**Combat**

Sooner or later, bringing justice to the streets of the city will mean combat. Whether they are low-level thugs, or super-powered menaces, there are tons of bad guys just itching to get at you. When all other means have failed, and it is time to power up your energy blasts, here are the rules.

**Distance Scale**

Combat is played on a map of hexes. Each hex (since the hexes on most maps are one inch, a hex is often called an inch) represents 2 meters. To summarize:

***1 hex = 1” = 2 meters***

### Time Scale

Combat is played in a series of turns called rounds. Each round represents a frame in a comic book, or a short descriptive passage in a novel. For those situations that need a more accurate representation of time, each round is about 3-5 seconds long.

***1 round = 3-5 seconds***

**Tactics**

Certain characters have talents or powers that give Tactics Points. When tactics points are earned, they are put into a pool for the entire team to use. Tactics points can be used as they are needed and can do the following:

* Reroll a failed attack
* Reroll a failed saving throw
* Force your opponent to reroll a successful attack against you
* Reroll a failed task
* Add one or more to an attack roll at the rate of +1/tactics point
* Add one or more to a defense roll at the rate of +1/tactics point

**Initiative**

At the start of battle before the first combat round, each combatant generates their initiative score:

***Initiative Score = 1d12 + Reflex Bonus + Wit Bonus***

Ties are resolved in order of the combatants’ importance, The players are “heroes”, while creatures and NPCs have their importance shown in their monster listing.

* Bosses
* Heroes
* Lieutenants
* Henchmen or Hirelings
* Soldiers
* Minions

Once the initiative order is set, it remains unchanged for the rest of the combat. However, before the start of any combat round, either side may ***call for a new initiative roll*** by spending a tactics point. This will force all combatants to reroll initiative and use the new initiative order for subsequent combat rounds.

**Surprise**

In certain situations, one side in a combat might surprise another. Conditions for surprise are up to the GM and should be based on the situation leading up to the conflict.

The side that surprises its opponents gets a free round of action.

The surprised side cannot act, but can use any appropriate defenses if they can see the attacks coming. Surprised defenders that cannot see the attacks coming can only use their Base Defense.

The surprised side also loses its opportunity to make a tactics roll.

**Actions, Half-Actions, and Free Actions**

When it is your turn to act, you can perform a full action, or two half-actions. Additionally, any number of free actions can be taken during your turn.

A ***full action*** is defined as something you could complete in a round. This might include climbing over a fallen tree, sawing through a thick rope, tying a bootlace, or rummaging in your pack. Anything the GM decides could be done in 3-5 seconds, or a frame in a comic book. Some examples of full actions include:

* Move your full movement allotment
* Use a run action to move 1.5x your movement allotment
* Use a sprint action to move 2x your movement allotment
* Activate a Full activation power
* Rummage through a pack
* Tie/Untie a knot
* Navigate an obstacle
* Open a stuck door
* Lift something really heavy
* Break out of a grapple
* Saw through a thick rope

A ***half-action*** is something that takes only a second or two. A combatant can perform two half-actions each round. Examples of half-actions include:

* Move up to half your movement allotment (rounded up)
* Attack an opponent (ends your turn)
* Activate a Half, or Attack power
* Draw a weapon, or put a weapon away
* Stand up from a prone position
* Open an easy door
* Pick up a light object
* Cut a thin rope (requires a muscle check)

A ***free action*** requires no time and you are free to do them as needed during your turn. Examples include:

* Speaking
* Drop an object on the ground
* Drop prone
* Activate a Free, Conditional or Reaction power

**Holding Your Action**

You do not have to act when it is your turn. Instead, you can ***hold your action*** by either ***delaying*** or ***declaring*** your held action.

When you ***delay an action*** you wait and choose to act later in the initiative order. After each combatant takes their action, you have the option to use your delayed action and take your turn.

If you ***declare your action*** you save your action and then state a specific condition which will trigger your turn. For instance, you could hold your turn and state, “I will attack anyone that comes within reach.” When your declared action is triggered, it happens immediately and preempts everything else.

Once you use your held action, your place in the initiative order changes to the current position in the order. So, if you delay and take your action after the last combatant goes, you are now last in the initiative order for subsequent combat rounds.

