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SIDEWINDER RECOILED

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d20 system™

Requires the use of the d20 Modern™ Roleplaying Game, published by Wizards of the Coast, Inc

SIDEWINDER: RECOILED

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CHAPTER ONE : INTRODUCTION

"This is the west, sir. When the legend becomes fact, print the legend."

Maxwell Scott—*The Man Who Shot Liberty Valence, 1962*

Welcome to *Sidewinder: Recoiled*, where the historic Wild West comes alive using the d20 Modern rules system. *Sidewinder: Recoiled* is designed to be a cinematic take on the Old West with the kind of action you'll find in your favorite Western movies. Characters can perform heroic, and sometimes unbelievable, acts of courage and daring. The gritty life of the Western Frontier is present, just toned down a bit. You won't find any magic or other fantastic elements within these pages, but d20 being what it is, the addition can be accomplished rather easily.

For those that have purchased the original *Sidewinder: Wild West Adventure*, you will undoubtedly recognize some of the text attributed to Bat Masterson within *Sidewinder: Recoiled*. The gang at Dog House Rules felt that it was important to maintain the feel of the original game while giving us a new framework to build upon for future supplements using the d20 Modern system.

We have also endeavored to make *Sidewinder: Recoiled* as complete a book as possible for your use when gaming. Some of the text presented between these covers is directly from the d20 Modern system reference document; although some (if not most) of it has been revised to suit the Western genre and spiced up for that Old West feel (such as a GM being called the Judge). You will still need to have the d20 Modern Core Rulebook to complete your journey into the Western Frontier, but for active gameplay, *Sidewinder: Recoiled* should be all you need.

On *Sidewinder: Recoiled* and Living in The Old West

by Bat Masterson

When those young guns from the Dog House Gang asked me to come out of "retirement" I told 'em to let me rest in peace. But given half a chance to tell stories about the West I knew and lived gets my hand reaching for a pen no matter how decrepit these old fingers might be. It's a pleasure to revisit the Western Frontier, to help you smell the dust of the trail, feel the beautiful balanced weight of a custom hogleg, and hear the howling of coyotes in the hills.

Indeed, this *Sidewinder: Recoiled* reminds me of the articles I wrote so long ago for *Human Life*. The editors have kindly re-printed some of those articles to help me illustrate, with my own words you might say, my memories of the Old West. The frontier was no trifle; in those articles, I spelled out just what it meant to be a gunfighter. It took a trinity of courage, willpower and skill with a weapon to survive. No matter what trail you choose, you'll need these traits to make good out on the range. The gunfighter, the lawman, the cowboy, the card sharp—yes, even the scallywag or the sidewinder—all need guts and grit to tough-out all manner of dangers and threats to a person's well-being.

I assume, friendly reader, that you have opened these pages to challenge the frontier. You now enter a world where, not just a tin-badge, but determination, desire and a six-shooter are the law. Here, your horse is your best friend, your gun is your ally and your imagination is your best asset.

I have been asked by *Human Life* to write something about the noted killers of men I am supposed to have personally known in the early days on the western frontier and who of their number I regarded as the most courageous and the most expert with the pistol.

In making this request, I may reasonably assume the editor did not consider that he was imposing on me very much of a task, and had it embodied nothing more than the question of proficiency with the pistol, such would have been the case; but in asking me to offer an opinion on the question of physical courage as sometimes exemplified by them under nerve-trying conditions, he has placed a responsibility on my shoulders that I hardly care to assume.

—Bat Masterson, "Ben Thompson"
Famous Gun Fighters of the Western Frontier

CO-AUTHOR'S NOTE

We are fortunate to have the perspective of Mr.William Barclay "Bat" Masterson on *Sidewinder: Recoiled.* It is worth noting, however, that Mr. Masterson is the product of a very different era in American history. His perspectives on racial and sexual issues are rough at best, compared with modern politically correct views. He has been gracious enough to allow us a broad hand in editing his work. However, we at **Dog House Rules** must remind the reader that Bat Masterson's views are his own, and do not reflect the editorial policy or opinions of our company or of Mr. Masterson's editors and co-authors.

Also, we are very pleased to be reprinting sections of "Gun Fighters of the Western Frontier," the legendary collection of articles written by Bat Masterson and Alfred Henry Lewis for *Human Life* magazine. These articles are reproduced exactly as they were written, complete with grammar and spelling errors. However, Mr. Masterson has never let the dull facts get in the way of a good story, and readers should be cautioned against using his writing (whether reprinted from "Gun Fighters" or *Sidewinder: Recoiled* itself) as a primary historical source.

You may wonder what sort of person went west, in those days—west of the Mississippi, down to the deserts of Arizona, up to the heights of Colorado, and into the vistas of Wyoming. Why leave the comfortable confines of Boston or Richmond for lands no white man had ever seen? Some did it to make a wage. Common was the frontiersman who hired on as a trapper, a hunter, or a scout for a wagon train. Plenty of 'just plain folks' headed west as settlers, to make a new life for themselves, and stake out a homestead. Lots of men became farmers or ranchers—raising cattle, crops and kinfolk. Still others hoped to strike it rich panning for gold or digging for silver—my old stomping ground in Tombstone, Arizona was founded on a rich silver strike. By 1867, the railroads stitched the West and the East together, making them one country, and making it possible for a man who chose his fares right to see both oceans in the same month. In fact, tourists were beginning to do just that.

Naturally, you're not reading this to find out about the tourist trade in the pueblos off the railroad. You want to know about the gunfighters, the lawmen and the outlaws. The legends of the Old West. What sort of man did *that?*

It is as I said. Heroic men. Men of unsurpassed courage, extraordinary skill, and the will to do hard things when necessary. Sometimes terrible things.

That is the sort of character you'll find in *Sidewinder: Recoiled*. Will you measure up?

Life as a Sidewinder

When one thinks of the Old West, one thinks of tough men riding in the saddle, driving cattle across endless prairie. Of solemn men wearing a gun and a badge, riding into town to become the law. Of battles between Indian braves and white settlers, each believing they had the right of it. One thinks of pretty saloon girls and showdowns at high noon.

The real West was all of those things and none of those things. Events change in the telling and the retelling, and legends are built by men who never saw the true events with their own eyes. I know. I saw plenty, and I heard and read more than my share of the hogwash that was served up about the gunfighters, the killers, the lawmen, and the Indians. For every true story you've heard, you're just as likely to have heard two tall tales and one fantastical humdinger.

The truth of the matter is a man could be many a thing in those days. He could scout for the military, pathfind for the government, mine for gold or silver, keep and raise cattle or horses or sheep, live in the saddle for weeks at a time, wear a badge in one town and be wanted as a low down dirty thief in the next. The frontier was hard in those days, especially before the railroads made conveyance simpler. And for every rustler, gunslinger, marshal or maverick you read about in the dime novels, there were a dozen shopkeepers, blacksmiths, prospectors and saloonkeepers who never wanted any kind of trouble, preferring to earn a quiet, decent (or not so decent) living.

Again, I suspect that you aren't reading this to hear about the locals. At least, when I meet a young man with his head full of glorious tales of cowpunchers and buffalo hunters, I have never heard him say, "if only I could have run the general store in Tombstone!" Nope, he dreams of being the man in the center of the street, his hand on his gun, staring down the no-good rival who done him wrong. Then, at the moment of truth, they both draw. Only one man remains standing.

There are a lot of routes to that street, some bloodier than others. A good number of men (and women—the stories of Calamity Jane, Annie Oakley and the thieving

THE CODE OF THE WEST

Thirty-five years ago Charley Harrison was one of the best known sporting men west of the Missouri River. His home was in St. Louis but he traveled extensively throughout the West and was well-known through the Rocky Mountain Region. He was of an impetuous temperament, quick of action, of unquestioned courage and the most expert man I ever saw with a pistol.

He could shoot faster and straighter when shooting at a target than any man I ever knew; then add to the fact that no man possessed more courage than he did, the natural conclusion would be that he would be a most formidable foe to encounter in a pistol duel.

In 1876 he started for the Black Hills, which was then having a great mining boom on account of the discovery of gold at Deadwood. When Charley reached Cheyenne he became involved in a personal difficulty with another gambler by the name of Jim Levy, and both men started for their respective lodgings to get their pistols and have it out the first time they met.

It looked 100 to 1 that Harrison would win the fight because of his well-known courage and proficiency in the use of the pistol. Little being known at that time about Jim Levy, Harrison was made a hot favorite in the betting in the various gambling resorts of Cheyenne. The men were not long in getting together after securing their revolvers, which were of the Colt pattern and of 45 calibre in size.

They met on opposite sides of the principal street of the city and opened fire on each other without a moment's delay. Harrison, as was expected, fairly set his pistol on fire, he was shooting so fast and managed to fire five shots at Levy before the latter could draw a bead on him.

Levy finally let go a shot. It was all that was necessary. Harrison tumbled into the street in a dying condition and was soon afterward laid to rest alongside those others who had gone before in a similar way.

That Harrison was as game a man as Levy could not be doubted; that he could shoot much faster, he had given ample proof, but under extraordinary conditions he had shown that he lacked deliberation and lost his life in consequence. The trouble with Charley Harrison was just this—he was too anxious. He wanted to shoot too fast. Levy took his time. He looked through the sights on his pistol, which is a very essential thing to do when shooting at an adversary who is returning your fire.

–Bat Masterson, "Ben Thompson"
Famous Gun Fighters of the Western Frontier

Belle Starr remind us that women rode the range as well) had no intention of becoming gunfighters. Others went west for that reason alone. When choosing the character you want to play in *Sidewinder: Recoiled*, you should consider where that character came from and what he or she means to do out West. Choose skills wisely, accounting for the adventures you expect. Your Judge will help you with that, of course.

The story of Levy and Harrison demonstrates the coolness under fire and deliberation of my acquaintance Jim Levy (take heed of the lesson, here). More importantly, it embodies the unwritten Code of the West that so many writers make reference to. Both Harrison and Levy agreed they had a dispute. They both went to their lodgings to prepare, and then they met in the street of Cheyenne. At any time, either could have left and kept himself safe, but to do so—to show the white feather, as we say—would be to humiliate oneself and damage one's reputation. Reputation is everything to a gunfighter, whether outlaw, lawman, or somewhere in between. My piece on Wyatt Earp and Ike Morris, re-printed here, tells it well.

The passage about Earp and Morris describes an Old West battle as intense and important as any gunfight. Morris, as a rival gambling house operator and bad man, had everything to gain from declaring Earp's operation crooked. Morris didn't count on having to deal with Wyatt Earp himself, but he stood to gain even more if he could

WYATT EARP AND IKE MORRIS

[Wyatt Earp] was once engaged in running a faro game in Gunnison, Colorado, in the early days of that camp; and one day while away from the gambling house, another gambler by the name of Ike Morris, who had something of a local reputation as a bad man with a gun, and who was also running a faro game in another house in the camp, went into Wyatt's game and put down a roll of bills on one of the cards and told the dealer to turn.

The dealer did as he was told, and after making a turn or two, won the bet and reached out on the layout and picked up the roll of bills and deposited them in the money-drawer. Morris instantly made a kick and claimed that the cards were crooked, and demanded the return of his money. The dealer said he could not give back the money, as he was only working for wages, but advised him to wait until Mr. Earp returned, and then explain matters to him, and as he was the proprietor of the game he would perhaps straighten the matter up.

In a little while Wyatt returned, and Morris was on hand to tell him about the squabble with the dealer, and incidentally ask for the return of the money he had bet and lost.

Wyatt told him to wait a minute and he would speak to the dealer about it; if things were as he represented he would see what could be done about it. Wyatt stepped over to the dealer and asked him about the trouble with Morris. The dealer explained the matter, and assured Wyatt that there was nothing wrong with the cards, and that Morris had lost his money fairly and squarely.

By this time the house was pretty well filled up, as it got noised about that Morris and Earp were likely to have trouble. A crowd had gathered in anticipation of seeing a little fun. Wyatt went over to where Morris was standing and stated that the dealer had admitted cheating him out of his money, and he felt very much like returning it on that account; but said Wyatt—"You are looked upon in this part of the country as a bad man, and if I was to give you back your money you would say as soon as I left town, that you made me do it, and for that reason I will keep the money."

Morris said no more about the matter, and after inviting Wyatt to have a cigar, returned to his own house and in a day or so left the camp.

There was really no reason why he should have gone away, for so far as Wyatt was concerned the incident was closed; but perhaps he felt that he had lost whatever prestige his reputation as a bad man had given him in the camp, and concluded it would be best for him to move out before some other person of lesser note that Wyatt Earp took a fall out of him.

This he knew would be almost sure to happen if he remained. He did not need to be told that if he remained in town after the Earp incident got noised about, every Tom, Dick, and Harry in camp would be anxious to take a kick at him, and that was perhaps the reason for his sudden departure for other fields where the fact of his punctured reputation was not so generally known.

The course pursued by Earp on this occasion was undoubtedly the proper one—in fact, the only one, [to] preserve his reputation and self-respect. It would not have been necessary for him to have killed Morris in order to have sustained his reputation, and very likely that was the very last thing he had on his mind at the time, for he was not one of those human tigers who delighted in shedding blood just for the fun of the thing.

–Bat Masterson, "Wyatt Earp,"
Famous Gun Fighters of the Western Frontier

force the famous lawman to return his money on a bad bet. Earp handled it in stride—by 'admitting' the honest game was crooked, he threw Morris' challenge back in his face. Refusing to return Morris's money forced the man to either back up his challenge with a gun, or back down and lose his money and be humiliated in front of all the other gamblers. As you have read, Earp's iron will ruled the day—Morris backed down, mollified Earp in every way, and then left camp at his earliest opportunity.

That, in a nutshell, is what the so-called Code of the West is about. To be seen as a brave and proud man, you have to be willing to stand up for yourself, and preserve your reputation. That reputation in turn stands you in good stead. Many a rustler might take a poke or a shot at you without cause—if you're a nobody in his eyes. But a man with a reputation for not backing down can pick and choose his fights and go unchallenged by the average person.

Sometimes a reputation can also help you play a bluff and win. Rather late in my career, I was living in New York City and working as a sportswriter for one of the local papers. During that time, Richard D. Plunkett—a former lawman I had known in Creede, Colorado—began badmouthing me when he came to town. That sort of thing never sits well with me, so I confronted him in the Waldorf-Astoria, of all places, when he was mouthing off with a drunkard named Dinklesheets. We began to tussle after Dinklesheets threw a bad swing at me, and I laid into both of them with this cane I've carried since an early injury in a gunfight.

All around us, people were crowding in to see the two Western gunfighters duke it out. They pressed so tight, they were interfering in the fight. Finally, I threw my hand in my pocket and pointed it at Plunkett, who turned ghost-white. One of the townies cried, "Look out! Bat's going to flash Betsy," referring to the Colt Frontier Model 1873 I carried out in the field. The townies scattered and Plunkett had the fight taken out of him. When the police came, it was already as quiet as church before service. I surrendered the 'gun' at their request—which is when the police and Plunkett alike learned I'd cleared the room and stood him down with my favorite cigarette case.

My reputation made that possible. My story was known as far East as New York City. Folks even knew my gun by name. When I made a threatening move, they had every reason to believe it might end in a hail of lead. That incident had a serious effect on Plunkett's reputation. He took all the lumps in the fight, and backed down from a man with a cane and a cigarette case. I had no more trouble with him in the Empire State.

The Code of the West was more than facing down cowards and braving dangerous showdowns. A good reputation depended on how one acted in all ways and to all people. People expected a man to talk straight and fight fair. For example, bushwhacking a man was frowned upon, because it didn't give a man a chance to surrender or even jerk his gun. The Code meant sharing your campfire and your beans with a stranger on the trail, because you didn't let a man go hungry just because you didn't know him. And it meant letting a man's past stay in the past. Plenty of upstanding citizens of the frontier were fleeing something back East—be it legal trouble, financial trouble or maybe a wife who wouldn't take the hint. The Code of the West meant you didn't ask about who a man used to be; you measured him by his current conduct.

That made it hard for the law to catch robbers and killers. Consider Jesse James—one of the most legendary outlaws of the West, and a stone cold killer to boot. Despite his willingness to kill innocent men in cold blood, he and his brother, Frank, were mighty fine at keeping good reputations in many towns. As a result, settlers and cowboys would often give them free passage when they asked politely. After stealing hundreds of thousands of dollars, Jesse was able to settle down with his wife in Tennessee under the name J.D. Howard. They farmed and raised children for three years as perfect neighbors and good citizens. No one inquired as to where Mr. Howard and his wife Zee came from, or how he could afford to set up as he did. One simply didn't ask. It was only after Jesse got bored and left retirement for the owlhoot trail—to live the life of the outlaw—that Jesse put himself in danger of being found out.

And even then, Jesse James didn't see justice, not the way I see it. In fact, the man who assassinated Jesse James learned what it really meant to violate the Code of the West. His name was Bob Ford, and he and his brother had joined the James Gang after Jesse left retirement. The Ford brothers—wanted criminals themselves—met with the Governor of Missouri and took an offer to kill Jesse James for the $10,000 reward on his head. The next time the Ford Brothers saw Jesse, they accepted an invitation to his home, sat at his table and ate his food. When Jesse noticed a picture on the wall was crooked, he stood and turned his back to his friends to adjust it. Bob Ford shot him in the back, right in his own home. Jesse didn't even have his gun belt on.

Convicted of the James murder, Ford was pardoned by that same Missouri Governor, who then cheated Ford out of most of the reward. But more expensive was the Ford Brothers' loss of reputation. Wherever they went, crowds would call them cowards and mobs would try to lynch them. Finally, Bob Ford was killed by an ex-lawman named Ed O'Kelley, who gunned him down in disgust. O'Kelley had no personal grudge against Ford; he just didn't cotton to the idea that Ford was pardoned for such a craven murder. O'Kelley, it should be mentioned, faced Ford and looked him in the eye when he fired.

On The Trail and In The Town

So far, you've heard me talk about reputation and the importance of the Code the West. It's true some people think all we ever did was drink, gamble and shoot at each other. As usual, the truth and the myths don't always get along.

More often than not, men and women out on the Western Frontier were simply trying to make a living. While *Sidewinder: Recoiled* doesn't focus on saloon girls or shopkeepers, blacksmiths or bankers, prospectors or settlers, ranchers or farmers; that doesn't mean the pugilists, gunslingers, preachers, wranglers, mavericks and rustlers who are the core of *Sidewinder: Recoiled* don't interact with such folks every day. It just means that they don't typically earn their living on a farm or at a peaceful occupation in a town.

So what will characters be doing to earn their keep on the range? Here's a short list of livelihoods that might occupy a character's time in *Sidewinder: Recoiled.*

Bounty Hunter

Bounty hunting can be a way of life, or just a quick way to earn enough cash to reach your next destination. Tracking and capturing a man for money takes desire and resilience. Some folks have been uncharitable to bounty hunters, calling them manhunters, or worse, bushwhackers. The latter was most unkind, because attack by surprise, without letting your intentions be known was a violation of the Code of the West.

Truly, many gunfighters and lawmen took up the trade of bounty hunting from time to time, and suffered no loss of reputation thereby. Even a lawman, should he have to kill an outlaw, would certainly collect any bounty that might be offered—and without compunction. After all, it was the law. Texas Ranger John Barclay Armstrong shot and killed the notorious outlaw John Wesley Hardin, taking a $4,000 bounty for his efforts. I myself took bounties from time to time, once cutting the heads from two criminals and keeping them in a gunnysack when I needed proof but had no means to transport their bodies. One could be a bounty hunter and still abide by the unspoken Code of the West, as long as one conducted oneself accordingly.

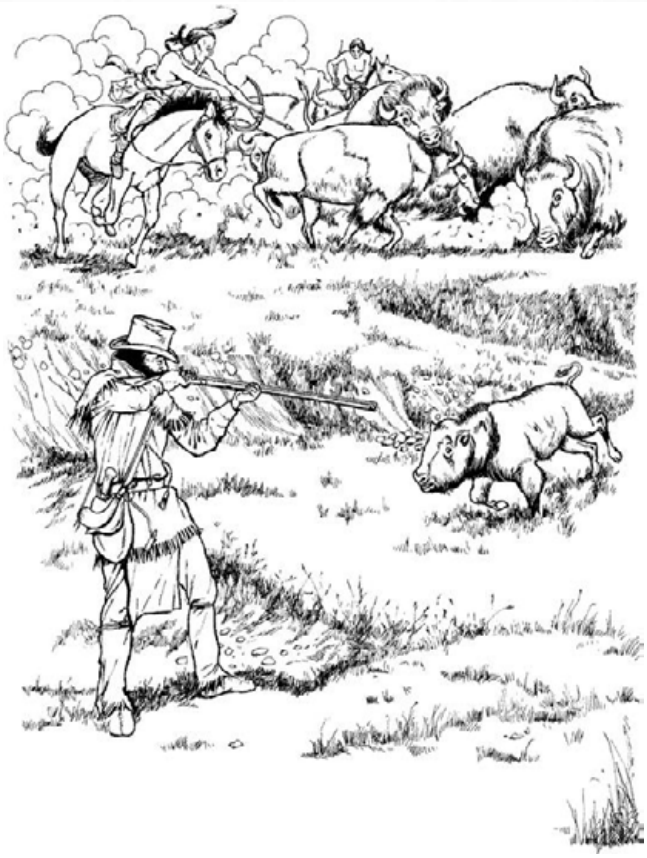
For example, when a man tracked down a criminal, all bets were off. The Code allowed for the use of a variety of measures to bring in a fugitive. Because many bounty hunters were employed by the Pinkerton Detective Agency, or acted on behalf of Wells Fargo or in some other official capacity, they had free reign when hunting down robbers and thieves. Such bounty hunters were seen in the same way as a man seeking vengeance for a personal wrong. Although they hunted men for money, a man seeking vengeance was forgiven many things.

Characters who take up bounty hunting are bound to travel far and wide—going where the bounties are—and desperados aren't exactly known for staying in one place. Bounty hunters need to be prepared to justify their actions wherever they go, as the good townsfolk of one community might not believe the new farmer up the road is wanted as a notorious killer in another. They might even be inclined to protect that farmer from the bounty hunters. It pays to be ready for anything—when a scallywag feels the heat, he won't be looking for a fair fight; he's more likely to bushwhack his pursuer and leave him for the vultures. When all is said and done, there's little in the West that beats the thrill of bringing in an outlaw.

Buffalo Hunter

The Plains Indians hunted buffalo and depended on them in all aspects of their lives. They used them in their religious practices, as a source of good meat, to provide clothing and shelter (the hide of a buffalo was capable of being anything from a blanket to a boat), to arm themselves (bison sinews made excellent bowstrings), and to otherwise survive on the sometimes harsh prairie. White men coming from the East discovered the practicality and many uses of the buffalo, including the fine leather that bison hides could yield when properly tanned. The lucrative trade meant good steady work for buffalo hunters, even while causing dismay among the tribes. Men crossed the prairie following the herds, sometimes taking down hundreds in an hour. Your character can easily choose a life as a buffalo hunter, or as a guard riding with the hunters, or serve any one of a number of roles in a hunting party's camp. Hunters came and went, collecting their earnings and riding off for other adventures, to return to the fields when the money ran out. I myself was a buffalo hunter for some time, relishing the life of the outdoors and the trail. See my good friend Mr. Lewis' comments about me.

Buffalo hunters had to contend with both the elements and the Indians. As the local tribes had been hunting bison for countless generations (and chafed on



the reservations they were being forced onto), they resented white hunters slaughtering the herds they had always depended upon. Buffalo hunters bore the brunt of hostile Indian attacks during these years; they had to be ready to defend themselves.

In the end, the Indians probably had a point. By the time I had moved east as deputy U.S. Marshal of the southern district of New York, the herds of buffalo that once numbered 70 million or more had been reduced to a mere 800. Naturalists and legendary ranchers such as wrangler Charles Goodnight tried to protect and restore the herds, but the hunting of buffalo by white man and Indian alike was over for good. Still, legends of the West such as Buffalo Bill Cody and Billy Tilghman grew from this trade and buffalo hunting provided a good living for a good many rustlers, scouts, mountain men, wranglers and other frontiersmen.

BAT MASTERSON

Just as some folks are born poets, so others are born shots, and Mr. Masterson from the first evinced a genius for firearms. With either rifle or pistol he proved himself infallible, and of all who ever pulled trigger he has wasted the least lead. It was as a hunter he won his name of "Bat," which descended to him as it were from Baptiste Brown, or "Old Bat," whose fame as a mighty Nimrod was flung all across, from the Missouri River to the Spanish Peaks, and filled with admiration that generation of plainsmen which immediately preceded Mr. Masterson upon the Western stage.

For his deadly accuracy with the rifle, Mr. Masterson was early employed to "do the killing" for great hunting outfits, which in the '70's ransacked the country between the Arkansas and Canadian, for buffaloes in the name of robes and leather. Mr. Masterson would "kill" for a dozen men to skin and cure; and the majestic character of that commerce, wherein he bore his powder-burning part, may be guessed at from the fact that, in the years such as 1873, more than three hundred thousand hides, to say naught of one-fourth as many robes, were shipped eastward from the single town of Dodge.

Crossing and re-crossing the buffalo ranges, Mr. Masterson came naturally by a close knowledge of the country, and in a region not overstocked of water, could locate every spring and stream, as surely as astronomers locate stars.

–Alfred Henry Lewis, "The King of the Gun-Players: William Barclay Masterson," *Famous Gun Fighters of the Western Frontier*

Cowboy

Besides hunting bison (which seemed to be put there for the slaughtering) there were plenty of jobs involving the corralling, herding, moving, keeping and selling of animals. The cowboy, so named because his job was typically to coerce herds of free ranging cattle to move where he wanted them to go, is one of the best-known characters in the Old West. Early attempts to cow-punch had been ended by the start of the Civil War, and cattle formerly ranched became free roving again, especially in Texas. Favorable conditions meant the herd could grow, and grow, and then, grow some more. By the end of the Civil War, there were five million wild cattle in Texas, belonging to no one . . . or in truth, belonging to anyone who could round them up and drive them to market. While huge financial empires were built on cattle drives, it was the cowboys who did the rounding-up and the driving that made cattle ranching a big business.

While one usually thinks of cattle when thinking of cowboys, the same skills, methods and dangers applied to those who captured, corralled and broke wild horses. Horsemen and wranglers were needed to drive the cowboys horses forward along the Old Chisholm Trail

from San Antonio to the railroad in Abilene, Kansas. Same goes for the sheepherders who drove their livestock to market. Indeed, the sheepherders and the cattle barons went to war more than once over shared territory—sheep tended to crop grass all the way to the ground, leaving nothing for cattle to eat. Naturally, the cowboys and hired hands driving sheep and cattle alike were the ones on the front lines of those ongoing battles. Good with rope, horse and gun alike, these cowpunchers made their own law where they went, defending themselves against rustlers and desperados. They made their own legends, too, such as Pecos Bill, the legendary cowboy who roped and rode a cyclone and created the Grand Canyon and Death Valley—at least in stories.

Perhaps the greatest real-life cowboy of all was Charles Goodnight. He once drove thousands of longhorn cattle from the Concho River to the Pecos, covering a distance of more than ninety miles in three days, without any watering holes in-between. Goodnight invented the chuck wagon—the indispensable rolling kitchen that all cowboys learned to know and love. Ultimately, he founded the huge ***JA*** Ranch in the Texas Panhandle, and "retired" there, developing more than a million acres of ranch with a hundred thousand head of Longhorns on it.

