should have higher wound thresholds than normal to represent them being big, tough, and scary. If you're looking for some guidance on how high a big creature's wound threshold should go, you can use their silhouette as a guide. Generally, monsters should not have a wound threshold lower than 10 times their silhouette.

TABLE II.2–2: SOAK, DEFENSE, AND WOUND AND STRAIN THRESHOLDS

NAME	DERIVED ATTRIBUTE	POWER LEVELS	EXAMPLES
Tough Skin	+1 soak, +2 wound threshold	Combat +0, Social +0, General +0	Minions, rivals, nemeses
Armored Hide	+2 soak, +5 wound threshold	Combat +1, Social +0, General +0	Rival or nemesis animals or non-humans
Dodgy	+1 melee defense, +1 ranged defense	Combat +0, Social +0, General +0	Minions, rivals, nemeses
Close Combatant	+2 melee defense	Combat +0, Social +0, General +0	Rivals, nemeses
Camouflaged	+1 melee defense, +2 ranged defense	Combat +1, Social +0, General +0	Rival or nemesis animals or non-humans
Hardy	+5 wound threshold	Combat +0, Social +0, General +0	Rivals, nemeses
Very Tough	+10 wound threshold	Combat +1, Social +0, General +0	Rival animals or non-humans and all nemeses
Giant Body	+25 wound threshold	Combat +2, Social +0, General +0	Silhouette 3 or higher animal rivals and nemeses
Savvy	+5 strain threshold	Combat +0, Social +0, General +0	Nemeses
Mental Giant	+10 strain threshold	Combat +0, Social +1, General +0	Main character nemeses

STEP 4: SKILLS

Among the most important choices to make for your adversary, skills define how they play at the table. However, it can be easy to add too many skills to an adversary. Often, we worry that an adversary may feel incomplete or somehow “wrong” if they don’t have skills allowing them to do everything we expect them to do based on their description and backstory. But before you start adding skills, keep a few things in mind:

- Adversaries can still make checks untrained.
- Most adversaries will only encounter the PCs in a few limited encounters. They generally won’t have the chance to make a check using each of the skills you give them. Just as with talents and abilities, an adversary doesn’t have to be good at a skill if it’s never going to affect the PCs or the ongoing story.
- In social encounters, some skills are used offensively (Charm, Leadership, Deception, Negotiation, and Coercion) to influence others, while other skills are used defensively (Cool, Discipline, Vigilance, and Negotiation) to resist that influence. Social encounters are usually more interesting if an adversary is more offensive than defensive, which is why our skill packages have higher ranks in social skills and less ranks in the skills that oppose them. This lets your PCs feel threatened by the adversary, but without feeling that making a check targeting them is hopeless.

Keeping these points in mind, you may select one to two skill packages from **Table II.2–3: Skill Packages** on page 78. If your adversary is a main character or principle villain in a campaign, you may select one to three packages, instead.

MINIONS

If your adversary is a minion, you may only select one skill package. In addition, ignore the ranks of the skills provided in the package. Instead, your minion gains the skills listed as group skills (see page 132 of the **GENESYS Core Rulebook**).

In addition, each package increases a minion’s power levels by a maximum of +1 (instead of the listed increase).

COMBAT AND OTHER SETTING-SPECIFIC SKILLS

In **Table II.2–3**, we use the basic combat skills, and not the sub-skills used in some settings. If you are making an adversary for one of these settings and you select a skill package with a basic combat skill, you may give your adversary any or all of the appropriate sub-skills instead at the same rank. Since your adversary can only make one attack at a time, having multiple combat skills does not significantly increase their power level.

In addition, some packages have other setting-specific skills. If your setting does not include a skill that comes in the package, you should not apply this skill to your adversary (the power level adjustments remain the same).

DUPLICATE SKILLS

If you select two packages that each contain the same skill, give your adversary the skill at the higher of the two values (do not combine the two values).

LIMITS ON THE NUMBER OF SKILLS

Too many skills can make an adversary’s profile confusing. Thus we recommend limiting the total number of skills to eight. If your choices give more than eight skills, you can discard any you feel are unnecessary.

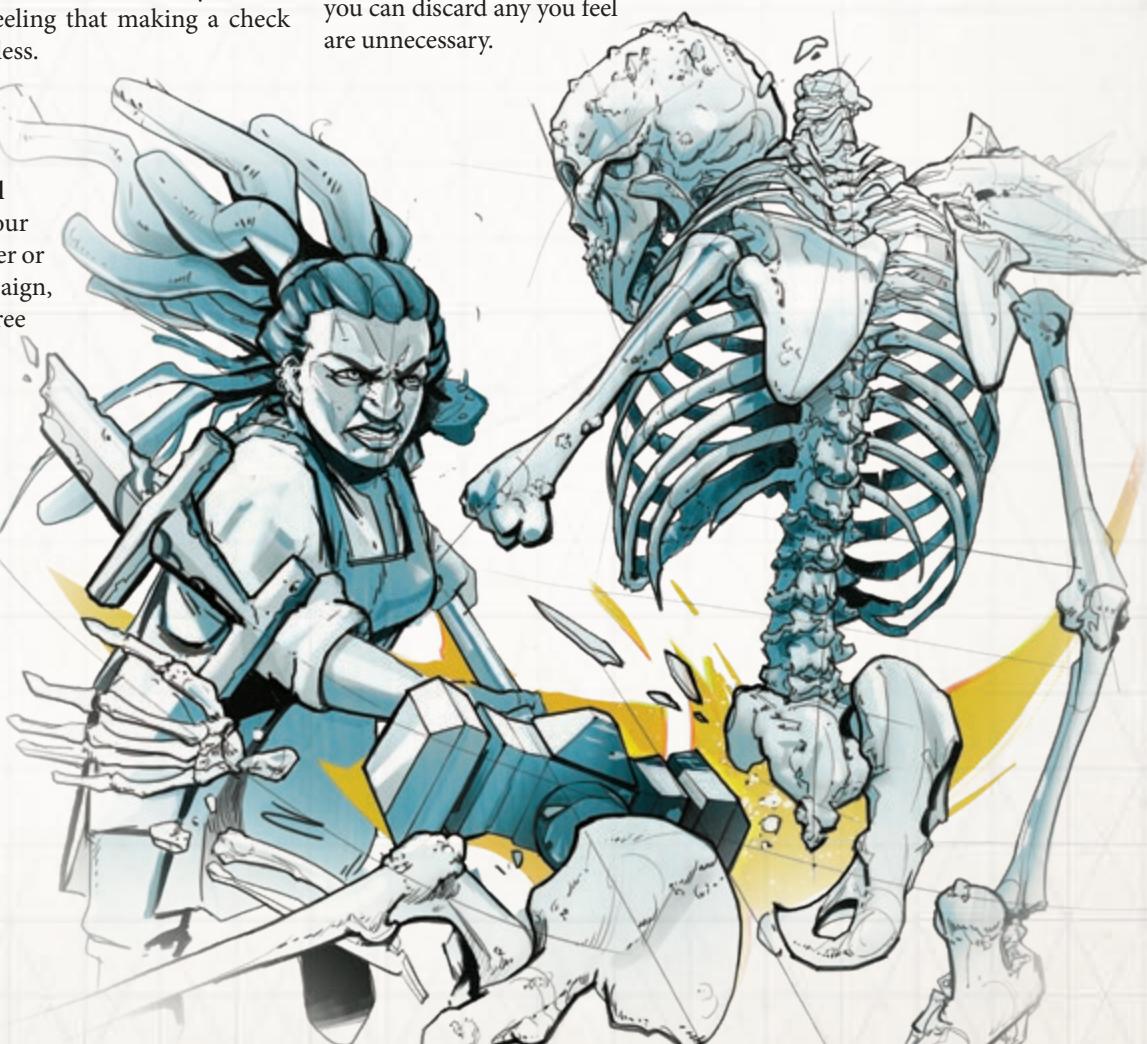


TABLE II.2–3: SKILL PACKAGES

NAME	SKILL PACKAGE	POWER LEVELS
Basic Creature	Athletics 1, Brawl 1, Survival 2, Vigilance 2	Combat +0, Social +0, General +0
Ferocious Creature	Athletics 3, Brawl 4, Perception 2, Survival 3, Vigilance 1	Combat +1, Social +0, General +1
Predatory Creature	Brawl 3, Coordination 3, Perception 4, Survival 2, Stealth 3	Combat +1, Social +0, General +1
Territorial Creature	Brawl 2, Resilience 3, Survival 4, Vigilance 4	Combat +0, Social +0, General +2
Soldier	Athletics 2, Discipline 1, Melee 2, Ranged 2, Resilience 2, Vigilance 2	Combat +1, Social +0, General +1
Duelist	Cool 3, Coordination 3, Melee 5, Stealth 1	Combat +1, Social +0, General +0
Scout/Sniper	Cool 2, Perception 3, Ranged 5, Stealth 4, Survival 3, Vigilance 3	Combat +2, Social +0, General +2
Brawler/Laborer	Athletics 3, Brawl 2, Resilience 3	Combat +0, Social +0, General +0
Gunslinger	Cool 3, Coordination 2, Ranged 4, Skulduggery 3	Combat +1, Social +0, General +0
Sailor	Athletics 2, Operating 3, Perception 2, Ranged 1, Vigilance 1	Combat +0, Social +0, General +1
Spy/Con Artist	Cool 2, Charm 3, Deception 4, Knowledge 1, Skulduggery 4, Stealth 3	Combat +0, Social +2, General +2
Thief/Assassin	Coordination 3, Deception 2, Melee 3, Skulduggery 4, Stealth 5, Streetwise 3, Vigilance 1	Combat +1, Social +0, General +4
Researcher	Astrocartography 5, Computers 3, Discipline 2, Knowledge 5, Perception 4	Combat +0, Social +0, General +5
Natural Philosopher	Alchemy 4, Knowledge 4, Medicine 2, Negotiation 1, Perception 2	Combat +0, Social +0, General +3
Doctor	Cool 2, Discipline 2, Leadership 1, Medicine 4, Melee 1	Combat +0, Social +1, General +2
Knight/Warrior Leader	Athletics 1, Discipline 2, Driving 3, Leadership 3, Melee 4, Riding 3	Combat +1, Social +2, General +2
Captain of a Vessel	Astrocartography 4, Coercion 2, Discipline 3, Leadership 4, Operating 4, Ranged 3	Combat +1, Social +2, General +3
Politician/Official	Charm 4, Coercion 2, Cool 2, Leadership 3, Negotiation 5, Vigilance 1	Combat +0, Social +3, General +1
Mage	Alchemy 2, Arcana 4, Coercion 2, Knowledge 4	Combat +2, Social +0, General +2
Priest	Charm 2, Discipline 3, Divine 4, Knowledge 4	Combat +2, Social +1, General +2
Druid	Knowledge 4, Primal 4, Survival 3, Vigilance 2	Combat +2, Social +0, General +2
Pilot/Driver/Rider	Cool 2, Coordination 3, Driving 4, Piloting 4, Ranged 3, Riding 4	Combat +1, Social +0, General +3
Merchant	Charm 2, Deception 3, Negotiation 3, Perception 2, Vigilance 3	Combat +0, Social +3, General +0
Crime Boss	Brawl 4, Coercion 5, Discipline 2, Leadership 2, Ranged 2, Streetwise 4	Combat +2, Social +3, General +1
Bureaucrat	Cool 3, Discipline 3, Knowledge 2, Negotiation 2, Vigilance 3	Combat +0, Social +3, General +1
Mechanic	Athletics 2, Brawl 1, Computers 1, Mechanics 4, Resilience 3	Combat +0, Social +0, General +3
Hacker	Computers 5, Cool 2, Deception 2, Streetwise 2	Combat +0, Social +1, General +3
Criminal Tough	Brawl 2, Coercion 3, Resilience 3, Skulduggery 3, Streetwise 2	Combat +0, Social +1, General +2
Investigator	Charm 2, Coercion 2, Discipline 3, Perception 3, Streetwise 3, Survival 3, Vigilance 3	Combat +0, Social +2, General +3
Wrangler/Survivalist	Athletics 4, Coordination 2, Perception 3, Ranged 2, Riding 3, Survival 4	Combat +0, Social +0, General +3
Cop/Town Guard	Coercion 2, Driving 2, Leadership 2, Melee 2, Ranged 2	Combat +1, Social +1, General +0

STEP 5: TALENTS AND SPECIAL ABILITIES

Once you have picked out skills, it's time to decide what talents and special abilities you want to give your adversary. These are two different things—talents are game elements that can also be taken by player characters, while special abilities are generally unique to adversaries and cannot be purchased by PCs at all. However, they have a similar mechanical function, so picking them happens at the same step of adversary creation.

SOME NOTES ON TALENTS AND SPECIAL ABILITIES

At first talents may seem like daunting choices. After all, there are 72 talents (including the Adversary talent) in the **GENESYS** Core Rulebook alone! As for special abilities, it may seem like every adversary profile has a different one. However, there are some elements that simplify these choices.

Generally speaking, less is more when it comes to talents and special abilities. Encounters generally last three or four rounds, so there is rarely a need for the same wide breadth of abilities PCs require. Talents and special abilities should not sit idle, and if your adversary has an ability, they should use it at the first viable opportunity during an encounter.

Many talents are also designed specifically for PCs, and aren't appropriate for adversaries. Avoid talents that upgrade thresholds, defense, soak, and attributes, as well as talents that are used during narrative encounters and don't affect the PCs directly (since anything an adversary does on their own time can be handled narratively). Finally, you should avoid giving adversaries talents that introduce plot elements or modify the ongoing narrative, like Know Somebody or How Convenient! All of this can be handled directly by you in your role as the Game Master.

Several talents offer opportunities for player characters to actively increase their protection. While talents like Dodge, Side Step, and Defensive Stance work well for PCs, when building an NPC you should always avoid these talents in favor of the Adversary talent instead. This talent simplifies running your adversary, which can be crucial in encounters where you may be tracking the status of several NPCs and a whole party of PCs. We discuss more about the adversary talent in the sidebar **Avoid Compounded Defenses** on page 76.

Since special abilities are something that adversaries have that PCs don't (the closest thing are the species/archetype abilities some PCs start with), these are designed to make adversaries feel especially different and unique. Special abilities do things like letting an adversary fly, represent a swarm of insects, or move through walls. For this reason, special abilities are particularly important when stating up creatures.

With these points in mind, we have compiled a list of talents in **Table II.2–4: Adversary Talents** that are appropriate for adversaries. Each talent entry lists where it can be found (either in the Core Rulebook, or **Part III** of this book) and how it affects your adversary's power levels.

Meanwhile, it would be impossible to list all the special abilities that exist. However, we have provided some iconic special abilities in **Table II.2–5: Adversary Special Abilities** on page 80. Each has a rules description, how they affect your adversary's power level, and some recommendations as to what types of adversaries they are appropriate for. You can also copy special abilities from adversaries in the Core Rulebook, and the examples starting on page 86 (compare them to the examples in **Table II.2–5** to figure out the appropriate power level adjustments.)

TALENTS AND SPECIAL ABILITIES FOR MINIONS

We strongly recommend giving minions zero talents by default, and no more than one special ability (but we recommend giving them no special abilities by default, unless the minion needs a special ability to represent its particular nature). If you want to give your minion a talent, think carefully about whether it will have a thematic and interesting impact on how they operate. Also, minions should have one talent *or* one special ability, but not more.

TALENTS AND SPECIAL ABILITIES FOR RIVALS

Rivals don't always need talents, but one linked to their area of expertise can be appropriate. When using this system, you should give your rival up to one talent. Also, we recommend avoiding giving rivals talents that require them to suffer strain (since they treat it as wounds). This isn't an absolute rule, but a word of caution. A rival can also have up to one special ability.