**Facing**

Every combatant has a facing. Characters can face any of the six hex sides of the hex they occupy. They cannot face a hex corner. The three hexes in the front of the character are called his front. The hex directly opposite the one the character is facing is his rear. The other two hexes are his flank.

During your turn, changing your facing takes no time. However, once you attack someone, you must turn so as to have your target in one of your front hexes.

When it is not your turn, you can still change facing, but only if you are aware of an attack. If an attacker starts his turn in front of you, you can freely turn to face him. However, if he starts his turn from behind you, you are not permitted to change your facing and your opponent will get a flanking attack.

**Flanking**

If an opponent attacks you from the flanks or the rear, he gets a +2 to his attack roll.

**Defense Modes**

A defense mode is simply the way in which a character is defending against a specific attack. Typically, you will block or dodge attacks. However, if things get dire, you might need to rely on your base defense.

**Block**

When faced with melee attackers, you can use your block skill to defend. You can also use your block skill to block missile attacks if you have the correct power or talent.

**Dodge**

Every character has a dodge skill, and every attack can be dodged, even missiles and blasts.

**Zap**

Zap is used to defend against mental attacks and certain magical assaults.

**Multiple Attacks**

A character may defend as many times in a single round as is necessary. Each time he can pick whatever defense mode is most advantageous. Thus, a character being attacked by two thugs might block the first attack and dodge the second. However, each time after the first he uses the same defense skill in a round, he takes a cumulative –3 penalty to his score in that defense skill.

If you face three attacks in a combat round and choose to block all three of them, you will block the first at your skill level. The second you block at –3. The third you block at –6. The penalties continue to accrue until you reach your base defense. You can never defend at a score lower than your base defense unless you are unable to move.

At the end of the combat round, these penalties reset.

Zap is the exception to this rule. Unlike block and dodge, your zap defense actually gets better as it is used. Each time you are hit with a zap attack, you get a +2 to future zap defenses. This bonus does not reset each round, but instead lasts until the end of the current battle.

**Hitting Your Opponent**

Hitting your opponent takes a skill test pitting the attacker’s weapon skill against the defense mode of the defender. If you do hit your opponent, you need to roll damage.

**Ranged Combat**

Ranged combat is resolved in a fashion similar to melee combat. The attacker makes a skill test pitting his shoot skill against the defender’s dodge. A defender cannot block a missile attack unless he is using a power that allows him to do so. Range and intervening obstacles between him and the target modify the attacker’s missile skill.

**Range Modifiers**

The range between the attacker and target reduce the attacker’s chance to hit. A longer range means a greater penalty. Each ranged power has a range band listed as #/ in the range category. The first range band is point blank and there is no penalty for targets at this range. However, each range band beyond point blank gives a -1 accuracy penalty.

**Obstacles**

Intervening obstacles such as trees, boulders and bushes give a –1 to the attacker’s skill for each obstacle in the line of fire. Obstacles such as characters or animals that move unpredictably give a –2 to the attack roll.

**Firing into a Melee**

Characters firing into an existing melee take a penalty for any friendly characters in the way of a clear shot. Friendly characters are considered obstacles and give a –2 for each character in the way. In addition, a missed shot has a 2 in 12 chance of hitting a friendly character.

**Hitting a Spot**

Targeted area powers require the character to hit a spot rather than a character. The base defense of a hex-sized spot is 6. Normal penalties for range and obstacles apply. A shot that misses causes the power to scatter in a random direction. The distance of the scatter depends on the failure of the attack roll.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Miss By** | **Scatter** |
| 1-2 | 1d4 hexes |
| 3-6 | 1d4+2 hexes |
| 7+ | 1d4+4 hexes |

**Damage**

If you hit your opponent, your power does an amount of damage which is listed as one or more dice, plus a stat die. For most melee powers, this stat die is your Muscle die, for most ranged powers, the stat die is your Skill die, and for mental powers, the stat die is Power. However, each power is different and you should read the power’s effects to understand how much damage it does.

The damage done is equal to the damage rolled on the damage dice, minus the amount of relevant armor the target has. Damage is either physical, energy or psychic, and armor has different effects against each type of damage.

**Effects of Damage**

When you are hit, you subtract the final damage taken (after armor) from your hit point total. There are several possible effects of damage which are described below.