The cowboy is one of the professions where black men really came into their own. Men like the legendary Nat Love—immortalized as Deadwood Dick—proved their mettle as cattle drivers or horse tamers. One of the finest cowboys ever, Love was taming horses at a dime a head by the time he was fifteen years old. He drove cattle with the best, won mustang roping and shooting matches and fought off Indians (and even lived among them for a time).

The possibilities for adventure are endless for cowboys, and they can fit into any setting out West. After a profitable run, a cowboy might spend time in town, drinking and gambling and carrying on—maybe just in time to meet up with the local law or a local gang. Their skills can easily translate to other employment when the trail gets old.

Gambler

Hardly the province of the maverick alone, many men and women made a comfortable living as gamblers—either as the players or the operators of the games. In any town, camp, or saloon, gambling opportunities were sure to be found. Prospectors, cowboys, outlaws and gunslingers alike enjoyed the gaming tables after a hard day's ride. The most popular card games were poker and faro—with faro the more popular of the two amongst the rank and file, while most professional gamblers preferred the poker tables as the place to ply their trade and win the really big stakes.

Now, there is a big difference between playing an occasional hand of poker and being a gambler. Game operators were most recognizably "professional" gamblers, running faro tables and poker games, or providing space for private games (selling liquor, tobacco and other sundries all the while). Generally, no laws existed against such pleasures at the time, and even

legendary lawmen such as Wyatt Earp (and myself) operated gambling houses at different points in our careers. My friend Luke Short ran gambling houses for much of his life, which landed him in trouble now and again.

The story of Luke Short offers both players and Judges some insight into the kinds of adventure that might come a character's way when he takes up professional gambling. The editors have included a section of my chronicle about Luke, which I'm pleased to share with you now (don't fret, more about Luke's fate can be found in the section about hired guns).

Of course, there were many well-known gamblers who preferred to play the games rather than run them, with the famous Doc Holliday perhaps the most notable of them all. Doc had a profession of his own, at least officially—he earned his nickname because he was in fact a professional dentist—but he never spent as much time working on filling teeth as he did working on filling straights and flushes.

Holliday made his living at cards, which also meant he was often on the run. Confrontations and accusations of cheating could easily turn into violence, and violence was something at which Holliday excelled. Characters choosing the adventuring life of a gambler in *Sidewinder: Recoiled* may well find themselves in a fix, as accusations of cheating (fair or not) can force a man to take flight or fight. And honest gamblers might find themselves chasing cheaters to recover a purloined stake. While Mavericks seem to be born gamblers, almost every man or woman out West put good money on the table at some time or other, hoping to cash in on the big prize.

Hired Gun

Plenty of men strapped on six-shooters and served up lead for one purpose or another. Certainly, some made their living as soldiers, hunters and cowboys, but for others, the art and skill of gunfighting itself was their bailiwick. Such men earned a living as hired guns, choosing to lend their superior skill with arms to

FARO

Faro is a game that was widespread in the Western Frontier. It was played on a table with a green cloth laid over it, and places marked for cards. Gamblers would place bets as to what cards would be dealt in what order, with the dealer providing the bank and making the profits. Bets were not unlike roulette wheel betting, with one to one payoffs for winners. Professional gamblers generally preferred poker, where the odds were more easily calculated and the game more easily manipulated by skill. Naturally, gambling house owners preferred faro, which usually brought more money into the house to stay.

The faro cloth—or lay out—generally had oil paintings of all thirteen cards in one suit of cards—traditionally the spades suit, though faro uses all card suits. The faro dealer would also have a dealer's box—typically spring loaded when available—to slide cards out of, and an abacus-like device called a casekeeper, which the dealer used to keep track of which cards had been played in the deal. Typically, the faro dealer himself would stake the game—that is, provide the bank and pocket the winnings, with a table fee or percentage paid to the saloon keeper or house owner.

To play, the deck would be shuffled, and placed face up in the box. The top-most card on the deck (which was showing, of course) was called the soda, and was neither a winner or loser for people who bet. Bets would be placed on the faro cloth for each of the cards the players felt would be winners. Players could also 'copper' bets by putting copper chips down as bet—copper bets were for certain cards to be losers. The dealer then drew out the cards from a slot in the box, two at a time, in a series of turns. In each turn, the first card out of the slot was the loser, and bets on that card's denomination would lose. The second card in the turn was the winner, and bets on that card's denomination would win. Bets and coppers all played at even odds. When a turn 'split'—the same denomination of card came up as winner and loser—then the house would take half the bet and the player would get half his bet back. Splits were what gave the house an edge in honest faro games. At the end of a deal (twenty-four turns) there would be three cards left in the box—one more turn and the last card, called a hock. Dealers then gave four to one odds to players betting on the order those last three cards would come out in. Faro was also complicated by side bets and bets on combinations of cards, and on the shifting of bets in between turns.

Honest faro games would give the house a slight edge, and that would mean a decent stake, but there were plenty of ways for the house to cheat—stacking the deck, rigging the dealer's box, and so forth—that could greatly improve the take. While this could lead to a gun in the face, it also (according to legend) led to the phrase "sure the game is crooked, but it's the only game in town."

Faro also had the phrase "bucking the tiger" associated with it, much like one hears of "shooting the moon" in Hearts. The early faro decks had tigers on their back images, and saloons that had a faro table typically put a tiger image on the sign or in the window to advertise. "Bucking the tiger" meant beating the odds and breaking the bank—unlikely, but possible. In Virginia City, Nevada, at the Delta Saloon, there is a legendary faro table called the Suicide Table. Three different operators, from 1860 to 1890, owned this faro table, only to have a player "buck the tiger," for tens of thousands of dollars each.—the last won the most—over three quarter of a million dollars, a team of horses and shares in a gold mine. According to legend, all three operators ended up committing suicide when they couldn't cover the bets. Most faro games don't lead to so grisly a fate, however.

employers who needed a fast gun or two (or seven) to carry out their regular business or set out on a grand adventure.

The phrase 'hired gun' sounds bad, but that connotation misses the mark. Many honest opportunities exist for a gunfighting character. A hired gun might ride as a guard on a stage running through hostile Indian territory or traversing a route particularly favored by thieves and scoundrels. When a sheriff or marshal puts together a posse, his new deputies could well be hired guns. And important cattle runs always need sure-shooters to make sure rustlers don't ruin the party.

LUKE SHORT, PART 1

In the spring of 1883 Luke formed a partnership with Harris and Beneson of Dodge City, and operated the Long Branch saloon, the biggest and best paying gambling house in Dodge at the time. The mayor of Dodge, whose name was Webster, was also running a gambling house and saloon next door to that operated by Short. At this time Dodge City was the shipping point for the Texas cattle driven every summer from the great cattle ranges of western Texas to the northern markets.

A fortune was to be made every season by the gambling house that could control this trade and, as Short was from Texas and had once been a cowboy himself, he held the whip-hand over the mayor, so far, at any rate, as the patronage of the cattlemen was concerned. This the mayor did not relish and, as he was a stubborn and strong-minded man himself, who would brook no opposition if he could help it, he set to work to put Luke out of business.

He had an ordinance passed by the City Council, prohibiting music in all the gambling houses and saloons of the city. Short employed a band in his place of business and Webster did likewise; but the latter was the mayor and therefore in control of the situation, so he thought. The city marshal was instructed by the mayor to notify Short that the music in his place must be discontinued.

"That suits me," Luke is reported to have told the Marshal. "I don't need music in my house in order to do business, and besides, maintaining a band is quite an expense."

The following night the only house in the city in which there was music was that operated by the mayor. Luke then smelt a mouse.

"We'll see about this," remarked Luke to his partners, Beeson and Harris.

The next night he re-engaged the band and instructed it to go ahead grinding out the old familiar melodies, so dear to the heart of the Texas cowboy. Luke remained about the place for several hours to see what move, if any, was to be made by the mayor. As he saw nothing to cause alarm, he concluded to go away for a while and pay a visit to a sick friend. He had not left the place more than ten minutes before all the members of the band, among them one woman, the pianist, were arrested and locked up in the city calaboose.

Luke was notified, and came hurriedly down to the saloon. He learned of the facts of the arrest and went out to hunt up the officer who was in charge of the squad, in order that he might furnish bail for the musicians and have them released. But he could not find him or any other person who was considered competent to accept a bail bond.

All the time Luke was trying to get his employees out of the calaboose, the music in the mayor's place was in full swing. This, as can well be imagined, did not tend to help matters in the least. About the time Luke had made up his mind that nothing could be done that night towards the release of the prisoners, he saw the officer whom he had been looking for standing some little distance away. Luke started towards him.

The officer, who was standing on the sidewalk, which was a foot or so above the street, saw Luke coming, and instantly pulled his pistol and fired point blank at him. The shot missed and Luke returned the fire; but just as he pulled the trigger the officer started to run, and in leaving the sidewalk for the dark street he fell.

Luke, thinking he had hit him, went then to his place of business, secured a shot gun and stood off the town until morning. He accomplished this by refusing to submit to arrest that night.

The next morning he was prevailed upon to lay aside his weapons, go over to the police court, plead guilty to creating a disturbance, pay a fine and have the whole thing ended. That was what had been promised him if he would take off his arms and surrender to the officers. He accordingly gave up his pistols and started for the police court with the officers. But instead of them taking him to the police court, as they promised, they took him to the city jail and locked him up until the noon trains arrived.

The passenger trains going East and West passed each other at Dodge, and Luke was marched to the depot by an escort armed with shotguns and told to choose which train he would take. There was nothing left for him to do. They had him, and were only waiting for an excuse to riddle him with buckshot if he offered the least resistance.

He took the East-bound train and landed in Kansas City.

–Bat Masterson, "Luke Short,"
Famous Gun Fighters of the Western Frontier

DOC HOLLIDAY, PART 1

His family however, thought it would be best for him to go away for a while and allow [a killing incident] to die out; so he accordingly pulled up stakes and went to Dallas, Texas, where he hung out his professional sign bearing the inscription, "J.H. Holliday, Dentist."

This was in the early seventies and at the time when Dallas was a typical frontier town in everything the term implied. A stranger in Dallas in those days could get anything he wanted from pitch and toss to manslaughter at any hour of the day or night, and that was exactly what suited the Georgia dentist.

Gambling was not only the principal and best paying industry of the town at the time, but it was also reckoned among its most respectable and, as the hectic Georgian had always shown a fondness for all things in which the element of chance played an important part, his new environment furnished him with no cause for complaint. In a short time those who wished to consult professionally with the doctor had to do so over a card table in some nearby gambling establishment, or not at all.

–Bat Masterson, "Doc Holliday,"
Famous Gun Fighters of the Western Frontier

Still, hired guns were often retained for nefarious purposes. I can remember many times when a noted gunfighter was hired by a coward to call out an enemy on his behalf. Men who lacked the skill or the stomach to shoot a man would often hire a gunfighter to do their dirty work—whether it was robbing a stage or intimidating the local townsfolk into keeping their mouths shut.

Perhaps the most famous hired gun of all was James Butler "Wild Bill" Hickok, who was involved in the very first showdown. Hickok cashed in on his skill with a gun, taking jobs with the army, working for cattle bosses and joining Colonel "Buffalo Bill" Cody's Wild West shows. Then there was the upstanding Elfego Baca—a native of New Mexico—who followed the money, too, but he always acted well and proper and never lost a showdown. He also defended Mexicans and those of Mexican descent, as Baca was himself, wherever they were being abused for their ancestry, regardless of their actions. And Ben Thompson, an Englishman and greenhorn in appearance, hired himself out to those who could afford him, proving himself a cool customer under fire.

Characters who choose the life of a hired gun will easily find adventure. They can get work guarding a stagecoach run, or protecting wranglers on a long cattle drive, or selling their services to aid a particular cause (such as helping to even the odds for an hombre in a bleak situation).

Which brings us back to the story of Luke Short. As you'll remember from the passage about Gamblers, he had just been forced to leave Dodge for Kansas City, after a corrupt mayor turned the law unfairly against him. Neither Luke nor Luke's friends—including Wyatt Earp and myself—would stand for that, but when the local law belongs to a bad man, you need more than three men with guns, even when those men have the last names of Earp, Short and Masterson.

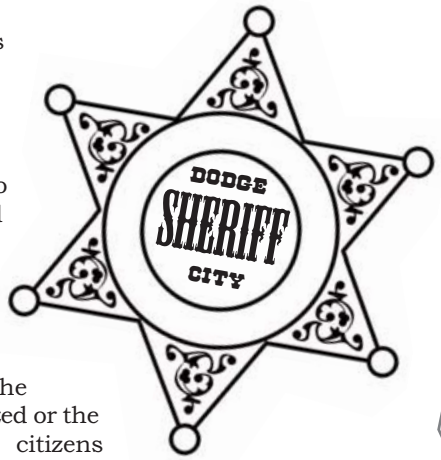
Fortunately, the Dog House Gang editors have reprinted my account of the rest of Luke Short's story. It's a testament to the way a number of hired guns can make a real difference during a conflict—to help right wrongs and protect the Code of the West. I invite you to think about Wyatt Earp's solution to the corrupt mess that cropped up there in Dodge. Without his plan to round-up a good many hired guns, it might have turned out quite different. If Earp, Short and I had entered Dodge alone, I'm certain that plenty of blood would have been shed on both sides of the resulting gunfight.

Local Law

The local law in a given area can take many forms. A county sheriff; a town, city, state or U.S. territorial Marshal; a member of the Pinkerton Detective Agency; a Texas Ranger: all of these men sought to administer justice out West (and let's not forget the role of the military around forts and in Indian territory). While the Law might be represented by a tin badge, it was embodied by the men and women who stood for it in the midst of a wild frontier. In the earliest days, the West had little or no formal law to speak of, at least in practical terms. Cow towns, mining and trapping camps and forts would administer their own justice depending on the situation—sometimes fairly and sometimes not.

The life of the local lawman can be a hard one. Virgil Earp was crippled and Morgan Earp killed by allies of the McLaurys and the Clantons in the weeks following the Gunfight at the O.K. Corral. That drove Wyatt Earp—at that point a United States Marshal—to go on the warpath seeking retribution. He won his revenge, but lost most of his money and possessions doing so, and spent much of the rest of his life prospecting and living hand-to-mouth with his common law wife. Billy Tilghman died at seventy years of age when a drunken government agent (who was charged to keep Cromwell, Oklahoma a dry town) shot and killed him rather than be escorted to jail. Even at that ripe old age, Tilghman had accepted the call of Governor Tapp of Oklahoma, strapping on his six-guns and tin star one more time.

Sadly, not all lawmen were worth the tin of their badges. Sheriff John Behan collaborated with the Clantons before the shootout in Tombstone. Behan's deputy, Frank Stillwell, was one of the men who bushwhacked and slaughtered Morgan Earp. Behan then protected the murderers and tried to hunt down Wyatt Earp and his fellows as they sought revenge for Morgan's murder. When Wyatt, now a marshal, pursued Johnny Ringo and "Curly Bill" Brocius, Behan deputized the outlaws and organized a posse to chase the marshal himself. Too often, the motivations of the men who wore the badge were less than honorable.



Player characters who take up the tin badge won't need to seek adventure, it's sure to find them first. They will need to deal with the bad and desperate men who are bound to come through their territory. They will need to be ready to help the frightened, the terrorized or the just-plain-aggravated citizens at all hours of the day. And

LUKE SHORT, PART 2

I was in Denver at the time, and he wired me to come to Kansas City at once, which I did. We talked the matter over when we met, and concluded to go up to Topeka and place the matter before the Governor. The next day we did so. The Governor denounced the conduct of the Dodge City authorities, but said that he could do nothing, as the local authorities at Dodge had informed him that they were amply able to preserve the peace and did not desire state interference.

We stated to the Governor that we believed we were able to rehabilitate ourselves in Dodge, but did not care to run afoul of state authorities, in case we concluded to do so. The Governor told us to go ahead and re-establish ourselves, if we could; that he would keep off, and wished us luck.

Immediately I started for Silverton, Colorado, where Wyatt Earp was located at the time, and enlisted him in our cause. Luke went to Caldwell, Kansas, where he had a couple of staunch friends, who were willing to take the bit in their mouths and go to the front and fight his battles whenever called upon.

Inside of a week from the time Luke and I separated in Kansas City, we had our forces organized and were on the way to Dodge. It was decided that if a fight was all that would satisfy the mayor of Dodge—a fight he would have.

Wyatt was selected to land in Dodge first. With him, but unknown to the Dodge authorities, were several desperate men. Several more dropped into town unobserved by the enemy. It finally became whispered about that Wyatt Earp had a strong force of desperate man already domiciled in town in the interest of Luke Short.

The mayor called a hasty meeting of his friends, and after they all assembled in the council chamber of the city hall, informed them solemnly of what he had heard about the Earp invasion. Anyone who was present at that meeting could easily have seen that anything but a fight was what the mayor and his friends were looking for, now that such a thing was not altogether improbable.

–Bat Masterson, "Luke Short,
Famous Gun Fighters of the Western Frontier

BILL TILGHMAN, PART 1

Tilghman has served four years as sheriff of Lincoln County, and during that time has killed, captured, and driven from the country a greater number of criminals than any other official in Oklahoma or the Indian Territory. His capture of Bill Doolin in a bathhouse at Eureka Springs, Arkansas, single-handed, was perhaps the nerviest act of his official career.

Doolin was known to be the most desperate criminal ever domiciled in the Indian Territory and had succeeded for several years in eluding capture. A large reward was offered for his apprehension and a number of U.S. Marshals with their deputies had several times attempted to arrest him, dead or alive, but in every instance Doolin either eluded them or, when too closely pressed, stood them off with his Winchester. Doolin was credited with the killing of several Deputy Marshals.

Tilghman got after him and trailed him to Eureka Springs where he found him in a bath-house, and without calling on the local officials for assistance, effected his capture single-handed. Doolin was seated on a lounge in the bath-house when Tilghman entered, and before the desperado realized what was happening, he was covered by a 45-calibre Colt's pistol and ordered to throw up his hands.

Doolin hesitated about obeying the order and Tilghman was forced to walk right up to him and threaten to shoot his head off unless he instantly surrendered. Doolin had his pistol inside his vest and directly under his armpit, and made several attempts to get it before he was finally disarmed. It was certainly a daring piece of work on the part of Tilghman, and he was lucky to get away with the job without being killed.

Bill Raidler was another notorious outlaw whom Tilghman got after, but in this case the Marshal was forced to kill his man before he could take him. Tilghman and Raidler met in the road in the Osage Indian Country, and Tilghman ordered the outlaw to throw up his hands, but instead of obeying he opened fire on the Marshal, who instantly poured a fistful of buckshot into the desperado's breast, killing him in his tracks.

Raidler had been a pal of Doolin's and had been mixed up in several train robberies and had sent word to the U.S. Marshals that if they wanted him to come and get him, but to be sure and come shooting. Tilghman was too good a shot for him at the critical moment and Bill Raidler's life paid the penalty for his many crimes.

–Bat Masterson, "Bill Tilghman,"
Famous Gun Fighters of the Western Frontier

should a hired gun want to try his hand at a showdown, the lawman might have to clean up the mess. Serving as a local lawman in *Sidewinder: Recoiled* can engender all manner of adventures.

Plenty of men known for other careers (or just known as gunfighters) spent time as lawmen of one degree or another. Besides the famous Earp Brothers (Wyatt, Virgil and Morgan Earp were all marshals or deputy marshals at various times) and myself (I was sheriff of Ford County in Kansas), many others wore the badge. Wild Bill Hickok, Luke Short, and even the murderous Johnny Ringo were all lawmen at some point in their careers. Bill Tilghman exchanged his career as a horse thief (stealing from the Indians, which at the time was hardly considered a crime thereabouts) to become a deputy U.S. Marshal and the sheriff of Lincoln County.

Now that I mention it, that reminds me of a story I told about Tilghman and the Doolin Gang (also called the Oklahombres). Seems fitting to wrap up this section with that true tale. While I hope you enjoy it, I ought to advise you not to get the wrong idea: usually, bringing in outlaws won't be as easy as Tilghman made it seem. But it's sure to be exciting and rewarding, that I can attest to.

Outlaw

So far, I've concentrated on mostly honorable professions—or if honorable isn't the right word, at least those professions that tended to be legal (or mostly legal). Nevertheless, there are always the misfits and scoundrels to consider—the criminals, thieves and robbers who took advantage of others to make a dishonest living on the frontier. It seems fair to say that the legend of the West wouldn't be the same without Jesse and Frank James, Belle Starr, Billy the Kid, Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid (and the Wild Bunch they formed), Johnny Ringo, the Dalton Gang, the Doolin Gang, Cattle Annie and Little Britches, the Rose of Cimarron, Black Bart, Sam Bass and so on and so on and so on. It's no wonder that legendary lawmen like Wyatt Earp and myself are held high in the public's esteem; with this veritable army arrayed against us, it's a wonder that any man with a badge wasn't gunned down on sight.

No matter how many legends I might name, there were plenty more honest citizens to be counted out on the frontier. Still, the lack of law (or competent law enforcers) throughout the frontier made it possible for crime to pay for many years, and the Code of the West gave a way to

GUNFIGHT AT THE O.K. CORRAL

The Earps and the stage robbers knew each other personally, and it was on this account that Morgan had been selected to guard the treasure the coach carried. The Wells Fargo Company believed that so long as it kept one of the Earp boys on their coach their property was safe; and it was, for no coach was ever held up in that country which one of the Earp boys rode as guard.

A certain band of those stage robbers who lived in the San Simon Valley, about fifty miles from Tombstone and very near the line of Old Mexico, where they invariably took refuge when hard pressed by the authorities on the American side of the line, was made up of the Clanton brothers, Ike and Billy, and the [McLaury] brothers, Tom and Frank.

This was truly a quartette of desperate men, against whom the civil authorities of that section of the country at that time were powerless to act. Indeed, the United States troops from the surrounding posts, who had been sent out to capture them dead or alive, had on more than one occasion returned to their posts having met with both failure and disaster at the hands of the desperados.

Those were the men who had made up their minds to hold up and rob the Tombstone coach; but in order to do so with as little friction as possible, they must first get rid of Morgan Earp. They could, as a matter of course, ambush him and shoot him dead from the coach; but that would hardly do, as it would be sure to bring on a fight with the other members of the Earp family and their friends, of whom they had a great many.

They finally concluded to try diplomacy. They sent word to Morgan to leave the employ of the Wells Fargo Express Company, as they intended to hold up the stage upon which he acted as guard, but didn't want to do it as long as the coach was in his charge. Morgan sent back word that he would not quit and that they had better not try to hold him up or there would be trouble. They then sent word to Wyatt to have him induce Morgan, if such a thing was possible, to quit his job, as they had fully determined on holding up the coach and killing Morgan if it became necessary in order to carry out their purpose.

Wyatt sent back word that if Morgan was determined to continue riding as guard for Wells Fargo he would not interfere with him in any way, and that if they killed him he would hunt them down and kill the last one in the bunch. Just to show the desperate character of those men, they sent Virgil Earp, who was City Marshal of Tombstone at the time, word that on a certain day they would be in town prepared to give him and his brothers a battle to the death.

Sure enough, on the day named Ike and Billy Clanton and Tom and Frank [McLaury] rode into Tombstone and put their horses up in one of the city corrals. They were in town some little time before the Earps knew it. They never suspected for a moment that the Clantons and McLaurys had any intention of carrying out their threat when they made it.

When Virgil Earp fully realized that they were in town he got very busy. He knew it meant a fight and was not long in hustling up Wyatt and Morgan and Doc Holliday, the latter as desperate a man in a tight place as the West ever knew. This made the Marshal's party consist of the Marshal himself, his brothers Wyatt and Morgan, and Doc Holliday. Against them were the two Clantons and the two McLaurys, an even things so far as numbers were concerned.

As soon as Virgil Earp got his party together, he started for the corral, where he understood that the enemy was entrenched, prepared to resist to the death the anticipated attack on the Earp forces.

Everybody in Tombstone seemed to realize that a bloody battle was about to be fought right in the very center of the town, and all those who could, hastened to find points of vantage from which the impending battle could be viewed in safety. It took the City Marshal some little time to get his men together, as both Wyatt and Holliday were still sound asleep in bed, and getting word to them and the time it took for them to get up and dress themselves and get to the place where Verge and Morgan were in waiting, necessarily caused some little delay.

The invaders, who had been momentarily expecting an attack, could not understand the cause of the delay and finally concluded that the Earps were afraid and did not intend to attack them, at any rate while they were in the corral. This conclusion caused them to change their plan of battle.

They instantly resolved that if "The mountain would not come to Mahomet [sic]—Mahomet would go to the mountain." If the Earps would not come to the corral, they would go and hunt up the Earps. Their horses were nearby, saddled, bitted and ready for instant use. Each man took his horse by the bridle-line and led him through the corral-gate to

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Continued from previous page.

the street where they intended to mount.

But just as they reached the street, and before they had time to mount their horses, the Earp party came round the corner. Both sides were now within ten feet of each other. There were four men on a side, every one of whom had during his career been engaged in other shooting scrapes and were regarded as being the most desperate of desperate men. The horses gave the rustlers quite an advantage in the position. The Earps were in the open street, while the invaders used their horses for breastworks. Virgil Earp, as the City Marshal, ordered the Clantons and McLaurys to throw up their hands and surrender. This order was replied to with a volley from their pistols.

The fight was now on. The Earps pressed in close, shooting as rapidly as they could. The fight was hardly started before it was over, and the result showed that nearly every shot fired by the Earp party went straight home to the mark.

As soon as the smoke of battle cleared away sufficiently to permit an accounting being made, it was seen that the two McLaurys and Billy Clanton were killed. They had been hit by no less than a half dozen bullets each, and died in their tracks. Morgan Earp was the only one of the Marshal's force that got hit. It was nothing more, however, than a slight flesh wound in one of his arms.

Ike Clanton made his escape, but in so doing stamped himself as a coward of the first magnitude. No sooner had the shooting commenced than he threw down his pistol and with both hands high above his head, he ran to Wyatt Earp and begged him not to kill him. Here again Wyatt showed the kind of stuff that was in him, for instead of killing Clanton as most any other man would have done under the circumstances, he told him to run and get away, and he did.

The Earp party were all tried for the killing, and after a preliminary examination lasting several weeks, during which more than a hundred witnesses were examined, they were all exonerated.

–Bat Masterson, "Wyatt Earp,"
Famous Gun Fighters of the Western Frontier

slip through the cracks and often elude final justice—sometimes forever. Even more frustrating was the fact that some outlaws actually won the respect and adoration of the towns they terrorized. Jesse and Frank James moved from place to place, sheltered all the while by adoring fans who saw the murderous Jesse as the West's very own Robin Hood.

Being an outlaw is one of the few things I can proudly say I never did. My experience with outlaws was on the other side of the tin star, as it were. I did have plenty of experience with men who chose to live outside the law—and so did many of my close friends. We didn't take kindly to the way of life chosen by some men and anytime they crossed our paths, we felt obligated to haul them in or send them to the hereafter. Most outlaws didn't die of old age. But I reckon that it's fair to say they lived life to the fullest until old Death caught up to them.