TABLE II.2–4: ADVERSARY TALENTS

TALENT	POWER LEVELS
Adversary 1 (Core page 131)	Combat +0, Social +0, General +0
Adversary 2 (Core page 131)	Combat +1, Social +0, General +0
Adversary 3 (Core page 131)	Combat +2, Social +0, General +0
Animal Companion (Core page 77)	Combat +1, Social +0, General +1
Barrel Roll (Core page 77)	Combat +1, Social +0, General +0
Berserk (Core page 75)	Combat +0, Social +0, General +0
Brilliant Casting (page 95)	Combat +1, Social +0, General +0
Clever Retort (Core page 73)	Combat +0, Social +0, General +0
Coordinated Assault 3 (Core page 75)	Combat +1, Social +0, General +0
Distinctive Style (Core page 78)	Combat +0, Social +0, General +1
Dual Wielder (Core page 76)	Combat +1, Social +0, General +0
Duelist (Core page 73)	Combat +0, Social +0, General +0
Elementalist (page 95)	Combat +0, Social +0, General +0
Explosive Casting (page 96)	Combat +1, Social +0, General +0
Face of the Wild (page 97)	Combat +1, Social +0, General +1
Field Commander (Core page 78)	Combat +1, Social +0, General +1
Flicker Step (page 97)	Combat +1, Social +0, General +1
Grenadier (Core page 78)	Combat +1, Social +0, General +0
Hamstring Shot (Core page 73)	Combat +0, Social +0, General +0
Improved Field Commander (Core page 80)	Combat +2, Social +0, General +1
Improved Inspiring Rhetoric (Core pages 76 and 78)	Combat +0, Social +0, General +1
Improved Parry (Core page 79)	Combat +1, Social +0, General +0
Improved Scathing Tirade (Core pages 77 and 79)	Combat +0, Social +1, General +0
Indomitable (Core page 81)	Combat +1, Social +1, General +0
Lucky Strike (Core page 76)	Combat +1, Social +0, General +0
Master (Core page 81)	Combat +1, Social +1, General +1
Masterful Casting (page 97)	Combat +1, Social +0, General +0
Natural (Core page 79)	Combat +1, Social +1, General +1
Parry 3 (Core page 74)	Combat +1, Social +0, General +0
Quick Draw (Core page 74)	Combat +0, Social +0, General +0
Ruinous Repartee (Core page 81)	Combat +0, Social +2, General +0
Second Wind 4 (Core page 74)	Combat +0, Social +1, General +0
Strength of Faith (page 97)	Combat +1, Social +0, General +1
Surgeon 2 (Core page 74)	Combat +0, Social +0, General +1

RANKED TALENTS

Some of the entries in **Table II.2–4: Adversary Talents** are ranked talents. In each case, we have listed the rank that we feel this talent should be provided at. For example, the Second Wind talent has the number "4" after the name. That signifies that if you give Second Wind to your adversary, they should have four ranks of the talent. Power level adjustments take these ranks into account.

TALENTS AND SPECIAL ABILITIES FOR NEMESES

A nemesis should do something interesting each turn in an encounter. This means that while your nemesis doesn't have to have talents or special abilities, we recommend that you give them some. We recommend not giving your nemesis more than three talents and/or special abilities total, unless they're the main reoccurring character in a campaign. In that case you can give them four or five.

TIERS AND PREREQUISITES

You don't have to abide by tiers or prerequisites when adding a talent to your adversary. They could have a single Tier 5 talent, two Tier 3 talents, or anything else. You

also don't have to worry about prerequisites (in the case of the improved and supreme versions of talents). If you want to take an improved version of the talent, treat your adversary as if it has the basic talent as well (and write the description accordingly). If the basic talent has ranks, then assume they're the number of ranks listed here.

Special abilities don't have any prerequisites, so simply use the special ability you feel is appropriate.

SETTING APPROPRIATE TALENTS

Some talents (such as talents involving magic, driving vehicles, and hacking computers) may only be appropriate for certain settings. If a talent doesn't fit your setting, don't choose it.

TABLE II.2–5: ADVERSARY SPECIAL ABILITIES

NAME	DESCRIPTION	POWER LEVEL	EXAMPLES
Aquatic (or Amphibious)	This adversary may breathe underwater and never suffers movement penalties for traveling through water, but cannot survive on land. (You may remove "cannot survive on land" to make this "Amphibious" instead.)	Combat +0, Social +0, General +1	Fish or sea-going creatures
Flyer	This adversary can fly; see page 100 of the GENESYS Core Rulebook.	Combat +0, Social +0, General +1	Flying creatures
Ghostly	This adversary may move over or through terrain (including doors and walls) without penalty. Halve the damage dealt to this adversary before applying soak, unless the attack came from a magical or supernatural source such as a spell, a blessed weapon, or another spirit.	Combat +2, Social +0, General +1	Ghosts, spirits, or ethereal beings
Know Your Foe	If this adversary knows an opponent's (pick one facet) Motivation, when this adversary inflicts strain on the opponent, the opponent suffers 3 additional strain.	Combat +0, Social +1, General +0	Sentient rivals and nemeses designed for social encounters
Loyal Followers	Once per round when this adversary is targeted by a combat check, they may choose one ally within short range, and the attack then targets the ally instead of this adversary.	Combat +1, Social +0, General +0	Nemesis leaders with fanatical or devoted followers
Mechanical (or Undead)	This adversary does not need to breathe, eat, or drink, and can survive in a vacuum and underwater. They are immune to poisons and toxins.	Combat +0, Social +0, General +2	Robots, drones, or undead adversaries
Mental Weakness	If an opponent knows the adversary's (pick one type) Motivation, when the opponent inflicts strain on the adversary, the adversary suffers 2 additional strain.	Combat +0, Social -1, General +0	Any character with a pronounced character flaw
Natural Weapons	Choose one of the weapon profiles from the Small Beast or Creature equipment arrays and add it to your adversary's weapons. Do not record this ability on their profile.	Combat +0, Social +0, General +0	Aliens or fantasy characters with an innate natural weapon
Ominous Reputation	When an opponent targets this adversary with a check, the opponent suffers 2 strain.	Combat +1, Social +2, General +0	Powerful nemeses with a fearsome reputation
One Step Ahead	Once per round, after an opponent performs an action or maneuver, you may spend one Story Point to have this adversary perform an action or maneuver as an out-of-turn incidental.	Combat +2, Social +1, General +0	Powerful nemeses who combat the PCs alone
Pack Fighter	If this adversary makes a successful combat check, the next ally making a combat check against the same target during the same round adds $\Delta \Delta$ to the results.	Combat +1, Social +0, General +0	Creatures that fight in groups
Pounce	Once per turn, while at short range this adversary may perform the move maneuver to engage a target as an incidental.	Combat +0, Social +0, General +0	Fast creatures that can leap or lunge at foes
Swarm	Halve the damage dealt to this adversary before applying soak, unless the attack has the Blast or Burn quality (regardless of whether the quality is activated).	Combat +1, Social +0, General +0	A single profile representing a swarm of bugs or vermin
Tactical Direction	This adversary may spend a maneuver to direct one friendly minion group within medium range. That group may immediately perform a maneuver as an out-of-turn incidental or add \square to the next check they make.	Combat +0, Social +0, General +0	Rivals and nemeses who lead or direct small groups
Environmental Vulnerability	When exposed to extreme heat, cold, or another environmental effect (pick one), this adversary adds $\blacksquare \blacksquare$ to all skill checks it makes.	Combat -1, Social -1, General -1	Creatures adapted to living in certain climates
Terrifying	At the start of the encounter, all opponents must make a Hard (♦♦♦) fear check as an out-of-turn incidental, as per page 243 of the GENESYS Core Rulebook. If there are multiple sources of fear in the encounter, the opponents only make one fear check against the most terrifying enemy.	Combat +1, Social +1, General +1	Large monsters, creatures, and individuals who are incredibly frightening

STEP 6: EQUIPMENT

Equipment (specifically armor and weapons) can be a powerful multiplier for combat effectiveness. In addition, even more than talents, equipment is entirely dependent on what setting your game takes place in.

There are two approaches to equipping your adversary. The first is the freest form: you simply equip your adversary with the gear you feel they need. This is particularly appropriate if you're creating an adversary for your own setting with its own gear lists. The only drawback is that this makes calculating power levels more difficult. Below are some basic guidelines that can help, but know these are just guidelines, and may not produce entirely accurate results. If any elements in a bullet entry apply to your adversary's equipment, increase the appropriate power level by the listed amount.

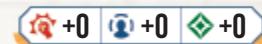
- Weapons that deal 4–7 base damage, armor with +1 soak and/or defense 1: +0 to combat power level.
- Weapons that deal 8–14 base damage, armor with +2 soak and/or defense 2–3: +1 to combat power level.
- Weapons that deal 15+ base damage, armor with +3 soak or defense 4: +2 to combat power level.
- Weapons that allow adversary to hit multiple foes or inflict multiple hits with a combat check: +2 combat power level.
- Armor with the Reinforced quality: +1 combat power level.
- Gear that adds **A** or removes **B** from social or general skill checks: +0 to social or general power level.
- Gear that adds ***** or **C** to social or general skill checks: +1 to social or general power level.
- A combined soak of 7+ after applying gear: +1 combat level.

EQUIPMENT ARRAYS

The second option is to give your adversary one of our listed equipment arrays. Each array uses generic weapon and equipment profiles that should be acceptable for most settings. However, you should theme your adversary's equipment based on the setting they occupy (such as by saying that a "two-handed ranged weapon" is a "rifle" in a modern setting, and a "longbow" in a fantasy setting). Each array also includes how it increases your adversary's power levels.

Although the weapons in these profiles are generic, we give them the most applicable and specific combat skills available (such as Melee [Light] instead of Melee). If your setting doesn't have that specific combat skill, use the more generic version instead.

SMALL BEAST OR CREATURE



Creatures and wild animals attack with their claws, teeth, tusks, or hooves. We treat these attacks as equipment, and have provided a few options here. These profiles represent creatures that are human-sized or smaller.

Weapons: Teeth and claws (Brawl; Damage +2; Critical 3; Range [Engaged]; Vicious 1) or hooves and tusks (Brawl; Damage +2; Critical 4; Range [Engaged]; Knockdown, Stun 2).

Equipment: None.

LARGE BEAST OR CREATURE



Large creatures, as with small ones, treat their attacks as equipment. These profiles represent creatures much larger than a human, such as an elephant or large dinosaur.

Weapons: Gaping maw or razor claws (Brawl; Damage +4; Critical 2; Range [Engaged]; Vicious 3), tentacles or thundering hooves (Brawl; Damage +5; Critical 4; Range [Engaged]; Knockdown, Concussive 1).

Equipment: None.

MANUAL LABORER



Manual laborers may be farmers, peasants, or others with access to pitchforks, shovels, sledgehammers, or other tools they can use as improvised weapons.

Weapons: Large farming implement (Melee [Heavy]; Damage +3; Critical 5; Range [Engaged]; Cumbersome 3, Inferior).

Equipment: Heavy clothes (+1 soak).

BASIC CITIZEN

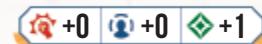


In every setting, there are multitudes of average people simply living out their lives. This equipment package is for any character who has no reason to have weapons, armor, or specialized gear.

Weapons: Fists (Brawl; Damage +0; Critical 6; Range [Engaged]; Disorient 1, Knockdown).

Equipment: Clothing appropriate to the specific era, average coin purse or wallet.

BLUE-COLLAR WORKER



Those who build, repair, work outdoors, and work with their hands have access to various tools or scrap that can be used as a weapon in a pinch.

Weapons: Improvised brawling weapon (Brawl; Damage +1; Critical 5; Range [Engaged]; Disorient 2, Inferior).

Equipment: Heavy clothing (+1 soak), tool belt full of tools (add ***** to checks this character makes to repair or fix something), wallet.

TRAVELER



Travelers may be traders, shepherds, or wanderers who spend their time walking and sleeping outdoors.

Weapons: Walking staff (Melee [Heavy]; Damage +2; Critical 4; Range [Engaged]; Defensive 1, Disorient 2).

Equipment: Heavy cloak (1 defense), survival pack (removes - from Survival or Perception checks this character makes), meager coin purse or wallet.

CRIMINAL



Muggers, bandits, and thieves are all possible criminals.

Weapons: Concealable melee weapon (Melee [Light]; Damage +1; Critical 2; Range [Engaged]; Pierce 2).

Equipment: Dark clothing (2 defense, adds to Stealth checks this character makes), thieves' tools (add to Skulduggery checks this character makes to open locks), backpack, rope with grappling hook.

DOCTOR



This equipment array can be used for any sort of doctor or medical professional, from ancient barber-surgeons to modern general practitioners.

Weapons: Sharp medical tool (Melee [Light]; Damage +0; Critical 1; Range [Engaged]).

Equipment: Clean clothing and face protection (adds to Resilience checks made by this character to resist disease or airborne toxins), medicine kit (allows this character to perform Medicine checks to heal wounds and critical injuries without penalty; after this character makes a successful Medicine check to heal wounds, heal one additional wound), notebook.

NOBLE



Well-dressed, well-to-do members of society, nobles are typical of the aristocracy.

Weapons: Dueling weapon (Melee [Light]; Damage +2; Critical 3; Range [Engaged]; Defensive 1).

Equipment: Fancy clothing (adds to any social skill checks this character makes), signet of authority (adds to any social checks this character makes when interacting with someone of a lesser social standing), important documents, full coin purse or wallet.

BASIC RANGED WARRIOR



The ranged warrior array is ideal for medieval archers, modern infantry, and futuristic soldiers. It can also be used to equip characters who work in the wilderness.

Weapons: Two-handed ranged weapon (Ranged; Damage 8; Critical 3; Range [Long]), one-handed backup weapon (Melee [Light]; Damage +2; Critical 3; Range [Engaged]; Vicious 1).

Equipment: Reinforced uniform or light armor (+1 soak), ammunition reload (may spend a maneuver to reload their ranged weapon after it runs out of ammo), survival pack (removes - from Survival or Perception checks this character makes), 1 painkiller.

HEAVY RANGED WARRIOR



This equipment array represents warriors who use very powerful ranged weapons to support their fellows. These might be scorpions or ballista in ancient times, modern machine guns, or futuristic rocket weapons.

Weapons: Heavy rapid-firing ranged weapon (Gunnery; Damage 12; Critical 3; Range [Long]; Auto-Fire, Cumbersome 3, Vicious 2) or powerful single-shot ranged weapon (Gunnery; Damage 20; Critical 2; Range [Extreme]; Blast 10, Breach 2, Cumbersome 4, Limited Ammo 1, Prepare 1).

Equipment: Heavy defensive armor (+3 soak), ammunition reload (may spend a maneuver to reload their ranged weapon after it runs out of ammo), backpack.

BASIC MELEE WARRIOR



The basic melee warrior array can be used to equip the rank-and-file of ancient armies, modern riot cops, or even futuristic soldiers with powerful defenses.

Weapons: One-handed defensive melee weapon (Melee [Light]; Damage +2; Critical 4; Range [Engaged]; Defensive 1), shield (Melee [Light]; Damage +0; Critical 6; Range [Engaged]; Defensive 1, Deflection 1, Inaccurate 1, Knockdown).

Equipment: Medium armor (+2 soak), satchel.

HEAVY MELEE WARRIOR



This equips a character who relies on their armor to get close enough to bring heavy melee weapons to bear. This could be used by a brave knight, a noble samurai, or a power-armored soldier with a plasma axe.

Weapons: Two-handed powerful melee weapon (Melee [Heavy]; Damage +4; Critical 3; Range [Engaged]; Cumbersome 3, Pierce 2, Vicious 1) or one-handed versatile melee weapon (Melee [Light]; Damage +3; Critical 2; Range [Engaged]; Defensive 1) and shield (Melee [Light]; Damage +0; Critical 6; Range [Engaged]; Defensive 1, Deflection 1, Inaccurate 1, Knockdown).

Equipment: Heavy armor (1 defense, +2 soak).

VERSATILE WARRIOR



This equipment array works for characters who use a combination of melee and ranged weapons. This could represent a cavalry soldier who fights with saber and pistol, an officer with a sword and sidearm, or a noble in a militant culture.

Weapons: One-handed versatile melee weapon (Melee [Light]; Damage +3; Critical 2; Range [Engaged]; Defensive 1), one-handed ranged weapon (Ranged [Light]; Damage 5; Critical 3; Range [Medium])

Equipment: Reinforced clothing (1 defense, +1 soak).

ADVENTURER



Adventurers journey into danger with a smile on their face and a torch in their hand. This could represent an explorer, an airship crewmember, or even a pirate.

Weapons: One-handed ranged weapon (Ranged [Light]; Damage 6; Critical 3; Range [Medium]; Accurate 1), backup brawling weapon (Brawl; Damage +1; Critical 4; Range [Engaged]; Disorient 3).