**Knock**

Each damage die has the property of Knock. By default, damage dice all have Knock(2), but certain powers modify this value.

Knock(2) means that if the die comes up with either of the two highest values (i.e. a 7 or 8 on a d8), then it knocks the target. Each damage die can knock, so if an attack does 3d8 damage, you can knock your target up to 3 times.

**Extra Knock**

Certain powers have extra knock. That means that after damage is rolled and calculated, you can roll extra dice which do no damage, but possibly knock the target. Extra knock dice are the same type of dice as the base power (not your stat die), and have the same knock chance.

**Knockback and Knockback Damage**

For each point of knock, roll 1d4. Your victim will be knocked back that many hexes in a straight line away from you. If they are knocked into a clear hex, they prone and take 1 point of physical damage per hex knocked.

If they are knocked into an object or another character, then both your victim and the object/character take 1d4 physical damage for each hex traveled. This damage cannot exceed the damage of the original attack + 3/die of extra knock in the power.

**Impact**

If a single attack does ¼ or more of your hit points, you take a random impact effect based on the roll of a d12.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Roll d12 | Impact Effect |
| 1-2 | Graze – No effect |
| 3 | Winded(1) until recovery |
| 4 | Bleed(1) until recovery |
| 5 | Slow(1) until recovery |
| 6 | Cripple until recovery |
| 7 | Daze next action |
| 8 | Stagger next action |
| 9 | Impair(1) until recovery |
| 10 | Stun next action |
| 11 | Impair(2) until recovery |
| 12 | Wound(x)  In addition  Roll again  or  Recover 1 Energy |

Any effect that lasts through the character’s next action is removed once the character suffers a round with the affliction. Effects that last until recovery end when the character succeeds in a burn roll and regains a point of energy.

**Defeat**

If you are reduced to zero hit points, you are on the ***Brink of Defeat***. If there is no one with the ability to revive you, then you are defeated and at the mercy of your foes. However, if someone has the ability to revive you, then they can try to do so. If they succeed, you return to battle. If they fail, you are defeated and no further revival attempts will have any effect.

Another way you can be defeated is to need to spend an energy when you have none. Once this happens, you are immediately reduced to -10 hit points, and are defeated.

**Revival**

To revive a character on the brink of defeat, you must have a power that specifically allows you to heal someone below zero hit points. Activating that power, allows you to roll the heal. If the heal brings your target to positive hits, then he is revived and can return to the fight. If the heal does not bring your target to positive hits, the revive attempt fails and the character is defeated.

Characters revived in this fashion retain the energy they had when they were defeated, or one energy, whichever is greater.

A character with a medical proficiency may attempt to revive a character on the brink of defeat by spending a round adjacent to the victim, and one energy. They then make a skill test against DL 20. If they are successful, they revive the unconscious combatant with 2d4 hit points and 1 energy.

**Area of Effect (Radius)**

Areas of effect are often described as a radius of x hexes. A radius always includes the central hex. Thus, a 1 hex radius power affects a single hex. A 2 radius power affects 7 hexes and so on.

**Energy**

You start combat with 6 Energy tokens. These are used to power your super abilities, but can also be used to give you an edge in combat.

**Energy Uses**

* Reroll a failed attack
* Reroll a failed saving throw
* Force your opponent to reroll a successful attack against you
* Reroll a failed task
* Add one or more to an attack roll at the rate of +1/energy
* Add one or more to a defense roll at the rate of +1/energy’
* During your turn you can spend an energy and regain 2d4 hit points

**Burn and the Burn Roll**

As you use your abilities, your energy will slowly drain until you are unable to continue fighting. Burn is a measure of how hard you are pushing yourself and how quickly your energy reserves will run dry. Each round, your burn rating accumulates. For every toggle power you have active, and every power you activate throughout the round, you add that power’s burn rating to your total for that combat round.

At the end of the round, every combatant must make a Burn Roll. Roll a d12. If the result is less than or equal to your burn rating, you lose 1 energy. If the result is 3 or more above your burn rating, you recover an energy. Otherwise, there is no change.

Recovering energy can never take you above your maximum energy.

**Excess Burn**

If your burn rating for the combat round is greater than 12, then you automatically lose an energy. Then you subtract 12 from your burn rating, and use the new rating to see if you lose an additional energy. Once you resolve your burn roll and have paid the energy, your burn rating resets to 0 for the next round.