While the legendary outlaws are too many to count, a few among them stand out, including Jesse James and William H. Bonney, Jr. (better known to history as Billy the Kid). Both James and Bonney captured the public's imagination and even its sympathy. They both came to ignominious ends: Jesse James was shot in the back at his own dinner table by a guest and Billy the Kid was gunned down in the dark by Sheriff Pat Garrett after escaping from jail—the Kid never even saw his killer's face. Although they died young, they lived as they chose, and their frontier adventures made history.

In *Sidewinder: Recoiled*, you can play an outlaw character no matter what character class you choose. It's

not what a man can do but how he does it that makes him an outlaw. In many cases, outlaw characters make their own adventures, as they plan train robberies or stage holdups, take up cattle rustling or horse thieving, or any other low down activities they can dream up. As an outlaw's reputation grows, so will the list of lawmen, military men and bounty hunters on their tail. The Judge will no doubt make an outlaw's life hard and dangerous.

Scout

The Old West didn't exactly invite men to come settle it. Before the cow towns, mining booms, settlements, land rushes, cattle barons and railroads, there was open wilderness, prairie, and Indian tribal lands. Neither man nor woman could know which lands were safe and which were deadly. Water came more dearly than gold in some territories. The Rockies through much of Colorado, Wyoming and points north are near-to-impossible to pass. Before there could be travelers, railroads, and settlements, there had to be trails. And scouts blazed those trails.

Scouts did more than trail blaze. Once the trails were known, scouts guided the parties through the territories. They performed necessary reconnaissance for the army or for groups trying to avoid (or bushwhack) Indians. They carried messages and parcels and, sometimes, they traded. Most of all, they knew the land.

For every wagon train headed across the Great Plains, with men and women looking for a new start in life, there was a scout to guide them safely to their new home. Before railroads made the crossing of the continent comparatively simple and pleasant, the journey out West could be treacherous. For years, the plains were called "the Great American Desert." Given the long stretches of prairie with no sign of water for hundreds of miles, a wagon train that got caught between dry watering holes might be forced to watch their horses and livestock die out, and then die of thirst themselves. The scouts and guides kept the wagons rolling, the people safe and the horses watered.

Scouts served many interests on the frontier. When James Marshall struck gold at Sutter 's Mill in California, gold-hungry prospectors and miners—the legendary '49ers—came from the East in droves. They needed scouts to lead them through the treacherous Rocky Mountains, and to guide the parties founding settlements in their wake. When gold was found and sent back east, scouts blazed the trails for the Wells Fargo Concord stagecoaches. Indeed, the ill-fated Donner Party—a party of settlers attempting to find a shortcut to the established Oregon Trail—met with disaster in large part because their contracted guide (Lansford Hastings) had grown impatient for their arrival and left with another party before they reached Wyoming. Their attempt to press on without an experienced scout proved gruesome. They ended up caught in the high Sierra Nevada at the onset of winter, encamped without nearly enough supplies. After eating their seed stock, they turned to leather

BILL TILGHMAN, PART 2

During the fall and winter of 1873-4, there was practically no cessation of hostilities between the Indians and hunters along the Indian border, finally culminating in an uprising among the four big Southern tribes, namely the Cheyennes, Arapahoes, Kiowas and Comanches, which required almost a year for the government to put down. In this Indian war of 1874, Tilghman acted as a scout for the government and several times, while carrying dispatches from one commander to another, had to fight his way out of mighty tight places with the Indians in order to save himself from being taken alive.

–Bat Masterson, "Bill Tilghman,"
Famous Gun Fighters of the Western Frontier

straps for food. Finally, as they began dying of starvation and illness, the half-crazed party turned to cannibalism and entered history's darker annals.

From the earliest days of the movement west, scouts were needed. Meriwether Lewis and William Clark were explorers and scouts in the grandest tradition of this profession. But even they needed a local guide to make it to the Pacific, employing the Shoshone woman Sacagawea, whose skills made their expedition's success possible. Daniel Boone and Davy Crockett scouted for much of their lives as well, building reputations of legendary stature. Zebulon Pike—while infamous for his ability to get lost, once even mistaking the Rio Grande for the Red River—made a regular living as a scout. In the latter half of the 1800s, during the time that most folks consider the Western Frontier's zenith, men such as Wild Bill Hickok, Cole Younger (one of the members of the infamous James Gang), and others scouted privately or for the army. I myself was a scout for the army after the battle of Adobe Walls. And Billy Tilghman, that legendary buffalo hunter and lawman, showed his versatility as a scout for the government.

Player characters who take up scouting as a profession will find themselves in two likely categories. They might be on the leading edge of exploration, dancing through dangerous lands, carrying dispatches and vital intelligence. Or they might be leading settlers, prospectors or hopefuls through hazardous terrain. Either way, a scout has plenty of adventure awaiting on the frontier.

BEN THOMPSON

When the Civil War broke out [Ben Thompson] enlisted as a private in one of the Texas regiments and went to the front to fight the battles of the lost cause. He was only a boy in years when he enlisted, but was not long in showing the kind of mettle that was in him.

While serving in General Kirby Smith's command during the campaign along the Red River, young Thompson performed many deeds of great daring, such as crossing the enemy's lines and in carrying important dispatches for the officers of his command. For the dash and courage he displayed at the battle of Sabine Cross Roads, just above the mouth of the Red River in Louisiana, he was promoted to the rank of captain by his commanding officer.

At the conclusion of hostilities between the North and South Ben returned to his home in Austin, but did not remain long. The spirit of war was now upon him and he longed for more conflict.

–Bat Masterson, "Ben Thompson,"
Famous Gun Fighters of the Western Frontier

Trapper

Trappers lived and worked in the deep forests and mountains, plying their trade in solitude. They left their haunts only to sell their wares in town or attend the annual rendezvous of the mountain men. While the fur trade stopped being quite as lucrative after some years, rabbit, raccoon, beaver and other pelts still had their appeal and uses. Indeed, the waterproof felt hats worn by cowboys, prospectors and bandits alike were not silk, as with their easterly cousins, but made from rabbit and beaver fur.

Almost always working alone, a trapper was never a more ornery individual than when forced to be social—except at rendezvous, of course. These were robust gatherings held once a year. It was a rare trapper who didn't find a way to attend these wild events. Trappers sold their wares to men like Manuel Lisa and John Jacob Astor, who used the skins to found the incredibly lucrative fur trade back east and in Europe. As fashions demanded Western furs, so trappers were able to become rich—or at least have steady work.

Most trappers didn't have other careers, at least not notable ones. You don't hear of many lawmen or cowboys who spent much time as trappers, and in many ways the fur trade lost steam by 1840, when beaver lost favor with the Eastern fur wearers. Still, many famous men worked predominantly as trappers, earning a solid living and building a reputation—such as Jed Smith, Joe Meek, James Beckworth and John Colter. Perhaps the greatest of trappers, Kit Carson, was the exception to this rule. Carson spent time as scout, guide, soldier, Indian fighter, and was even the first man to bring news of the gold strike at Sutter's Mill back east.

Player characters who choose to be trappers are often looking for solitary adventures, with the exception of the rendezvous. Rarely does a trapper go into town except to load up on supplies for another season alone in the wilderness. In *Sidewinder: Recoiled,* players might want to have previous experience as a trapper, rather than making their living at it during the game. In any case, clever players and Judges could easily make a trapper-based character's life full of all the excitement he could want.

Have Gun Will Travel

I have discussed professions and given proper accord to the Code of the West. What remains for us to discuss is just what *Sidewinder: Recoiled* characters will find in the way of adventure and excitement.

Inevitably, a character's profession tends to lead to

adventure of one kind or another. For example, a group of hired guns guarding a Wells Fargo gold shipment has clear objectives and predictable obstacles. It's a rare Judge who won't have at least one stage robber attack along the way, so a good team of *Sidewinder: Recoiled* characters should have plenty of fun in such a scenario. Similarly, if the core of the adventuring group is made up of deputy town marshals, it's likely that an adventure will come calling for them, involving all members of the group—even those not wearing tin badges. Think of Doc Holliday's role in both the Gunfight at the O.K. Corral and Marshal Earp's posse hunting down his brother's killers. It's easy to see how even a low-down bad man can be pulled into adventures of law and order. Now, if your characters decide to form a gang of outlaws, they can make their own fun, at least until the law comes a calling.

In some games of this type, characters are locked into one activity or set of expectations. Not so, with the bold men and women of the *Sidewinder: Recoiled* frontier. Each day is a new form of excitement and adventure, and if your group discovers that they don't like being outlaws, then traveling across a few state lines can mean a whole new start for everyone involved. Think again of Billy Tilghman, who went from a horse thief stealing from Indians to one of the most respected lawmen the West has ever known. Or consider my words about Doc Holliday (re-printed here for your benefit), who always seemed to outride any warrants for his arrests while living rather well for a scallywag and maverick of his stripe.

For old Doc, even multiple incidents of violence and murder, in many towns, didn't stop him from finding a new place to call home, play cards and kill men. The Code of the West guarantees you another chance somewhere on the vast frontier.

The most important thing any man or woman can do in *Sidewinder: Recoiled* is play to the fullest. I have tried to give you some idea of the reality behind the West, and hope I have done so in good faith. But in playing

DOC HOLLIDAY, PART 2

From Jacksboro to Denver, Colorado, was fully eight hundred miles, and, as much of the route to be traversed through was the Texas Panhandle and No-man's land, which was in those days alive with Indians none too friendly to the white man, and renegade Mexicans from New Mexico, the journey was a most perilous one to take; but the doughty doctor was equal to the task and in due time reached Denver without either having lost his scalp or his desire for more conflict.

This was the summer of 1876 and while Denver was a much more important city than Dallas, its local government was conducted on very much the same principles. Like Dallas, everything went in Denver, and the doctor, after looking the situation over for a day or two, concluded that he had lost nothing by the change.

In all respects the Rocky Mountain town looked good to him, and as he had set out to build up a record for himself as a man-killer, he did not purpose lying idle very long. While Denver, in many respects in those days was a rough and ready town, it nevertheless enforced to the very letter the ordinance against the carrying of fire arms, and Holliday, for the nonce becoming prudent, put his canister aside, but straightway went and bought himself a murderous looking knife.

Thus heeled, he did not long delay in getting into action, and in so doing, carved up the face and neck of one Bud Ryan, a quiet and gentlemanly looking sport, in a frightful manner. Bud Ryan still lives in Denver, and carries around with him the marks of his run-in with the fighting Holliday, more than thirty years ago. It was again the doctor's turn to take the road and escape from the scene of his recent malefaction, and this time he headed for Dodge City, Kansas.

–Bat Masterson, "Doc Holliday,"
Famous Gun Fighters of the Western Frontier

Sidewinder: Recoiled, you step beyond the reality and into the romance of the frontier, where men and women of upstanding character fight terrible outlaws. A place where the fates of whole towns and innocent citizens can hang in the balance on one man's decision to fight or flee. As I've said many times, one must have courage, skill and determination to succeed. Whether you end up in the back of a saloon dealing from the bottom of the deck or in the middle of the street facing down a man with steely eyes, you're living the adventure of the Old West.

Enjoy every minute of it.

From Sunup to Sundown in the Old West

Mr. Lewis records my comments correctly, and they are certainly true. However, there are those who ask how I could leave the West behind me. After all, don't all gunfighters dream of dying with their gun in their hands and their boots on? Didn't Doc Holliday, dying in bed of the consumption that plagued him much of his life, remark on how strange it was to die with those boots off?

Perhaps so. But truth be told, I never left the West. The West left me. I was a gambler in Denver—long a bastion of that noble profession—when new men came into power and began eliminating such innocent pastimes. The winds were changing and I could smell a new day. The Old Western Frontier was becoming tame and civilized, and gunfighters were becoming antiques and novelties, or worse. In the end, I had the choice of becoming a local curiosity—a living piece of history no longer relevant to the modern day—or moving on with dignity.

Naturally, when my wife and I could see civilization take hold, we decided to remove ourselves to where civilization was at its brightest and best. This led us to New York City, where we established ourselves fully well. As a member of the press, I reported on the happenstances of the day as well as sporting events. As Deputy Marshal of New York, I conducted official business without being concerned that things would result in gunfire. Meanwhile, my wife enjoyed the comforts that the city provided.

The Old West—as we know it—really first appeared when Lewis and Clark broke trails all the way to the mighty Pacific back in 1804. The fur trade fueled the early West's growth, Jim Bowie and Davy Crockett became Texan Legends, and the first wagons hit the Oregon Trail by 1841. The frontier was exploding, and it seemed everyone had a place in its limitless fields. Gold was struck in 1848 in Sutter's Mill by James Marshall, and within a year the oft-spoken of '49ers created a boom rush to California and all points in between. And if those prospectors and miners didn't all find gold and become rich, many of them found homes to live in and land to work on. Thus, the Old West began to flourish.

The Civil War came to the West even as it embroiled North and South, and soldiers from both sides ended up in every Western territory. With the lucrative markets for wild cattle, bison and mustangs, cowboys and cattle barons came through the West all a splendor, making money and starting new ways of life wherever they went. When they came, they drove the Indian natives out, and eventually the Indians fought back—at the Little BigHorn and tragically at Wounded Knee. Settlers continued to come, even as transcontinental telegraph and railroad lines interconnected both coasts of this growing nation.

Which, in the end, was the end of the Old West. Oh, certainly, some of the brightest Western legends followed the trains and telegraphs. The infamous James Gang made its reputation robbing trains, after all. But between those and the creation of barbed wire—making free-range cattle suddenly easier to control—civilization, and formal laws came West, until finally it had become just another place in America. *(Ed. Note: Oh, but as a Westerner I must whole-heartedly disagree with the respectable Mr. Masterson)*

In a way, the West's last hurrah came and went with the Hole in the Wall Gang—also called the Wild Bunch, led by Butch Cassidy and his partner, the Sundance Kid. Even Butch and the Kid themselves didn't die in the West, but all the way down in South America. Still, the excitement, the majesty, the history, the pride and the heritage of the West remain. And now it falls into the hands of those who bring it back to life. Those who relive the brightest and darkest moments of Western history. Those who would be like Wyatt Earp or Jesse James. Like Deadwood Dick or Wild Bill Hickok. Like Annie Oakley or Calamity Jane.

The Old West passed into history, but now it is back in your hands: the Judges and players of *Sidewinder: Recoiled*. In your imagination, lawmen and desperados square off once again, and steel-eyed gunfighters meet in the center of the street at High Noon. Scouts guide and grifters connive. Coldhearted bounty hunters bring in desperate criminals—or their heads—for cash on the barrelhead.

From time to time throughout this spin-a-yarn, I'll offer up more advice as well as presenting other tidbits of useful information in sidebars. These icons will tell you what it holds:

– Bat Masterson, look for this icon and you'll know it's me talkin' to you.

– Historical Information

– Rules Information

The Old West belongs to you now. Shine up your tin star, load your Colt or your Sharps or your Remington, and mount your best horse. The adventure is about to begin.

CHAPTER TWO : CHARACTERS

"You know the rules, Jake. You ride with an outlaw, you die with an outlaw."

Woodrow Call – *Lonesome Dove, 1989*

"Tell me again why we're robbin' this train," Sam asked in his agonizing drawl, while loading both barrels of his shotgun.

Hildi never looked up while she helped her baby sister Melody into the huge hoop skirt. "We ain't robbin' the train. We're robbin' that low-down thievin' Martel's payroll. Without the cash he won't be able to pay those hired guns. And then he won't be able to run off the rest of the ranchers."

Melody lay down on the tracks, frowning at the frilly, puffy skirt. "It ain't fair that I gotta wear this awful dress. I don't even want to rob the train. Why don't you wear it?"

Exasperated Hildi said, "I already told you, we ain't robbin' the train. And you're the one who agreed to play a hand of poker to see who wore the dress."

Realizing that she wouldn't get anywhere with her sister, Melody turned to Zeke, pouting. "This is all your fault. We were all gonna ride up shootin' until you came up with this plan."

Zeke just smiled and turned back to his conversation with Lafayette, "Fate, where do you reckon we should hole up with the horses?"

Fate gestured further down the steel rails with his saber still in its scabbard, "Assuming that Miss Hildi here manages to flag down the train's engineer as he veers around that corner, I would imagine that the train would come to a halt somewhere near that cottonwood tree. I will be waiting there to ask that gentleman to exit the train, while you and Sam ride up from behind that line of willows to secure the passengers."

The long wail from the train's horn was heard in the distance. Sam slung his shotgun's carrying strap over his shoulder, "Enough jawin'. Let's do it."

Character Concepts

The d20 Modern system allows a great deal of flexibility in molding a character to fit your concept of what he or she should be. The application of starting occupations and the unrestricted use of multiclassing easily imitates the myriad of stouthearted souls that braved the Western Frontier. This holds true for characters of all levels, as demonstrated by the different members of the Gunter Gang introduced in the opening fiction of this chapter (see the Gunter Gang's statistics, pages 273 — 277).

Since such creatures as elves and dwarves are but myths in the real world of the Wild West, all characters in *Sidewinder: Recoiled* are human. However, because humans in the 19th century did not all share the same values or traditions, you should select a cultural heritage to indicate where your character, or character's ancestors, originated. The Wild West was home to people from numerous nations around the world. You may aspire to play an Irish rustler, a Crow scout, an English maverick, a French voyageur, a freedman cowboy or a Mexican wrangler (who may prefer to be called a caballero). This does not make any difference with the game mechanics, but your character's cultural background opens a wide range of role-playing possibilities and it may determine a character's native language.

Players should reference Chapter 1 of the d20 Modern Roleplaying Game for step-by-step instructions on creating a character.

Characters in *Sidewinder: Recoiled* can take advantage of starting occupations and three different types of classes to build upon:

Starting Occupations: A starting occupation represents the character's livelihood and experience before adopting a life of adventure. The choice of starting occupation helps augment a character's basic skill set and starting finances. Moreover, certain starting occupations may provide an additional feat or perhaps a bonus to the character's reputation.

Basic Classes: Basic classes represent the foundation of skills and knowledge that all characters have. They are open to both starting and experienced cowpokes, offering a large selection of talents that are useful to characters of any level.

Advanced Classes: Advanced classes mirror the typical stereotypes present in the western genre: scout, preacher, gunslinger, tin star, etc. These classes have different prerequisites that a character must meet before taking a level in the class.

Prestige Classes: Designed to represent the specialized organizations present in the Wild West, prestige classes are beyond the scope of this book. However, future supplements will cover such classes as Pinkerton Agents, Texas Rangers, and United States Marshals.

WHAT'S DIFFERENT?

The six basic character classes in d20 Modern have been included in *Sidewinder: Recoiled* to update them to the Wild West era and as a convenience when creating your cowpoke. Everything within these classes is unchanged with the exception of the class skills and bonus feats. The skill lists have been modified to delete the skills inappropriate to the era (Computer Use for example) and the list of bonus feats has been updated to remove inappropriate feats and add new ones to fill the gaps. In addition, you may notice some other differences between the basic classes listed here and those in the d20 Modern Roleplaying Game as all published errata have been included within this and all subsequent chapters.

Ability Scores

Every character has six basic Ability Scores: Strength (STR), Dexterity (DEX), Constitution (CON), Intelligence (INT), Wisdom (WIS), and Charisma (CHA). These scores represent the basic prowess of a character's physical and mental faculties – their fundamental strengths and weaknesses.

Strength

Strength represents a character's physical prowess, his raw muscular power. Strength helps determine a character's carrying capacity, his adroitness in melee combat, and effectiveness in skills that require power.

Dexterity

Dexterity represents a character's agility, physical grace, quickness of movement, and coordination. Dexterity determines a character's accuracy with ranged weapons, slipperiness in combat, ability to avoid explosions and other similar attacks, and effectiveness in skills that require agility.

Constitution

Constitution represents a character's physical health, endurance, and robustness. Constitution determines a character's durability in combat, resistance to afflictions of the body (poison, disease, etc.), and effectiveness in skills requiring heartiness and mental focus.

Intelligence

Intelligence represents a character's mental acumen, memory, and reasoning ability. Intelligence determines a character's ability to learn new skills and effectiveness in skills that require a keen intellect.

Wisdom

Wisdom represents a character's horse sense, will power, and perception. Wisdom determines a character's resistance to mental influence and effectiveness in skills that require intuition or keen senses.

Charisma

Charisma represents a character's force of personality, affability, natural leadership, and magnetism. Charisma determines a character's ability to influence others and effectiveness in skills that require good communication and persuasiveness.

Ability Score Ranges

The normal human range of an ability score is 3 to 18, with 3 representing the lowest of specimens and 18 the epitome of human achievement. Scores outside this range are possible. In particular, critters often possess ability scores outside of this range. The great grizzly might have Strength of 27, while the humming bird might have Strength of 1. Unusual circumstances may even a cause a man's ability score to fall outside of this normal range. For example, infirmity or injury can reduce an ability score to below 3. While ability scores below 3 may be debilitating, terrible consequences befall a creature with an ability score of 0, and under no circumstances can a score drop below 0. Once a cowpoke or critter's Constitution drops to 0, death is immediate. A 0 in any other score renders a character helpless and unable to move. If the ability reduced to 0 is Intelligence, Wisdom, or Charisma, the character or critter is rendered unconscious as well.

Ability Modifiers

Associated with each ability score is a modifier derived from that score. When your character attempts to do something related to that ability, that modifier is added to any die roll required. Use the following formula to calculate the modifier:

modifier = (ability – 10)/2,

with the result being rounded down to the nearest whole number. Modifiers typically range from –4 to +4 with an average modifier being +0. A positive modifier is called a bonus, and a negative modifier is called a penalty.

Changing Ability Scores

Class features and pharmaceuticals may temporarily increase an ability score. If several such temporary effects are operating simultaneously, the ability score can increase without limit. Poisons, diseases, and other effects can cause temporary ability damage. Ability points

There is a belief that what you do is synonymous with *who* you *are*. And perhaps that's true for some people. However, consider this: my good friend Doc Holliday was a trained dentist, and hung out a dentist's shingle in several cow towns he lived in during his day. Wyatt Earp was once a bill collector in Wichita, Kansas. Davy Crockett was a Justice of the Peace and later became a congressman from Tennessee. And I myself have been privileged enough to make a living as a sports writer for many years, reporting on the boxing trade for the New York *Morning Telegraph.*

Yet, as a matter of course we do not look at the above names and think 'dentist,' 'bill collector,' 'congressman' or 'sports writer.' How they made their living is not the same as who they were. So, as we examine the different types of western man in the following pages, remember that difference. How a man does a thing is not as important as what a man does.

lost to damage return naturally, typically at a rate of 1 point per day per affected ability (see Natural Healing, page 228). As a character ages, some ability scores go up while others go down (see d20 Modern Roleplaying Game, Chapter 1: Vital Statistics). As with temporary ability increases, permanent increases are not limited.

When an ability score changes, the modifier associated with that score also changes.

Basic Character Classes

When all you have is a hammer, all problems look like nails. A character's approach to solving the myriad problems of life begins early. We all have different strengths that we invariably use. As good ol' Jim Bob bullies his way through on brawn, and Joe just toughs it out, Jack manages to slip and slide his way past obstacles. And if Annie expects to win over enemies with a beguiling smile, Sally would rather rely on her own indomitable will. Meanwhile Todd relaxes, sits back and thinks up a new solution.

The basic classes in *Sidewinder: Recoiled* represent a set of starting skills and abilities that, with a little training, all individuals can access. Each class forms a broad methodology that a character uses to solve problems and overcome obstacles. There are six basic classes – one associated with each ability score.

Basic Class Descriptions

The following section provides the general layout of each of the six basic classes. It describes what is included under each subsection and what that information means.

Class Vitals

Ability: This entry tells which ability is typically associated with that class.

Grit Die: The die type used by characters of the class to determine the number of grit gained per level.

A player rolls one die of the given type each time his or her character gains a new level. The character's Constitution modifier is applied to the roll. Add the result to the character's total grit. Even if the result is 0 or lower, the character always gains at least 1 grit. A 1st-level character, rather than rolling the die, automatically receives the maximum roll possible on the given type of die (of course, the Constitution modifier must still be applied).

Action Points: The number of action points gained per level.

Class Skills: This section of a class description provides a list of class skills and the number of skill ***points*** a character receives for each level taken in the class. A character's Intelligence modifier is applied to determine the total skill points gained each level (with a minimum

WHAT IS GRIT?

In *Sidewinder: Recoiled* grit functions identically to d20 Modern's hit points. Grit represents how much pain, abuse, and suffering an hombre's body can take before playing out. For each level achieved, a character gains additional grit. A die is rolled, the character's Constitution modifier is applied, and the result is added to the character's grit. The character class selected for the new level determines the size of the die rolled. At 1st level, instead of rolling for grit, a character receives the maximum amount that a die roll would normally allow, plus the character's Constitution modifier.

During combat, whenever an attack succeeds against a character, the damage inflicted by the attack reduces the character's grit. As long as a cowpoke's grit remains positive, he can function normally. However, as soon as a character's grit falls to 0 he becomes *disabled* and his performance is impaired (see Character Condition Summary, page 228). If a character's grit is reduced into negative numbers, the poor fellow falls unconscious. Once an hombre's grit drops to -10 (or lower), he dies.

Lost grit can be regained through healing, with 1 point per character level returning naturally for each evening of 8 hours of sleep. Grit can return more quickly if the wounded cowpoke receives doctoring and bed rest (see the Treat Injury skill, page 97)

In order to avoid confusion, *Sidewinder: Recoiled* refers to the grit of an undamaged character as the ***total grit***. Effects that change a character's total grit (such as gaining additional grit upon advancing a level), modify the maximum amount of grit that a character may have when fully healed and rested. When a character receives damage in combat, the damage reduces his grit. The remaining grit is referred to as the character's ***current grit***. A character's ***current grit*** is much more volatile, and can change due to taking damage and receiving healing. For a fully rested and uninjured character, ***current grit*** and ***total grit*** will be equal.

WHAT ARE ACTION POINTS?

Action points allow western heroes, and villains, to perform incredible feats of skill or invoke the blessings of Lady Luck. Every character controlled by a player, as well as Judge-controlled characters of significance, possesses a limited pool of action points. A player, or the Judge, may spend these points to augment a d20 roll or to activate certain special abilities. Action points fulfill two functions within the game. The first is to allow characters a second chance on a clutch die roll, the second is to limit the number of times that a character may use a particularly potent and dramatic ability. The net effect of action points is to allow heroes to be heroic, performing acts that are beyond the pale of the normal. A more thorough discussion of the use of action points follows later in this chapter (see Action Points, page 49).

of 1 point per level, even for a character with an Intelligence penalty).

1st-level characters start with 4 times the normal number of skill points (including Intelligence modifier) received for a level in the class. The maximum number of ***ranks*** a character may have in a class skill is equal to the character's level plus 3. A character spends 1 skill ***point*** to buy 1 skill ***rank*** in a class skill.

A character can also buy skills from another class's skills list. These are considered ***cross-class*** skills. A character spends 1 skill point to buy 1/2 rank (do not round up or down) in a ***cross-class*** skill. The maximum number of ranks a character can purchase in a cross-class skill is one-half that of a class skill.

Starting Feats: The feats gained at 1st level in the class.

Class Table

The table provided for each basic class details how a character improves as he or she attains higher levels in the class. It includes the following information.