Equipment: Leather vest (+1 soak), backpack, length of rope, torch or other light source, and well-worn hat.

BOUNTY HUNTER



In nearly every setting there is a need for people who hunt down criminals, escaped prisoners, or other fugitives. Their equipment helps them in their task.

Weapons: Short-ranged entangling weapon (Ranged [Heavy]; Damage 4; Critical 5; Range [Short]; Disorient 3, Ensnare 3, Limited Ammo 1), stunning melee weapon (Melee [Light]; Damage +3; Critical 5; Range [Engaged]; Stun 4; Stun Damage).

Equipment: Medium armor (+2 soak), warrants for bounties, restraints.

GAME HUNTER



Some individuals hunt from elevated tree-stands or blinds, waiting for prey to happen into range. This array could also be used for a sharpshooter or assassin.

Weapons: Long-ranged hunting weapon (Ranged [Heavy]; Damage 9; Critical 3; Range [Extreme]; Accurate 1, Limited Ammo 2; reduce the difficulty of combat checks made at long or extreme range by 1).

Equipment: Camouflage (2 defense, add □ to Stealth checks made by this character), survival pack (removes ■ from Survival or Perception checks this character makes), ammunition reload (may spend a maneuver to reload their ranged weapon after it runs out of ammo).

LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER



Law enforcement officials from modern cops to ancient town guards typically have some sort of protective clothing and then a ranged or melee weapon of some sort.

Weapons: One-handed ranged weapon (Ranged [Light]; Damage 5; Critical 3; Range [Medium]) or one-handed bludgeoning weapon (Melee [Light]; Damage +3; Critical 4; Range [Engaged]; Disorient 2)

Equipment: Light armor (+1 soak), badge of authority (adds □ to Coercion or Leadership checks this character makes), restraints, torch or other light source.

PILOT



Combat pilots or operators of air vehicles must always be ready to land in hostile territory. In the appropriate setting, the flight outfit can be sealed against vacuum.

Weapons: Concealable ranged weapon (Ranged [Light]; Damage 5; Critical 4; Range [Short]).

Equipment: Flight outfit, emergency survival kit (removes ■ from Survival or Perception checks this character makes), 1 painkiller.

FLASHY OUTLAW



This array can equip a criminal with a flair for large, dramatic, and potentially impractical weapons. This person probably gives off a certain roguish charm.

Weapons: Intimidating ranged weapon (Ranged [Light]; Damage 7; Critical 3; Range [Medium]; Inaccurate 1).

Equipment: Dashing coat with exposed holster (+1 soak, adds ▲ to the results of all Charm and Coercion checks this character makes), fancy cape or hat (removes ■ from all social skill checks this character makes).

DEFENSIVE MAGIC USER



This equipment array is only useful for characters who have at least one magic skill, and represents characters who use their magic defensively. This works with characters who use any magic skill.

Weapons: None.

Equipment: Magically enhanced robes (3 defense) augmenting magical implement (when the this character casts a spell, may add the Additional Target and Additional Summon effects without increasing the difficulty. In addition, attack spells cast by this character increase their base damage by two), supernatural healing item (once per session, when this character heals wounds with a healing spell, increase the wounds healed by three).

OFFENSIVE MAGIC USER



This equipment array is only useful for characters who have at least one magic skill, and represents characters who use their magic to attack. This works with characters who use any magic skill.

Weapons: One-handed melee weapon (Melee [Light]; Damage +3; Critical 2; Range [Engaged]; Defensive 1).

Equipment: Robes (1 defense), offensive magical implement (when the this character casts a spell, the first Range effect they add doesn't increase the difficulty. In addition, attack spells cast by this character increase their base damage by four).

ADVERSARY POWER LEVELS

This section discusses how to take adversary power levels and use them to create more balanced encounters for your party.

As described on page 5, the first power level is the combat power level. This is a measure of how dangerous and resilient an enemy is in a fight. However, it's an average of both defensive and offensive capabilities, so an adversary with a lot of defenses and a relatively weak attack may have the same power level as an adversary with a powerful attack who can be taken out in one hit.

The second power level is the social power level. This is a measure of how skilled an adversary is at winning social encounters. It's an average of an adversary's ability to use their social skills to sway or dominate the opposition and their ability to resist an opponent's attempts to do the same. As with combat, it's an average of defensive and offensive capabilities, so the same power level may include both an adversary who is able to resist another's social skills and one who is very persuasive but open to persuasion.

Finally, the third power level is the general power level. This is a measure of how useful an adversary is at supporting other characters as they perform tasks and how skilled they are at tasks that don't involve social or combat encounters. General power level can measure how well an adversary can buff allies, track opponents through the wilderness, heal characters, perform repairs, and accomplish myriad other useful tasks. This rating can also help determine how powerful a friendly NPC is if you're looking for an ally for your party.

Finally, remember that if any adversary power level is less than 1, increase it to 1.

MINION POWER LEVELS

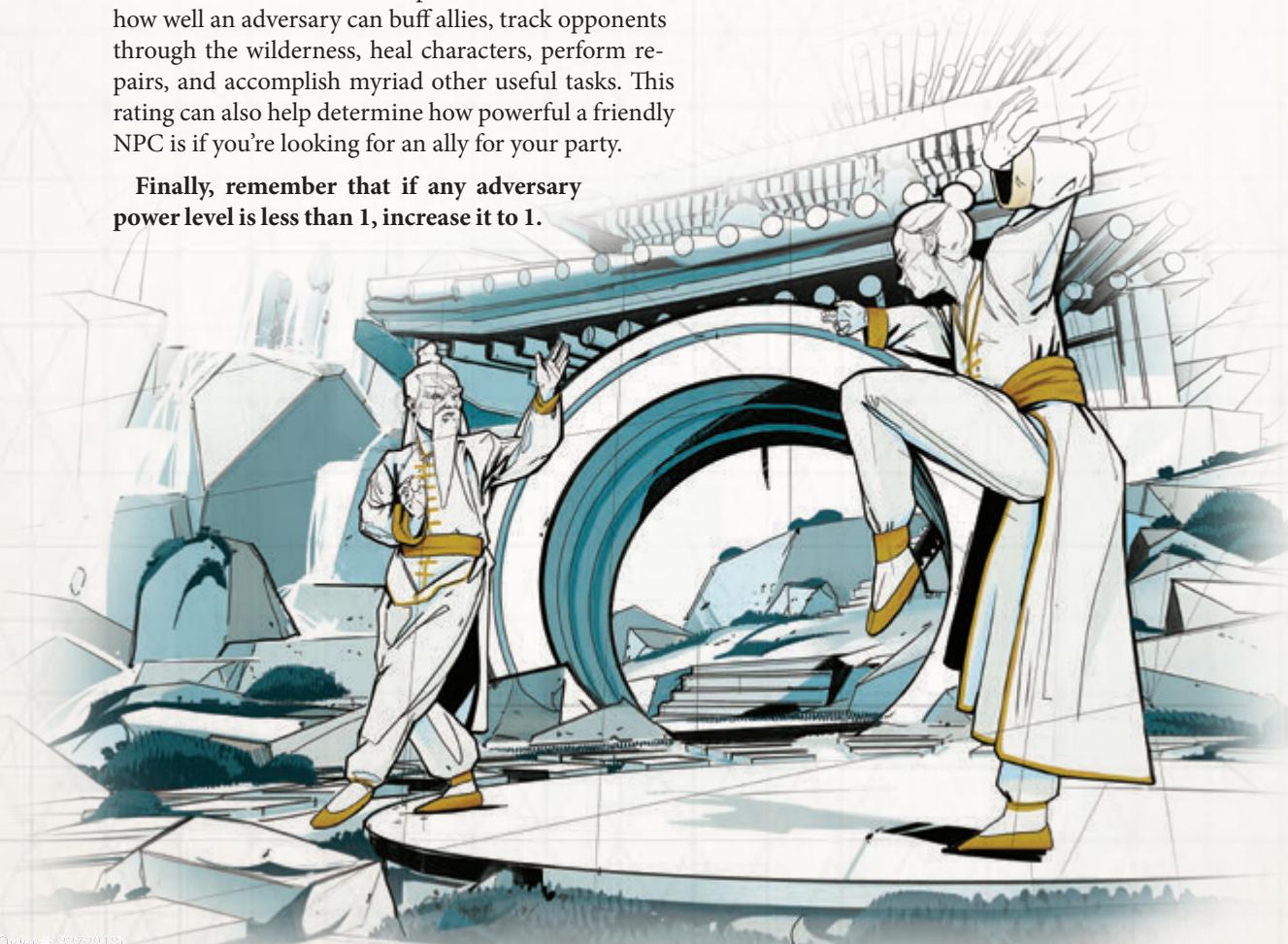
Minion power levels are calculated assuming they are operating in a group of three minions. If a minion is in a group of two or is alone, decrease its combat and social power level by one (to a minimum of 1). If a minion is in a group of five or higher, increase its combat and social power level by one.

USING POWER LEVELS TO CREATE AN ENCOUNTER

Power levels are useful for comparing adversaries, but they can also be used to build a more balanced encounter for your group. To do so, you need to keep track of how much experience your group has been earning so that you can determine its group power level.

GROUP POWER LEVEL

Your group's power level are basically measures of how significant a challenge the PCs can face in different types of encounters and how good they are at general tasks.



You can use your group's power level to create challenging combat encounters or social encounters.

To track your PCs' power level, you need to know how many experience points you give your PCs from all of your game sessions. This works best if you're giving every PC the same amount. If you award different amounts to different PCs, record the average of those amounts.

Once you have this total (not including the XP that each archetype starts the campaign with), compare it to the XP totals listed in **Table II.2–6 Appropriate Challenge Rating**. Each XP total has a series of entries that list appropriate encounter challenge ratings depending on how many PCs are in the group. This table can be used to calculate the difficulty of social and combat encounters.

USING AN ENCOUNTER CHALLENGE RATING

Once you have determined the appropriate encounter challenge rating for your group, you can use it to create a more balanced encounter. **Simply select adversaries for the encounter and make sure their combined combat or social power levels (depending on the encounter type) do not exceed the value of the encounter challenge rating.**

It's worth noting that this system assumes that your PCs have each spent roughly the same number of XP investing in combat capability, social prowess, and general abilities. Even if one character has invested much more heavily in combat prowess, another character has hopefully invested heavily in social abilities. If this is not the case, and your group is heavily skewed toward one type of encounter, you may have to make your own adjustments on the fly (potentially by increasing the encounter challenge rating for encounters they're good at and decreasing it for encounters they're bad at).

TABLE II.2—6: APPROPRIATE CHALLENGE RATING

PC XP TOTAL	CR FOR 1 PC	CR FOR 2 PCS	CR FOR 3 PCS	CR FOR 4 PCS	CR FOR 5 PCS	CR FOR 6 PCS
0–25 XP	2	2	3	5	6	6
26–50 XP	2	3	5	7	8	8
51–75 XP	3	3	6	8	9	10
76–100 XP	3	4	7	10	11	12
101–150 XP	4	5	8	11	12	13
151–200 XP	4	6	9	12	13	14
201–250 XP	4	7	10	14	15	16
251–300 XP	5	8	11	15	16	18
301–400 XP	5	9	12	16	17	19
401–500 XP	6	9	14	18	18	20
501–600 XP	6	10	15	18	19	21
601–750 XP	7	10	16	19	20	21
751–1,000 XP	7	11	16	20	20	22
1,001+ XP	8	12	17	20	21	22

KNOW YOUR GROUP!

Balancing encounters in roleplaying games is very difficult. There are a lot of variables that go into success or failure in an encounter, not the least of which is the creativity of your players and yourself! So be aware that while this system is an aid to building more balanced encounters, that's all it is—an aid. Don't be afraid to adjust encounters based on what you know your group can and cannot handle. After all, you know them better than we do!

One final note, when you build an encounter, generally you should ensure there are not more adversaries (with minion groups counting as one adversary) than there are PCs.

ADDITIONAL ENCOUNTER CHALLENGE RATING MODIFIERS

Below are a few other modifiers that you can apply to the encounter challenge rating as well, to better reflect your group's capabilities:

- The majority of the group is armed with weapons with a base damage of 8 or higher: +1 challenge rating in combat encounters.
- The majority of the group is equipped with armor that provides +2 soak or higher, or defense 2 or higher: +1 challenge rating in combat encounters.
- At least two members of the group possess a means of inflicting multiple hits with a single attack: +1 challenge rating in combat encounters.
- There is only one adversary opposing at least three PCs: +1 challenge rating in all encounters.

SAMPLE ADVERSARIES

This section includes over thirty general adversaries fit for use in any setting. The profiles are broken up into creatures, civilians, and martial adversaries, and were not created using the quick adversary creation rules. You can use these profiles in all settings.

CREATURES

This section includes a variety of creatures. If you use these profiles in science fiction or space opera settings, just change the description to sound more alien.

BEAR [RIVAL]



Bears tend to be strong, surprisingly fast, and very tough. This profile best represents the particularly large and ferocious specimens of bear, such as the grizzly, Kodiak, and polar bears.



Skills: Athletics 4, Brawl 3, Coercion 3, Perception 2, Resilience 2, Survival 4.

Talents: Adversary 1 (upgrade difficulty of all combat checks against this target once).

Abilities: Silhouette 2.

Equipment: Claws (Brawl; Damage 7; Critical 4; Range [Engaged]; Concussive 1, Knockdown), bite (Brawl; Damage 6; Critical 2; Range [Engaged]; Ensnare 1, Pierce 3).



BIG CAT [RIVAL]



Lions, tigers, pumas, jaguars, and leopards stalk the tall grasses of expansive plains, thick forests, and other wilderness regions. Big cats hunt their prey by silently closing the distance before pouncing, pinning their victim, and going for the jugular.



Skills: Athletics 3, Brawl 3, Cool 3, Coordination 2, Perception 2, Stealth 2.

Talents: Swift (this creature does not suffer penalties for moving through difficult terrain).

Abilities: Ambush Predator (when attacking a target that has not yet acted during the current encounter, this creature adds **■ ■** to its combat checks), Pounce (once per turn, while at short range this creature may perform a move maneuver to engage a target as an incidental).

Equipment: Claws and fangs (Brawl; Damage 6; Critical 2; Range [Engaged]; Vicious 3).

BULL [RIVAL]



Bulls often get used as draft animals on farms. Although usually peaceful, a provoked bull can charge and gore enemies with its horns.



Skills: Athletics 3, Brawl 1, Coercion 2, Resilience 3.

Talents: Bullrush (When this creature makes a Brawl combat check after using a maneuver to engage a target, may spend **▲ ▲ ▲** or **⊗** to knock the target prone and move them up to one range band away from this creature).

Abilities: Encumbrance Capacity 18, Silhouette 2.

Equipment: Horns (Brawl; Damage 5; Critical 3; Range [Engaged]; Pierce 2, Vicious 4).

Dog [RIVAL]



Humanity has had domesticated dogs for thousands of years. This profile represents a medium or large dog who's ready to be a faithful companion and join some lucky individual on adventures.



Skills: Athletics 1, Brawl 1, Charm 2, Perception 1, Survival 1, Vigilance 2.

Talents: None.

Abilities: Pack Fighter (if this creature makes a successful combat check, the next ally making a combat check against the same target during the same round adds $\Delta \Delta$ to the results), Silhouette 0.

Equipment: Bite (Brawl; Damage 4; Critical 3; Range [Engaged]; Knockdown).

Elephant [NEMESIS]



Elephants have prehensile trunks, large tusks, and a gentle nature. They roam forests and savannas in herds, defending their young from attack. While often friendly, and even domesticated as mounts by some cultures, wild elephants are not something one should mess with.



Skills: Athletics 1, Brawl 2, Discipline 2, Survival 2, Vigilance 3.

Talents: None.

Abilities: Encumbrance Capacity 30, Silhouette 3, Toss (after making a combat check, this creature may spend \otimes to move the target up to short range, inflict 4 strain, and knock the target prone).

Equipment: Tusks and trampling feet (Brawl; Damage 10; Critical 4; Range [Engaged]; Knockdown).

Falcon [RIVAL]



Falcons are swift and vicious birds of prey. However, they are often domesticated as pets or aids in hunting. This profile could also be used to represent a hawk, eagle, or owl.