**Negative Burn**

Certain abilities can drive your burn rating negative. There is no chance to lose energy in this case, but roll regardless, remembering that if you roll 3 higher than your burn rating, you recover an energy. Once you resolve your burn roll and have recovered any energy, your burn rating resets to 0 for the next round.

**Automatic Recovery**

At the end of rounds 3, 6, 9, 12, and every three rounds thereafter, you automatically gain an energy after resolving your burn roll.

**Status Effects**

The effects of the Impact Chart, and many powers will impose status effects on their victims. Each status imposes some penalty to its victim, but also has rules pertaining to stacking multiple effects, and when the effect will end.

**Impact Effects**

Impact effects are pretty simple. The Daze, Stagger, and Stun effects last for a single action. Once the victim suffers an action hampered by the effect, the effect ends. These effects do not stack. Being hit twice and getting two separate impact stun effects, still means you will be stunned for a single combat action.

The other impact effects do stack, and last until you make a burn roll that allows you to recover an energy. In addition to recovering your energy, you can remove any lasting impact effects from which you are suffering.

**Power Effects**

Power effects are trickier and each status has its own set of rules for stacking and ending.

**Saving Throws**

Some effects have initial saving throws that allow their targets to avoid the effect entirely. These are listed as one or more stats. The DL for saving throws is 18 unless the power has been enhanced with Save DL +2. If the stat is listed with a modifier, then apply that modifier to the victim’s saving throw. (i.e. Muscle+2 means add two to your Muscle stat and save vs. the power’s DL.)

Regardless of other rules, failing an initial save means that, unless you or an ally has a power or trait that allows you to cancel that status, you will suffer its effect for at least one full combat action.

**Ongoing Saves**

If a status effect has an ongoing save, then at the end of any combat action where you suffered the status, you may make a new saving throw, with a bonus of +2 to your stat. If you succeed, the status effect ends. If you fail your ongoing save, you continue to suffer the status, and will have to save on subsequent rounds to be free of the effect.

Bonuses to ongoing saves are cumulative. At the end of the first round, your save is +2. At the end of the second round, your save is +4, and +6 at the end of the third round.

Statuses with ongoing saves will only affect their target for a maximum of 4 combat actions. If you are required to make an ongoing save with a bonus of +8, the status automatically ends instead.

**Reapplying and Stacking**

Powers with ongoing saves that stack all end once the victim succeeds his ongoing save. The attacker is usually given the choice to either apply a stacking effect, or to reset the victims ongoing save bonus.