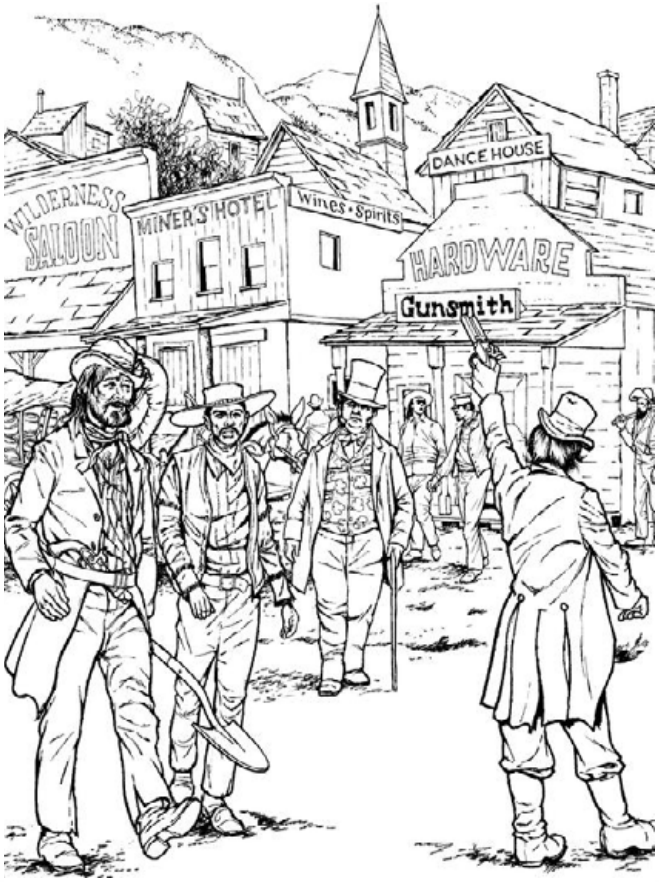
Level: The character's level in the class.
Base Attack Bonus (BAB): The character's base attack bonus and number of attacks.
Fort Save: The base save bonus for Fortitude saving throws. The character's Constitution modifier also applies.
Ref Save: The base save bonus for Reflex saving throws. The character's Dexterity modifier also applies.
Will Save: The base save bonus for Will saving throws. The character's Wisdom modifier also applies.
Class Features: Level-dependent class features, each explained in the section that follows.
Defense Bonus: The character's bonus to Defense. The character's Dexterity modifier and equipment bonus also applies.
Reputation Bonus: The character's Reputation bonus.

Class Features

This entry will detail the special characteristics of the class, including the bonus feats and unique talents a character is eligible to gain with an increase in level.

Talents: Every basic class offers a selection of talents from which to choose. A character gains a talent upon attaining each odd-numbered level in a class (including 1st level). Some talents may not be eligible for selection until a character meets certain prerequisites.

Bonus Feats: Every basic class offers a selection of bonus feats from which to choose. A character gains a bonus feat upon attaining each even-numbered level in a class. These bonus feats are in addition to the feats that all characters receive as they attain new levels. Some feats may not be eligible for selection until a character meets certain prerequisites



THE STRONG HERO

"My mammy was a 'gator and my pappy was a bull. I can whup my weight in wildcats and drink my belly full."

– The Kentuckian, 1955

The Strong hero appears frequently throughout the western landscape of *Sidewinder: Recoiled*. Physical strength can make a difference in diverse professions, from cowboy to gambler. Having the strength to bulldog down a renegade steer, carry a fallen compadre to safety, or bust a cheater's head in a gaming house brawl defines the Strong hero's mentality and lifestyle, regardless of the profession he chooses or the adventures he seeks.

A Strong hero looks for a physical advantage to meet the challenges of the open range, the rough and tumble saloon or a crooked riverboat. He often prefers a straight up fight to a lot of jawin' and deal-makin'. To maintain their physical prowess and advantage, Strong heroes usually engage in some kind of regular physical labor, such as chopping wood or busting rock in a mine. In some cases (and depending upon the Judge's campaign era), a Strong hero might choose more formal physical training, such as the boxing ring.

Tales of tremendous physical feats help to build a Strong hero's reputation. Paul Bunyan chopped his way into the hearts of loggers, townspeople and greenhorns alike. John Henry, the steel drivin' man, pounded his way into a railroad legend by beating a steam-powered drill with nothing but his powerful arms, huge heart and a 14-pound hammer. In *Blazing Saddles*, the sight of Mongo cold-cocking his rival's horse put fear in the mind of every right thinking citizen. The famous mountain man Cyrus "No-Neck" Brown was said to have picked up his near lame horse and carried it up a mountain pass to avoid being tracked by a posse of lawmen on his trail. A Strong hero looks for any opportunity to use his massive strength to overcome an obstacle and definitely wants everyone else to hear about it. Whether it's his legendary fist fighting, axe wielding or saber slashing, a Strong hero uses his power to achieve his goals and stay alive under the most difficult situations.

Truly, a Strong hero could choose any number of professions; it's the way he goes about doing the job at hand that is relevant to this class. Whether a wrangler, a lawman or a mountain man—and for that matter, a freed slave, an immigrant or a member of the Sioux Nation—the Strong hero relies on muscle and sinew to make things happen.

Strong Hero Vitals

Ability: A Strong hero focuses, first and foremost, on securing a high Strength ability score. A stout Constitution is also important, for physical prowess isn't worth a plugged nickel if he can't stick it out long enough to do the job. Skill with hands makes a difference too, and a Strong hero will often pursue a good Dexterity score to back up his raw power.

Grit Die: 1d8

Table 2.1: The Strong Hero

Level	BAB	Fort	Ref	Will	Features	Defense	Reputation
1st	+1	+1	+0	+0	Talent	+1	+0
2nd	+2	+2	+0	+0	Bonus feat	+2	+0
3rd	+3	+2	+1	+1	Talent	+2	+0
4th	+4	+2	+1	+1	Bonus feat	+3	+0
5th	+5	+3	+1	+1	Talent	+3	+1
6th	+6/+1	+3	+2	+2	Bonus feat	+3	+1
7th	+7/+2	+4	+2	+2	Talent	+4	+1
8th	+8/+3	+4	+2	+2	Bonus feat	+4	+1
9th	+9/+4	+4	+3	+3	Talent	+5	+2
10th	+10/+5	+5	+3	+3	Bonus feat	+5	+2

Action Points: Strong heroes gain a number of action points equal to 5 + one-half their character level, rounded down, at 1st level and every time they attain a new level in this class.

Class Skills: The Strong hero's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are:

Climb (Str), Craft (structural) (Int), Handle Animal (Cha), Jump (Str), Knowledge (current events, popular culture, streetwise, tactics) (Int), Operate Vehicle (watercraft) (Dex), Profession (Wis), Read/Write Language (none), Repair (Int), Speak Language (none), and Swim (Str).

In addition, the starting occupation selected can provide additional class skills from which to choose.

Skill Points at 1st Level: (3 + Int modifier) x 4.
Skill Points at Each Additional Level: 3 + Int modifier.

Starting Feats: In addition to the two feats all characters receive at 1st level, a Strong hero begins play with the Simple Weapons Proficiency feat.

Class Features

The following are class features of the Strong hero.

Talents

At 1st, 3rd, 5th, 7th, and 9th level, the Strong hero selects a talent from the following talent trees. Some trees have a set order that the hero must follow, while others provide a list from which to choose. As long as the hero qualifies, he can select freely from any of the Strong talent trees. The hero may not select a talent more than once unless expressly indicated in the talent description.

Extreme Effort Talent Tree

A Strong hero can push himself to make an extreme effort. The effort must relate to either a Strength check or a Strength-based skill check. You must decide to use this ability before making the check.

Extreme Effort: The effort requires a full-round action and provides a +2 bonus on the check.

Improved Extreme Effort: The effort requires a full-round action and provides a +2 bonus that stacks with the bonus provided by extreme effort (+4 total).

Prerequisite: Extreme effort.

Advanced Extreme Effort: The effort requires a full-round action and provides a +2 bonus that stacks with the bonuses provided by extreme effort and improved extreme effort (+6 total).

Prerequisites: Extreme effort, improved extreme effort.

EXTREME EFFORT IN COMBAT

A hero can use the talents in the Extreme Effort Talent Tree with the Strength check made when attempting to trip an opponent. However, if the hero does so, the trip attack becomes a full-round action instead of a single attack.

Kit Carson was the most powerful mountain man I ever set eyes on. While its is true that Kit was the runt of the family and weighed maybe 150 pounds when soaking wet, he was still as tough as nails, a first-rate guide, and possessed an incredible physical strength to beat all. His is the story of the Strong hero.

Carson, whose given name was Christopher, although nobody but his mother ever called him that, was a rugged, courageous man who served as a soldier, trapper, guide, scout and government agent. His exploits as a young guide in the Rocky Mountains are just as legendary as his often misunderstood work as an Indian agent. Oh, there's a barn full of stories about Kit's feats of strength, but I recall one tale in particular.

He was leading an expedition to find safe passage through Indian lands in Colorado, not too long before he helped sort out some disagreements between the Cheyenne and the federal government. He had taken one soldier with him on foot, to scout the hills that skirted a large Arapaho village. The rest of the party waited and wondered when the tandem didn't return that night. Before dawn, the men at camp heard wolves and they figured they had to either turn back or go find Kit. They went looking at daybreak and found him.

You see, he was wedged up the limbs of a tall spruce, along with the wounded soldier. When the rescuers helped the two men down, they learned that Kit had a busted ankle and the soldier had nearly died of a blow to the head. After taking a spill on a rockslide; Carson said his ankle was battered like nobody's business, but at least he could still walk. The soldier, however, was delirious. It appears that Kit decided to carry him back to camp, no-good ankle and all, and it was slow going. He camped, cared for the soldier, and when he realized the wolves had got wind of them, picked up his companion and set to climbing that spruce. He made it up, leaving the wolves to keep a growling vigil, until sun-up came and they finally tired of the wait. He said he was about to get down himself and leave the soldier there, hoping to make it back to camp in time to send help when the men arrived. All the men just scratched their heads, at a loss to explain how Kit could've carried that soldier up a tree, even on two good legs.

Ignore Hardness Talent Tree

The Strong hero has an innate talent for finding weaknesses in objects. This allows a Strong hero to ignore some of an object's hardness when making a melee attack to break it.

Ignore Hardness: The Strong hero ignores 2 points of an object's hardness.

Improved Ignore Hardness: The Strong hero ignores 2 additional points of an object's hardness (for a total of 4).

Prerequisite: Ignore hardness.

Advanced Ignore Hardness: The Strong hero ignores 2 additional points of an object's hardness (for a total of 6).

Prerequisites: Ignore hardness, improved ignore hardness.

Melee Smash Talent Tree

The Strong hero has an innate talent that increases melee damage.

Melee Smash: The Strong hero receives a +1 bonus on melee damage.

Improved Melee Smash: The Strong hero receives an additional +1 bonus on melee damage (+2 total).

Prerequisite: Melee smash.

Advanced Melee Smash: The Strong hero receives an additional +1 bonus on melee damage (+3 total).

Prerequisites: Melee smash, improved melee smash.

Bonus Feats

At 2nd, 4th, 6th, 8th, and 10th level, the Strong hero gains a bonus feat. The hero must select the feat from the following list, and some feats may not be eligible for selection until the hero meets certain prerequisites.

Animal Affinity, Archaic Weapons Proficiency, Athletic, Blind-Fight, Brawl, Cleave, Combat Martial Arts, Combat Reflexes, Great Cleave, Improved Brawl, Improved Combat Martial Arts, Improvised Weapon Proficiency, Improvised Weapon Damage, Power Attack, Weapon Focus.

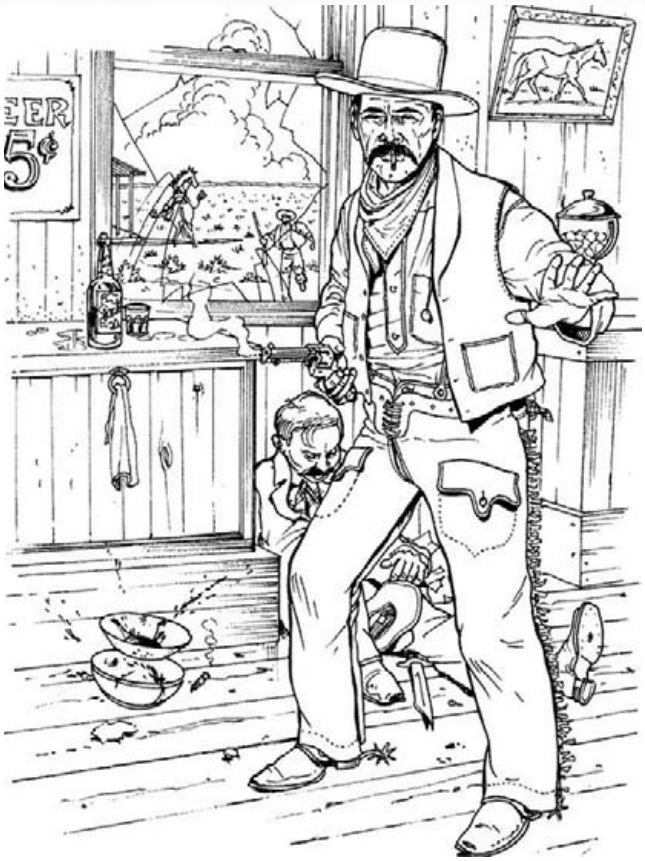
THE FAST HERO

"Draw fast and shoot slow, that's my motto. Then you never miss what you're aiming at."

Wyatt Earp – *Tombstone, 1942*

The Fast hero wants above all to be nimble, quick and sure-handed. The fast draw depends on the ability to "throw a gun" like lightning and still take a true aim. Obviously, gunfighters of every ilk are apt to choose the life of the Fast hero, but other professions are equally well served by taking a level in this character class.

For example, a gambler may well be a Fast hero at heart, using his lightning quick moves and filching fingers for sleight of hand at the poker table (or for snatching an opponent's wrist before they can put a card up a sleeve). A Fast hero making a living as a trapper might use his speed and agility to set up a trap right quick, spring into the brush to snare a rabbit, or



scramble up a tree before that lumbering grizzly bear even smells him. A wrangler might use his reflexes to get in and out of the saddle in a single movement, rope a steer while aiming his rifle at a pack of wolves, or catch a fish with his bare hands during an overnight camp along the river.

The most important things to a Fast hero are pure quickness, hand-eye coordination and cat-like reflexes. "Throwing" a handgun relies on all of these (assuming he wants to stay alive), but so does shooting an arrow, jumping from one rooftop to another or diving for cover when a flurry of lead catches him by surprise. No matter what background, chosen profession, color or creed, speed kills without discretion—especially if you ain't got it. The Fast hero makes sure he does.

Fast Hero Vitals

Ability: A Fast hero puts a premium on a high Dexterity, applying that ability to the menial aspects of everyday life as well as to the rigors of adventure. A deadeye shot, quick reflexes, and physical grace depend on a good Dexterity score. Additionally, Fast heroes should be able to think quickly and thus a good score in either Intelligence or Wisdom makes a valuable sidekick to Dexterity. A Fast hero might also find it worthwhile to place a strong score in Charisma. The ability to gain someone's trust on the spot, to enhance a reputation in short order or convince people of a plan of action will go a long way toward success.

Of course, you've heard of Doc Holliday, unless you were born yesterday. But what made him a legend in the first place? Was it his skill at pulling teeth? Nope. His prowess at the gambling table? Probably not. His heroic battle against tuberculosis? Doubtful. It was, after all was said and done, his quick draw, his fame as a gunfighter. Wyatt Earp once called him the "most dangerous man alive," because Doc's fast draw and deadly aim would end any dispute he fell into, and he fell into plenty.

The OK Corral might have defined Doc's story, but it didn't start there. Doc practiced his quick draw and gambling dexterity like they were two inseparable ingredients in a pound cake. Moving from town to town looking for a good game, all too often Doc ended up pulling his pistols and gunning rivals down when a game went bad. He practiced on the trail, learning to conserve bullets, and practiced in town, learning that getting people to talk about you and fear you was just as powerful as putting a hole through a man's gun hand before it pulled his piece from the holster. Nobody ever proved faster than Doc. Unlike the many gunfighters who died in the town square with their boots on, Doc died of consumption many years after that day in Tombstone. A bullet couldn't catch him, but old Death always finds a way.

And unless you were born within the hour, you know about Wild Bill Hickok, too. A fearless lawman, a dependable stagecoach driver on the Santa Fe Trail, and as stubborn as a mule when it came to giving up his guns, that was the true story of Wild Bill. While Bill's exploits were many and his name was known in every rotgut saloon and high-class faro house west of Old Man River, it wasn't because of his flamboyant garb or good looks. Talk of his lightning draw preceded him everywhere, making him the quintessential Fast hero.

It brought him trouble, it earned him fame and, eventually, it bought him a bullet through the back of the head. But not before he left many a man dying in the street. He was said to have shot five desperados by himself in a street brawl. I heard that he once shot two men with his last bullet during a shootout in Kansas, being so quick that he lunged to their flank while the men turned to aim and he put the slug right through the first man's heart, out through his back and into the second man's chest. It would also be foolhardy to forget his skill with a knife. That man could stick a knife in the spine of a book from twenty paces, even if the man holding it was trembling something fierce.

Table 2.2: The Fast Hero

Level	BAB	Fort	Ref	Will	Features	Defense	Reputation
1st	+0	+0	+1	+0	Talent	+3	+0
2nd	+1	+0	+2	+0	Bonus feat	+4	+0
3rd	+2	+1	+2	+1	Talent	+4	+1
4th	+3	+1	+2	+1	Bonus feat	+5	+1
5th	+3	+1	+3	+1	Talent	+5	+1
6th	+4	+2	+3	+2	Bonus feat	+6	+2
7th	+5	+2	+4	+2	Talent	+6	+2
8th	+6/+1	+2	+4	+2	Bonus feat	+7	+2
9th	+6/+1	+3	+4	+3	Talent	+7	+3
10th	+7/+2	+3	+5	+3	Bonus feat	+8	+3

Grit Die: 1d8

Action Points: Fast heroes gain a number of action points equal to 5 + one-half their character level, rounded down, at 1st level and every time they attain a new level in this class.

Class Skills: The Fast hero's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are:

Balance (Dex), Craft (mechanical) (Int), Escape Artist (Dex), Hide (Dex), Knowledge (current events, popular culture, streetwise) (Int), Move Silently (Dex), Operate Vehicle (watercraft) (Dex), Profession (Wis), Read/Write Language (none), Ride (Dex), Sleight of Hand (Dex), Speak Language (none), and Tumble (Dex).

In addition, the starting occupation selected can provide additional class skills from which to choose.

Skill Points at 1st Level: (5 + Int modifier) x 4.
Skill Points at Each Additional Level: 5 + Int modifier.

Starting Feats: In addition to the two feats all characters receive at 1st level, a Fast hero begins play with the Simple Weapons Proficiency feat.

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the Fast hero.

Talents

At 1st, 3rd, 5th, 7th, and 9th level, the Fast hero selects a talent from the following talent trees. Some trees have a set order that the hero must follow, while others provide a list from which to choose. As long as the hero qualifies, he or she can select freely from any of the Fast talent trees. The hero may not select a talent more than once unless expressly indicated in the talent description.

Defensive Talent Tree

The Fast hero gains the ability to improve his innate defensive talents as he attains new levels.

Evasion: When exposed to any effect that normally allows a character to attempt a Reflex saving throw for half damage (for instance, a dynamite explosion), the Fast hero suffers no damage if he makes a successful saving throw. Evasion cannot be used when wearing medium or heavy armor.

Uncanny Dodge 1: The Fast hero retains his Dexterity bonus to Defense even when caught flat-footed or struck by a hidden attacker. (An immobilized hero still loses his Dexterity bonus to Defense.)

Prerequisite: Evasion.

Uncanny Dodge 2: The Fast hero can no longer be flanked; he can react to opponents on opposite sides of himself as easily as he can react to a single attacker.

Prerequisites: Evasion, uncanny dodge 1.

Defensive Roll: The Fast hero can roll with a potentially lethal attack to take less damage. When the Fast hero's current grit would be reduced to 0 or less by damage in combat (from a ranged or melee attack), the Fast hero can attempt to roll with the damage.

A Fast hero spends 1 action point to use this talent. Once the point is spent, the hero makes a Reflex saving throw (DC = damage dealt). If the save succeeds, he takes one-half damage. The Fast hero must be able to react to the attack to execute a defensive roll—an immobilized hero cannot use this talent.

Since a character cannot normally make a Reflex save for one-half damage against ranged or melee attacks, the Fast hero's evasion talent does not apply to the defensive roll.

Prerequisites: Evasion, uncanny dodge 1.

Opportunist: The Fast hero can spend 1 action point to use this talent. Once the point is spent, the hero can make an attack of opportunity against an opponent who has just been struck for damage in melee by another character. This attack counts as the Fast hero's attack of opportunity for that round. Even a Fast hero with the Combat Reflexes feat cannot use this talent more than once per round.

Prerequisite: Evasion.

Increased Speed Talent Tree

The Fast hero can increase his natural base speed.

Increased Speed: The Fast hero's base speed increases by 5 feet.

Improved Increased Speed: The Fast hero's base speed increases by an additional 5 feet. This talent stacks with increased speed (10 feet total).

Prerequisite: Increased speed.

Advanced Increased Speed: The Fast hero's base speed increases by an additional 5 feet. This talent stacks with increased speed and improved increased speed (15 feet total).

Prerequisites: Increased speed, improved increased speed.

Bonus Feats

At 2nd, 4th, 6th, 8th, and 10th level, the Fast hero gains a bonus feat. The hero must select the feat from the following list, and some feats may not be eligible for selection until the hero meets certain prerequisites.

Acrobatic, Combat Expertise, Combat Throw, Defensive Martial Arts, Defensive Riding, Double Tap, Elusive Target, Focused, Improved Disarm, Mobility, Personal Firearms Proficiency, Point Blank Shot, Sidewinder, Slip Hammer, Stealthy, Weapon Finesse.

THE TOUGH HERO

"If the shooting starts, I'll live long enough to kill you."
Clint Burton – *Flaming Star, 1960*

Toughness is as much a state of mind as it is a physical manifestation. The Tough hero can gut out the most treacherous travail, whether it's a long and bloody fist fight, a trek across the desert on foot with only a half canteen of water, or the need to stay awake all night guarding the herd from rustlers.

Thus, just about any profession can benefit from taking a level as a Tough hero. A gunfighter might prefer the ability to take a bullet without going down to a super fast draw. A mountain man might decide the best chance of survival during the long winter is pure endurance, including the ability to resist illness and stomach the same dried meat for weeks on end. A gambler could benefit from the ability to stay sharp while drinking snakehead during an all night poker tournament.

But regardless of the reason for choosing the Tough hero, a character in this class values good health, fortitude and endless endurance. That's just as much the mentality of the Tough hero as it is a physical trait. Tough heroes are strong-minded, sometimes to the point of stubbornness. The Tough hero often prefers to take a beating if it means continuing to do things her way. She'll stick to her ways and endure hardships rather than compromise or cut a deal. These qualities make Tough heroes a force to be reckoned with—they will stay in a fight long after others have withdrawn and will often stand up and fight for another person's welfare or cause, even when others have given up hope.

Tough heroes come from all walks of life and they turn up in all regions of a *Sidewinder: Recoiled* setting. Whether a lawman, a cowboy or a mountain man, the Tough hero relies on steadfast endurance of mind, body and spirit to achieve success and build a reputation.

Tough Hero Vitals

Ability: A high Constitution score is a must for the Tough hero—the ability to endure physical pain, ward off illness and mentally stick to her guns all depend on it. And it never hurts to have a dose of raw power to back up that stubborn streak, so Tough heroes usually place a respectable score in Strength. Of course, nimble hands and sure feet make a difference too, especially for characters that tend to get into fistfights and tight spots. Finally, it is hard to endure when you don't know why you're doing it; so Tough heroes often place a good score in either Wisdom or Intelligence.

Grit Die: 1d10

Action Points: Tough heroes gain a number of action points equal to 5 + one-half their character level, rounded down, at 1st level and every time they attain a new level in this class.

Class Skills: The Tough hero's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are:

Climb (Str), Concentration (Con), Craft (mechanical, structural) (Int), Intimidate (Cha), Knowledge (current events, popular culture, streetwise) (Int), Operate Vehicle (watercraft) (Dex), Profession (Wis), Read/Write Language (none), Ride (Dex), Speak Language (none), Spot (Wis), and Survival (Wis).

In addition, the starting occupation selected can provide additional class skills from which to choose.

Skill Points at 1st Level: (3 + Int modifier) x 4.
Skill Points at Each Additional Level: 3 + Int modifier.

Starting Feats: In addition to the two feats all characters receive at 1st level, a Tough hero begins play with the Simple Weapons Proficiency feat.

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the Tough hero.

Talents

At 1st, 3rd, 5th, 7th, and 9th level, the Tough hero selects a talent from the following talent trees. Some trees have a set order that the hero must follow, while others provide a list from which to choose. As long as the hero qualifies, she can select freely from any of the Tough talent trees. The hero may not select a talent more than once unless expressly indicated in the talent description

Damage Reduction Talent Tree

The Tough hero has an innate talent to ignore a set amount of damage from most weapons, but not from energy. Before she can select a talent from this tree, the hero must have previously selected at least one talent from the Energy Resistance or Unbreakable Talent Tree.

Damage Reduction 1: The Tough hero ignores 1 point of damage from melee and ranged weapons.

Prerequisite: One other talent from either the Energy Resistance Talent Tree or the Unbreakable Talent Tree.

Damage Reduction 2: The Tough hero ignores an additional 1 point of damage from melee and ranged weapons (DR 2 total).

Prerequisites: Damage reduction 1, one other talent from either the Energy Resistance Talent Tree or the Unbreakable Talent Tree.

Table 2.3: The Tough Hero

Level	BAB	Fort	Ref	Will	Features	Defense	Reputation
1st	+0	+1	+0	+0	Talent	+1	+0
2nd	+1	+2	+0	+0	Bonus feat	+2	+0
3rd	+2	+2	+1	+1	Talent	+2	+1
4th	+3	+2	+1	+1	Bonus feat	+3	+1
5th	+3	+3	+1	+1	Talent	+3	+1
6th	+4	+3	+2	+2	Bonus feat	+3	+2
7th	+5	+4	+2	+2	Talent	+4	+2
8th	+6/+1	+4	+2	+2	Bonus feat	+4	+2
9th	+6/+1	+4	+3	+3	Talent	+5	+3
10th	+7/+2	+5	+3	+3	Bonus feat	+5	+3

Calamity Jane proved she was as tough as any man during her career on the frontier. With a reputation as a fearless rider, a mighty good shot and a person you could count on when the chips were down, she personifies the *Sidewinder: Recoiled* incarnation of the Tough hero.

Born as Martha Canary, Calamity Jane never let anything stand in her way. No challenge was too great, no task too difficult, and no crisis too overwhelming. Over the years before she settled down, she served as a scout, a soldier, a wild horse breaker and a pony express rider. But her greatest ability was her mental toughness, her single-minded focus on whatever she was doing at the time. She could break the stubbornness' horse, because her own relentless drive always outlasted it. She could laugh off a hazardous ride through the Black Hills to deliver the mail—a route no one else wanted—because she refused to believe it couldn't be done. She could save a rider's life with nothing more than dogged determination. Which is how she got her nickname, as it happens, out on Goose Greek River in 1873, as her cavalry unit found itself in a skirmish with a band of Sioux. Turning back from her position at the point, she saw her captain falling from the saddle after taking a hit. She spurred her mount and raced to his side, getting there just in time to catch him and ride to safety. She was named Calamity Jane that day; a nod to her uncanny ability to gut it out and do the job every time.