Skills: Athletics 2, Brawl 2, Perception 3, Vigilance 3.

Talents: None.

Abilities: Flyer (can fly; see page 100 of the Core Rulebook), Silhouette 0.

Equipment: Claws and beak (Brawl; Damage 3; Critical 3; Range [Engaged]; Vicious 1).

Horse [MINION]



One of the most common domesticated mounts, horses are bred for racing, farm work, everyday transportation, and even combat. Sometimes stubborn, horses are generally docile creatures, though riders risk getting thrown, kicked, or trampled.



Skills (group only): Athletics, Resilience.

Talents: None.

Abilities: Encumbrance Capacity 12, Silhouette 2.

Equipment: Hooves (Brawl; Damage 4; Critical 4; Range [Engaged]; Knockdown, Stun 3).

Kraken [NEMESIS]



Octopi and squid rarely get much larger than a human, but rumors abound of larger specimens. Allegedly, the giant creatures lurk in the ocean, wielding multiple long, suckered tentacles that are able to crush ships and terrorize their crews. This profile is of a truly immense specimen, able to consume a large ship.



Skills: Athletics 4, Brawl 4, Perception 2, Survival 2.

Talents: Adversary 2 (upgrade difficulty of all combat checks against this target twice).

Abilities: Amphibious (this creature may breathe underwater and never suffers movement penalties for traveling through water), Crush (while engaged with a vehicle, this creature may make a Hard $\diamond \diamond \diamond$ Athletics check as an action; if the check is successful, the vehicle suffers a Critical Hit and may not move during the following round), Multotentacled (after making a successful combat check, this creature may spend 3 strain to inflict one additional hit with its thrashing tentacles against one other target within short range that is no more difficult to hit than original target, dealing base damage +1 per \diamond ; it may do so up to three times), Silhouette 5.

Weapons: Multiple thrashing tentacles (Brawl; Damage 8; Critical 5; Range [Short]; Ensnare 3, Knockdown), piercing beak (Brawl; Damage 15; Critical 2; Range [Engaged]; Breach 1, Vicious 3).

SHARK [RIVAL]

5 1 2

The ocean's apex predators, larger sharks have jaws wide enough to swallow a person, and their razor-sharp teeth can easily bite someone in half.

3	3	1	1	2	1
BRAWN	AGILITY	INTELLECT	CUNNING	WILLPOWER	PRESENCE
SOAK VALUE 4	WOUND THRESHOLD 21	M/R DEFENSE 0 0			

Skills: Athletics 3, Brawl 4, Perception 3, Stealth 2, Vigilance 2.

Talents: Adversary 1 (upgrade difficulty of all combat checks against this target once).

Abilities: Aquatic (this creature suffers no penalties for moving through water and can breathe underwater, but cannot move or survive on land).

Equipment: Powerful jaws (Brawl; Damage 8; Critical 2; Range [Engaged]; Ensnare 1, Vicious 4).



VENOMOUS SNAKE [RIVAL]

1 1 1

Venomous snakes hunt small game, and their poisonous bite is effective at deterring predators as well. Their venom can cause a variety of severe effects, including death.

1	2	1	2	1	1
BRAWN	AGILITY	INTELLECT	CUNNING	WILLPOWER	PRESENCE
SOAK VALUE 1	WOUND THRESHOLD 4	M/R DEFENSE 0 2			

Skills: Brawl 2, Coercion 2, Perception 2, Survival 2.

Talents: None.

Abilities: Neurotoxin (if this creature inflicts wounds with a combat check, the target must make a Hard

[] Resilience check; upon failure, the target suffers 5 wounds, plus 1 strain per ; means the target must make another Resilience check at the same difficulty at the start of their next turn or suffer the same effects), Silhouette 0.

Equipment: Fangs (Brawl; Damage 2; Critical 5; Range [Engaged]; Pierce 2).

WOLF [MINION]

2 1 2

Wolves are territorial pack hunters common to forests, plains, and tundra. While a single wolf poses little threat to a well-prepared human, the real danger is when the pack isolates a single target.

2	3	1	3	2	1
BRAWN	AGILITY	INTELLECT	CUNNING	WILLPOWER	PRESENCE
SOAK VALUE 2	WOUND THRESHOLD 5	M/R DEFENSE 0 0			

Skills (group only): Athletics, Brawl, Coercion, Survival.

Talents: None.

Abilities: Pack Tactics (when this creature's minion group consists of at least two minions and is engaged with a target, they can spend a maneuver to prevent the target from disengaging from the minion group until the end of their next turn and to add to their next combat check against that target), Silhouette 0.

Weapons: Bite (Brawl; Damage 5; Critical 3; Range [Engaged]; Knockdown, Vicious 1).

TERRIFYING CREATURES

In many campaigns, encountering an angry animal isn't enough to trigger a fear check from a heroic PC. However, in your setting it may be appropriate to give a creature the Terrifying ability.

Terrifying (at the start of the encounter, all of this character's opponents must make a Hard () fear check as an out-of-turn incidental, as per page 243 of the GENESYS Core Rulebook. If there are multiple sources of fear in the encounter, the opponents only make one fear check against the most terrifying enemy).

Adding this ability to a creature should increase its combat power level by 1. For particularly scary creatures, you can increase the difficulty of the fear check to **Daunting** () ; this still increases the combat power level by 1.

CIVILIANS

The following section features profiles fitting as adversaries in social challenges and NPCs to populate settings. Each is adaptable to any setting by adding a setting-appropriate equipment array (**Step 7: Equipment Arrays**, page 81), which may increase their challenge rating.

ADVISOR [NEMESIS]



An advisor might be a therapist, priest, or a wise political advisor. They are more defensive socially than offensive, which means a group will have to work hard to overcome them in a social encounter.



Skills: Cool 1, Deception 3, Discipline 3, Knowledge 4, Perception 2, Vigilance 2.

Talents: Second Wind 3 (once per encounter as an incidental, may heal 3 strain).

Abilities: Take a Breath (once per encounter, may suffer 2 strain as an out-of-turn incidental during an ally's turn; the ally loses a maneuver and either heals 6 strain or may reroll a fear check they just failed).

Equipment: None.

BLUEBLOOD [RIVAL]



Bluebloods are a society's wealthy people of leisure. Money affords them great power to indulge in their assorted proclivities and solve many problems.



Skills: Charm 1, Coercion 3, Discipline 1, Knowledge 4, Leadership 3, Perception 1.

Talents: None.

Abilities: Let Me Get You Something (once per encounter, this character may give another character 100 currency to downgrade the difficulty of the next social check they make targeting that character).

Equipment: Formal clothing, expensive jewelry, unlimited funds.

HEALER [RIVAL]



A healer treats ailments and injuries alike, either traveling to visit their patients or working within a medical facility. They might be an educated doctor, a veterinarian, or just really into holistic remedies.



Skills: Cool 1, Discipline 2, Knowledge 3, Medicine 4, Negotiation 1, Perception 1.

Talents: Surgeon 2 (when making Medicine checks to heal wounds, heals 2 additional wounds).

Abilities: Time to Heal (if this character is caring for a character who is benefiting from natural rest, the resting character heals 2 wounds each night and decreases the difficulty of any Resilience checks they make to heal Critical Injuries by 1, to a minimum of **Easy** [♦]).

Equipment: Healer's garb, doctor's tools.

FIXER [RIVAL]



When things break, a fixer repairs them. They might mend everything from simple carts to high-tech gadgets and vehicles. To make this character usable in a pre-modern setting, remove the Computers skill.



Skills: Athletics 1, Computers 3, Knowledge 1, Mechanics 3, Negotiation 2, Perception 3.

Talents: None.

Abilities: Many Hands Make Light the Load (if this character provides assistance when another character makes a Mechanics check to repair a vehicle, increase the hull trauma or system strain repaired by 2; if the check is being made to repair a Critical Hit, reduce the difficulty of the check by 1, to a minimum of **Easy** [♦]; this is in addition to the other benefits of assistance).

Equipment: Toolkit.

LABORER [MINION]



Laborers perform physical work in fields, warehouses, factories, and elsewhere. They often work in teams to handle complex tasks. After a hard day's work they relax in a tavern, sometimes getting into fights.



Skills (group only): Athletics, Brawl, Resilience.

Talents: None.

Abilities: None.

Equipment: Fists (Damage 3; Brawl; Critical 5; Range [Engaged]; Disorient 1, Knockdown), work clothes.

LEADER [NEMESIS]



A leader might be a duly elected politician, protest organizer, CEO, religious leader, or other influential public figure. Their position grants great influence, which they wield against their foes to great effect.



Skills: Charm 3, Cool 2, Deception 2, Discipline 2, Knowledge 3, Leadership 3, Vigilance 1.

Talents: Adversary 1 (upgrade difficulty of all combat checks against this target once), Clever Retort (once per encounter, add $\star \Delta \Delta$ to another character's social skill check), Ruinous Repartee (once per encounter, may make an **opposed Charm versus Discipline check** against a character within medium range [or within earshot]; if successful, target suffers 8 strain, plus 1 per \star , and this character heals strain equal to strain inflicted). **Abilities:** Let's Make a Deal (if this character knows an opponent's Desire Motivation, when this character inflicts strain on the opponent, the opponent suffers 4 additional strain).

Equipment: Formal clothing.

MANAGER [RIVAL]



A manager leads workers at a job site or office, arguably improving efficiency and morale. They could be nearly any nonmilitary team leader.



Skills: Charm 1, Leadership 3, Operating 1, Vigilance 2.

Talents: Improved Inspiring Rhetoric (as an action, may make an **Average** [$\Delta \Delta$] **Leadership check**; for each \star , one ally within short range heals 1 strain; for each Δ , one ally benefiting from Inspiring Rhetoric heals 1 additional strain; all allies affected by Inspiring Rhetoric add \square to all skill checks for 3 rounds).

Abilities: Corporate Oversight (when performing the assist maneuver, add $\star \Delta \Delta$ to the result instead of adding \square).

Equipment: None.

PAPER PUSHER [MINION]



A paper pusher might be a data entry clerk, scribe, accountant, or programmer, or fill nearly any position performed in a cubicle or its setting equivalent.

For some settings, you may need to remove the Computers skill from this profile.



Skills (group only): Cool, Computers, Knowledge, Perception.

Talents: None.

Abilities: Red Tape (once per encounter, as an action, make an **opposed Knowledge versus Cool check** targeting one character in the encounter; if successful, the target increases the difficulty of all social skill checks they make by two, to a maximum of **Formidable** [$\blacklozenge \blacklozenge \blacklozenge \blacklozenge$], until the end of the encounter).

Equipment: Attire appropriate to the place of work.

SELLER [NEMESIS]

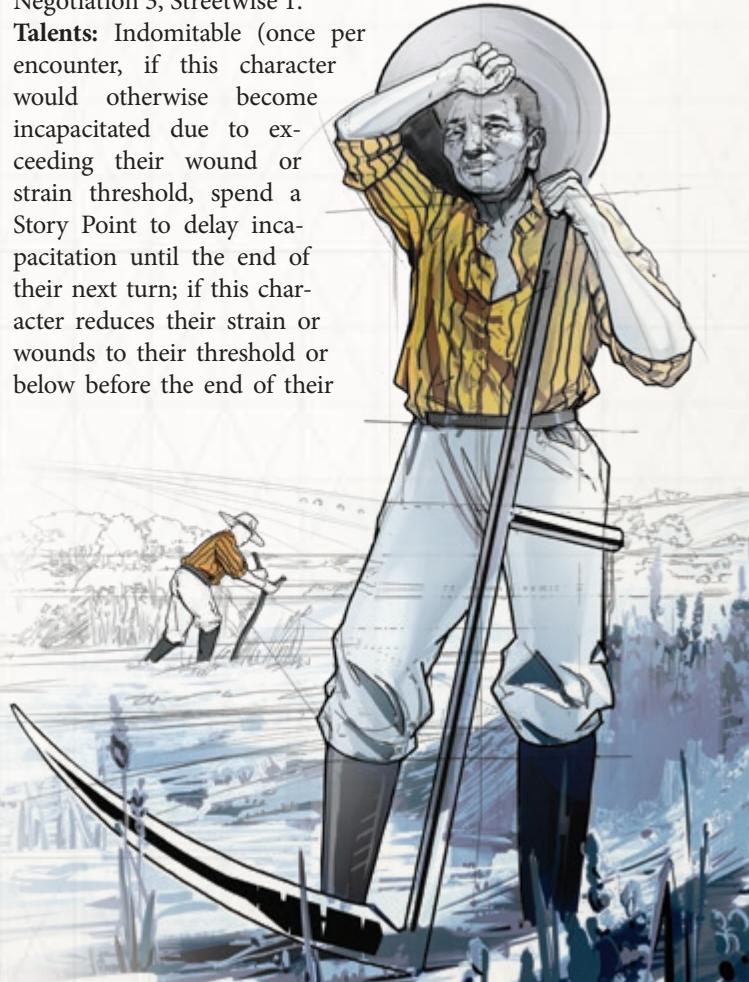


A seller talks fast and counts profits. They might be a merchant, a car salesman, or even someone collecting for charity. The important thing is that the seller wants your money, and they can convince you to part with it.



Skills: Charm 2, Cool 3, Deception 3, Knowledge 2, Negotiation 3, Streetwise 1.

Talents: Indomitable (once per encounter, if this character would otherwise become incapacitated due to exceeding their wound or strain threshold, spend a Story Point to delay incapacitation until the end of their next turn; if this character reduces their strain or wounds to their threshold or below before the end of their



next turn, they are not incapacitated), Second Wind 3 (once per encounter as an incidental, may heal 3 strain).

Abilities: None.

Equipment: Rumpled and worn professional attire.

TRACKER [RIVAL]



A tracker can discern the obscure signs left behind by humans and creatures to follow them over rugged terrain. To convert the tracker from a wilderness guide to an urban debt collector or detective, swap out Athletics for Computers, and Survival for Streetwise.



Skills: Athletics 2, Coercion 1, Ranged 3, Survival 4, Vigilance 3.

Talents: Hamstring Shot (once per round, on a successful ranged combat check against a non-vehicle target within range, halve the damage inflicted [before applying soak] to immobilize the target until the end of its next turn).

Abilities: None.

Equipment: None.

WANDERER [RIVAL]



The wanderer never stays in one place for long, and doesn't seem to have a home. They happily, or perhaps quietly, roam from place to place doing odd jobs. They often have a traveling companion in the form of a stray animal, or possibly even a small drone or robot (two creatures that would serve in this role would be the dog and falcon on page 87).



Skills: Brawl 2, Charm 2, Cool 1, Knowledge 2, Mechanics 1, Negotiation 1, Resilience 3, Streetwise 2, Survival 2, Vigilance 3.

Talents: Animal Companion (has a silhouette 0 animal companion; once per round, may spend a maneuver to direct the animal to perform one action and one maneuver during this character's turn).

Abilities: Been There, Done That (when providing assistance, this character adds $\star \Delta$ to the results instead of \square).

Equipment: Fists (Damage 3; Brawl; Critical 5; Range [Engaged]; Disorient 2, Knockdown), rugged clothes.

MARTIAL

The following profiles represent combatants and combat support personnel. They are adaptable to any game: just add a setting-appropriate equipment array (see **Equipment Arrays**, page 81).

ACE [RIVAL]



Traditionally, any pilot who downs five enemy aircraft is an ace. Aces can push vehicles beyond normal tolerances to make maneuvers no one else can. In the age of myth, fantasy, and monsterworld settings, replace the Piloting skill with the Riding skill. In the post apocalypse setting, replace the Piloting skill with the Driving skill.



Skills: Charm 1, Coordination 2, Gunnery 3, Mechanics 1, Piloting 4, Ranged 2, Vigilance 2.

Talents: Barrel Roll (when piloting a starfighter or airplane of silhouette 3 or less, after suffering a hit, may suffer 3 system strain to reduce the damage by four as an incidental), Defensive Driving 2 (increase the defense of any vehicle this character pilots by two).

Abilities: None.

Equipment: None.

ATTACKER [RIVAL]



This highly trained combatant favors aggressive, frontal assaults, winning engagements by employing overwhelming force. An attacker might be an ax-wielding berserker, charging soldier brandishing a bayonet, or SWAT team member who is first into the breach.