**List of Statuses**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Status | Effect |
| Apathetic | * Accuracy -1 * Initiative -1 * Damage -2 * Move -1 * Search -4 * Skills -4 * At the end of the round, your burn rating is -2 * You have no zone of control, and never get disengage attacks. * Apathetic does not stack with itself, but instead the save resets. * Apathetic has an ongoing save. |
| Bleed(x) | * You lose (x) hit point each round * Your burn rating is increased by (x) * Bleed stacks with itself. * Bleed does not have an ongoing save. * At the end of each round, if you gain energy on your burn roll, you can choose to lose the bleed status instead of gaining the energy. * Alternately, if someone uses a healing power on you, they can remove the bleed effect instead of returning hit points. * Alternately, if someone has any medical background, they can take a round to administer first aid, removing the bleed effect from you. |
| Blind | * Block -2 * Strike -2 * Dodge -4 * Shoot -4 * Blind does not stack. * Blind has an ongoing save. * For every 3 hexes you move, roll 1d6 and move one hex in a random direction * Blind has an ongoing save. |
| Blurred | * Shoot -1 * Blurred does not stack. * Blurred has no save. * Blurred ends based on the power. |
| Chill(x) | * Accuracy -1(x) * Defense -1(x) * Damage -2(x) * Skills -1(x) * Saves -1(x) * Chill gives an ongoing save. * Chill stacks with itself and when it is reapplied, it is the attacker’s choice whether to increase its effect, or reset its save bonus back to zero. |
| Choke | * If you are in the area of effect, you have to save each round. * Success means you can act normally, but with a -1 penalty. * Failure means you can take only ½ action with a -2 penalty. * Once you leave the area of effect, a save ends the effect. |
| Controlled | * You take penalties as though you suffered Chill(1) * Your attacker is in control of your actions and may give you a single command each combat round. * You must fulfil that command to the best of your ability. * Controlled has an ongoing save. * Controlled does not stack with itself, but further applications reset the save bonus. |
| Crippled | * Defense -2 * Initiative -2 * Ground Move -2 |
| Cursed | * You take a -1 penalty to all d12 rolls. * If you roll a natural 1 on any d12 roll, your action immediately ends and you take penetrating damage equal to your attacker’s Power die. * If your opposition rolls a natural 12 on any d12 roll, your action immediately ends and you take penetrating damage equal to your attacker’s Power die. * Cursed has an ongoing save. * Cursed does not stack, but instead resets its save bonus. |
| Dazed | * Accuracy -1 * Defense -1 * Skills -1 * You can only take ½ actions. * Daze does not stack. * Daze has an ongoing save. |
| Desolid | * You cannot be attacked. * You can pass through objects and barriers as though they were not there. |
| Dissolve | * Your armor value is reduced by the value of the dissolve. * Dissolve stacks with itself based on the individual power. * Dissolve does not have an ongoing save. * Dissolve ends when the battle ends. |
| Drain … (x) | * Your … stat is reduced by x. * Drain does not stack. * Drain has an ongoing save. * Multiple applications of Drain will either allow a reroll on the magnitude, or reset the save bonus. |
| Enraged | * Accuracy -2 * Defense -2 * Damage +6 * If you roll 10+ on your initiative, you must make the most efficient move to the nearest character and attack them with your best attack. * Enraged does not stack. * Enraged has an ongoing save. |
| Entangled | * You cannot move. * You cannot take any action other than attacking your entanglement. * Any attack that hits you damages the entanglement. Once the entanglement is broken, any remaining damage will affect you. * Entanglement does not stack, but reapplying the entangle will allow another entangle roll to take effect if it is higher than the current entangle hit points. * Entanglement does not have a save. * Entanglement ends once the hit points of the entangle are reduced to zero. |
| Envenomed | * You take 1d6 penetrating damage each round (typed based on the specific power). * Envenomed does not stack with itself. * Envenomed has an ongoing save. |
| Festering | * You take 1d4 penetrating disease damage each round * Festering does not stack with itself. * Festering does not have an ongoing save. * At the end of each round, if you gain energy on your burn roll, you can choose to lose the festering status instead of gaining the energy. * Alternately, if someone uses a healing power on you, they can remove the festering effect instead of returning hit points. * Alternately, if someone has any medical background, they can take a round to administer first aid, removing the festering effect from you. |
| Ignite | * You take 1d6 penetrating damage each round (typed based on the specific power). If the damage die comes up 1 or 2, that die goes away next round. If the die comes up a 6, another burning die is added to the damage next round. * There is no ongoing save for Ignite. * Ignite does not stack with itself. * Ignite ends when all burning dice are gone. * You can choose to lose your action to “stop, drop and roll”, thereby removing all burning dice. |
| Immersed | * You are in a dream-like state, unable to sense the real world around you. * You believe you are taking action, but are really just standing there muttering to yourself. * You reflexively defend yourself at -4, but get no benefit from bonus dodges or blocks. * Immersed does not stack, but the save is reset. * Immersed has an ongoing save. * If you are damaged while immersed, you immediately get to resave to snap out of the effect. |
| Impaired(x) | * Accuracy -1(x) * Defenses -1(x) * Skills -1(x) * Impaired might have an ongoing save (depends on the power). * Impaired stacks with itself and when it is reapplied, it is the attacker’s choice whether to increase its effect, or reset its save bonus back to zero. |
| Invisible | * Melee Defense +2 * Missile Defense +4 * Attack +2 |
| Pacified | * You cannot attack or take hostile action. * You can take actions that buff or assist your allies, or affect you. * Pacified does not stack, but the save is reset. * Pacified has an ongoing save. * If you are attacked and take damage, the status ends immediately. |
| Prone | * Accuracy -2 * Defense -2 * It takes ½ action to get on your feet. * You have no zone of control, and cannot get disengage attacks. |
| Restrained | * You drop anything you are holding. * You cannot use your arms/hands. * Device-based powers cannot be used. |
| Slow(x) | * You take -2(x) to all your movement modes, and -2(x) to initiative rolls. * If your initiative for a round is negative, you lose your action that turn. * There is no ongoing save for Slow. * Slow stacks with itself each time it is applied. * Slow ends only when you lose your action to its effect. * You can choose to voluntarily lose your action to shake the effects of Slow. |
| Smitten | * You cannot attack the character who gave you this status. * Smitten does not stack. * Smitten has an ongoing save. * Smitten ends immediately if you are attacked by the opponent that gave you this status. |
| Snare | * Each time you move, you roll the snare and subtract that many hexes from your movement. * If the snare reduces your movement to zero or less, you do not move, but still spend your movement action * Snares directed on characters have ongoing save. * Snares directed on an area have no ongoing save. They end once you leave the area. * Some snares have additional effects if the snare stops you from moving. |
| Stunned | * All toggle powers turn off. * You can take ½ action, but only to run or fly. * You wander 1 hex for every 3 hexes moved. * You cannot activate powers (aside from run/fly). * You cannot attack. * You can defend at -2. * Stun does not have an ongoing save. * Stun does not stack. * Stun ends after one stunned action is taken. |
| Taunted | * If the character who taunted you is close enough to attack, you feel compelled to attack him instead of any other target. * You can attack other targets, but take -2 accuracy and -2 damage if you do so. * Taunt has an ongoing save. * Taunt does not stack with itself, but the save resets instead. * If you are too far to attack, or out of line of sight, the taunt automatically ends. |
| Winded(x) | * At the end of each round, your burn rate is increased by (x). * Winded has an ongoing save. * Winded stacks with itself and when it is reapplied, it is the attacker’s choice whether to increase its effect, or reset its save bonus back to zero. |