And if that doesn't convince you, how about the time she tracked down the desperado who had murdered Wild Bill? It's said that she captured him armed only with a meat cleaver from the butcher shop. That's right, she went straight after him, didn't even go to fetch her guns first. She wasn't about to let that snake leave town and that cleaver was all she needed to bring him in. That's toughness in my book.

Damage Reduction 3: The Tough hero ignores an additional 1 point of damage from melee and ranged weapons (DR 3 total).

Prerequisites: Damage reduction 1, damage reduction 2, one other talent from either the Energy Resistance Talent Tree or the Unbreakable Talent Tree.

ROTGUT WHISKEYS

Snakehead was the nastiest of the "whiskeys" of the old west. Take one barrel of pure grain alcohol add two pounds of black powder, four plugs of chewin' tobacco to give it the proper color, and one or more rattlesnake heads for "bite". Iffin' it don't kill ya out right when ya drink it, you sure will in hell wish it had the next day. And that's one of the "tamest" recipes. As to some of the stuff traded to the natives, well…

"Teddy Blue" Abbott wrote: "You take one barrel of Missouri River water, and two gallons of alcohol. Then you add two ounces of strychnine to make them crazy — because strychnine is the greatest stimulant in the world — and three plugs of tobacco to make them sick — because an Indian wouldn't figure it was whiskey unless it made him sick — and five bars of soap to give it a head, and half a pound of red pepper, and then you put in some sagebrush and boil it until it's brown. Strain into a bottle and you've got your Indian whiskey; that one bottle calls for one buffalo robe and when the Indian got drunk it was two robes. And that's how some of the traders made their fortunes."

Energy Resistance Talent Tree

The Tough hero is particularly resistant to certain kinds of deadly energy effects. The hero can select these talents in any order.

Acid Resistance: The Tough hero ignores an amount of acid damage equal to her Constitution modifier.

Cold Resistance: The Tough hero ignores an amount of cold damage equal to her Constitution modifier.

Electricity Resistance: The Tough hero ignores an amount of electricity damage equal to her Constitution modifier.

Fire Resistance: The Tough hero ignores an amount of fire damage equal to her Constitution modifier.

Sonic/Concussion Resistance: The Tough hero ignores an amount of sonic or concussion damage equal to her Constitution modifier.

Unbreakable Talent Tree

The Tough hero is particularly resilient thanks to the following talents.

Remain Conscious: The Tough hero gains the ability to continue to perform actions when she would otherwise be considered unconscious and dying. When the Tough hero's current grit reaches –1, the hero can perform as

though she were disabled, making either an attack action or a move action every round until she reaches –10 grit (and dies) or her current grit returns to 1 or higher. The hero can choose to succumb to unconsciousness if she thinks that doing so might prevent her from taking more damage.

Robust: The Tough hero becomes especially rugged, gaining a number of total grit equal to her Tough level as soon as she selects this talent. Thereafter, the hero gains +1 total grit with each level of Tough hero she gains.

Second Wind: The Tough hero can spend 1 action point to gain a second wind. When the hero does this, she recovers a number of grit equal to her Constitution modifier. This talent cannot increase the Tough hero's current grit beyond her total grit.

Stamina: The Tough hero heals and recovers twice as fast as normal, regaining 2 grit per character level per evening of rest, 2 points of temporary ability damage per evening of rest, and awakening in one-half the normal time after being knocked unconscious.

Prerequisite: Robust.

Bonus Feats

At 2nd, 4th, 6th, 8th, and 10th level, the Tough hero gains a bonus feat. The hero must select the feat from the following list, and some feats may not be eligible for selection until the hero meets certain prerequisites.

Alertness, Athletic, Brawl, Confident, Endurance, Great Fortitude, Improved Brawl, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Feint, Knockout Punch, Mechanical, Power Attack, Streetfighting, Toughness, True Grit.

THE SMART HERO

"Hey, that boy's so smart he'd dry snow and sell it for sugar."

"Honey" Wiggin – *The Virginian, 1929*

Sometimes the best way to win a fight or overcome a challenge is by using one's wits rather than brute force. The Smart hero chooses to live that way all of the time, preferring to use his superior intellect to build an authoritative reputation, defeat adversaries, and make a mark on the world.

That's not to say that a Smart hero won't wear a Colt on his hip without knowing how to use it. But most of the time, he would rather it stay cleanly oiled in his holster, using it only when his education, power of reason and clever plans don't figure—for instance, you just can't reason with a mountain lion springing from the rock ledge above you.

Smart heroes take many forms, and they gain their mental prowess by different means. Some might be bookish types from back east or overseas, getting their smarts from book learning or other formal education and passing it on to others by living as a teacher or advisor. Others might be born geniuses and inventors, applying their incredible powers of deduction in a big city laboratory or small town smithy. Still others might be plain folks that have learned through experience, like the clever lawman who gets inside the heads of the outlaws to solve crimes, entrap the guilty or hunt down a runaway. Yet another might be a high-ranking military officer (perhaps retired) known for resourceful battlefield tactics and strategy.

Smart heroes are often travelers because they crave new intellectual challenges. Adventure beckons even those who tend toward a sedentary lifestyle. A character that chooses a level in Smart hero can benefit in many ways, no matter what their profession—knowing how to figure out a puzzle or gathering the knowledge needed to accomplish a goal comes in handy even if your only ambition in life is to find that elusive mother lode of silver or gold.

DAMAGE TYPES

The Tough hero has several talents available to her that reduce the damage taken from certain types of attacks. In particular, damage reduction works against melee and ranged attacks and energy resistance works against different varieties of energy attacks. However, what about explosions? Does damage reduction work against the blast from several sticks of dynamite? Does energy resistance work? Determining the type of damage an attack inflicts will resolve such questions. There are four types of 'physical' damage: ballistic, bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing. There are five forms of energy damage: acid, cold, electricity, fire, and sonic/concussion. Damage reduction works against the four physical damage types while energy resistance works against the type of energy selected when the talent was taken. The type of damage that a weapon or other damage source inflicts is always listed with the description of that weapon or source. For example, a knife does piercing damage (see Table 5.13: Melee Weapons, page 151) and dynamite does concussion damage (see Table 5.12: Explosives and Splash Weapons, page 148). Therefore, while damage reduction reduces the damage dealt by a knife, it is ineffective against dynamite, because concussion damage is an energy damage type. Only the talent energy resistance (sonic/concussion) would reduce damage from a dynamite blast.

Smart Hero Vitals

Ability: As someone's pappy once said, it's hard to be smart if you don't have some Intelligence. A Smart hero needs an impressive score in this ability to build a reputation as a great thinker. And, as someone else's pappy once said, being smart won't stop a bullet that's aiming for your melon, so Smart heroes will often back up their intellect with a respectable Dexterity or Wisdom. To wit: if you can't think your way out of a gunfight, maybe you should dodge your way out of it, or have the sense to stay clear of it in the first place. Additionally, a high Charisma or Constitution may aid the Smart hero in dealing with potential clients and partners, or enduring the long hours of planning the latest rescue or caper without eating or sleeping.

Grit Die: 1d6

Action Points: Smart heroes gain a number of action points equal to 5 + one-half their character level, rounded down, at 1st level and every time they attain a new level in this class.

Class Skills: The Smart hero's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are:

Craft (chemical, electric, mechanical, pharmaceutical, structural, visual art, writing) (Int), Decipher Script (Int), Demolitions (Int), Disable Device (Int), Forgery (Int), Investigate (Int), Knowledge (arcane lore, art, behavioral sciences, business, civics, current events, earth and life sciences, history, physical sciences, popular culture, streetwise, tactics, technology, theology and philosophy) (Int), Navigate (Int), Operate Vehicle (aircraft, ground vehicles, watercraft) (Dex), Profession (Wis), Read/Write Language (none), Repair (Int), Research (Int), Search (Int), and Speak Language (none).

In addition, the starting occupation selected can provide additional class skills from which to choose.

Skill Points at 1st Level: (9 + Int modifier) x 4.
Skill Points at Each Additional Level: 9 + Int modifier.

Starting Feats: In addition to the two feats all characters receive at 1st level, a Smart hero begins play with the Simple Weapons Proficiency feat.

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the Smart hero.

Talents

At 1st, 3rd, 5th, 7th, and 9th level, the Smart hero selects a talent from the following talent trees. Some trees have a set order that the hero must follow, while others provide a list from which to choose. As long as the hero qualifies, he can select freely from any of the Smart talent trees. The hero may not select a talent more than once unless expressly indicated in the talent description

Research Talent Tree

The Smart hero has a natural aptitude for study and fact-finding. The hero can select these talents in any order.

Savant: Select one of the skills listed in the following paragraph. The Smart hero receives a bonus equal to his Smart level when making checks with that skill. A Smart hero may select this talent multiple times; each time it applies to a different skill.

Craft (any single skill), Decipher Script, Demolitions, Disable Device, Forgery, Investigate, Knowledge (any single skill), Navigate, Repair, Research, Search.

Table 2.4: The Smart Hero

Level	BAB	Fort	Ref	Will	Features	Defense	Reputation
1st	+0	+0	+0	+1	Talent	+0	+1
2nd	+1	+0	+0	+2	Bonus feat	+1	+1
3rd	+1	+1	+1	+2	Talent	+1	+1
4th	+2	+1	+1	+2	Bonus feat	+1	+2
5th	+2	+1	+1	+3	Talent	+2	+2
6th	+3	+2	+2	+3	Bonus feat	+2	+2
7th	+3	+2	+2	+4	Talent	+2	+3
8th	+4	+2	+2	+4	Bonus feat	+3	+3
9th	+4	+3	+3	+4	Talent	+3	+3
10th	+5	+3	+3	+5	Bonus feat	+3	+4

Mark Twain made his mark on the West in subtle ways, by using his smarts to build a reputation, earn a decent living and tell the story of the West as it was happening. One has to reckon that he stands up as a fine example of the Smart hero. Just consider all the things he wrote and all the places he went in pursuit of new experiences and new stories to tell. He never made a living bringing in pelts or herding cattle (although he did try his hand at timber and mining), but he made a legend of himself in any case, by creating new legends inspired by his experiences out West.

It was while working on the staff of a Virginia City newspaper in Nevada that he first began using his pen name, instead of his real name of Samuel Clemens. His regular columns and features about the mining life in Nevada towns were the beginnings of his legendary writing style. Later, in San Francisco and then Sacramento, he continued to polish his skills and tell more of the evolving story of California, moving on to more humorous and imaginative stories that formulated his ideas for his famous novels. Yep, Twain's fiery imagination was forged in the West—and he used his intellect to fashion a reputation that made it possible to write the likes of *Huckleberry Finn*.

Wyatt Earp embodies a different brand of Smart hero. Earp's reputation as a gunslinger and lawman was always grounded in his street smarts. He was a shrewd businessman, prospector and gambler. He built himself a nice living running faro houses, and buying and selling property. While he wouldn't hesitate to use his skill with a gun when necessary, he saved that course of action for the times when reason and guile just wouldn't cut it.

Earp knew when to throw a gun and when to use his head instead. He knew how to get inside a man's head, and turn things to his advantage without shedding blood. For instance, he often preferred to pistol-whip an opponent, knowing it was better to take them in alive. And he liked to resolve gambling disputes in his establishments without drawing his gun at all. One time, I saw him toying with an obnoxious greenhorn who accused him of bottom dealing at a faro table. Wyatt had taken the dealer's chair for fun that night and he didn't like the idea of being called a cheater by a fool who didn't have the sense to recognize Wyatt Earp himself. But old Wyatt, he just let the man rant and even returned his money with a smile before asking him to leave the house. Not ten minutes later the man skulked back in, leaving twice as much money as he had taken and apologizing all over himself. He backed out the door shaking in his skin, before riding off with the friends who clued him as to Wyatt's identity. That's how Earp proved that being Smart wasn't just for inventors and writers.

Linguist: With this talent, the Smart hero becomes a master linguist. Whenever the hero encounters a new language, either spoken or written, he can make an Intelligence check to determine if he can understand it. The check is made with a bonus equal to the hero's Smart level. For a written language, the bonus applies to a Decipher Script check instead.

The DC for the check depends on the situation: DC 15 if the language is in the same group as a language the hero has as a Read/Write Language or Speak Language skill; DC 20 if the language is unrelated to any other languages the hero knows; and DC 25 if the language is ancient or unique. With this special ability, a Smart hero can glean enough meaning from a conversation or document to ascertain the basic message. However, this ability does not allow a Smart hero to fluently converse or read and write in a language in which he has not invested a skill rank.

Prerequisite: A rank in either Read/Write Language or Speak Language for each of three different languages.

Strategy Talent Tree

The Smart hero has the brainpower to see solutions in most situations. The hero can select these talents in any order. However, before the hero can select a talent from this tree, he must have previously selected at least one talent from the Research Talent Tree.

Exploit Weakness: After 1 round of combat, the Smart hero can designate one opponent and try to find ways to gain an advantage by using brains over brawn. The Smart hero uses a move action to make an Intelligence check (DC 15) with a bonus equal to his Smart level. If the check succeeds, instead of either his Strength or Dexterity bonus, the Smart hero uses his Intelligence bonus on attack rolls verses the designated target for the rest of the combat. The Smart hero can always find a way to outthink opponents and notice weaknesses in their fighting style.

Prerequisite: One talent from the Research Talent Tree.

Plan: Prior to a dramatic situation, either combat- or skill-related, the Smart hero can develop a plan of action. Using this talent requires preparation; a Smart hero cannot use this talent when surprised or otherwise unprepared for a particular situation.

The Smart hero makes an Intelligence check (DC 10) with a bonus equal to his Smart level. The result of the check provides the Smart hero and allies with a

circumstance bonus. A Smart hero cannot take 10 or 20 when making this check.

Check Result	Bonus
9 or lower	+0 (check failed)
10–14	+1
15–24	+2
25 or higher	+3

This bonus can be applied to all skill checks and attack rolls made by the Smart hero and his allies, but the bonus only lasts for the first 3 rounds. After that time, reduce the bonus by 1 point (to a minimum of +0) for every additional round the situation continues, as the vagaries of circumstance begin to unravel even the best-laid plans.

Prerequisite: One talent from the Research Talent Tree.

Trick: Using ploy and deception, a Smart hero can cause a target to become temporarily confused. To be susceptible to a trick, the target must have an Intelligence score of 3 or higher, be within 30 feet of the hero, and be able to hear and understand the hero.

To play a trick on a target, the hero uses a full-round action to make an Intelligence check (DC 15), adding his Smart level as a bonus. If the Intelligence check succeeds, the target can still try to think quickly and ignore the trick.

The target resists the trick by making a Reflex saving throw (DC 10 + Smart hero's class level + Smart hero's Int bonus). If the saving throw fails, the target becomes dazed (unable to act, but can defend normally) for 1 round.

A Smart hero can only play a trick on a particular target once per encounter. After the first trick in an encounter, whether the attempt succeeds or not, that target becomes wary and immune to such ploys.

Prerequisite: One talent from the Research Talent Tree.

Bonus Feats

At 2nd, 4th, 6th, 8th, and 10th level, the Smart hero gains a bonus feat. The hero must select the feat from the following list, and some feats may not be eligible for selection until the hero meets certain prerequisites.

Builder, Cautious, Combat Expertise, Educated, Improved Disarm, Improved Trip, Indian Lore, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Mechanical, Meticulous, Studious, Trail Lore, Vehicle Proficiency, Weapon Focus.

THE DEDICATED HERO

"When that girl gets an idea, she's just as stubborn as mule with a broken hind leg."

Nat – *Cattle Queen of Montana, 1954*

Some heroes wouldn't know what to do without a specific cause to live and die for. Remaining steadfast in a belief, a conviction or a code of conduct, a Dedicated hero in the *Sidewinder: Recoiled* milieu is someone who can't be shaken from a task or swayed from an ideal; someone who has the greatest confidence not only in his abilities, but also in his righteousness.

Such Dedicated heroes usually have a particular devotion, a sense of destiny or a clear-cut purpose in life. These heroes are found everywhere, from the devout town preacher intent on saving the populace from the sins of human frailty, and the squeaky clean lawman foresworn to protect the innocent to the immigrant freedom fighter who takes an oath to unshackle the bonds of oppression for his people.

Usually, Dedicated heroes possess a strong will, an intuitive nature or just plain common sense. They are usually insightful and understanding even if they don't always agree with the people they are trying to help. Often, they see themselves as tools of a higher power, or part of some grand design that is much bigger than themselves. Because of this, they are secure in their beliefs, ideals or causes, regardless of exactly what those things might be.

Taking a level in this class shows that the character has a definite focus in life, a prescribed set of goals or ideas that govern his life. Such a focus can be beneficial; no matter what task or adventure the fates have in store.

Dedicated Hero Vitals

Ability: Knowing one's purpose in life goes hand in hand with the Wisdom to understand the world around us. The Dedicated hero must possess the wisdom to understand what he can change and the ability to accept what he can't change. A keen intellect will help the wisest of warriors to grow and succeed, as will a physical manifestation of his righteousness, whether it is the raw power represented by a high Strength score or the ability to endure hardship endowed by a high Constitution.

Throughout his life and the struggle of his Hunkpapa Lakota tribe, Chief Sitting Bull remained dedicated to his people and the spiritual ways of old. He stood defiant against the federal government and refused to give up his beliefs or his allegiance, even after surrendering to save his people from extinction. As chief and holy man, he offers a prime example of the Dedicated hero.

Sitting Bull got his name as a youth—Tatanka-Iyotanka—the Lakota description of a buffalo bull sitting on its haunches, unmovable. He lived up to that name many times. He refused to budge after the government decided to ignore the Fort Laramie treaty and declare the Lakota on those grounds to be hostile Indians. This led to the famous battle of Little Big Horn, where Sitting Bull's vision of Lakota warriors falling from the sky came true in the force of Crazy Horse's band and the thousands of other Lakota who defeated Custer's 7th Cavalry. Even as more cavalry came to exact revenge, Sitting Bull wouldn't concede, leading his people on a trek to Canada to avoid capture. Years later, when he saw that his people couldn't survive without the buffalo that were becoming more and more scarce, Sitting Bull surrendered rather than let his people die. Even so, he remained defiant in his beliefs. After his stint in the Wild West show, he returned to the Lakota reservation but still refused to abide by the white man's rules, rejecting Christianity and maintaining his rituals to Wakan Tanka, the Great Spirit. He also kept two wives, like in the days of old.

Meanwhile, Brigham Young fought to preserve the religious freedom for followers of the Church of Latter-day Saints. He fought the federal government, local governments and the everyday citizens who not only threatened the independence and livelihood of Mormons, but even their very lives. Until his death, Young remained dedicated to the Church and its ways.

After meeting Joseph Smith and being baptized, Young became one of the original Quorum of Twelve Apostles and quickly became a leader of the flock. He organized the gathering of Saints first in Missouri, then in Illinois, all while doing missionary work in England. Continually fending off threats to his people and their beliefs, he decided to lead an exodus of Mormons westward. It was a grueling trek, but Young's dedication to the task, and his unwavering faith, helped to guide the beleaguered followers to the valley of the Great Salt Lake. Where, in 1847, they established the now famous settlement of Latter-day Saints. It didn't happen overnight, but with Young's leadership they built irrigation, housing and established trade with other settlements. His steadfast belief in the Mormon way of life, his hard work and his vision for the creation of the promised Deseret show us all what it means to be a Dedicated hero.

Table 2.5: The Dedicated Hero

Level	BAB	Fort	Ref	Will	Features	Defense	Reputation
1st	+0	+1	+0	+1	Talent	+1	+1
2nd	+1	+2	+0	+2	Bonus feat	+2	+1
3rd	+2	+2	+1	+2	Talent	+2	+1
4th	+3	+2	+1	+2	Bonus feat	+3	+2
5th	+3	+3	+1	+3	Talent	+3	+2
6th	+4	+3	+2	+3	Bonus feat	+3	+2
7th	+5	+4	+2	+4	Talent	+4	+3
8th	+6/+1	+4	+2	+4	Bonus feat	+4	+3
9th	+6/+1	+4	+3	+4	Talent	+5	+3
10th	+7/+2	+5	+3	+5	Bonus feat	+5	+4

Grit Die: 1d6

Action Points: Dedicated heroes gain a number of action points equal to 5 + one-half their character level, rounded down, at 1st level and every time they attain a new level in this class.

Class Skills: The Dedicated hero's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are:

Craft (pharmaceutical, visual art, writing) (Int), Gamble (Wis), Investigate (Int), Knowledge (arcane lore, art, behavioral sciences, business, civics, current events, earth and life sciences, history, physical sciences, popular culture, streetwise, tactics, technology, theology and philosophy) (Int), Listen (Wis), Profession (Wis), Read/Write Language (none), Sense Motive (Wis), Speak Language (none), Spot (Wis), Survival (Wis), and Treat Injury (Wis).

In addition, the starting occupation selected can provide additional class skills from which to choose.

Skill Points at 1st Level: (5 + Int modifier) x 4.
Skill Points at Each Additional Level: 5 + Int modifier.

Starting Feats: In addition to the two feats all characters receive at 1st level, a Dedicated hero begins play with the Simple Weapons Proficiency feat.

Class Features

The following are class features of the Dedicated hero.

Talents

At 1st, 3rd, 5th, 7th, and 9th level, the Dedicated hero selects a talent from the following talent trees. Some trees have a set order that the hero must follow, while others provide a list from which to choose. As long as the hero qualifies, he or she can select freely from any of the Dedicated talent trees. The hero may not select a talent more than once unless expressly indicated in the talent description

Empathic Talent Tree

The Dedicated hero's innate talents give him a great capacity for empathy.

Empathy: The Dedicated hero has a knack for being sensitive to the feelings and thoughts of others without having those feelings and thoughts communicated in any objectively explicit manner. This innate talent provides a bonus on checks involving interaction skills (Bluff, Diplomacy, Handle Animal, Intimidate, Perform, and Sense Motive), provided the hero spends at least 1 minute observing his target prior to making the skill check. The bonus is equal to the hero's Dedicated level.

Improved Aid Another: When a Dedicated hero is successful with an aid another check the bonus granted to others increases by +1. The hero can select this talent multiple times, each time increasing the bonus by +1.

Prerequisite: Empathy.

Intuition: The Dedicated hero has an innate ability to sense trouble in the air. The Dedicated hero can make a Will saving throw (DC 15). On a successful save, the hero either feels assured that everything is all right, or he gets a hunch that a specific situation is about to turn bad, based on the Judge's best guess relating to the circumstances. The hero may use this talent a number of times per day equal to his Dedicated level.

Prerequisite: Empathy.

Healing Talent Tree

The Dedicated hero has a talent for healing.

Healing Knack: The hero has a knack for the healing arts. The hero receives a +2 bonus on all Treat Injury skill checks.

Healing Touch 1: The Dedicated hero's ability to restore grit with a medical kit or perform surgery with a surgery kit increases by +2 grit.

Prerequisite: Healing knack.

Healing Touch 2: The Dedicated hero's ability to restore grit with a medical kit or perform surgery with a surgery kit increases by an additional +2 grit, which stacks with healing touch 1 for a total of +4 grit.

Prerequisites: Healing knack, healing touch 1.

Insightful Talent Tree

His innate insight serves the Dedicated hero well.

Skill Emphasis: The Dedicated hero chooses a single skill and receives a +3 bonus on all checks with that skill. This bonus does not allow the hero to make checks for a trained-only skill if the hero has 0 ranks in that skill.

Aware: The Dedicated hero is intuitively aware of his surroundings. When making Listen or Spot checks to avoid surprise, the hero adds his base Will saving throw bonus to the roll.

Prerequisite: Skill emphasis.

Faith: The Dedicated hero has a great deal of faith. It might be faith in self, in a higher power, or in both. Whenever the hero spends 1 action point to improve the result of an attack roll, skill check, saving throw, or ability check, this unswerving belief allows the Dedicated hero to add his Wisdom modifier to the die roll as well as the bonus obtained from the expenditure of the action point.

Prerequisite: Skill emphasis.

Cool Under Pressure: The Dedicated hero selects a number of skills equal to 3 + the hero's Wisdom modifier. When making a check with one of these skills, the Dedicated hero can take 10 even when distracted or under duress.

Prerequisite: Skill emphasis plus either faith or aware.

Bonus Feats

At 2nd, 4th, 6th, 8th, and 10th level, the Dedicated hero gains a bonus feat. The hero must select the feat from the following list, and some feats may not be eligible for selection until the hero meets certain prerequisites.

Advanced Firearms Proficiency, Alertness, Archaic Weapons Proficiency, Attentive, Blind-Fight, Deceptive, Educated, Far Shot, Iron Will, Medical Expert, Meticulous, Surgery, Track, Weapon Focus.

THE CHARISMATIC HERO

"You know, I've seen fancy dressers like her before. They can do more harm to a man sometimes than a pair of six-shooters."

The Silver Kid – *The Duel at Silver Creek, 1952*

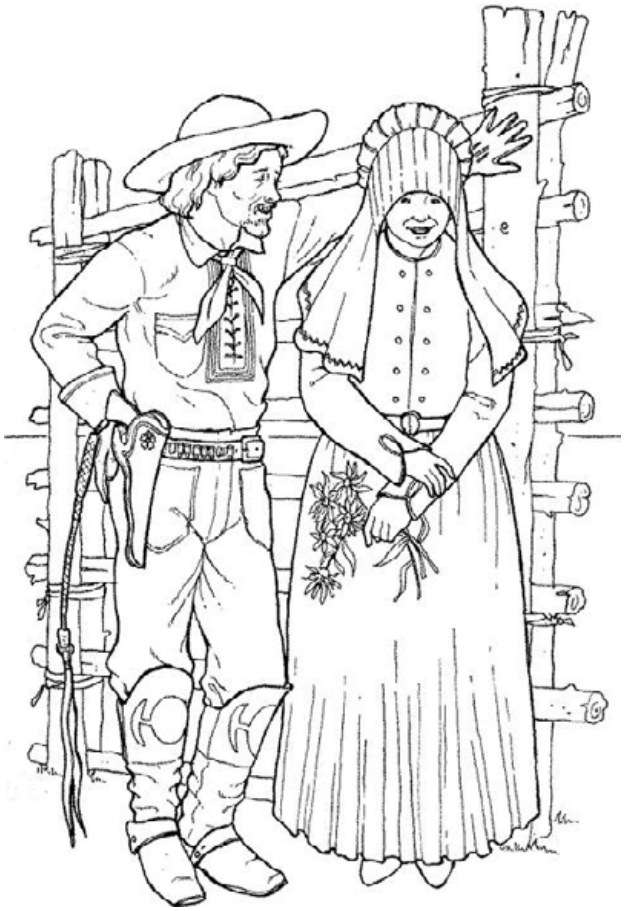
While there are a lot of ways to build a solid reputation, the Charismatic hero does it primarily by winning the hearts and minds of the people she encounters every day. Relying on personal magnetism, overall charm and superb communication skills, Charismatic heroes have a way of connecting with others in a positive fashion, seemingly without even trying.

In many professions, the first impression is lasting—and the Charismatic hero takes full advantage of that. She may be comely, she may possess that winning smile, or she might have a compelling voice or mannerism. She may have an alluring aura, a mysterious magnetism or a compelling presence. By one means or another, she appeals to many different people and has the ability to make fast friends and gain trusted companions.