Skills: Athletics 2, Brawl 2, Coercion 2, Coordination 3, Discipline 2, Melee 2.

Talents: Adversary 1 (upgrade difficulty of all combat checks against this target once).

Abilities: Momentum (If this character performed a move maneuver, they add 3 to the damage of one hit of any successful Brawl or Melee combat checks they make during the same turn).

Equipment: None.

DEFENDER [NEMESIS]



Defenders guard the walls at castles and bases, act as bodyguards, and control gates and checkpoints. They might be security guards at banks, businesses, or residential high-rises. Any combatant whose primary job is to guard a location should use this profile, and they could range from armored paladins and knights to modern bodyguards.



Skills: Athletics 1, Cool 1, Discipline 3, Melee 3, Ranged 3, Vigilance 3.

Talents: Body Guard 2 (as a maneuver, may suffer up to 2 strain to upgrade the difficulty of all combat checks targeting one ally engaged with this character a number of times equal to the strain suffered), Rapid Reaction 2 (May suffer up to 2 strain to add an equal number of \star to a Vigilance or Cool check to determine Initiative order).

Abilities: None.

Equipment: None.

FIELD LEADER [RIVAL]



The field leader is proficient in tactical direction and movement. They lead their forces from the front, deploying units to ensure success. A field leader might be a gruff squad leader or an inspirational cavalry officer. For the age of myth and fantasy settings (and possibly the steampunk and monsterworld settings), you should replace the Drive skill with the Ride skill.



Skills: Cool 1, Discipline 1, Drive 2, Leadership 2, Melee 2, Perception 1, Ranged 2, Survival 1.

Talents: Adversary 1 (upgrade difficulty of all combat checks against this target once), Field Commander (as an action, make an **Average** [♦♦] Leadership check; if successful, 3 allies may immediately perform one maneuver as an out-of-turn incidental).

Abilities: None.

Equipment: None.

GENERAL [NEMESIS]



A general is a master of strategic warfare. They use formations and force multipliers to break the morale and

KNIGHTS WITH SWORDS

The defender profile can be used to represent a knight, but traditionally knights (in most of their regional variants) fight with swords or other bladed weapons. If you want to create a knight, besides the proper equipment array, we recommend adding the following talent to the profile:

Parry 3 (when this character suffers a hit from a melee combat check, after damage is calculated, but before soak is applied, they may suffer 3 strain to reduce the damage of the hit by five).

If you add this to the profile, increase the combat power level to 6.

spirit of their enemies. A general could be any leader in charge of a faction's troops in battle.



Skills: Coercion 4, Cool 2, Knowledge 3, Leadership 5, Melee 1, Ranged 1.

Talents: Adversary 2 (upgrade difficulty of all combat checks against this target twice), Coordinated Assault 4 (once per turn, may spend a maneuver to add Δ to the results of all combat checks made by five allies within long range until the end of this character's next turn).

Abilities: Strategic Coordination (once per encounter, may make a **Daunting** [♦♦♦♦] Leadership check; if successful, until the end of the encounter, all allies in the encounter may perform an additional move maneuver on their turn without downgrading their action or suffering strain—but they still may only perform two maneuvers during their turn).

Equipment: Uniform.

GUNNER [MINION]



Gunners operate large-scale weapons, from ballistae and catapults to missile launchers and laser cannons. They might work aboard a vehicle or operate a weapon emplacement. If used in older settings, switch their Gunnery skill for the Ranged skill.



Skills (group only): Athletics, Discipline, Gunnery, Mechanics.

Talents: None.

Abilities: None.

Equipment: None.

MEDIC [RIVAL]



The medic's primary task is to keep their allies alive and fighting. This often limits them to first aid and administering painkillers, or dragging the seriously wounded to safety where surgeons can address their injuries.



Skills: Athletics 3, Cool 3, Discipline 2, Medicine 2, Melee 2, Ranged 1.

Talents: Combat Medicine 2 (before making a Medicine check, this character may add ⚔ ⚔ to the results; after the check is resolved, the target suffers 4 strain), Painkiller Specialization 2 (when this character uses painkillers, the target heals 2 additional wounds; the sixth painkiller and beyond each day still have no effect).

Abilities: None.

Equipment: 2 painkillers (or setting equivalent), medical supplies (can make Medicine checks without penalty).

RANGER [RIVAL]



Rangers, scouts, and snipers operate independently or in small teams, identifying enemy locations, performing reconnaissance, and taking out enemy scouts. Rangers are adept at avoiding detection, and might be medieval rangers, modern recon scouts, or even snipers.



Skills: Athletics 2, Cool 3, Melee 1, Perception 3, Ranged 3, Stealth 3, Survival 4.

Talents: Adversary 2 (upgrade difficulty of all combat checks against this target twice), Hamstring Shot (once per round, on a successful ranged combat check against a non-vehicle target within range, halve the damage inflicted [before applying soak] to immobilize the target until the end of its next turn), Heightened Awareness (allies within short range add ☐ to Perception and Vigilance checks; engaged allies add ☐ ☐ instead).

Abilities: None.

Equipment: None.

SAPPER [RIVAL]



Combat engineers destroy enemy defenses and clear out fortified positions. They might accomplish this through the use of shovels and sledgehammers, or advanced tools and explosives.



Skills: Athletics 2, Discipline 2, Mechanics 4, Melee 3, Perception 2, Ranged 2, Resilience 4.

Talents: None

Abilities: Destroy Terrain (when engaged with a silhouette 2 or smaller terrain feature that is providing cover or obstructs movement—such as a section of fence, foxhole, door, or sandbagged emplacement—this character may spend an action and make a Hard [♦♦♦] Mechanics check; if the check succeeds the terrain feature is destroyed and no longer provides cover or obstructs movement), Flush Target (after making a combat check targeting a character in cover, may spend ▲▲ or ☀ to force the character to immediately move out of cover as an out-of-turn incidental). **Equipment:** Hatchet or similar tool (Melee [Light]; Damage 4; Critical 3; Range [Engaged]; Vicious 1).

WARRIOR [MINION]



Warriors are infantry fighters that could be trained in close-quarters combat or ranged fighting. Depending on the equipment and the setting, warriors might represent a phalanx of Spartans, a horde of barbarians, squads of rifle infantry, or a line of archers.



Skills (group only): Athletics, Brawl, Discipline, Melee, Ranged.

Talents: None.

Abilities: None.

Equipment: Fists (Brawl; Damage 3; Critical 5; Range [Engaged]; Disorient 1, Knockdown).

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EXPANDED ALTERNATE RULES

In Part II, we discussed new rules for creating your own vehicles and adversaries. Now, in Part III, we're going to introduce new alternate rules that you can use to further customize your own GENESYS games.

These alternate rules expand on the game in the same vein as the rules presented in **Part III–Chapter 2** and **Chapter 4** of the GENESYS Core Rulebook. The first chapter in **Part III** of this book expands on the magic rule set, while the second chapter presents new rules for using specialization trees to purchase talents. The third chapter offers rules and guidance for one-versus-many social encounters. Finally, the forth chapter presents two new tones for use in your game.

WHAT'S IN THIS PART OF THE BOOK?

Let's take a closer look at what you're going to find in this part of the book:

- **Chapter 1: Expanded Magic Rules.** This chapter presents new talents that are specifically linked to the magic alternate rules in the Core Rulebook. You should only use them if you're going to be using those magic rules. It also presents three new spells: Mask, Predict, and Transform.
- **Chapter 2: Specialization Trees.** This chapter presents new rules for using specialization trees as a means of letting characters obtain talents (instead of allowing them to purchase talents freely). It also has rules on how to create your own specialization tree.
- **Chapter 3: Social Encounters.** Many social encounters end up being a group of players versus a single nemesis. The rules in this chapter help keep those encounters challenging for the group.
- **Chapter 4: New Tones.** Expanding on the Core Rulebook's guidance on tones, we have two new tones you can use with your game: heist and noir.

CHAPTER 1: EXPANDED MAGIC RULES

This chapter expands on the magic rules found on page 210 of the *GENESYS* Core Rulebook. The first section adds new talents that only benefit characters

who are using magic. The second section introduces three new spells: Mask, Predict, and Transform.

MAGIC TALENTS

The following talents are only valuable for magic-using characters. Some of the talents are this way by default: they amplify or modify the effects of magic skill checks (so someone who can't make magic skill checks won't benefit from the talent). Some of the other talents require your character to have ranks in a magic skill to benefit from their effects.

All of these talents can be used in any setting that uses the magic alternate rules.

TIER 1

COMPONENT CASTING

Tier: 1

Activation: Active (Incidental)

Ranked: No

When your character casts a spell, they may use this talent to consume a physical item and add  to the check. The item does not have to be expensive or rare, but it does have to be thematically appropriate for the spell, available to your character, and subject to your GM's approval. Some examples include a match or bit of sulphur for an Attack spell with the Burn quality, a piece of glass for a Predict spell, or a scrap of bandage for a Heal spell.

ELEMENTALIST

Tier: 1

Activation: Passive

Ranked: No

When your character purchases this talent, choose one of the following attack spell effects (and the element associated with it): Fire (fire), Ice (water), Impact (earth), or Lightning (air). Whenever your character casts an Attack spell, they always add the chosen effect to the spell without increasing the difficulty. However, they may never add any of the other three effects to a spell they cast.

ENSORCELLED

Tier: 1

Activation: Active (Incidental)

Ranked: No

If your character has at least one rank in a magic skill, once per encounter, they may use this talent to add  to the result their next social skill check.

Additionally, this has a passive narrative effect; your character's appearance is subtly enhanced by their magic. Others do not note it as supernatural, but may be slightly put off. What form this enhancement takes is up to you, with your GM's approval, but it should be based on the magic skill your character possesses (as well as their backstory). A character with the Divine skill may always be flushed with good health, or their eyes may flash red momentarily. A character with the Primal skill may be surrounded by the scent of fresh pine, or their voice may have an intimidating growl. A character with the Arcana skill may have their hair tousled by undetectable winds, or when they wear a hat or hood, their face might be obscured by strangely deep shadows.

TIER 2

BRILLIANT CASTING

Tier: 2

Activation: Active (Incidental)

Ranked: No

When your character casts a spell, you may spend one Story Point to use this talent to add  equal to your character's ranks in Knowledge to the results.

ENSORCELLED (IMPROVED)

Tier: 2

Activation: Passive

Ranked: No

Your character must have purchased the Ensorcelled talent to benefit from this talent. If your character has at

least two ranks in a magic skill, when using the Ensorcelled talent, they may add $\star \Delta$ to their next social skill check (instead of Δ).

After purchasing this talent, your character's appearance is now noticeably changed by their magic. What form this enhancement takes is up to you, with your GM's approval, but it should be based on the magic skill your character possesses as well as the enhancement they originally possessed with the Ensorcelled talent.

TIER 3

DRUID

Tier: 3

Activation: Passive

Ranked: No

When your character casts a Conjure spell using the Primal skill, they always add the Summon Ally effect without increasing the difficulty, and they must always summon a living animal (such as those starting on page 86). The animal remains for the duration of the encounter even if your character does not use a concentrate maneuver to maintain the spell. At your GM's discretion, the animal may have already been nearby rather than summoned from thin air. Likewise, at the end of the encounter, the animal may revert back to its natural behavior instead of vanishing.



ELEMENTALIST (IMPROVED)

Tier: 3

Activation: Passive

Ranked: No

Your character must have purchased the Elementalist talent to benefit from this talent. When your character purchases this talent, they gain one of the following abilities based on the element they selected when they purchased Elementalist: they cannot be knocked prone or staggered (earth), they cannot be immobilized and can breathe underwater (water), they cannot be disoriented and can fly using the hovering guidelines in the Flying sidebar on page 100 of the GENESYS Core Rulebook (air), or they are immune to fire—including ignoring damage from attacks with the Burn item quality and from other fire-based attacks (fire).

ENSORCELLED (SUPREME)

Tier: 3

Activation: Active (Incidental)

Ranked: No

Your character must have purchased the Improved Ensorcelled talent to benefit from this talent. If your character has at least three ranks in a magic skill, once per session they may use this talent to force all enemies within medium range to make a Hard ($\diamond \diamond \diamond$) Discipline check as an out-of-turn incidental. If they fail,

they must spend all available maneuvers moving away from your character, and they suffer 5 strain, plus 1 additional strain per \diamond (if your group is using the optional Fear rules on page 243 of the Core Rulebook, this can be treated as a fear check).

What form this reveal takes is up to you, with your GM's approval, but it should be based on your character's magic skill and the enhancement they possess from the Improved Ensorcelled talent. Some possibilities include growing golden wings of light, manifesting demonic horns and glowing red eyes, rising into the air on a tornado, becoming a figure of pure shadow, or transforming into a massive treelike humanoid.

EXPLOSIVE CASTING

Tier: 3

Activation: Active (Incidental)

Ranked: No

When your character casts an attack spell, they treat the spell's Blast quality as having a rating equal to twice your character's ranks in Knowledge (instead of their ranks in Knowledge). When your character casts an Attack spell with the Blast effect, you may spend one Story Point to use this talent to trigger the spell's Blast quality, instead of spending Δ (even if the attack misses).

FACE OF THE WILD

Tier: 3

Activation: Active (Incidental)

Ranked: No

When your character casts a transform spell on themselves using the Primal skill, you may spend a Story Point to have them use this talent to maintain the effects of the spell until the end of the encounter, without performing concentrate maneuvers.

INNATE FOCUS

Tier: 3

Activation: Active (Incidental)

Ranked: No

While not using a magic implement, your character increases the base damage of all Attack spells they cast by two. In addition, when casting a spell while not using a magic implement, your character may use this talent to decrease the difficulty of the check by one. If they do so, they increase the strain suffered for casting the spell by one.

MASTER OF ILLUSION

Tier: 3

Activation: Active (Incidental)

Ranked: No

After your character makes a successful Mask spell to create an illusion, you may spend a Story Point to have your character use this talent to make the illusion last until the end of the encounter, without performing concentrate maneuvers, and not need to remain within the spell's range after being cast. You may spend two Story Points to make the illusion last until the end of the session instead.

TIER 4

ELEMENTALIST (SUPREME)

Tier: 4

Activation: Active (Incidental)

Ranked: No

Your character must have purchased the Improved Elementalist talent to benefit from this talent. When

your character casts an augment, barrier, or transform spell, they may use this talent to choose to have the targets of the spell gain the ability your character gained when they purchased Improved Elementalist for the spell's duration.

FICKER STEP

Tier: 4

Activation: Active (Incidental)

Ranked: No

When your character casts a spell using the Arcana skill, they may use this talent to spend $\Delta \Delta \Delta$ or \otimes to instantly vanish and reappear at any location within long range.

MASTERFUL CASTING

Tier: 4

Activation: Active (Incidental)

Ranked: No

When your character casts a spell, they may use this talent to spend \otimes to trigger up to three different qualities or spell effects instead of one. These qualities or spell effects must be ones that can be triggered by spending Δ or \otimes .

POLYMORPH

Tier: 4

Activation: Passive

Ranked: No

If your character has at least one rank in the Arcana or Divine skill, they can cast the transform spell. However, they can use the spell to only transform into magical or supernatural creatures (such as dragons, angels, demons, or elementals).

STRENGTH OF FAITH

Tier: 4

Activation: Active (Maneuver)

Ranked: No

Once per session, your character may use this talent to add \star equal to their ranks in Discipline and Δ equal to their ranks in Willpower to the results of the next Divine skill check they make during this turn.

TELEPORTATION

Tier: 4

Activation: Active (Action)

Ranked: No

If your character has at least one rank in Arcana, once per session, your character may use this talent to make a **Daunting (♦♦♦♦) Arcana check**. If they succeed, they instantly vanish and reappear in any other location in the world they already know about.

Your character may bring up to five allies with them when they teleport, but they must add ■ to the check for each ally. They may also teleport to different worlds or planes of existence; however, they must upgrade the difficulty of the check once (or more, at your GM's discretion) if they do so. Whenever your character uses this talent, your GM may spend ♀ to have the teleportation miss the location by a range band per ♀ spent, or may spend ♀ ♀ ♀ ♀ or ♀ to have the teleportation go catastrophically wrong (by having a character materialize in a wall, another person, or midair, for instance, with the awful consequences to be determined by your GM).