**Alternate Initiative System**

**Initiative Score**

Each round, both the heroes and the villains choose one of their combatants to be the initiative roller. Then both sides generate an initiative score based on the roll of a d12 + either the roller’s Reflex or Wit bonus. The side that has the higher score has the initiative that round.

**Quick and Slow Actions**

Each action in the game is designated as quick or slow. Relating these to the base game, actions that would have been ½ actions are now considered quick. Actions that would have been full actions, or two ½ actions (i.e. move and attack), are now considered slow.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Quick Actions (1/2 actions)** | **Slow Actions (full actions)** | **Free Actions** |
| Activate a quick power (would have been Act = A, H) | Activate a slow power (would have been Act = F) | Activate a toggle, condition or free power |
| Attack without moving (activate an A power) | Fly, Leap or Run up to ½ your move allowance, and then activate a quick power (or attack) | Drop an item |
| Fly, Leap or Run up to ½ your move allowance | Fly, Leap, or Run up to your full move allowance | Say something |
| Recover from being prone | Recover from stun |  |
| Teleport up to your full move allowance | Teleport up to your full move allowance, and then activate a quick power (or attack) |  |

Generally speaking, any combination of actions that would have been a ½ action in the old game are quick, and any combination of actions that would have taken your full action are slow.

**Phases and Alternating Activation**

Combat rounds are divided into three phases.

* Haste Phase
* Quick Phase
* Slow Phase

Each phase, the side with the initiative gets to choose whether to activate first, or defer to their opponent. If you have no characters allowed to act in a given phase, you automatically defer to your opponent. The side that is activating can choose any of its eligible combatants. That combatant can then take an appropriate action. (i.e. quick actions in the quick phase, slow actions in the slow phase, etc.)

Once your side activates a character, your opponents have the option to activate a character. Play passes back and forth between the two sides until all characters who wanted to take an action in that phase have taken their action.

Each character can take a single action, quick or slow, and possibly a haste action. So, if you take a quick action, you cannot also take a slow action. Conversely, if you are going to take a slow action, you cannot also take a quick action.

You do not have to declare which type of action you want to take at the beginning of the round.

**Haste Phase and Haste Actions**

The round starts with the ***Haste Phase***. To start this phase, all characters with a haste power, can choose to activate them now to try and get a haste action. All characters who successfully get a haste action can use them in this phase. Also, certain powers will allow you to take a quick or slow action during the haste phase.

Taking a haste action does not end your turn. Haste actions are extra actions, and a character to takes a haste action can take an additional quick or slow action later in the round.