Thus, taking a level in this class provides many advantages to travelers and homebodies alike, whether the hero's profession is that of an entertainer, lawman or

gambler. A Charismatic young merchant could set up shop just about anywhere, selling her wares at top dollar to a trusting group of loyal customers. A Charismatic gambler could ease her way out of any mistaken accusations of cheating—likewise a fast-talking politician could secure a power base after a short stint in a new settlement. A Charismatic soldier could parlay his social skills into a coveted position as a spy for the government or one of the powerful rail barons.

Truly, there is no limit to what a Charismatic hero can accomplish. Her engaging style, influential ways and downright likeability give her an edge anytime other folks get involved—which is as sure as a child's hankering for two-penny candy.



Charismatic Hero Vitals

Ability: It's as obvious as a rattler's tail; a powerful Charisma score is vital to the Charismatic hero's success. Positive human interaction is greatly enhanced by a strong score in this ability, as is the ability to gain followers or companions. Additionally, such a hero often shores up their natural charm and amiability with some strong physical ability, such as Dexterity or Strength; alternatively, a worthy intellect can be a boon to a Charismatic hero who does a lot of talking and needs the ability to gather or assimilate knowledge quickly in order to cultivate and maintain someone's trust.

Grit Die: 1d6

Action Points: Charismatic heroes gain a number of action points equal to 5 + one-half their character level, rounded down, at 1st level and every time they attain a new level in this class.

Class Skills: The Charismatic hero's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are:

Bluff (Cha), Craft (visual art, writing) (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Disguise (Cha), Gather Information (Cha), Handle Animal (Cha), Intimidate (Cha), Knowledge (arcane lore, art, behavioral sciences, business, civics, current events, popular culture, streetwise, theology and philosophy) (Int), Perform (act, dance, keyboards, percussion instruments, sing, stand-up, stringed instruments, wind instruments) (Cha), Profession (Wis), Read/Write Language (none), and Speak Language (none).

In addition, the starting occupation selected can provide additional class skills from which to choose.

Skill Points at 1st Level: (7 + Int modifier) x 4.
Skill Points at Each Additional Level: 7 + Int modifier.

Starting Feats: In addition to the two feats all characters receive at 1st level, a Charismatic hero begins play with the Simple Weapons Proficiency feat.

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the Charismatic hero.

Table 2.6: The Charismatic Hero

Level	BAB	Fort	Ref	Will	Features	Defense	Reputation
1st	+0	+1	+1	+0	Talent	+0	+2
2nd	+1	+2	+2	+0	Bonus feat	+1	+2
3rd	+1	+2	+2	+1	Talent	+1	+2
4th	+2	+2	+2	+1	Bonus feat	+1	+3
5th	+2	+3	+3	+1	Talent	+2	+3
6th	+3	+3	+3	+2	Bonus feat	+2	+3
7th	+3	+4	+4	+2	Talent	+2	+4
8th	+4	+4	+4	+2	Bonus feat	+3	+4
9th	+4	+4	+4	+3	Talent	+3	+4
10th	+5	+5	+5	+3	Bonus feat	+3	+5

Talents

At 1st, 3rd, 5th, 7th, and 9th level, the Charismatic hero selects a talent from the following talent trees. Some trees have a set order that the hero must follow, while others provide a list from which to choose. As long as the hero qualifies, he or she can select freely from any of the Charismatic talent trees. The hero may not select a talent more than once unless expressly indicated in the talent description

Of all the names we remember from the frontier, Annie Oakley and Buffalo Bill remain two of the biggest stars of the West. They earned their fame both on the open range and in the traveling Wild West shows, thrilling us with great deeds and extraordinary exhibitions. Without a doubt, they give us good examples of the Charismatic hero in *Sidewinder: Recoiled*.

Of course, Buffalo Bill was said to win friends and impress people right on sight. His dashing appearance got the notice of the ladies and his natural showmanship and charm had people readily believing all the tales of his buffalo hunting and sharp shooting, especially when he told them himself. And he wasn't just for show—he knew how to shoot and scout and hunt—but his greatest talent was gaining the confidence and enthusiasm of the people. He was known as an honest and thoughtful man, championing the cause of Women's Suffrage, decrying the mistreatment of the Indians by the government, and promoting the need for natural conservation. By the time he created "Buffalo Bill's Wild West," everyone flocked to his shows because they knew he wouldn't give them snake oil entertainment. They knew he would bring the real thing to the towns and settlements that already loved him. His natural charisma is what made it possible for Bill to become a star in his own show.

Now, Annie Oakley only increased her fame as one of Bill's traveling legends, but she was earning her reputation on her own long before joining the shows. Growing up hunting in Ohio as Phoebe Anne Oakley Moses, she became known in all the towns and settlements for her ability to shoot her quarry cleanly through the head and bringing in pelts and meat of the highest quality. Still, though there were lots of good shots in that part of the country; there weren't that many who were pretty young women and her fame grew quickly as she went from town to town. She wasn't afraid of a challenge, and she accepted a competition with a man named Butler who claimed he could outshoot anyone. When she won, Butler was smitten—just like everyone at the contest. Together they joined the Wild West show after they were married and that's when she took the stage name of Annie Oakley. As if you needed more convincing, even Sitting Bull couldn't resist her charms—becoming so enthralled with her while he traveled with the Wild West show that he adopted her as his own daughter, and gave her the nickname "little sure shot" as a sort of crowning achievement for her career. Her winning ways and womanly charms made Annie Oakley a legend in a frontier dominated by men.

Charm Talent Tree

The Charismatic hero has an innate talent for being charming and captivating.

Charm: The Charismatic hero receives a bonus on all Charisma-based skill checks made to influence members of his chosen gender. (Some characters are charming to members of the opposite gender, others to members of the same gender.) The bonus is equal to the character's Charismatic level.

A Charismatic hero can only charm Judge characters with attitudes of indifferent or better. The hero cannot use the charm bonus against characters that are unfriendly or hostile.

Favor: The Charismatic hero has the ability to acquire minor aid from anyone she meets. By making a favor check, a Charismatic hero can gain important information without going through the time and trouble of doing a lot of research. Favors can also be used to acquire the loan of equipment or documents, or to receive other minor assistance in the course of an adventure.

A Charismatic hero spends 1 action point to activate this talent. To make a favor check, roll a d20 and add a bonus equal to the character's Charismatic level. The Judge sets the DC based on the scope of the favor requested. The DC ranges from 10 for a simple favor to as high as 30 for a formidable and highly dangerous, expensive, or illegal favor. A Charismatic hero cannot take 10 or 20 on this check, nor can she retry the check for the same (or virtually the same) favor. Favors should help advance the plot of an adventure. A favor that would enable a character to avoid an adventure altogether should always be unavailable to the character, regardless of the result of a favor check.

The Judge should carefully monitor a Charismatic hero's use of favors to ensure that this ability is not abused. The success or failure of a mission should not hinge on the use of a favor, and getting a favor should not replace good roleplaying or the use of other skills. The Judge may disallow any favor deemed disruptive to the game.

Prerequisite: Charm.

Captivate: With her honeyed words and impressive bearing, a Charismatic hero can temporarily beguile a target. To be susceptible to a captivate attempt the target must have an Intelligence score of 3 or higher, be within 30 feet of the hero, and be able to see, hear, and understand the hero.

To captivate a target, the hero must use an attack

action to make a Charisma check (DC 15), adding her Charismatic level as a bonus. If the Charisma check succeeds, the target can still try to resist.

The target resists the captivation attempt by making a Will saving throw (DC 10 + Charismatic hero's class level + Charismatic hero's Cha bonus). If the saving throw fails, the hero becomes the sole focus of the target. The target pays no attention to anyone else for 1 round. This focusing of the target's attention allows other characters to take actions of which the captivated target is unaware. The effect ends immediately if the target is attacked or threatened.

A Charismatic hero can concentrate to keep a target captivated for additional rounds. The Charismatic hero concentrates all of her effort on the task, and the target is allowed to make a new Will save each round. If the target succeeds on a save or the hero stops concentrating, the effect ends.

Prerequisites: Charm, Favor.

Fast-Talk Talent Tree

The Charismatic hero has an innate talent for bending the truth and dazzling others with a combination of words, mannerisms, and charm.

Fast-Talk: The Charismatic hero has a way with words when attempting to con and deceive. With this talent, she applies her Charismatic level as a bonus on any Bluff, Diplomacy, or Gamble checks made while attempting to lie, cheat, or otherwise bend the truth.

Dazzle: The Charismatic hero has the ability to dazzle a target through sheer force of personality, a winning smile, and fast-talking. To be susceptible to a dazzle attempt, the target must have an Intelligence score of 3 or higher, be within 30 feet of the hero, and be able to see, hear, and understand the hero.

To dazzle a target, the hero must use an attack action to make a Charisma check (DC 15), adding her Charismatic level as a bonus. If the Charisma check succeeds, the target can still try to resist.

The target resists the dazzle attempt by making a Will saving throw (DC 10 + Charismatic hero's class level + Charismatic hero's Cha bonus). If the save fails, the target receives a –1 penalty on attack rolls, ability checks, skill checks, and saving throws for a number of rounds equal to the hero's Charismatic level.

This talent can be selected multiple times, each time worsening the dazzled penalty by –1.

Prerequisite: Fast-talk.

Taunt: A Charismatic hero has become so adept at insulting and goading that she can cause another to become temporarily rattled. To be susceptible to a taunt, the target must have an Intelligence score of 3 or higher, be within 30 feet of the hero, and be able to hear and understand the hero.

To taunt a target, the hero must use an attack action to make a Charisma check (DC 15), adding her Charismatic level as a bonus. If the Charisma check succeeds, the target can still try to resist.

The target resists the taunt by making a Will saving throw (DC 10 + Charismatic hero's class level + Charismatic hero's Cha bonus). If the save fails, the target becomes dazed (unable to act, but can defend normally) for 1 round.

The hero can use a taunt on an opponent any number of times.

Prerequisites: Fast-talk, dazzle.

Leadership Talent Tree

The Charismatic hero has a talent for leadership and inspiration.

Coordinate: The Charismatic hero has a knack for getting people to work together. If the hero can spend a full round directing her allies and can make a Charisma check (DC 10), she can provide allies within 30 feet a +1 bonus on their attack rolls and skill checks. The bonus lasts for a number of rounds equal to the hero's Charisma modifier.

The hero can coordinate a number of allies equal to one-half of her Charismatic level, rounded down (to a minimum of one ally).

Inspiration: The Charismatic hero can inspire her allies, bolstering them and improving their chances of success. An ally must listen to and observe the Charismatic hero for a full round for the inspiration to take hold, and the hero must make a Charisma check (DC 10). The effect lasts for a number of rounds equal to the hero's Charisma modifier.

An inspired ally gains a +2 morale bonus on saving throws, attack rolls, and damage rolls.

A Charismatic hero cannot inspire herself. The hero can inspire a number of allies equal to one-half of her Charismatic level, rounded down (to a minimum of one ally).

Prerequisite: Coordinate.

Greater Inspiration: The Charismatic hero can inspire her allies to even greater heights, bolstering them and improving their chances of success. An ally must listen to and observe the Charismatic hero for a full round for the greater inspiration to take hold, and the hero must make a Charisma check (DC 10). The effect lasts for a number of rounds equal to the hero's Charisma modifier.

An inspired ally gains an additional +1 morale bonus on saving throws, attack rolls, and damage rolls, which stacks with the bonus from inspiration for a total of a +3 morale bonus.

A Charismatic hero cannot inspire herself. The hero can inspire a number of allies equal to one-half of her Charismatic level, rounded down (to a minimum of one ally).

Prerequisites: Coordinate, inspiration.

Bonus Feats

At 2nd, 4th, 6th, 8th, and 10th level, the Charismatic hero gains a bonus feat. The hero must select the feat from the following list, and some feats may not be eligible for selection until the hero meets certain prerequisites.

Agile Riposte, Creative, Deceptive, Dodge, Frightful Presence, Horse Tradin', Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Low Profile, Point Blank Shot, Renown, Trustworthy, Windfall.

Starting Occupations

Although a hero may hold other jobs as his or her career unfolds, the benefits of a starting occupation are only applied once—at the time of character creation.

Many starting occupations have a prerequisite that the character must meet to qualify for the occupation. Each occupation provides a list of skill choices, a number of which the character can select as additional permanent class skills. Once selected, a permanent class skill is always considered a class skill for the character. If the skill selected is already a class skill for the character, he or she gains a competence bonus for that skill whenever it is used.

Some starting occupations provide a Reputation bonus or a bonus feat (in addition to the two feats a 1st-level character already receives). Finally, a starting occupation increases the character's Wealth bonus or starting cash (see Finances, Money and Wealth, page 51).

Choose one occupation from the available selections and apply the benefits to the character as noted in the occupation's description.

Academic

One who chooses the profession of the Academic does so because she values the attainment and preservation of knowledge. While Academics sometimes take the "desk jobs" that tend to dominate the general public's perception of the profession, they are just as often found in the field, doing research, working on a commissioned project or just exploring. The Academic may fall into any of the following example categories: librarians, professors at an institution of higher knowledge, teachers (in the school house or self-employed), university students or dedicated scholars, and explorers (archaeologists, botanists, behaviorists, naturalists).

Prerequisite: Age 18+.

Skills: Choose three of the following skills as permanent class skills. If a skill the character selects is already a class skill, she receives a +1 competence bonus on checks using that skill. Craft (writing), Decipher Script, Gather Information, Knowledge (arcane lore, art, behavioral sciences, business, civics, current events, earth and life sciences, history, physical sciences, popular culture, tactics, technology, or theology and philosophy), Research, or add a new Read/Write Language or a new Speak Language.

Wealth Bonus Increase: +2.

Artisan

Those who choose the artisan profession enjoy working with their hands to create or repair items of practical use in their community. Artisans are usually trained professionals who have studied under a master of a specific craft, but they are sometimes self-taught or even jacks-of-all-trades who are able to fashion and fix useful objects and machinery from basic materials. Although Artisans primarily focus on making objects that are useful and functional, they often dabble in artistry as a hobby or matter of creative pride. Among the many professions an artisan might pursue are carpenters, jewelers, potters, cobblers, blacksmiths, gunsmiths, coopers, glassblowers, and watchmakers.

Prerequisite: Dexterity 13+.

Skills: Choose two of the following skills as permanent class skills. If a skill the character selects is already a class skill, the character receives a +1 competence bonus on checks using that skill. Craft (chemical, electric, mechanical, pharmaceutical, structural, or visual art), Disable Device, Knowledge (art, physical sciences, or technology), Repair, or Research.

Bonus Feat: Select one of the following: Builder, Creative, or Mechanical.

Wealth Bonus Increase: +2.

Artist

The artist profession encompasses a myriad of creative endeavors, from writing to sculpting or singing. Artists seek to earn their living by fanning their creative sparks into profitable, or at least sustaining, ways to provide food and shelter for themselves or their family. For the artist, two professional goals are crucial: the ability to earn a decent wage and the sense of creating something that enriches others and endures. An artist may choose to focus on any of a number of disciplines, including literary arts (journalist, novelist, columnist, playwright), visual arts (graphic artist, painter, sculptor, illustrator, cartoonist, photographer), musical arts (musician, singer, composer), or performance arts (actor, dancer, director).

Prerequisite: Age 15+.

Skills: Choose three of the following skills as permanent class skills. If a skill the character selects is already a class skill, he or she receives a +1 competence bonus on checks using that skill. Bluff, Craft (visual art or writing), Disguise, Forgery, Knowledge (arcane lore, art or popular culture), Listen, Perform (act, dance, keyboards, percussion instruments, sing, stand-up, stringed instruments, or wind instruments), Spot.

Wealth Bonus Increase: +2.

Athlete

Athletes strive to use their physical prowess to earn a livable wage. Many different applications are possible in a *Sidewinder: Recoiled* game; the scope of the relevant skill sets is dependent on the era in which the Judge chooses to set his or her game. Typical athletic professions would include gymnasts, wrestlers, boxers, runners, crew (rowers), swimmers, baseball players and mountain climbers—as well as any other competitive sport suitable to the era.

Prerequisite: Strength 13 or Dexterity 13.

Skills: Choose three of the following skills as permanent class skills. If a skill the character selects is already a class skill, he or she receives a +1 competence bonus on checks using that skill. Balance, Climb, Jump, Ride, Swim, Tumble.

Bonus Feat: Select either Archaic Weapons Proficiency or Brawl.

Wealth Bonus Increase: +1.

Clergy

Whether it is in the big city back east or the small town on the range, there is always a job for a clergyman. Attending to the spiritual needs of the populace is a rewarding as well as secure profession for those who hear the calling. Ordained clergymen of all denominations fall into this profession, as do the untrained laity that make a living serving the public in formal religious institutions or in some official capacity. Additionally, others connected with spiritual studies can be considered as clergy, including theological scholars and experts on religious studies.

Prerequisite: Age 23+.

Skills: Choose three of the following skills as permanent class skills. If a skill the character selects is already a class skill, he or she receives a +1 competence bonus on checks using that skill. Decipher Script, Diplomacy, Knowledge (arcane lore, art, behavioral sciences, history, or theology and philosophy), Listen, Sense Motive.

Wealth Bonus Increase: +2.

Doctor

Like the clergyman, a good Doctor can always find work. People who choose this profession usually feel a strong need to help and heal people. Monetarily, Doctors may often lead the life of an average citizen, but people in the community treat them with a great deal of respect. Rather than paying cold hard cash, patients may treat a Doctor to special favors, meals, or gifts. In *Sidewinder: Recoiled*, Doctors encompass a wide variety of disciplines, from the physician (whether a general practitioner or a specialist in some area), to the surgeon, apothecary, alienist or dentist.

Prerequisite: Age 25+.

Skills: Choose two of the following skills as permanent class skills. If a skill the character selects is already a class skill, he or she receives a +1 competence bonus on checks using that skill. Craft (pharmaceutical), Knowledge (behavioral sciences, earth and life sciences, or technology), Search, Treat Injury.

Wealth Bonus Increase: +4.

Engineer

The engineering profession attracts people who immerse themselves in building and tinkering with machinery more complicated than a simple tool, or constructing great edifices and public works. An Engineer makes a living by creating or maintaining technological solutions to real community needs. This profession includes mechanics (fluent in engines, pumps, and machines of all sorts), telegraph operators and others familiar with electrical gadgets (varies depending on the Judge's chosen era), civil engineers (schooled in building dams, buildings, bridges, etc.), and architects. Depending on the level of expertise and nature of their work, some blacksmiths and gunsmiths may qualify as engineers rather than artisans.

Prerequisite: Age 23+.

Skills: Choose three of the following skills as permanent class skills. If a skill the character selects is already a class skill, he or she receives a +1 competence bonus on checks using that skill. Craft (electric, mechanical, or structural), Knowledge (business, physical sciences, or technology), Operate Vehicle (aircraft, ground vehicles, watercraft), Repair, Research.

Wealth Bonus Increase: +3.

Entertainer

An Entertainer is anyone who thrusts herself into the spotlight solely to regale the populace and make them smile, laugh, cry or cheer. Entertainers make their livings in many ways and often they are multi-talented rather than focusing on a single ability. Some Entertainers are itinerant, performing wherever people have a hankering for a good show to ease the drudgery of daily life. Others prefer to set up in a city or town, performing in a single venue as long as it can support them. Entertainers and Artists are sometimes one and the same, but Entertainers are usually more profit motivated than

Artists. This occupation would include daredevils, singers, dancers, comics, jugglers and vaudeville actors, but can expand to encompass whatever act grabs the public's attention and creates an audience.

Prerequisite: Age 15+.

Skills: Choose one of the following skills as permanent class skills. If a skill the character selects is already a class skill, he or she receives a +1 competence bonus on checks using that skill. Bluff, Craft (visual art or writing), Diplomacy, Disguise, Perform (act, dance, keyboards, percussion instruments, sing, stand-up, stringed instruments, or wind instruments).

Reputation Bonus Increase: +1.

Wealth Bonus Increase: +4.

Greenhorn

A Greenhorn is a wet-behind-the-ears adventurer from back east—someone who usually led a pampered lifestyle before heading west. That pampered past really didn't give them a defined profession, so the Greenhorn becomes a de facto profession for those who dream of riches, fame and thrilling experiences on the wild frontier.

Prerequisite: Age 16+.

Skills: Choose two of the following skills as permanent class skills. If a skill the character selects is already a class skill, he or she receives a +1 competence bonus on checks using that skill. Diplomacy, Gamble, Knowledge (art, business, civics, current events, earth and life sciences, history, physical sciences, popular culture, or technology), Research.

Wealth Bonus Increase: +2.

Hunter

Hunters make their living by supplying food and animal hides to settlements, towns and cities—large or small. They might be adept at hunting wild game, proficient at fishing or otherwise harvesting the bounty of the rivers and seas, or skilled in trapping a variety of animals for food or pelts. Expert hunters are usually familiar with more than one of these methods, such as being capable of both trapping and hunting game.

Prerequisite: Age 15+.

Skills: Choose two of the following skills as permanent class skills. If a skill the character selects is already a class skill, he or she receives a +1 competence bonus on checks using that skill. Balance, Climb, Handle Animal, Hide, Ride, Survival, Swim.

Bonus Feat: Select either Far Shot or Personal Firearms Proficiency.

Wealth Bonus Increase: +1.

Idle Rich

The Idle Rich are individuals who possess enough money to make more money by supporting other people's projects and dreams—or, if they don't feel the need to make more money, decide to spread around what wealth they already have. Usually, such a person's wealth originated from family holdings, trust funds or inheritance. However, a member of the Idle Rich might have just as easily gained their wealth through gambling, mining or other low stakes-high return endeavors. Typically, someone in this starting occupation has no other job, has limited responsibilities and has at least one driving passion that occupies their attention and energy. The Idle Rich likely fall into one of three categories: Capitalists, Philanthropists or Dilettantes. Capitalists are those whose passion is using money to make more money, usually by financing projects for people of good risk and expecting a return on that investment. Philanthropists are those whose passion is a particular charity or type of charity, often supported through a foundation. Dilettantes are those that use their wealth to either pursue an amateur's passion in the arts or sciences or to just revel in their lust for living a fun and carefree existence.

Prerequisite: Age 18+.

Skills: Choose one of the following skills as permanent class skills. If a skill the character selects is already a class skill, he or she receives a +1 competence bonus on checks using that skill. Gamble, Intimidate, Knowledge (business, civics, current events or popular culture), Operate Vehicle (aircraft, ground vehicles, watercraft), Ride, add a new Speak Language.

Reputation Bonus Increase: +1.

Wealth Bonus Increase: +6.

Laborer

What would civilization be without the Laborer to do the building, assembling, digging and handling of that which needed to be built, moved, assembled, dug or otherwise handled? This occupation encompasses all the callous-hand work done in cities, towns, ranches and mines. Laborers exist for virtually every task, from factory workers to construction hands, teamsters to miners, and railroad workers to ditch diggers. Often, Laborers are transient folks, moving from one place to the next to find good honest work at a fair and decent wage, then moving again when the work dries up.

Prerequisite: Age 14+.

Skills: Choose three of the following skills as

permanent class skills. If a skill the character selects is already a class skill, he or she receives a +1 competence bonus on checks using that skill. Craft (mechanical or structural), Climb, Demolitions, Handle Animal, Intimidate, Repair, Ride.

Wealth Bonus Increase: +1.

Law Enforcement

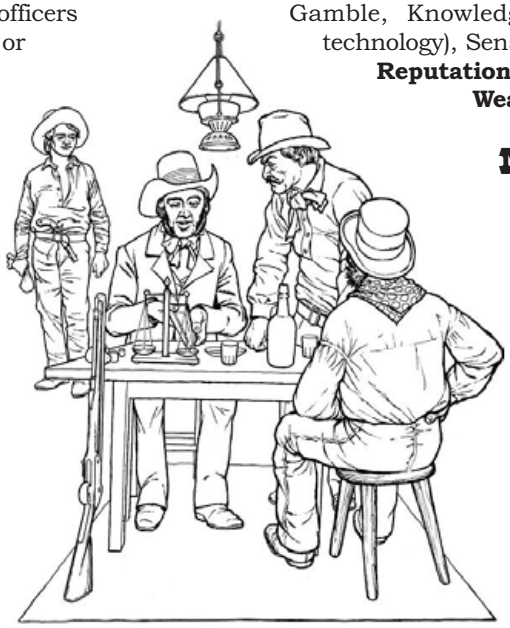
Law and Order are paramount before any place can be deemed civilized, and there are always people ready to step up to maintain safety and protect the lives and property of their fellow citizens. Law Enforcement officers often have a stake in the place they are protecting, whether they are one of the nearby ranch owners, saloon/faro house operators or even notable venture capitalists. Sometimes, members of this occupation are strictly altruistic, believing that the good of the community remains the highest priority, and pledging to maintain dependable law and order to achieve the greatest good. Law Enforcement officers include, but aren't limited to, county or town sheriffs and deputies, federal marshals, Texas rangers, railroad investigators, secret service agents, "Pinkertons" and beat cops.

Prerequisite: Age 20+.

Skills: Choose two of the following skills as permanent class skills. If a skill the character selects is already a class skill, he or she receives a +1 competence bonus on checks using that skill. Bluff, Diplomacy, Gather Information, Intimidate, Investigate, Knowledge (civics, earth and life sciences, streetwise, or tactics), Listen, Ride.

Bonus Feat: Select one of the following: Combat Martial Arts or Personal Firearms Proficiency.

Wealth Bonus Increase: +1.



Mariner

Mariners make their living working on watercraft of all shapes and sizes. Whether climbing the rigging of the largest sailing ships plying the high seas, stoking the boilers of the grand paddle wheelers working the Big Muddy or Old Man River, or poling the smallest of barges, a Mariner is most at home when afloat.

Prerequisites: Age 14+.

Skills: Choose two of the following skills as permanent class skills. If a skill the character selects is already a class skill, he or she receives a +1 competence bonus on checks using that skill. Balance, Climb, Craft (structural), Gamble, Jump, Navigate, Operate Vehicle (watercraft), add a new Speak Language, Swim.

Bonus Feat: Select one of the following: Acrobatic, Focused, or Vehicle Proficiency (sailing ships or steamships).

Wealth Bonus Increase: +1.

Merchant

Merchants come in every stripe and color. They make a living buying and selling the goods that people really need, and sometimes things people don't need at all. They often have an obsession about being their own boss. They believe in themselves, have an abundance of confidence, and possess the ability to make their own way in the world. These small or large business owners, hucksters and suppliers have a knack for putting together business plans, gathering resources, and ensuring that new ventures are prosperous. Merchants range from lowly snake oil salesmen to owners of general stores and importers of valuable—and sometimes exotic—goods.

Prerequisite: Age 20+.

Skills: Choose two of the following skills as permanent class skills. If a skill the character selects is already a class skill, he or she receives a +1 competence bonus on checks using that skill. Bluff, Diplomacy, Gamble, Knowledge (business, current events, or technology), Sense Motive.

Reputation Bonus Increase: +1.

Wealth Bonus Increase: +3.

Military

Military service is a starting occupation for many young men, and sometimes becomes a full career for those who make it through the early challenges. As an occupation, this covers those who may have served, or continue to serve, in any of a variety of military outfits, from a locally organized militia to the U.S. or Confederate Army or Navy.