TIER 5

DIRE ANIMAL COMPANION

Tier: 5

Activation: Passive

Ranked: No

Your character must have purchased the Animal Companion talent to benefit from this talent. If your character has at least one rank in the Primal skill, the animal companion they have bonded with through the Animal Companion talent increases its Brawn by one, to a maximum of 5, and its wound threshold by four. If it is a nemesis, it increases its strain threshold by four. If it is a minion or rival, it becomes a nemesis and gains

a strain threshold of 6. If it is silhouette 0, it becomes silhouette 1. Your character also chooses to increase either its Agility or its Willpower by one, to a maximum of 5, and its Brawl, Discipline, Perception, or Survival by one, to a maximum of 5.

TELEPORTATION (IMPROVED)

Tier: 5

Activation: Active (Action)

Ranked: Yes

Your character must have purchased the Teleportation talent to benefit from this talent. Your character may use this talent to make a Hard (♦♦♦) Arcana check to create a permanent beacon, glyph, or teleportation circle in a location (how it appears is up to you and your GM, but it should be large and noticeable).

When your character uses the Teleportation talent, if they choose to teleport to the location of their beacon, glyph, or teleportation circle, the difficulty of the check is Average (♦♦) and they do not add ■ for teleporting additional allies. They also do not upgrade the difficulty of the check to teleport to a different world or plane of existence.

Your character can have two glyphs, beacons, or circles established at any one time per rank of Improved Teleportation. If they create any over this limit, one of the originals of your character's choice is destroyed.

NEW SPELLS

The following three new spells are designed to work with the magic rules starting on page 210 of the GENESYS Core Rulebook. In this section, we offer narrative descriptions of each of the new spells, followed by their mechanical rules.

NEW TYPES OF SPELLS

The three new spells deal with the powers of illusion, foresight, and shapeshifting.

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTIONS

This section discusses how these spells can be used in narrative encounters.

MASK

Skills: Arcana

Mask spells create illusions of light and sound. These can be images of people, creatures, or objects. Alternatively, the spellcaster can wrap illusions around themselves or someone else, masking their appearance

with a different countenance. The illusions may look fearsome, beguiling, or repugnant, but they are simply phantasms without form or substance. They cannot interact with the real world in any way.

When you use a Mask spell in a narrative situation, first check out the mechanical rules starting on page 99 and see if the effects you want are listed there. If so, you can use the listed difficulties to figure out how hard it should be to cast the spell. However, remember that the Mask spell only creates illusions; it can merely alter what the eyes see and the ears hear (and maybe what the nose smells). It can't create something physical.

PREDICT

Skills: Arcana, Divine

"Prediction," "prophecy," and "foresight" refer to the ability to see the future (or at least a possible future). Prophecy plays a role in many stories, especially myths and legends of old. Usually, a prophecy doesn't let one see the entire future. Instead, it lets the person ask one or two questions and get answers about events to come.

When your character uses a Predict spell narratively, its difficulty usually depends on how far into the future they want to look. If it's within the next day or so, then you can start with a difficulty of **Average** (♦♦). Looking a month ahead may increase the difficulty to **Hard** (♦♦♦), a year may be **Daunting** (♦♦♦♦), and anything beyond that may be **Formidable** (♦♦♦♦♦). A significant number of ♣ or a ♦ may make a prophecy especially inscrutable or vague.

TRANSFORM

Skills: Primal

The Transform spell lets its caster transform into a beast. Like lycanthropy, Transform involves the alteration of a person's physical form into that of a creature. However, with the Transform spell, the creature must be natural (no skeletons or demons), and the spellcaster retains their psychological identity. While the caster may look like an animal, they still think like a person.

When using Transform narratively, you should base the difficulty on the size of the animal your character is attempting to become. The default difficulty for using this spell in a narrative encounter is **Average** (♦♦) if your character wants to transform into a silhouette 0 creature. Increase the difficulty of the check by one for each silhouette larger your character wants to transform into. You could also increase the difficulty by one if your character needs to remain transformed for a great length of time.

SPILLS IN STRUCTURED ENCOUNTERS

The following are the rules for using each of the three new spells in a structured encounter.

ACTIONS

Each of the new spells requires an action to use. As with the spells in the Core Rulebook, each of the following entries specifies whether the spell can be sustained using the concentrate maneuver and what skills can be used to perform the action. Not all skills can be used to perform each magic action, and as with the spells in the Core Rulebook, a character must have at least one rank in the skill required by a magic action to perform that magic action.

MASK

Concentration: Yes

Skills: Arcana

This is using magic to create an illusion, or to disguise a character's appearance. The character makes an Arcana skill check. The default difficulty for the check is **Easy** (♦). If the check is successful, the character creates an illusion of a creature or object that is silhouette 1 or smaller. The illusion appears within short range of the character. Alternatively, the illusion changes the appearance of the caster or one silhouette 1 (or smaller) target they are engaged with. The illusion cannot obscure the basic size and shape of the target.

MAGIC KNOWLEDGE SKILL

In GENESYS, we assume that your setting may have its own set of expanded knowledge skills (see page 67 of the GENESYS Core Rulebook for more on how Knowledge can be expanded into multiple skills). However, this raises the question of which knowledge skill should be used when casting spells?

One option is to create your own knowledge skill or skills, each one linked to a different kind of magic. However, we have also provided a default option: Knowledge (Supernatural), which can represent knowledge of any magical abilities.

KNOWLEDGE (SUPERNATURAL)

This is a broad knowledge of the arcane mysteries, divine powers, or supernatural primal forces of nature. This knowledge may represent decades of magical research or a deep study of holy texts or of the underlying principles of natural power.

You should use this skill in any setting that employs the magic rules.

YOUR CHARACTER SHOULD USE THIS SKILL IF...

- Your character is researching a spell's origins.
- Your character is trying to learn more about a supernatural creature or monster.
- Your character is deciphering a holy text.

YOUR CHARACTER SHOULD NOT USE THIS SKILL IF...

- Your character is trying to learn about the mundane world. Your character should use a different knowledge skill for anything that isn't related to magic or the supernatural.
- Your character is trying to cast a spell. Your character should use a magic skill for that.



TABLE III.1-1: MASK ADDITIONAL EFFECTS

EFFECTS	DIFFICULTY MOD
Blur: If the spell targets a character, it blurs and obscures their form. Until the spell ends, add ♀ to the results of combat checks targeting the character (this applies even if the attacker realizes the effect is an illusion).	+ ♦
Mirror Image: If the spell targets a character, it creates multiple images that move with the target and distract opponents. Until the spell ends, the character may spend ♀ ♀ ♀ or ♀ from any combat check targeting them to cause the attack to harmlessly hit a mirror image rather than the character (this applies even if the attacker realizes the effect is an illusion).	+ ♦
Additional Illusion: The spell creates one additional illusion or disguises one additional character. In addition, after casting the spell, you may spend ♀ ♀ to create another additional illusion or disguise another additional character (you may trigger this multiple times, spending ♀ ♀ each time).	+ ♦
Range: Increase the range of the spell by one range band. This may be added multiple times, increasing the range by one range band each time.	+ ♦
Size: Increase the silhouette of the illusion created by one, or disguise the appearance of a target one silhouette larger. This may be added multiple times, increasing the silhouette of the illusion created or target disguised by one each time.	+ ♦
Realism: Increase the difficulty of checks to determine that the illusion is fake by one. In addition, after casting the spell, you may spend ♀ ♀ to increase the difficulty of checks to determine that the illusion is fake by one (you may trigger this multiple times, spending ♀ ♀ each time). The illusion can also fool additional senses such as smell, taste, or touch.	+ ♦
Terror: The illusion terrifies those who behold it. When any character who does not know the illusion is fake spots it, they must make a Hard (♦♦♦) Discipline check. They suffer 2 strain per ♀ and, if they fail, are unable to approach the illusion. (If you are using the Fear rules from page 243 of the GENESYS Core Rulebook, this can be a Hard (♦♦♦) fear check).	+ ♦♦
Invisibility: If the spell targets a character, it renders them invisible to sight instead of changing their appearance.	+ ♦♦♦

Illusions can generate light and sound, but they cannot cause harm or interact with their environment in any way. Illusions can be animated and can move, as long as they remain within the range of the spell. A keen observer can attempt to spot the false nature of the illusion by making an Average (♦♦) Vigilance check

(or Average [♦♦] Perception check if the observer suspects that their senses may be fooled). Success means the observer recognizes the object's illusory nature.

Before making a mask check, choose any number of additional effects listed on Table III.1-1: Mask Additional Effects. These effects are added to the check.

TABLE III.1–2: PREDICT ADDITIONAL EFFECTS

EFFECTS	DIFFICULTY MOD
Quicksilver Reflexes: Instead of asking a question about events, the character adds ♦♦ to the results of any checks they make to determine Initiative during the next structured encounter they participate in.	-
Scry: Instead of asking a question about events, the character may learn the location of one silhouette 0 item within long range. They must know what item they are looking for before they cast the spell, and the spell does not reveal how to get through any obstacles such as locked doors, hidden passages, or traps.	+ ♦
Empowered: The character may ask a question about events that will unfold within the next month.	+ ♦
Additional Questions: The character may ask one additional question about events. In addition, after casting the spell, you may spend A A to ask another additional question about events (and may trigger this multiple times, spending A A each time).	+ ♦
Flash of Precognition: In addition to asking a question, once before the end of the current encounter, the character may add ♦ to the results of one of their checks. In addition, once before the end of the current encounter, the character may add ✕ to the results of a check targeting them. In addition, after the character casts the spell, you may spend A A A to add ♦♦ to the results of one of their checks, and add ✕ ✕ to the results of a check targeting them, instead of this effect's normal benefits.	+ ♦♦
Cheat Death: In addition to asking a question, the character foresees a possible doom for themselves in the next 24 hours. Once before the end of the current session, when the character would otherwise be incapacitated or killed, you may spend a Story Point to have them suffer wounds and strain until they reach (but do not exceed) their wound and strain thresholds instead. Their survival should be described narratively, taking into account that they "saw" their potential death coming.	+ ♦♦

PREDICT

Concentration: No

Skills: Arcana, Divine

This is using magic to attempt to predict the future. The character makes an Arcana or Divine skill check, then asks one question about events that will unfold within the next 24 hours. The default difficulty of the check is **Average (♦♦)**. If the check is successful, your GM must provide the character with a truthful answer, but that answer could be one that can be interpreted multiple ways or is somewhat enigmatic. Whether the check succeeds or fails, the character may not make another predict check to ask about the same events for the remainder of the session.

Before making a predict check, choose any number of additional effects listed on **Table III.1–2: Predict Additional Effects**. These effects are added to the check.

TRANSFORM

Concentration: Yes

Skills: Primal

This is using magic to tap into primal forces and shift into the form of a wild creature. The character makes a Primal skill check. The default difficulty of the check is

Average (♦♦). If the check is successful, until the end of the spellcaster's next turn, the character transforms into a silhouette 0 animal. The animal must be a natural creature, and is subject to GM approval. Some options can be found starting on page 86.

While transformed, the spellcaster adopts the physical appearance of the animal and gains the animal's characteristics, soak, wound threshold, and defense. The spellcaster also gains any of the animal's abilities and equipment (including weapons).

The character retains their own skills, talents, and strain threshold. They drop any gear or clothing they were carrying or wearing when they transformed.

If the character is incapacitated while transformed, they revert back to their normal form. When a character reverts back to their normal form, they heal all wounds suffered while transformed but do not heal any strain or Critical Injuries they suffered while transformed. If they were incapacitated due to exceeding their wound threshold, they are no longer incapacitated.

Before making a transform check, choose any number of additional effects listed on **Table III.1–3: Transform Additional Effects**, on page 101. These effects are added to the check.

TABLE III.1–3: TRANSFORM ADDITIONAL EFFECTS

EFFECTS	DIFFICULTY MOD
Silhouette Increase: The character may transform into an animal that is one silhouette larger (this may be added multiple times, increasing the silhouette by one each time).	+ ♦
Characteristic Retention: When transformed, the character retains their own Intellect and Willpower, rather than the Intellect and Willpower of the creature they transformed into.	+ ♦
Transform Gear: When the character is transformed, their worn gear and wielded items change into natural markings on the animal's skin, fur, or scales (but confer no benefit to the character). When the character reverts back to normal, they are wearing and carrying their gear and items.	+ ♦
Dire Form: When the character transforms, they adopt a dire form of the chosen animal. Increase the damage of the animal's weapons by three, its soak by one, its wound threshold by six, and its silhouette by one.	+ ♦
Curse of the Wild: Instead of transforming themselves, the character may transform one target within short range into a silhouette 0 animal of the character's choice following all of the rules for transformation.	+ ♦♦♦

CHAPTER 2: SPECIALIZATION TREES

Talent acquisition is presented on page 71 of the GENESYS Core Rulebook as a system of tiers in which players must purchase a certain number of lower-level talents before they can purchase a higher-level one. This section presents the specialization tree concept as an alternative method of purchasing talents, and it allows the creator of the trees some control over what talents are available to particular characters.

A specialization tree is, simply put, a talent tree of twenty different talents. These talents are formed into a grid with four columns and five rows. Each row represents one tier, with the top row featuring Tier 1 talents. Talents in the top row are purchased for 5 XP each. Talents in subsequent rows cost an additional 5 XP for each row, with talents in the bottom row costing 25 XP apiece. Pathways of lines connect some of the talents together. You start by buying any of the Tier 1 talents. Then, you follow the lines to talents in subsequent rows. There are typically several ways to proceed through the tree, so the player still gets choices, though the range of talents is more limited and focused.

WHY CONSIDER SPECIALIZATION TREES?

Specialization trees have several benefits and trade-offs.

- **Themes:** Each tree typically reinforces a particular theme, in support of the setting and/or tone of the game. A tree may focus on close combat, social interaction, stealth, or intimidation, for example.
- **Limiting Options:** Specialization trees present talents in specific pathways, which limit player character options for spending XP. This gives the Game Master more control over what talents appear in the game, and when the characters gain access to them. It also limits “analysis paralysis” in players who have a difficult time deciding among all the available talents.
- **Promotes Unique Characters:** Specialization trees create limited access to talents, as previously noted. However, as long as different PCs have different careers (and thus, access to different specializations), they cannot select the same talents as their peers. This forces characters to grow differently.
- **Access Higher-Tier Talents More Quickly:** Tree pathways can grant quicker access to higher-tier talents, as their layout does not require purchasing

many more lower-tier talents to gain access to the upper-tier talents. This ultimately allows the player to purchase higher-tier talents for less total XP when the lower-tier talents are factored in.

- **Interesting Decisions:** A well-constructed tree provides interesting options that makes the players think about which talents they want to proceed with. It can also motivate them to earn more XP to gain talents they can’t wait to try out.

USING SPECIALIZATION TREES IN YOUR GAME

There are two ways to use specialization trees in your game. One approach is to tie each specialization tree to a particular career. Another is to create specialization trees that are not linked to any career, and may be selected freely by any player.

CAREER SPECIALIZATIONS

Specialization trees linked to a specific career focus on specific aspects of that career. Each specialization represents a narrowing of focus for practitioners of that career by providing four new career skills and a predetermined selection of available talents to a player character.

For example, Soldier career specializations could represent training in different types of combat. A Mechanized Combat specialization could contain vehicle-related talents. A Commando specialization may focus on stealth, demolitions, and close combat. An Officer specialization could feature leadership- and strategy-related talents.

In this system, when you create a specialization, you should also assign that specialization four career skills. There can be some overlap with the career skills in the specialization’s career, but generally, there should be at most two duplicate skills between a career and one of its specializations. When a character takes a specialization, they gain the specialization’s skills as career skills if they didn’t have them as career skills already (meaning those skills cost fewer XP to advance).

The reason for this is twofold. First, by providing additional career skills, a specialization can ensure that characters who take it have additional career skills that will be useful with regard to the specialization’s focus and to its provided talents. This allows a Soldier career to focus on career skills that are integral to the “basic”

soldier, while the Officer specialization provides some additional skills that are only applicable to the officer, like Leadership.

Second, this method guarantees that characters who purchase specializations outside of their career (see the **Using Specialization Trees in Games** sidebar, on page 104) have access to the career skills they need to get full use out of their specializations.

How Many Specializations Does This Method Need?