Prerequisite: Age 15+.

Skills: Choose two of the following skills as permanent class skills. If a skill the character selects is already a class skill, he or she receives a +1 competence bonus on checks using that skill. Climb, Demolitions, Handle Animal, Hide, Knowledge (tactics), Move Silently, Navigate, Ride, Survival, Swim.

Bonus Feat: Select one of the following: Archaic Weapons Proficiency, Brawl, Combat Martial Arts, or Personal Firearms Proficiency.

Wealth Bonus Increase: +1.

Outlaw

Continuing a time-honored occupation, the Outlaw makes a living from illicit activities. Typically, Outlaws have a colorful history or background steeped in escapades on the wrong side of the law. Without them, Law Enforcement officers would be bored silly, with nothing more to do than rescue cats from trees, lock up the town drunk or settle penny-ante poker disputes. This

occupation includes confidence artists, bandits, burglars, extortionists, thieves, gang members, robbers (bank, train, or stagecoach), rustlers, highwaymen and other sundry career criminals.

Prerequisite: Age 15+.

Skills: Choose two of the following skills as permanent class skills. If a skill the character selects is already a class skill, he or she receives a +1 competence bonus on checks using that skill. Disable Device, Disguise, Forgery, Gamble, Hide, Knowledge (streetwise), Move Silently, Sleight of Hand.

Bonus Feat: Select either Brawl or Personal Firearms Proficiency.

Wealth Bonus Increase: +1.

Politician

Politicians are born deal-makers. Usually found in thriving towns or municipalities, they may sometimes seize opportunities out on the frontier. Drawn to situations where money, goods, or power is bartered, stolen or swapped, they are the people without whom the big deals can't be made. Motivated by wealth, personal power or just a piece of the action, Politicians include the negotiators, lobbyists, agents, judges, mayors, and other people that make a living by getting two or more groups or individuals to come to terms and consummate deals.

Prerequisite: Age 21+, Charisma 13+.

Skills: Choose two of the following skills as permanent class skills. If a skill the character selects is already a class skill, he or she receives a +1 competence bonus on checks using that skill. Bluff, Diplomacy, Gather Information, Intimidate, Knowledge (behavioral sciences, civics, current events, history, popular culture, or theology and philosophy), Listen, Research, Sense Motive, or add a new Read/Write Language or a new Speak Language.

Bonus Feat: Select one of the following: Renown, Trustworthy, or Windfall.

Reputation Bonus Increase: +1.

Wealth Bonus Increase: +3.

Prospector

A demanding and high-risk occupation, prospecting lures people who seek to find a mineral fortune in the hills and valleys of the wild frontier. Drawn from all walks of life, Prospectors can come from any point on the globe. While driven by a desire to strike it rich quickly, Prospectors won't shun hard work. Endless digging, panning and screening, often resulting in nothing more than a few flakes or grains, is the norm for serious Prospectors. Nevertheless, they prefer to take that risk, hoping for the one big strike that will set them up for the rest of their lives.

Prerequisite: Age 15+.

Skills: Choose two of the following skills as permanent class skills. If a skill the character selects is already a class skill, he or she receives a +1 competence bonus on checks using that skill. Climb, Demolitions, Handle Animal, Knowledge (earth and life sciences, physical sciences), Ride, Search, Survival, Swim.

Bonus Feat: Select either Endurance or Personal Firearms Proficiency.

Wealth Bonus Increase: +1.

Ranch Hand

Every ranch needs capable riders, herders and cattle punchers. The occupation of Ranch Hand encompasses all of the people who do the daily work needed to make a ranch successful; in addition to those just mentioned this includes grooms, stable boys, chuck wagon cooks and other specialized workers.

Prerequisite: Age 15+.

Skills: Choose two of the following skills as permanent class skills. If a skill the character selects is already a class skill, he or she receives a +1 competence bonus on checks using that skill. Balance, Climb, Handle Animal, Ride, Survival, Swim.

Bonus Feat: Select from Animal Affinity, Exotic Ranged Weapon Proficiency (lasso) or Personal Firearms Proficiency.

Wealth Bonus Increase: +1.

Sodbuster

The Sodbuster occupation includes anyone who makes a living toiling in the fields to produce crops to feed people and livestock. While usually tough, it is rewarding work, because everyday a Sodbuster experiences the results of his effort, from the first germinating sprouts to fields full of grain or orchards heavy with fruit and then, finally, the harvest itself. Sodbusters include farmers and others who work the land, usually in rural communities or new settlements.

Prerequisite: Age 15+.

Skills: Choose two of the following skills as permanent class skills. If a skill the character selects is already a class skill, he or she receives a +1 competence bonus on checks using that skill. Climb, Handle Animal, Repair, Ride, Survival, Swim.

Bonus Feat: Select either Home Ground or Personal Firearms Proficiency.

Wealth Bonus Increase: +1.

Tribal

While being of a tribe is not an occupation itself, those who remain steadfast in their tribal heritage effectively establish themselves in a role that is akin to choosing an occupation. Tribal characters come from one of the many native populations that inhabit the western landscape. The way of life and skills of Tribal characters dates back centuries and perseveres because of their desire to remain true to the teachings of their ancestors. A strong sense of honor, tradition and ritual governs the life and attitudes of a Tribal character.

Prerequisite: Age 13+.

Skills: Choose three of the following skills as permanent class skills. If a skill the character selects is already a class skill, he or she receives a +1 competence bonus on checks using that skill. Balance, Craft (structural or visual art), Handle Animal, Hide, Intimidate, Listen, Move Silently, Navigate, Ride, Spot, Survival, or Swim.

Bonus Feat: Select one of the following: Archaic Weapons Proficiency or Athletic.

Wealth Bonus Increase: +1.

Action Points

Action points provide a means to affect game play in significant ways. Your character only has a limited number of action points, and while replenished at each new level the character attains, you should use them wisely. You can spend 1 action point to do one of the following:

• Alter a single d20 roll used to either make an attack, a skill check, an ability check, a level check, or a saving throw.

• Use a class talent or class feature during your character's turn for which the expenditure of 1 action point is required.

When you spend 1 action point to improve a d20 roll, add 1d6 to the d20 roll to help meet or exceed the target number. You can declare the use of 1 action point to alter a d20 roll after the roll is made—but only **before** the Judge reveals the result of that roll (whether the attack or check or saving throw succeeded or failed). You cannot use an action point on a skill check or ability check when the character is taking 10 or taking 20.

When you spend 1 action point to activate a character's class feature, he or she gains the benefit of the feature but you do not roll a d6. In this case, the action point is not a bonus to a d20 roll.

You can only spend 1 action point in a round. If you spend a point to activate a character's class feature, you cannot spend another one in the same round to improve a die roll or to use another class feature, and vice versa.

Depending on your hero's character level (see the table below), you may be able to roll more than one d6 when spending 1 action point. If you do so, apply only the highest die, discarding all others.

Character Level	Action Point Dice Rolled
1st–7th	1d6
8th–14th	2d6
15th–20th	3d6

Allegiances

The allegiances system is optional and may not be useful depending upon the type of western game you are running. Campaigns with strong political ties and heavy organizational influences can benefit from the use of allegiances. Those with a lone gunman or a small gang of cowpokes may still use the allegiance system, but it may not come into play as often.

A character may have a maximum of three allegiances, listed in order from most important to least important. These allegiances are indications of what the character values in life, and may encompass people, organizations, or ideals. A character may have an allegiance to nothing (being either a free spirit or a lone wolf) or may change allegiances as he or she passes through life. However, just because the character fits into a certain category of people does not mean the character has to have that category as an allegiance.

If the character commits acts that are detrimental to his or her allegiance, the Judge may choose to strip the character of that allegiance (and all of its benefits) and possibly assign an allegiance more suitable to those actions. Changing allegiances can also carry far greater consequences than the mere loss of benefits. Former friends and allies can suddenly become a man's deadliest enemies, just ask ol' William Bonney.

Pledging Allegiance

A cowboy's allegiance can take the form of loyalty to a person, to an organization, to a belief system, to a nation, or to an ethical or moral philosophy. In general, a character can discard an allegiance at any time, but may only gain a new allegiance after attaining a new level.

Having an allegiance implies having sufficient intelligence and wisdom to make a moral or ethical

choice. Consequently, a character must have Intelligence and Wisdom scores of 3 or higher in order to select allegiances.

Allegiances include, but are not limited to, the following examples.

Person or Group: This may include a leader or superior, a family, a group of linked individuals (such as a gang of outlaws), or a discrete unit within a larger organization (such as members of the character's squad or platoon, or individuals for whose safety the character feels a responsibility).

Organization: This may be a company or corporation, a gathering of like-minded individuals, a fraternal brotherhood, a secret society, a branch of the armed forces, a local, state, or national government, a university, an employer, or an otherwise established authority.

Nation: This may or may not be the nation that the hero currently resides in. It may be where the individual was born, or where the hero resides after immigrating to a new home.

Belief System: This is usually a particular faith or religion, but can also be a specific philosophy or school of thought. Belief systems could also include political beliefs or philosophical outlooks.

Ethical Philosophy: This describes how one feels about order, as represented by law and chaos. An individual with a lawful outlook tends to tell the truth, keep his or her word, respect authority, and honor tradition. He or she expects others to do likewise. An individual with a chaotic outlook tends to follow his or her instincts and whims, favors new ideas and experiences, and generally behaves in a subjective and open manner in dealings with others.

Moral Philosophy: This describes one's attitude toward others, as represented by good and evil. An individual with a good allegiance tends to protect innocent life. This belief implies altruism, respect for life, and a concern for the dignity of other creatures. An evil allegiance shows a willingness to hurt, oppress, and kill others, and to debase or destroy innocent life.

Allegiances and Influence

An allegiance can create an empathic bond with others of the same allegiance. With the Judge's permission, the character gains a +2 circumstance bonus on Charisma-based skill checks when dealing with someone of the same allegiance—as long as the character has had some interaction with the other character to discover the connections and bring the bonus into play.

Reputation

Many gunfighters have won countless showdowns without firing a single shot, simply due to their widespread reputation. A well-known reputation in the Wild West can be both a blessing and a curse. Often it is more desirable to be anonymous than it is to be instantly recognized, especially if you are a wanted man or fast on the draw. An hombre should take care when performing deeds that may affect his reputation.

Reputation can help determine whether a character recognizes, or is recognized by, a stranger. Those who recognize a cowpoke are more likely to help or do what he or she asks, provided the reputation has a positive connotation to the person that recognizes the hero. A high Reputation bonus also makes it difficult for the hero to mask his or her identity.

Most of the time, a hero does not decide whether to use his or her reputation. The Judge decides when a hero's reputation can be relevant to a scene or encounter. At the moment it becomes relevant, the cowpoke who might be influenced in some fashion due to the hero's fame or notoriety makes a Reputation check, as detailed below.

Fame and Infamy

Most hombres with a high Reputation bonus (+4 or higher) are considered well known within their profession or social circle. Whether this has a positive or negative connotation depends on the point of view of the person who recognizes the hero.

ALLEGIANCES ON THE FRONTIER

A character in the old west could belong to many different organizations. Dependent on the character's class and the era, these could range from fur trading companies to large cattle ranches. A Mountain Man or Scout in the 1840's may find himself working alongside Joe Walker for the American Fur Company or perhaps for Jim Bridger and the competing Rocky Mountain Fur Company. A Soldier or Scout may find work with the likes of Fremont in his explorations of California, or Custer and the 7th a few years later. Butch, Sundance and the Wild Bunch, the James boys and Youngers, or the Daltin-Doolin gang may welcome Desperados and Rustlers into the fold. Any number of groups may wish to hire on Gunslingers, such as the Lincoln County Regulators in the Lincoln County War, the Dodge City Peace Commission, or the Wyoming Stock Growers Association in the Johnson County War. Wranglers and for that matter any characters good at ridin', ropin', and shootin' could find themselves "riding the river" with a cattle baron like John Chisum and the Jinglebob brand, or trailin' a herd out of the ***JA*** spread with the Charles Goodnight outfit.

When a person has a positive opinion of a hero's reputation, that person considers the hero famous. Fame, when recognized, provides a bonus to certain Charisma-based skill checks.

When a person has a negative opinion of a hero's reputation, that person considers the hero infamous. In addition, at the Judge's option, a hero might be considered infamous in certain situations due to events that have transpired in the campaign. Infamy, when recognized, provides a penalty to certain Charisma-based skill checks.

Using the Reputation Bonus

Whenever the Judge decides that a character's Reputation can be a factor in an encounter, those cowpokes that might recognize him make Reputation checks (DC 25). A Reputation check is an Intelligence check: 1d20 + the cowpokes' Int modifier + the character's Reputation bonus. Alternatively, the check might be a Knowledge skill check modified by the character's Reputation bonus, if the hero would be well known in the field covered by the Knowledge skill. Modifiers to the Reputation check depend on the character and the cowpoke doing the recognizing, as shown below. Note that if the cowpoke has no possible way of recognizing the character, then the Reputation check automatically fails.

If the cowpoke succeeds at the Reputation check, he or she recognizes the hero. This provides a +4 bonus or a -4 penalty on checks involving the following skills for the duration of the encounter: Bluff, Diplomacy, Gather Information, Intimidate, and Perform.

Situation	Reputation Check Modifier
The hero is famous, known far and wide with either a positive or negative connotation	+10
Both characters are part of the same professional or social circle	+5
The hero has some small amount of fame or notoriety	+2

The Judge must decide if, and when, a character's fame or infamy can come into play. A hero's reputation cannot influence a cowpoke that does not know, or at least know of, the hero.

Finances, Money & Wealth

Individuals in today's society have a multitude of options when making a purchase. In addition to paying cash, they can use a credit card, write a check, or take out a loan. The d20 Modern Roleplaying Game introduced an abstract monetary system (the Wealth System) designed to handle the many financial options that a 21st century character possesses. While the Wealth System vastly simplifies the handling of money and wealth, many Judges may find it lacking flavor and inappropriate for their Wild West campaigns. Therefore, *Sidewinder: Recoiled* provides an alternate (and old-fashioned) monetary system: Cold Hard Cash.

Before play begins, the Judge should decide which system he wishes to use. Since *Sidewinder: Recoiled* supports both systems, the choice of which system to implement will largely be a matter of personal preference. The Wealth System, with less dependence on bookkeeping, may be easier to use. However, players and Judges may be more familiar with Cold Hard Cash and feel it is a better fit for the genre.

Wealth System

Every character has a Wealth bonus that reflects his or her buying power. A character's Wealth bonus serves as the basis of the character's Wealth check, which is used to purchase equipment and services for the character (see Wealth Checks, page 125).

Wealth Bonus

To determine a character's starting Wealth bonus, roll 2d4 and add the wealth bonus for the character's starting occupation, plus (if appropriate) the bonus from the Windfall feat. Over the course of play, the hero's Wealth bonus will decrease as the hero purchases expensive items and increase as the hero gains levels.

A character's Wealth bonus can never fall below +0, and there is no limit to how high the Wealth bonus can climb.

Since Wealth is an abstract concept, it is sometimes difficult to determine how financially well off a character is. To get a general sense of how financially solvent a character is at any given time, check the table below.

Wealth Bonus	Financial Condition
+0	Impoverished or in debt
+1 to +4	Struggling
+5 to +10	Middle class
+11 to +15	Affluent
+16 to +20	Wealthy
+21 to +30	Rich
+31 or higher	Very rich

Cold Hard Cash

When using the Cold Hard Cash system, characters purchase equipment, goods and services with money, just as we do in real life. Every item that a character may wish to purchase comes with a purchase price listed in dollars. To buy an item, the character must either pay the purchase price in cash, or trade an equivalent value in goods or services.

Each character begins play with an amount of money calculated by the following formula,

(2d4 + wealth bonus) x $20,

where the wealth bonus is that granted by the character's starting occupation plus, if appropriate, the bonus received from the Windfall feat.

Multiclass Characters

A cowpoke may add new classes as he or she progresses in levels, thereby becoming a multiclass character. The class abilities from all of a character's classes combine to determine the overall abilities of a multiclass character.

Class and Level Features

Generally, the abilities of a multiclass character are the sum of the abilities provided by each of the character's classes.

Level

"Character level" is a character's total number of levels. It is used to determine when feats and ability score increases are gained. "Class level" is the character's level in a particular class. For a hero whose levels are all in the same class, character level and class level are the same.

Grit

A hero gains total grit from each class as his or her class level increases, adding the new grit to the previous total.

Base Attack Bonus

Add the base attack bonuses for each class to calculate the hero's base attack bonus. Resulting values of +6 or higher provide the hero with multiple attacks.

Base Attack Bonus	Additional Attacks
+6	+1
+7	+2
+8	+3
+9	+4
+10	+5
+11	+6/+1
+12	+7/+2
+13	+8/+3
+14	+9/+4
+15	+10/+5
+16	+11/+6/+1
+17	+12/+7/+2
+18	+13/+8/+3
+19	+14/+9/+4
+20	+15/+10/+5

To use multiple attacks in the same round, a character must use a full attack, which is a full-round action.

Saving Throws

Add the base save bonuses for each class together.

Defense Bonus

Add the Defense bonuses for each class together.

Reputation Bonus

Add Reputation bonuses together.

Skills

A multiclass hero uses his or her character level to determine the maximum ranks the hero can have in a skill. If a skill is a class skill for any of the multiclass hero's classes, then use character level to determine a skill's maximum rank. (The maximum rank for a class skill is 3 + character level.)

When a multiclass hero gains a level in a class, he or she spends the skill points gained for that level as a member of that class. The hero may only purchase ranks in the class skills of that class at the class skill cost. The hero must purchase ranks in any other skills, including skills for another class the hero has levels in, as cross-class skills.

Class Features

The character gains the class features (talents, bonus feats, or other special abilities) for the appropriate level of any class level possessed.

Feats

A multiclass character receives 1 new feat for every 3 character levels, regardless of individual class level. Taking 1 level in a new class does not entitle a character to receive the 2 feats that a beginning 1st-level character receives.

Ability Increases

A multiclass character increases 1 ability score by +1 for every 4 character levels, regardless of individual class level.

Adding a Second Class

When a character with one class gains a level, he or she may choose to increase the level of his or her current class or pick up a new class at 1st level. This could be a basic class or, if the character qualifies, an advanced or prestige class.

The character gains the 1st-level base attack bonus, base save bonuses, class skills, other class features of the new class, grit of the appropriate die type, and the new class's number of skill points normally gained at each additional level.

Picking up a new class is not exactly the same as starting a character in that class. When picking up a new class, a hero does not gain the maximum grit, but should roll the new Grit Die. Nor does the character receive 4 times the usual allotment of skill points.

Advancing a Level

Each time a multiclass character attains a new level, the hero either increases one of his or her current class levels by one or picks up a new class at 1st level.

When a multiclass character increases one of his or her class levels by one, the character gets all the standard benefits that characters receive for attaining the new level in that class: more grit, possible bonuses on attack rolls, Defense, and saving throws (depending on the class and the new level), a new class feature (as defined by the class), and new skill points.

Skill points are spent according to the class that the multiclass character just advanced in. Skills are purchased at the cost appropriate for that class.

In general, a character can have levels in as many different classes as there are classes. Mix, match, and have fun.

CHAPTER THREE : SKILLS

"The lowest intellect, like the highest, possesses a skill of some kind and takes a keen pleasure in testing it, proving it, perfecting it."

Mark Twain – *Letters from the Earth, 1909*

Zeke flung the door to one of the railcars open revealing a large metal safe with the Wells Fargo logo on the front, "Well, this makes things a might more difficult. I guess I had better get to work."

After an hour had passed and Zeke's nimble fingers and fine hearing failed to compromise the safe's locking mechanism, Sam grew impatient. "Get out of the way, Zeke. This calls for a little help from Alfred." [1] Sam started pulling sticks of dynamite out of a satchel he had just retrieved from his horse. Zeke quickly scrambled out of the railcar.

Riding back after gathering up the gang's panicked horses, Fate dismounted and watched Melody help Hildi tend Sam's wounds. "You all right Sam?"

"I'll do," Sam said through gritted teeth.

"That was one helluva big bang there, Sam. What happened?"

"Too much dynamite, I reckon" Sam said, somewhere between a wheeze and a drawl.

"What do you mean too much dynamite? How much did you use?" asked Zeke.

"All of it."

"All of it? Last thing I heard you had six sticks of that stuff." Fate said with a mixture of disbelief and astonishment flashing across his face.

"Yep," came Sam's laconic reply.

Staring in shock and awe for a few moments, Fate then slowly shook his head.

"Sweet Mother of God - Sam, you coulda blown us all to Kingdom Come!"

[1] Alfred Nobel invented dynamite in 1866.

Skills

A character begins adventuring life with a small number of skills that provide expertise in a variety of abilities. As a cowboy continues with his adventures and gains levels, he may gain new skills as well as becoming more proficient in those skills he already possesses. Each skill represents the ability to perform a set of related tasks. A skill may also represent how much a cowboy knows in a certain field of knowledge, such as history, art, or a scientific discipline. For example, the previously described exploits of the Gunter Gang involve the use of several skills. Zeke tried to use the Disable Device skill to open the safe. Sam used his Demolitions skill to place and detonate the dynamite; and Hildi used the Treat Injury skill to clean up after Sam's mistake. A skill check determined the outcome of these actions (and in fact, will determine most actions that a character can take outside of combat).

Acquiring Skills

At each level, a character receives skill points to buy new skills or to increase the character's competence in an old skill. The character's class and Intelligence modifier determine the number of points received. The number of skill points that are acquired for each level gained in each basic character class is provided in Table 3.1: Skill Points Per Level.

Table 3.1: Skill Points Per Level

Class	1st-Level Skill Points	Higher-Level Skill Points
Strong	(3 + Int modifier) x4	3 + Int modifier
Fast	(5 + Int modifier) x4	5 + Int modifier
Tough	(3 + Int modifier) x4	3 + Int modifier
Smart	(9 + Int modifier) x4	9 + Int modifier
Dedicated	(5 + Int modifier) x4	5 + Int modifier
Charismatic	(7 + Int modifier) x4	7 + Int modifier

Using Zeke Phelps as an example, we find that he started his career as a Charismatic hero with a 14 Intelligence (+2 Intelligence modifier). Therefore, at 1st level he possessed 36 skill points ([7 + 2] x 4) to purchase skill ranks. When Zeke achieved 2nd level and took another level of Charismatic hero, he gained 9 additional skill points (7 + 2).

Skill points are used to purchase skill ranks. A character may possess anywhere from 0 to 23 ranks in any particular skill, where 0 represents a lack of any exceptional training and 23 ranks can be achieved only by a 20th-level character who has increased a class skill to a truly legendary standing. When making a skill check, a character adds his or her skill ranks to the roll as part of the skill modifier.

When a character buys ranks in a class skill, he or she receives 1 rank in the skill for each skill point spent. If a character buys a cross-class skill, he or she receives 1/2 rank per skill point. The maximum number of ranks a character may have in a class skill is equal to character level + 3. The maximum rank in a cross-class skill is (character level + 3)/2, (half the number for a class skill). When a character gains a level, he or she must spend all newly acquired skill points immediately. Skill points cannot be saved for later use.

The rules assume that a character can always find a way to learn or improve a skill. However, the Judge can impose limits depending on the particular events that are occurring within the game.

Skill Usage

When a character uses a skill, a skill check determines the level of success or failure of that effort. A high roll indicates that the character has performed well, and a low roll represents a poor performance or failure. Usually, the successful execution of a skill requires that the skill check equal or exceed a particular threshold called the Difficulty Class (DC). The more difficult the task, the higher the DC.

Unlike attack rolls and saving throws, a natural roll of 20 on the d20 is not an automatic success when making a skill check, and a natural roll of 1 is not an automatic failure.

Skill Checks

To make a skill check, roll:

1d20 + skill modifier
(skill modifier = skill ranks + ability modifier + miscellaneous modifiers)

Skill Ranks:. The number of skill points a character has invested in a skill determines the number of skill ranks a character possesses in that skill. A character may use a skill without possessing any ranks in that skill. However, any character doing so is making an untrained skill check.

Ability Modifier: Associated with each skill is a "key" ability that most closely regulates the successful use of that skill. For example, a dexterous cowpoke will find it much easier to balance on top of a bouncing stagecoach than a clumsy one would. Therefore, Dexterity is the "key" ability for the Balance skill. The description of a skill will note that skill's "key" ability. Whenever making a skill check, add your hombre's ability modifier for this key ability to the check.

Miscellaneous Modifiers: Miscellaneous modifiers may (and usually do) include any bonuses provided by feats and class features, and/or situational penalties, such as the one associated with the non-proficient use of armor.

WHAT DO SKILLS MEAN?

New characters begin with limited skill points, so you will have tough choices to make when you create your cowpoke. You could choose to purchase the maximum number of ranks allowed in a few skills or spread the points around to purchase a few ranks in a variety of skills. Either way, it might seem that your character doesn't have any skill in many things that we take for granted in real life. That's okay, because the skills you choose don't represent everything that your character can do, rather they represent the ones in which he or she excels.

Skill ranks do not represent normal everyday knowledge but rather those abilities at which your hombre exceeds the **average** citizen. Essentially everyone could be considered to be average with most skills, but every rank that you purchase indicates how far above the average tenderfoot your hero is. For example, your character won't need to have ranks in Craft (structural) to drive a nail with a hammer so that he or she can hang Aunt Bessie's portrait in a cabin in the hills. However, your hero would need those ranks to build the cabin. And just because your character learned how to ride the horse back on Grandpa's farm does not mean he or she will have ranks in the Ride skill. Thus, skill ranks in *Sidewinder: Recoiled* indicate that your character has received advanced training or experience in actions beyond those of quotidian life.

With that said, how does it all work? How will characters perform routine tasks? How will they accomplish something without ranks in any given skill? The answer depends on the situation, or circumstance, of their effort. In many cases, your Judge may rule that mundane tasks are so easy that no check is required (you don't have to be a barber to shave your own face). In other cases, the Judge might rule that a check is needed, but with a relatively easy DC of 10. In general, the time available for the task and current working environment will determine whether it is possible to succeed without possessing ranks in a particular skill.

Therefore, it's reasonable to assume that your character has familiarity or competency in skills other than those in which you choose to garner ranks. Your Judge will help you determine how to handle tasks that require such a skill. Meanwhile, the skills for which you buy ranks are the ones that really mean something in *Sidewinder: Recoiled*. Choose skills that give your character the potential for the heroic acts you envision during his or her adventuring career.

Difficulty Class

A character will make some skill checks against a Difficulty Class (DC). The DC is the number that the character must meet or beat to succeed. Tasks that are more difficult possess higher DC's. Example DC's for a variety of skill checks are shown in Table 3.2: Difficulty Class Examples.

Table 3.2: Difficulty Class Examples

Difficulty (DC)	Example (Skill Used)
Very easy (0)	Notice the broadside of a barn (Spot)
Easy (5)	Climb a knotted rope (Climb)
Average (10)	Hear an approaching jailer (Listen)
Tough (15)	Disarm an explosive (Demolitions)
Challenging (20)	Swim against a strong current (Swim)
Formidable (25)	Stop a stampeding herd of longhorns during a thunder storm (Handle Animal)
Heroic (30)	Leap across a 25-foot chasm (Jump)
Superheroic (35)	Convince the guards at the local bandit hideout that even though you do not know the password, you're actually a member of the Wild Bunch (Bluff)
Nearly impossible (40)	Track a Blackfoot warrior through a thick forest on a moonless night after 12 days of rainfall (Survival)

Opposed Checks

Some skill checks are opposed checks. In this case, the result of another character's die roll (usually a skill check, ability check, or attack roll) sets the DC. For example, Sam Lee sits down to a not so friendly card game with Jake the Snake dealing. Now Jake is, of course, palming cards and just cheatin' in general (see the Card Sharp feat, page 107). In order for Jake to pull one over on Sam, his Sleight of Hand skill check must equal or exceed Sam's Spot check. Otherwise Jake's cheating will be discovered, and then he had better hope to draw his derringer before Sam brings his gut-buster into play.