This method requires that each career have an equal number of specializations linked to it to keep things balanced. We recommend three specializations for each career. This does mean that you have to create a lot of specializations for your setting!

ROLE SPECIALIZATIONS

If you take the approach of keeping specializations separate from careers, then they represent training and abilities that could apply to a wide range of characters. For example, charlatans and con artists could come from any walk of life. Likewise, many people learn forms of self-defense even though they aren't soldiers. Settings with magic might include a magic role specialization that gives characters of any career access to

magic related talents. You can create a variety of role specializations and allow the characters to buy into multiple roles as they and the campaign develop.

However, role specializations are not intended to replace careers. A role specialization called Swindler would include talents that would help a player character con, connive, and scheme, but it wouldn't include the wide range of skills available to the Scoundrel career available on page 41 of the **GENESYS** Core Rulebook. Of course, a Scoundrel character would benefit from taking such a specialization.

This method does not have additional career skills linked to the specializations. This is because doing so devalues careers too greatly (unlike the career specialization method, by which the specializations are available for fewer XP for their linked careers).

How Many Specializations Does This Method Need?

This method requires you to have at least as many specializations as you have careers (that way each of your players can have a different career and specialization if they want). However, the real determining factor for the number of specializations you need is how many different focuses your characters want to be involved in and are appropriate for your setting.



USING SPECIALIZATION TREES IN GAME

Characters using specialization trees gain access to one tree for free at character creation. If your game is using the career specialization method, the specialization must be related to their career.

Access to subsequent specialization trees are purchased at the cost of ten times the total number of specializations the character will have after making the purchase. If your game is using the career specialization method, characters can purchase specializations outside of their career, but they must pay an additional 10 XP to do so.

Each talent tree has four columns and five rows, with a total of twenty talents ultimately available for purchase. The cost of each talent depends on the row it occupies. Talents in the top row (Row 1) cost 5 experience points each. Talents in the next row (Row 2) cost 10 experience points each. Talents in the third row cost 15 each. Talents in the fourth

row cost 20 each. Talents in the bottom row (Row 5) cost 25 each.

Characters begin by purchasing one or more Tier 1 talents. Talents in the top row (Row 1) may be purchased freely. However, a character can only purchase a talent in any of the other rows if it is linked by a pathway to a talent they have already purchased. This means characters must follow the pathways as they get deeper into the tree.

Ranked talents may be purchased additional times as they become available on trees that have them listed multiple times. If the character already has a ranked talent from another tree, they still must purchase it again and add it to the total number of ranks.

If the character comes across a talent they already have from a previous tree, and it is not a ranked talent, they can mark it as purchased without spending experience points.

CREATING A TREE

When creating a new specialization tree, start with the blank sheet presented in this book (or available for download at www.fantasyflightgames.com/genesys). The process of creating a talent tree typically starts with creating or selecting a theme, along with a suitable name.

Next, select two to four talents from each tier that support the theme. Then arrange the talents into a grid of five rows and four columns, with Tier 1 talents in the top row, and subsequent talents in order in the following rows. Connect most, if not all, of the talents with connecting lines to create a pathway for characters to follow as they advance through the tree. Except for the top row, each talent must have at least one connection to another talent and be part of the pathway. At the top row, at least one talent must connect to a Tier 2 talent. Tier 1 talents that are not connected simply stand alone and don't provide progress through the tree.

SELECTING AND ARRANGING TALENTS

A specialization tree should have roughly fourteen to sixteen unique talents (some ranked talents should be added to the tree multiple times). Roughly half the talents should be active and half passive. This keeps the player from becoming overloaded with too many options as their character gains more and more talents.

Most trees should include the Toughened or Grit talents. Socially focused trees can have more ranks of Grit, while combat-focused trees can have more of Toughened. Most trees should have the Dedication talent at Tier 5. If you omit Dedication for some reason, replace it with a talent of equal usefulness or benefit.

ARRANGING TALENTS

The art of creating talent trees lies in talent arrangement and connections. The exact arrangement ultimately influences how much XP is expended to purchase certain talents. For example, a tree may want

Dedication to be more or less expensive, and can create a very circuitous pathway that leads through half of the tree before Dedication, or it can provide a straight line down to the talent.

Ranked talents should spread out through the tree, and should usually become available at the talent's lowest cost. For example, Grit and Toughened are Tier 1 talents and should therefore become available in the top row (Row 1) for 5 XP. Enduring, on the other hand, is a Tier 4 talent and should first become available in the fourth row. This holds true for non-ranked talents as well. Animal Companion, for example, is a Tier 3 talent, so it should probably appear in the third row.

However, you don't have to put subsequent ranks in consecutive rows. If you want to make it more costly to gain another rank, simply place the talent in a higher-tier row, even if it skips rows in between. Toughened could appear in row one at its normal Tier 1 cost, and later in row three at the cost of a Tier 3 talent, even though it is only the second rank. Note that trees usually only include a few ranked talents, so a player is unable to purchase them in every single tier like they might in the regular talent rules.

In addition, consider placing some talents on a higher or lower row than their established tier in some specializations. A specialization may be unique and interesting because it allows purchase of a normally expensive talent at a lower rank as a trade-off for providing more limited talent selection overall. This can also set multiple talents apart from one another. For example, let's say you were making a Druid specialization and you wanted to emphasize their ability to bond with animals. Even though Animal Companion is a Tier 3 talent, you may put it in the second row. That way characters who take this specialization can purchase the talent earlier and cheaper.

CREATING THE PATHWAYS

Connect the talents by drawing lines between them to create your pathways. You should use eleven to fourteen vertical connections between the rows, and six to ten connections between the various columns. Using more connections diminishes the effectiveness of pathways, while using fewer connections may make the player feel like their choices are too restricted. However, some specializations may feel more unique because of their limited (or more open) pathway arrangements.

It is possible to create columns of talent trees that are barely connected to the other columns. This is another way to subdivide options within the tree, and it is perfectly valid. Doing so can create two "sub-trees" within a specialization, requiring your player to either choose to commit to one, or slowly advance up both.

Not counting the first row, there should be a maximum of three dead-end talents in the tree. Typically, there are one or two talents with a single connection to the rest of the tree. These dead ends may occur in any row after the first. They could represent the ultimate goal in a string of talents or could simply be the natural end of related talents that don't necessarily tie into the rest of the tree.

XP TAX

Players often regard purchasing lesser talents that they may not necessarily want as a tax on acquiring better talents. You can reduce this feeling by avoiding talents that are not relevant to the tree, and by including useful or interesting talents wherever possible. Providing multiple paths through the tree also gives players a chance to pick more desirable talents along the way.

POWERFUL TREES

Be aware of how many powerful talents you include in a given tree. Most trees naturally have a range of powers. Putting all the best talents in one tree may make other trees undesirable or underpowered in comparison. See the **Create a Talent** section on page 194 of the GENESYS Core Rulebook for suggestions on what makes a talent more or less powerful. In general, your tree should probably only include no more than three Tier 4 talents and two Tier 5 talents.

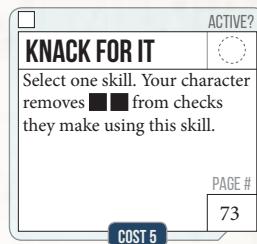
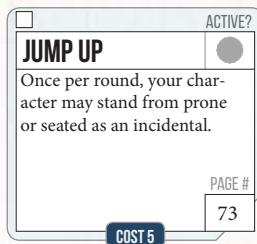
TESTING A NEW TREE

Once you have built a new tree, you should take a few minutes to test out which pathways a player would most likely use first. You're looking for paths that are obviously better than the others: paths most players would choose. Ideally, a player should want to take most of the tree eventually. Once you're satisfied, you should give the tree to several players and tell them they have 50 or 100 XP to spend. If everyone is making the same choices, you should consider changing pathways, arrangement of talents, or both to make other choices more appealing.

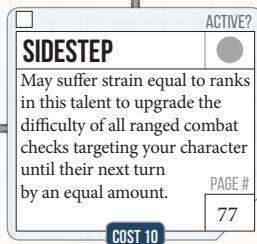
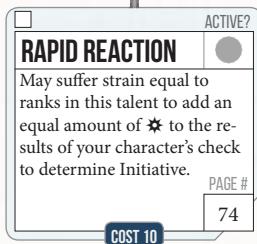
EXAMPLE SPECIALIZATION TREE: DAREDEVIL PILOT

ADDITIONAL CAREER SKILLS: COOL, COORDINATION, GUNNERY, PILOTING

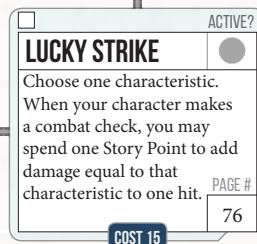
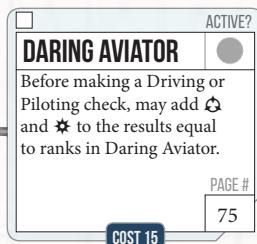
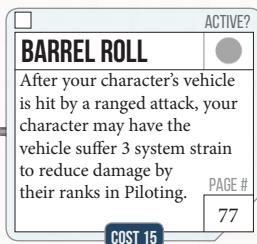
Row 1



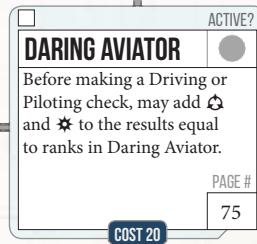
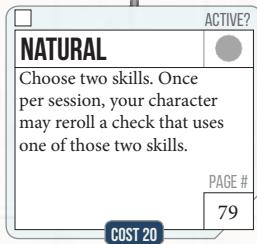
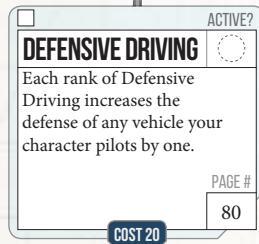
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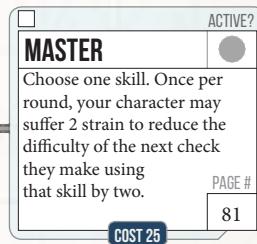
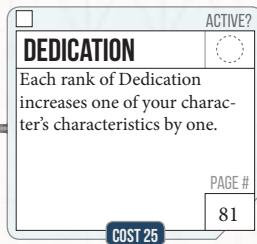
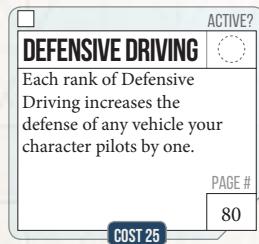
Row 3



Row 4



Row 5



This specialization tree is suitable for steampunk, weird war, modern day, science fiction, and space opera settings, and should be linked to the Fighter Pilot career. The left side of the tree tends to focus on piloting ability and keeping a vehicle intact. The right side is more geared towards taking down enemy vehicles. The isolated middle section of the top two rows reflects that daredevil pilots tend to be dodgy, fast, and have good reflexes, even if it doesn't directly help their piloting ability. Appropriately, there are three ranks of Daring Aviator. However, there is no straight line path from Row 1 to Row 5, so all talents on the fifth row ultimately cost a little bit more to achieve than they otherwise might. Dedication and Master are particularly difficult and expensive to purchase. This reflects that the character values risk above mastery and expertise, and has to dedicate themselves to achieve mastery.

CHAPTER 3: SOCIAL ENCOUNTERS

Because player characters commonly act as a group throughout an adventure, they regularly confront individual NPCs in social situations. This can let the PCs overcome obstacles too easily, because the PCs make multiple checks for every one check a single NPC makes.

This is especially true with the structured social encounter method. The NPC simply doesn't get enough opportunities to counter the PCs, since the NPC only makes one check to the PCs' three to five. Also, PCs often take different and conflicting approaches to winning an encounter. Some may try to charm or negotiate with the target, while others may try to coerce or order them around. While from a gameplay standpoint, this is handled by various skill checks, it can result in an unrealistic conversation. How does a character act when one person threatens to kill them, another tries to befriend them, and yet another attempts to bribe them?

This section discusses different approaches to dealing with these issues in social situations. You should also review **Chapter 7: Social Encounters** (starting on page 118 of the **GENESYS** Core Rulebook), particularly the **Skill Checks in Social Encounters** section, on page 120, and **Winning Social Encounters**, on page 121.

MANAGING ACTIONS

One of the primary issues is that the PC actions outnumber the NPC's actions. Here are a few approaches for balancing them out. You may use one or several in combination, depending on the encounter.

EXTRA ACTIVATIONS

If the NPC is a nemesis, you may choose to use the **Nemesis Extra Activation Rules**, on page 204 of the **GENESYS** Core Rulebook. This gives the NPC an extra turn each round, and it can go a long way toward making a nemesis feel more powerful toward the PCs.

DISTRACTING THE PCs

Depending on the situation, you can design a social encounter with additional tasks for the group to accomplish. This way, while some PCs engage with the main social opponent, the rest can do something equally vital. They could be learning secrets about the opponent, distracting the opponent's allies, or searching their surroundings.

REFUSING ENGAGEMENT

In settings where there are social protocols that influence or dictate the interaction between individuals, the NPC might initially refuse to listen to or discuss anything with someone who is breaking that protocol. Only a few PCs might properly meet the criteria. For example, an army general might refuse to discuss tactics with enlisted personnel, or a ruler might immediately dismiss any suggestion by someone who is not a noble.

MAIN ADVERSARIES AND SUPPORTERS

Of course, one way to make a social encounter more challenging is to not make it one NPC versus the party. You can add in a few rival or minion NPCs to back up the main adversary with social checks of their own and abilities that support their boss. In these encounters, you can have the PCs win if they get the boss to capitulate or compromise. This means the PCs can succeed at the encounter just as quickly, but if they don't act fast, they may be defeated by the main adversary's allies.

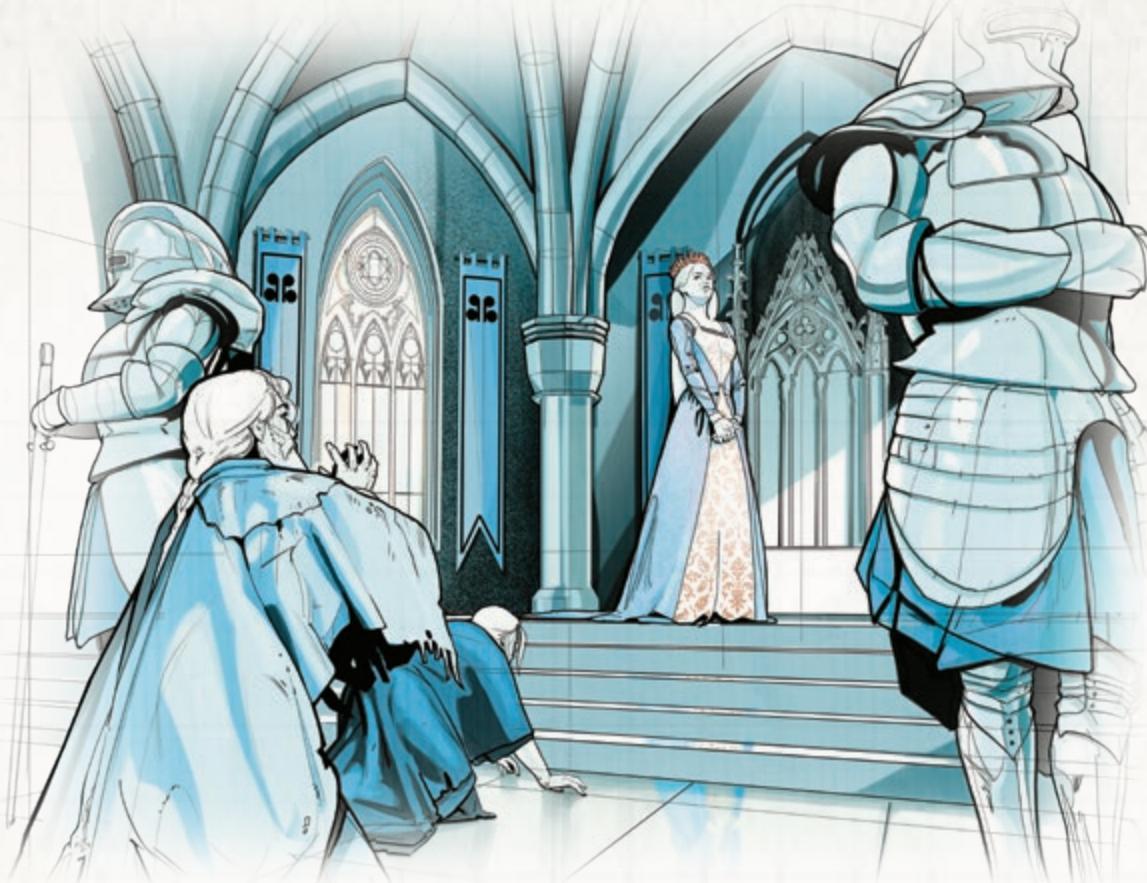
MULTIPLE CHECKS, MORE DICE

This is a different look at the problem addressed in the **Managing Actions** section: basically, the PCs are making a lot of checks compared to the main adversary's one. However, the following approaches specifically focus on ways to modify dice pools, or ways to reduce the number of checks being made.

DEALING WITH CONFLICTING ASSERTIONS

When multiple PCs, and perhaps the entire party, are simultaneously trying to influence the NPC but are not cooperating effectively with each other, you're left trying to figure out your NPC's reaction.

Initially, your NPC's Motivations should be what determines whether they respond favorably to certain arguments and approaches. However, as the encounter continues, it's only fair that the NPC reacts poorly to a wide range of potentially-conflicting approaches. If one PC threatens the NPC, and then the next PC tries to charm them, you can add ■ to the check and remark that the NPC is becoming confused and distrustful. If this back-and-forth continues, add more ■ as the NPC starts to distrust everything the PCs say.



Of course, some social encounters can see this back-and-forth approach used effectively. The “good cop, bad cop” trope is a famous example of this. However, in these cases, the two partners have to at least be pretending to work against each other, so that the NPC is fooled into thinking they’re on different sides. Your PCs can do the same to avoid suffering the penalties.

COOPERATION

PCs who do cooperate with each other by making similar or complementary statements probably should make assisted checks (see page 26 of the *GENESYS* Core Rulebook). This cuts down on the number of checks made against the NPC and helps manage the number

SOCIAL ADVERSARIES

Before using these rules, it’s worth taking a look at your adversary’s profile. Some adversaries have been specifically designed for social encounters with unique abilities.

The first thing to look for is a talent or ability that lets the adversary apply strain to multiple targets at once. The second is a talent or ability that inflicts strain when the adversary is targeted by a social check. If either of these are present, the NPC may be more capable than you thought.

of actions. Even though only one player is rolling the dice, you can ask each of the players to narratively describe their character’s approach when making the assisted check. That way, all players feel engaged.

NEW RULE: GROUP LEADERS

When dealing with a large group of people, it is easy and common for PCs to target solely the leader. To reflect the relative power of the group and its support, you can temporarily increase the leader’s strain threshold, making it more difficult to defeat the leader (see **Table III.3-1: Group Leader Strain Threshold Modifiers**). The group need not be present to apply the strain increase, but the GM might consider lowering the increase if it is not in the immediate vicinity. An unpopular or otherwise weakened leader may also lower the amount of increase.

TABLE III.3-1: GROUP LEADER STRAIN THRESHOLD MODIFIERS

SIZE OF GROUP	STRAIN THRESHOLD INCREASE
10–25	+5
26–50	+10
51–100	+15
101–500	+20
501+	+25

CHAPTER 4: NEW TONES

On page 241 in the **GENESYS** Core Rulebook, we introduced tone, another element of an adventure that creates a unique feeling and style that informs the way players play their characters and lets them know what to expect from the game.

HEIST

*"Are you through yet? Our airship is almost here!"
Dollian finished rigging the ascent balloons and looked nervously around the storage room.*

"I'm trying!" Mirsandria hissed. She was hunched over the lock of an ironbound strongbox. "But the lock's been changed since we scouted the place!"

Through the skylight in the ceiling, the bulbous form of an air sloop drifted overhead. Teller sighed. "All right, time for Plan B. Get back, Mirsandria." The thief barely had time to scramble away before Teller's rotorsword chewed into the box with a howl.

If there's one thing RPG players love, it's thievery. Whether looting an ancient temple or cracking into a heavily encrypted database, players are rarely happier than when their PCs are stealing everything in sight. Does this describe your players? Do they have difficulty keeping their grubby mitts off other people's stuff? If so, then the heist tone may be just what you're looking for.

In this section, we'll discuss the ins and outs of a good heist: what it is, what it isn't, what you can do with it, and what can go horribly wrong for the characters. You'll also find some optional rules designed to help you structure and run a heist for your players.

WHY USE HEIST?

Why should you use the heist tone in your game? Well, heists are the bread and butter of roleplaying games. Bad guys—corrupt lords, evil priests, dragons, depraved wizards, and dangerous multinational corporations—all of them have stuff, and your PCs want it. How will they get it? To what lengths will they go to pull the theft off? Who, or what, stands in their way? If you want to tell that kind of story and find out, use a heist.

In this chapter, we present two new tones: heist and noir. If you're looking for more information on how to use tones, you can also find that on page 241 of the **GENESYS** Core Rulebook.



THEMES OF HEIST

Heist-based games aren't as much about the actual target of the heist—the thing being stolen—as they are about everything the PCs do to get there. It's about the journey, not the destination. The plan the players concoct to steal that gold, or to get access to that valuable data, is every bit as important as the payoff itself—perhaps more so.

Heists typically take place in modern or futuristic urban or other heavily populated settings, places where there's a lot of good loot under lock and key. That said, there are plenty of opportunities for a good heist in, say, fantasy and weird war settings.

Heists have a lot of moving parts. Plans tend to be overly complex, there are double and triple crosses, and the characters must try to stay one step ahead of the authorities and their intended targets. It's a lot to keep straight, and anything can go wrong at any time. This is usually when the fun really starts.

Heist stories are, at best, morally gray. The primary characters are criminals, after all. The thing that makes the crime palatable to us, the consumers of heist-based media, is that the owner of whatever is being stolen is typically far worse than the primary characters. Sure, those planning the heist are crooks, but have you seen what the guy they're stealing from has been up to?

RUNNING HEIST-THEMED GAMES

Pulling off a heist breaks down into four broad steps: planning the job, doing the legwork, pulling the trigger, and getting away with it. Each step has its own feel, and each one presents numerous unique opportunities for the characters to royally screw up and bring the whole thing crashing down around them.

PLANNING THE JOB

The first phase of any heist is the planning phase. Here, the characters designate their target, make their plans, and discuss complications. This is a largely a roleplaying phase, but you can have the PCs make skill checks here and there, spend Story Points to identify threats, reach out to potential contacts, plot escape routes, or otherwise set themselves up for the next phase.

DOING THE LEGWORK

With the plans made, it's time for the characters to hit the streets and put all the pieces of their plan together. In the legwork phase, the characters case their target, collect any special equipment they need, and spread bribes around. It's during this phase that characters are most likely to generate heat (see **Generating Heat**) and to get in other kinds of trouble. Maybe that fake ID a character used to buy all those demolition charges was a bit too fake, or the huge tow truck they stole for part of their plan has a GPS tracker hidden in it.

PULLING THE TRIGGER

This is where the rubber meets the road. Once all the planning and legwork is done, it's time for the characters to execute their plan and see whether or not all that preparation pays off. Of course, every plan is a great plan until it's executed, and if things are going to go seriously wrong, it'll happen here.

GETTING AWAY WITH IT

Did the characters get what they wanted? Were they able to get that shipment of gold or that sensitive and highly incriminating data? Great! Now, what are they going to do with it? Did they make a plan for how to fence or otherwise profit from their ill-gotten gains? Did they get away scot-free, or was there, in fact, some dangerous computer virus in those stolen files?

Successfully pulling off a heist isn't necessarily the end of the story. There's always fallout, even in the best situations. Someone is going to be angry and looking for payback, and the characters will probably have a huge target painted on their backs for a long while.

NEW RULES: HEAT

During the planning and legwork stages, particularly unlucky crews can generate heat. Heat is a measure of how much attention the characters draw to themselves while going about the business of planning their daring heist. That attention could come from the law, from the heist's target, from another crew of thieves, or from anywhere else you feel makes narrative sense.

GENERATING HEAT

Characters generate heat through unlucky rolls. If a character generates \otimes on a skill check made during the planning or legwork phases, you can spend that \otimes to give them one point of heat. As a character gains heat, their life becomes increasingly more complicated, their luck begins to run out, and their plans begin to unravel.

As the characters gain more heat, you can spend it in two different ways: burning the characters, or having them attract the wrong kind of attention.

GETTING BURNED

Characters with heat find out real quick that word travels fast when you're in trouble. Contacts become scarce or want more for their services, family and friends keep them at arm's length, and the like. To reflect these extra complications, you may spend a PC's heat whenever they make a check. For each point of heat spent, upgrade the difficulty of the check once. You may not upgrade a single check more than three times using heat.

RESULTS OF SPENDING HEAT

If the characters are generating heat, they're drawing attention to themselves. Just what kind of attention—the law, agents of the target, witnesses and bystanders, or vigilantes—is up to you. You can spend as much of a character's heat as you feel necessary to bring attention to their actions. Just keep the attention proportional to the character's actions. A character scoping out a building or casing a jewelry store doesn't require the attentions of a SWAT team, for example.

We've provided the following examples of attention levels to give you an idea of how to use heat.

- **One heat:** Two cops in a squad car cruise by to check for suspicious behavior, or the character's credit card gets flagged for suspicious activity.

- **Two heat:** A private detective asks questions, or someone sends the character an oblique message.
- **Three heat:** The cops are actively looking for the PC, bank accounts are frozen, or someone sends the PC a more direct and possibly violent message.
- **Four heat:** There is a warrant out for the character's arrest, bounty hunters are hired, a loved one is kidnapped, or someone tries to kill the character by blowing up their car.
- **Five heat:** The feds are called in, a corporate assassin team is on the character's trail, all the character's assets are seized, or the character's face and name are plastered all over the media.

Cooling Off

Heat stays with a character until you spend it to complicate their life or they find another way to work it off.

THE LIMITS OF HEAT

Keep in mind that heat represents general static generated by a character or characters in the course of planning their heist. If the PCs do something flagrantly illegal or otherwise draw direct attention to themselves, such as by wiping out a corporate hit squad or getting into a shootout with the cops, for example, they will get into the appropriate trouble for that regardless of their heat level.

For example, maybe a character knows a crooked judge or lawyer who'll clear their record if the character does a favor or two for them. The exact nature of that favor is, of course, left to your discretion, but you should make it as shady and uncomfortable as possible. After all, a clean slate is worth its weight in gold.

Noir

Predictably, it was a gloomy evening that plunged straight into darkness. The streetlamps flickered to life, illuminating the streets with lonely islands of light, but it did nothing good for the group's mood. Staked out in the shadows around the old warehouse, everyone shivered as the cold mist slowly soaked their clothes. Finally, the rusted hulk of an old car pulled up to a side door, sans lights. The engine suddenly cut out, and a pair of burly men shoved a smaller figure out of the car and into the building. "You're gonna pay for ratting us out!" snarled one of the captors, "Boss wants to see you one last time." The stunned watchers realized their ambush was now a rescue mission. Their informant was in mortal danger, and it was their fault.

Do you like stories with a darker feel? How about highly personal tales of common people forced into sinister circumstances? Are you into old-style private detective stories complete with standard tropes like femmes fatales and down-on-their-luck private detectives?

Noir is part attitude, part atmosphere. It shares similar traits with the pulp tone, and many stories contain elements of both. It's dark, gritty, and cynical. It fits hard-boiled crime stories very well. Mystery and suspense are common elements. The first half of the twentieth century saw a lot of noir stories and films, but noir

isn't restricted to any particular time frame. It's adaptable to modern-day thrillers, futuristic settings, comic-book tales, and stories of ancient times.

WHY USE NOIR?

Noir is an instantly recognizable theme, with tropes and character types familiar to many players. Simply using the term "noir" evokes images of dark nights, complicated mysteries, tragic violence, antiheroes, tough detectives, and mysterious strangers who are always much more than they seem. If you want a classic detective tale, noir fits the bill.

However, don't feel you have to use well-worn tropes and old-time attitudes. The dark and gritty noir feel can inject a certain amount of toughness and realism into many types of stories. Using noir elements imparts a certain amount of danger and dread, wrapped into the dim lighting of a tough place to visit or live.

THEMES IN NOIR

Crime stories are the most typical noir tales, so variations on murders, kidnappings, thefts, and gangs are common. This theme naturally fits with the pulp and mystery tones. While you need not adhere to every stereotype and trope, you need to include enough to sell the setting; otherwise, you may as well select another tone.

Private detectives, police officers, and government agents with an air of toughness and self-destructive vices

are common elements. The antihero is key, though not necessarily a detective. An antihero could be a surgeon who, despite their oath, let a mafioso die on their operating table, or they could be a parent who will do whatever it takes to get their child out of the local crime syndicate, no matter how unsavory. They could even be a young member of an influential crime family who has seen the error of their family's ways and is now working to stop them from the inside. Whatever their background, your antihero will most likely be one of your player characters, and they will have a central role in the story.

Another theme is that nothing is ever easy, and bad luck abounds. Lucky breaks are mired with unexpected difficulties. No one is rich, and anyone who appears rich is faking it, losing their wealth, or about to meet a sudden and dismal end.

Finally, there is always a clear goal: rescue someone in distress, recover a stolen item, find a loved one, or even seek revenge for an earlier slight or evil deed. The goal is easy to see, but the path is never simple. Twists are commonplace, as are different levels of betrayal. Rewards are usually basic and hardly life-changing, but they enable the protagonists to live another day.

RUNNING NOIR-THEMED GAMES

With a noir-themed game, you need to highlight supporting elements throughout the game session. First, be aware of your descriptions. You really want to set the right atmosphere for the story. Use noir elements to reinforce the tone during play. The nights are always darker than usual, the weather is dreary, and mist and fog are unusually commonplace. When there is light, it is dramatic and highlights specific characters or elements vital to the story. The bad parts of town are ramshackle and dismal. In contrast, the well-to-do usually

live in fantastic luxury and style, from their clothes to their mansions to their vehicles. Vices such as gambling, smoking, or drinking are on display, usually to the detriment of the characters. Check out noir imagery, new and old, for additional inspiration.

Many noir stories feature criminal acts and elements. If this is the case in your adventure, spend some time figuring out the crime and the reason for its occurrence, including the perpetrator's motives and expectations. See the mystery tone, on page 246 of the **GENESYS** Core Rulebook, for more ideas on setting up detailed mysteries. Figure out how the player characters intersect with the story. They will likely become investigators regardless of their actual professions.

If the story isn't a mystery, it's likely the PCs are pursuing a specific item or person. It's probable they are doing this for someone else, for money, or for favors, or that they are being forced into it due to blackmail. The reason for their pursuit may be genuine, but it's highly likely that they don't know the full story up front. They may or may not like the truth when they discover it, and if not, they may turn on their employer or client. Be prepared for that moment, because the opposing character likely has a plan for this eventuality.

Of course, any clue or dialogue could be a red herring, whether it is a deliberate attempt to mislead the characters or simply sends PCs on an errant path due to logical deductions based on incomplete information. Since red herrings delay the overall story, they should be used with care in order to avoid annoying the players. Discovering dead ends during an investigation is expected, but ideally, the PCs still get something useful out of the effort.

NPCs should reinforce the noir theme. Even if your antagonists are not typical noir stereotypes or tropes, supporting and minor characters could have recognizable elements. Major characters in particular should be cynical of their situation or surroundings. They often see the negative side of things, except for items or efforts that directly benefit or enrich them.

NEW RULES: INTERNAL MONOLOGUE

Noir stories are typically narrated by the main character, whether on the printed page or as a voice over in a film. Not only does this character inform the audience what is going on, but they also reveal their own emotional state, deductive reasoning, and ruminations. Once per encounter, a player may narrate their PC's internal monologue to reveal to the GM and to the group what their PC is currently thinking, what their plan of action is for the remainder of the encounter, and what the reasoning behind their actions is. If they do this, the PC heals up to 3 strain that they are suffering.



GENESYS



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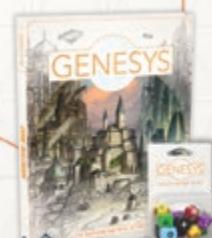
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