If an opposed check results in a tie, the character with the higher key ability score wins. If this still results in a tie, roll again.

SKILL MODIFIER EXAMPLE

Let us use good ol' Zeke Phelps for another example. When the Gunter Gang arrives in Denver to secure provisions, Zeke slips off and finds the Dry Gullet Saloon. Checking his pockets, he confirms what he already knew; he's dead broke right now. Nevertheless, he hears a drink calling his name and gets an idea. He figures he can bluff the barkeep into a free one. Ducking around the side of the place, Zeke scuffs his hat on the ground, runs in place for a few seconds (stirring up a load of dust) and runs back around to the saloon entrance.

He rushes through the swinging doors, a wild look in his eye and a cloud of dust sweeping in behind him. Other patrons take notice as he barrels over to the bar. "Give me a whiskey, quick, before the trouble starts," he gasps, darting a look back to the entrance. Zeke hopes to bluff the bartender into pouring the drink quickly and then using the patrons' temporary confusion to steal out without paying.

The Judge considers the conditions in the saloon. Zeke needs to convince the other patrons, as well as the barkeep, for his plan to work. There are two checks needed—one that is essentially a general diversion of the crowd and another as a direct Bluff against a specific target, the barkeep. The Judge rules that the check for the crowd is not opposed, but rather a base DC 15, while the barkeep requires an opposed skill check.

Zeke's quick preparation adds to the believability of this bluff and grants a +2 circumstance bonus. In addition, the Judge reduces the DC to 13 because the patrons are so bored that anything unusual will grab their attention. However, the barkeep ain't no rube and because business is bad, he's in a foul mood. The Judge rules a +2 circumstance bonus for the barkeep's opposed check. No other modifiers apply, because the bluff is believable and it does not seem to affect the target much one way or the other.

Zeke rolls a 2. He adds a +23 skill modifier for his check against the patrons (12 ranks, +3 Charisma modifier, +2 for possessing the Deceptive feat, +2 for the class feature "Work the Crowd", +2 for the class feature "Silver Tongue", and another +2 for his convincing entrance). His result of 25 easily beats the DC of 13 (base DC 15, -2 because the crowd is bored). (See page 275 for a full description of Zeke Phelp's abilities).

The barkeep rolls a 12 and he adds +6 to his Sense Motive check (4 ranks and the +2 for his foul mood and suspicious nature) for a result of 18. However, while big, the barkeep isn't exactly a crowd, so Zeke cannot apply his "Work the Crowd" bonus. Therefore, Zeke's result is 23 against the barkeep's 18, so the grouch pours….

Zeke downs it and starts to drift back into the crowd. The barkeep says "So when's this here trouble gonna start?" Zeke, now bolting through the shield of patrons, yells back "Soon as you realize I can't pay for that drink!"

Table 3.3: Opposed Skill Check Examples

Task	Skill	Opposing Skill
Sneak up on someone	Move Silently	Listen
Con someone	Bluff	Sense Motive
Hide from someone	Hide	Spot
Win a horse race	Ride	Ride
Pretend to be someone else	Disguise	Spot
Steal a pocket watch	Sleight of Hand	Spot
Create a fake land claim	Forgery	Forgery

Trying Again

If a skill check fails, a character may be able to try again. Check the skill description to determine if, and under what circumstances, a character may try again. However, many skills have natural consequences for failure, and a character must account for these consequences. Some skill checks cannot be tried again if the initial check for a particular task or circumstance has failed.

If Sam had remained patient back at the train, Zeke could have tried to open the safe again using his Disable Device skill. Since a penalty for failure did not exist, Zeke could have kept trying until he eventually succeeded (see Taking 20, page 59), admitted that the lock was beyond his skill, or ran out of time.

Untrained Skill Checks

Generally, if a character attempts to use a skill without possessing any ranks in that skill, the character makes a skill check as normal. Since the character is untrained in that skill, the character's skill modifier will not include any skill ranks. However, the character may still receive other modifiers, such as the bonus granted for having an exceptional score in the skill's key ability.

For example, when Zeke rides a horse he must rely on his innate agility because his experience with horses is rather limited. He prefers the stage or train and thus

lacks ranks in the Ride skill. When making a Ride check he must do so untrained and his skill modifier is +2 (0 ranks, +2 Dexterity modifier).

A character may be required to possess training before being able to use some skills. Such skills are listed as *Trained Only* in their skill descriptions and are marked "No" in the "Untrained?" column of Table 3.6: Skill List.

During the Martel payroll holdup, both Zeke and Sam used skills (Disable Device and Demolitions respectively) that can be used only if the character has at least one rank in the skill. Hildi on the other hand used a skill (Treat Injury) that any character can use, regardless of the number of ranks the character has in the skill.

Favorable and Unfavorable Conditions

Some situations may make a skill easier or harder to use, resulting in a bonus or penalty to the skill modifier or a change to the skill check's DC. Such modifiers can arise from the environment, from the use of proper or improper equipment, or from any other circumstances that make success harder or simpler.

The Judge can alter the odds of success in four ways to take into account exceptional circumstances:

1) Give the skill user a +2 circumstance bonus to represent conditions that improve performance, such as having the perfect tool for the job, getting help from another character (see Aiding Another, page 59), or working under conditions that are significantly better than normal.

2) Give the skill user a –2 circumstance penalty to represent conditions that hamper performance, such as being forced to use improvised tools or possessing misleading information.

3) Reduce the DC by 2 to represent circumstances that make the task easier, such as having a friendly audience when making a Perform check or searching for information on an extremely well documented topic with a Research check.

4) Increase the DC by 2 to represent circumstances that make the task harder, such as making a Perform check in front of a hostile audience or searching for information on a very poorly documented topic with a Research check.

Conditions that affect a character's ability to perform the skill change the ***character's skill modifier***. Conditions that modify how well a character must perform the skill change the ***DC***. A bonus on a skill modifier or a reduction in the DC of a check has the same result: both create a better chance for success. However, they represent different circumstances, and sometimes that difference is important.

Accumulation of Bonuses and Penalties

A modifier provides a bonus (a positive modifier) or a penalty (a negative modifier) to a die roll, be it an attack roll, a skill check, ability check, or a saving throw. Bonuses and penalties are usually provided with a "type" descriptor from the following list: circumstance,

competence, cover, dodge, equipment, morale, natural armor, size, or synergy. In some situations, a bonus or penalty will lack a descriptor (such as a simple "+1 bonus"). Consider such modifiers as "nameless".

Bonuses with specific descriptors, such as "equipment bonus," generally do not stack (combine for cumulative effect) with others of the same type. In those cases, only the best bonus of that type applies. The only specific bonuses that stack are dodge bonuses, synergy bonuses, and, sometimes, circumstance bonuses. Circumstance bonuses stack only if provided by differing circumstances; if two circumstance bonuses caused by similar circumstances apply, they do not stack. Specific bonuses that do not stack include competence, cover, equipment, morale, natural armor, and size. "Nameless" bonuses stack with all other bonuses. All penalties stack, regardless of their descriptors.

These modifier-stacking rules apply to any roll made in a *Sidewinder: Recoiled* game, not just skill checks.

Time and Skill Checks

The time required to use a skill may range from a moment, to a round, several rounds, hours, or even days. Some skill checks occur as a reaction to an event, taking no time at all (e.g., Concentration checks). Other skill checks occur as part of movement. The distance covered when a character uses the Jump skill, for example, is part of the character's movement. See the skill description for specifics on how long a skill may take to use.

Using Skills in Combat

The length of time required to use a skill will determine the type of action a character must use when making a skill check in combat (see Actions in Combat, page 207). Skills that take just a moment only require a free action. Some skill checks may require an attack or move action, and others may require a full-round action or longer.

Using a skill that requires concentration can be dangerous if attempted by a character involved in close combat. Since a character must let his or her guard down while making the skill check, he or she is subject to attacks of opportunity from nearby opponents (see Attacks of Opportunity, page 209). In general, any skill check that requires an attack action, move action, or full-round action will provoke an attack of opportunity. However, it is the Judge's responsibility to decide when the use of a skill will provoke an attack of opportunity.

Tools

Some applications of certain skills will require the use of tools. If tools are needed, the specific items that are required are mentioned in the skill description. If a character does not have the appropriate tools, he or she can still attempt to use the skill, but suffers a –4 penalty on the check.

A character may be able to improvise tools before attempting the skill check. If the Judge allows it, reduce the penalty to –2 (instead of –4) for using improvised tools. It usually takes some time (anywhere from several minutes to an hour or more) to collect or create a set of improvised tools. The collection or creation of improvised tools may also require a separate skill check. For example, a Craft (mechanical) skill check may be needed to create an improvised mechanical tool kit for use with the Repair skill.

For some skill applications that require tools, access to a fully stocked laboratory or workshop will provide a bonus to the skill check. For instance, when providing long-term care using the Treat Injury skill (see the Treat Injury skill, page 97), access to a complete hospital grants a +2 circumstance bonus to the required skill check.

Checks without Rolls

A skill check represents an attempt to accomplish some goal, usually in the face of distractions or under the pressure of a time limit. Often, though, a character can use a skill under more favorable conditions and eliminate the luck factor.

Taking 10

When not being threatened or distracted, a character may choose to "take 10". Instead of rolling 1d20 for the skill check, calculate the result as though you rolled a 10 (the average roll on a d20). For most routine tasks, taking 10 will result in a success.

Distractions and threats make it impossible for a character to take 10. In addition, a character cannot take 10 when using a skill untrained; though the Judge may allow exceptions for truly routine activities.

For example, Sam Lee has a Demolitions modifier of +4 (2 ranks, +2 Intelligence modifier). Setting the blasting cap for dynamite requires a DC 10 Demolitions check (see *Set Detonator* under the Demolitions skill, page 71). Since he does not have any interest in having dynamite blowing up in his face, Sam is cautious and careful, and therefore "takes 10". No die roll is necessary and the skill check automatically succeeds with a result of 14 (10 + Demolitions modifier). However, if the Gunter Gang was under fire from several of Martel's men, Sam would not be able to take 10 because he would be rushed, distracted and under pressure.

Taking 20

When a character has plenty of time, is not facing any threats or distractions, and the skill check being attempted does not carry a penalty for failure, a character can "take 20". Instead of rolling 1d20 for the skill check; calculate the result as though you rolled a 20. Whether or not a cowpoke can "take 20" when using a common function of a skill is detailed in the description of that skill.

Taking 20 is the equivalent of a character attempting the skill check repeatedly until successful. "Taking 20" takes twenty times as long as making a single check. For a skill check that a character can normally accomplish in a single combat round (6 seconds), taking 20 requires 20 rounds (or 2 minutes) to finish.

For example, when Sam was setting the blasting cap on the dynamite, he was not able to "take 20" because there is a penalty for failure. With a particularly low Demolitions check, the dynamite will explode prematurely, sending Sam to join the choir invisible (or worse). In Hildi's case, she was trying to use the restore grit function of the Treat Injury skill. Since there isn't a penalty for failure (other than the loss of time spent on the failed attempt), Hildi may "take 20" when dressing Sam's burns.

Aiding Another

Sometimes, characters can cooperate to accomplish a given task. One character, designated as the leader in the effort, makes the primary skill check to complete the task. Each assisting character makes a separate skill check against DC 10, on which they cannot take 10. For all assisting characters that succeed in their skill check, the designated leader gains a +2 circumstance bonus to apply to his or her skill check.

In many cases, the help of another character will not be beneficial, or only a limited number of characters can help at the same time. The Judge may limit assistance as seems fitting for the conditions.

Hildi's treatment of Sam Lee after he blasted that train's safe offers a good example of Aiding Another. Of course, Hildi could try to make a Treat Injury check to dress Sam's wounds by herself, but with her sister Melody's help, she would have a better chance of taking care of the wounds quickly. First, Melody would need to make her check (DC 10), and if she succeeded, Hildi would receive a +2 to her check to bandage Sam's blast damage. Hildi could ask for Zeke's help as well, but the Judge may rule that, in this case, another person would just get in the way.

Table 3.4: Common Synergy Bonuses

Contributing Skill	Primary Skill	Situation
Bluff	Sleight of Hand	When trying to pick a pocket or palm an object
Craft (chemical)	Craft (pharmaceutical)	When creating a chemically-based pharmaceutical (as opposed to a plant- or animal-derived pharmaceutical)
Craft (electric)	Repair	When repairing an electric device
Craft (mechanical)	Repair	When repairing a mechanical device
Craft (structural)	Demolitions	When placing an explosive device to maximize the damage inflicted on a structure
Disable Device	Demolitions	When disabling an explosive device
Handle Animal	Ride	When riding a horse the character has trained
Investigate	Knowledge (art)	When trying to detect a forged piece of art
Jump	Tumble	When trying to reduce falling damage
Knowledge (art)	Craft (visual art)	When trying to forge a painting or other work of art
Knowledge (behavioral sciences)	Sense Motive	When determining whether an individual that the character has spoken to for at least one minute is trustworthy
Knowledge (business)	Diplomacy	When dealing with a business's bureaucracy
Knowledge (civics)	Diplomacy	When dealing with government officials
Knowledge (earth & life sciences)	Treat Injury	When performing surgery
Knowledge (history)	Knowledge (art)	When appraising an ancient work of art
Knowledge (streetwise)	Gather Information	When trying to gather information about the local black market
Navigate	Survival	When the character is trying to avoid getting lost
Perform (act)	Disguise	When pretending to be someone else
Ride	Balance	When standing on a horse's back
Search	Survival	When following tracks
Survival	Navigate	When intuiting direction outdoors or when determining location
Tumble	Jump	When jumping down or performing an acrobatic jump
Tumble	Perform (Dance)	When performing an energetic dance with aerial maneuvers

Skill Synergy

Sometimes, a character may possess two skills that work well together. The Judge may decide that having one skill (the contributing skill) provides a bonus when a character uses another skill (the primary skill) in certain situations. The character must have at least 5 ranks in the contributing skill to gain this bonus, and the Judge must agree that the two skills complement each other in the given situation. In such situations, the character receives a +2 synergy bonus on skill checks using the primary skill. Common situations in which the Judge might allow a synergy bonus are listed in Table 3.4: Common Synergy Bonuses. The Judge should not limit synergy bonuses to the situations that appear in the table. They should be awarded whenever it seems appropriate.

Sometimes a skill and an action other than a skill work well together. For example, the Judge may decide that possessing ranks in Knowledge (current events) allows a character a better chance of recognizing a figure featured in the newspapers recently. In such a case, if the character possessed at least 5 ranks of Knowledge (current events) he or she would receive a +2 synergy bonus on the Reputation check to recognize the famous figure (see Reputation, page 50).

Ability Checks

Sometimes a character tries to do something outside the bounds of any specific skill application. In these instances, the character makes an ability check against a DC determined by the Judge. Make an ability check by rolling 1d20 and adding the appropriate ability modifier. The Judge may declare an opposed check when two characters are engaged in a contest using one ability score against another. In some cases, a test of one's ability does not involve luck. When two characters arm wrestle, for example, the stronger character simply wins. In the case of identical scores, make opposed Strength checks.

Table 3.5: Ability Check Examples

Example Ability Check	Key Ability
Forcing open a jammed or locked door	Strength
Tying a rope	Dexterity
Holding one's breath	Constitution
Navigating a maze of canyons	Intelligence
Recognize a peculiar odor	Wisdom
Getting yourself noticed in a crowd	Charisma

Table 3.6: Skill List

Skill	Ability	Untrained?	Action
Balance [1]	Dex	Yes	Move
Bluff	Cha	Yes	See skill
Climb [1]	Str	Yes	Move or full
Concentration	Con	Yes	See skill
Craft			
Chemical	Int	No	See skill
Electric	Int	No	See skill
Mechanical	Int	No	See skill
Pharmaceutical	Int	No	See skill
Structural	Int	Yes	See skill
Visual Art	Int	Yes	See skill
Writing	Int	Yes	See skill
Decipher Script	Int	No	See skill
Demolitions	Int	No	Full [2]
Diplomacy	Cha	Yes	Full [2]
Disable Device	Int	No	Full [2]
Disguise	Cha	Yes	See skill
Escape Artist [1]	Dex	Yes	Full [2]
Forgery	Int	Yes	See skill
Gamble	Wis	Yes	See skill
Gather Information	Cha	Yes	See skill
Handle Animal	Cha	Maybe	See skill
Hide [1]	Dex	Yes	Move
Intimidate	Cha	Yes	Full
Investigate	Int	No	Full [2]
Jump [1]	Str	Yes	Attack
Knowledge			
Arcane lore	Int	Maybe	React or full
Art	Int	Maybe	React or full
Behavioral sciences	Int	Maybe	React or full
Business	Int	Maybe	React or full
Civics	Int	Maybe	React or full
Current events	Int	Maybe	React or full
Earth and life sciences	Int	Maybe	React or full
History	Int	Maybe	React or full
Physical sciences	Int	Maybe	React or full
Popular culture	Int	Maybe	React or full
Streetwise	Int	Maybe	React or full
Tactics	Int	Maybe	React or full
Technology	Int	Maybe	React or full
Theology and philosophy	Int	Maybe	React or full
Listen	Wis	Yes	React or move
Move Silently [1]	Dex	Yes	Move
Navigate	Int	Yes	Full [2]
Operate Vehicle			
Aircraft	Dex	No	Move [2]
Ground Vehicles	Dex	No	Move [2]
Watercraft	Dex	No	Move [2]
Perform			
Act	Cha	Yes	See skill
Dance	Cha	Yes	See skill
Keyboards	Cha	Yes	See skill
Percussion instruments	Cha	Yes	See skill
Sing	Cha	Yes	See skill
Stand-up	Cha	Yes	See skill
Stringed instruments	Cha	Yes	See skill
Wind instruments	Cha	Yes	See skill
Profession	Wis	Yes	See skill
Read/Write Language	None	No	-
Repair	Int	Maybe	Full [2]
Research	Int	Yes	See skill
Ride	Dex	Yes	Move [2]
Search	Int	Yes	Full
Sense Motive	Wis	Yes	See skill
Sleight of Hand [1]	Dex	Maybe	Attack
Speak Language	None	No	-
Spot	Wis	Yes	React or full
Survival	Wis	Yes	See skill
Swim	Str	Yes	Move or full
Treat Injury	Wis	Yes	See skill
Tumble	Dex	No	React or move

1 An armor penalty, if any, applies to the skill check.
2 See skill description for further details.

Skill List

Table 3.6: Skill List provides the following information in a condensed form about each skill.

Ability: This column lists the "key" ability for each skill.

Untrained?: This column indicates whether the skill can be used untrained (with 0 ranks) or not. Yes: the skill can be used untrained. No: the skill cannot be used without at least 1 rank in the skill. Maybe: the skill can be used untrained for some tasks but not others. See the skill description for details.

Action: This column lists the type of action that using the skill requires when in combat (see Action Types, page 207).

Skill Descriptions

The following section provides a description of each skill, how that skill is used, the Difficulty Class (DC) for common applications, and any other pertinent information for using the skill during game play. Presented in alphabetical order, the skills are detailed in the following format.

Skill Name (Key Ability)

Trained Only; Armor Penalty

The skill name line and the line beneath it include the following information:

Key Ability: The abbreviation for the ability whose

WHAT'S DIFFERENT?

Reading this chapter reveals that three of the skills existing in the d20 Modern Roleplaying game are absent in *Sidewinder: Recoiled* (i.e., Computer Use, Drive, and Pilot). Furthermore, there is one skill present that does not appear in d20 Modern (Operate Vehicle). We here at Dog House Rules feel these changes are necessary in order to reflect the technology differences between the 21st century setting of d20 Modern and the 19th century reality of the Old West. Obviously, Computer Use is a superfluous skill for a Western game (Babbage Engines not withstanding). In addition, to model era appropriate modes of transportation more closely, Drive and Pilot have been subsumed into the more inclusive Operate Vehicle skill (See the sidebar Vehicles and Skills, page 80).

A more careful reading reveals that there are hosts of minor additions to the rules as well. We have avoided making any significant or sweeping changes to the rules that appear in the d20 Modern Roleplaying Game (other than published errata). However, we have expanded and clarified many skills for their application to a Western era game.

modifier applies to the skill check. As exceptions, Speak Language and Read/Write Language have "None" given as their key ability because the use of these skills never requires a check.

Trained Only: If "*Trained Only*" appears beneath the skill name, a character must have at least 1 rank in the skill to use it. If "*Trained Only*" is omitted, the skill can be used untrained. The Special section (see below) will cover any particular notes that apply to trained or untrained use.

Armor Penalty: If "*Armor Penalty*" appears beneath the skill name, apply the armor penalty of any armor the character is wearing to checks involving this skill.

Check: What a character, with a successful skill check, can accomplish, and the DC of that check.

Try Again?: Any conditions that apply to repeated attempts to use the skill successfully. If omitted, the skill check can be tried again without any inherent penalty other than taking additional time.

Special: Any extra notes that apply to the skill, such as rules regarding trained or untrained use and tool requirements. This section will also state whether a character can take 10 or take 20 when using the skill.

Synergy: This entry, if present, lists common synergies that exist between this skill and others.

Time: How much time normally required to make a check with this skill.

Balance (Dex)

Armor Penalty

The character can maintain his or her balance while walking or standing on a narrow, uneven, unstable, or bucking surface. Examples include walking along a tightrope, standing on a bouncing wagon, or creeping along a narrow ledge.

"You make me feel like a man standing on a narrow ledge face to face with a grizzly bear. There just ain't no ignoring the situation."

Linus Rawlings – *How the West Was Won, 1962*

Check: A successful check allows the character to move at one-half speed along a precarious surface as a move action. A failure indicates that the character spends his or her move action keeping his or her balance and does not move. A failure by 5 or more indicates that the character falls. The difficulty varies with the conditions of the surface. Compute the DC by taking a base 5 and adding all of the modifiers that apply from Table 3.7: Balance Check DC Modifiers.

Balance DC = 5 + modifiers for surface conditions

The following table provides modifiers for various surface conditions.

Table 3.7: Balance Check DC Modifiers

Narrow Surfaces	DC Modifier
7–12 in. wide	+5
2–6 in. wide	+10
Less than 2 in. wide	+15

Difficult Surfaces	DC Modifier
Uneven or angled	+5
Slippery surface	+5
Swaying surface (suspended cable)	+5
Swinging surface (suspended cable in a strong wind)	+10

Bouncing Surfaces	DC Modifier
Vigorous motion (bouncy wagon ride, small boat in rough water, below decks in a storm-tossed ship, standing on a walking horse [1])	+10
Violent motion (very rough wagon ride, small boat in rapids, on deck of storm-tossed ship, standing on a galloping horse [1])	+20
Extraordinarily violent motion (earthquake, landslide)	+30

[1] The back of a horse is considered a bouncing and uneven surface.

Being Attacked While Balancing: Unless a character has 5 or more ranks in Balance, the character is flat-footed while balancing, (the character loses any Dexterity bonus to Defense). If a character takes damage, he or she must make a new Balance check to stay balanced and remain standing.

Accelerated Movement: A character can try to cross a precarious surface more quickly than normal. The character may elect to move full speed by taking a –5 penalty on the Balance check. (A double movement requires two Balance checks and requires a full round action). A character can attempt to charge across a precarious surface. Charging requires one Balance check at a –5 penalty for each multiple (or fraction thereof) of the character's speed moved during the charge.

Special: A character can take 10 when making a Balance check, but cannot take 20.

Synergy: A character with 5 or more ranks in Ride gains a +2 synergy bonus when using the Balance skill to stand on the back of a horse.

Time: Balancing while moving one-half speed is a move action. Accelerated movement, allowing the character to balance while moving full speed, is also a move action.

Bluff (Cha)

Whether fast-talking, conning an adversary or simply using deception as a means to an end, the character is a master at speaking with a forked tongue and using body language to misdirect. A character can use a bluff to sow temporary confusion, get other characters to turn their heads in a specific direction, or simply to appear innocuous. A character can also use Bluff to send, or receive and understand, secret messages while appearing to talk about something else entirely.

"I swear, if Sweetface told me that I rode out of town ten minutes ago, I'd believe him."
Butch Cassidy – *Butch Cassidy and The Sundance Kid, 1969*

Check: The character may make a Bluff check for several fashions of misdirection and prevarication.

Connive (DC opposed Sense Motive check): When trying to mislead, the character's Bluff check is opposed by the target's Sense Motive check. Favorable and unfavorable circumstances weigh heavily on the outcome of a bluff. Two circumstances can work against the character: the bluff is hard to believe, or the action that the bluff requires the target to take goes against the target's self-interest, nature, personality, or orders.

If it is important, the Judge can distinguish between a bluff that fails because the target does not believe it and one that fails because it asks too much of the target. For instance, if the target gained a +10 bonus because the bluff demanded something risky of the target, and the target's Sense Motive check succeeded by 10 or less, then the target did not so much see through the bluff as prove reluctant to go along with it. If the target's Sense Motive check succeeded by 11 or more, he saw through the bluff, and would have succeeded in doing so even if it had not placed any demand on him (that is, even without the +10 bonus).

A successful Bluff check indicates that the target reacts as the character wishes, at least for a short time (usually 1 round or less), or the target believes something that the character wants him or her to believe.

A bluff requires interaction between the character and the target. A character cannot bluff an unaware target.

Table 3.8: Modifiers to Oppose Bluff Checks

Example Circumstances	Sense Motive Modifier
The target wants to believe the character.	–5
The bluff is believable and does not affect the target much one way or the other.	+0
The bluff is a little hard to believe or puts the target at some kind of risk.	+5
The bluff is hard to believe or entails a large risk for the target.	+10
The bluff is preposterous; it's almost too incredible to consider.	+20

Feinting in Combat (DC opposed Sense Motive check): A character can also use Bluff to mislead an opponent in combat so that the opponent cannot effectively dodge the character's attack. The opponent makes a Sense Motive skill check to oppose the feint. If the feint succeeds, the next attack that the feinting character makes against the target opponent ignores the target's Dexterity bonus to Defense (if the opponent has one), thus lowering the target's Defense score. Using Bluff in this way against a creature of animal intelligence (Int 1 or 2) incurs a –8 penalty on the check. Against non-intelligent creatures, feinting is impossible.

SOCIAL SKILLS AND ROLEPLAYING

Bluff, Diplomacy, Gather Information, and Intimidate, often called social skills, are all used to convince, coerce, or confuse another character into revealing information or acting in a desired fashion. Such personal interactions often form the bulk of the contacts made between player characters and Judge-controlled characters, and are traditionally resolved through roleplaying. Just because a mechanism exists to resolve such encounters with a simple die roll, does not mean that roleplaying should be supplanted. Instead, the quality of the roleplaying should provide a modifier to the relevant skill checks. Roleplaying can occur in two styles. The first style is that of the improvisational actor, the first-person. The second style is that of the novelist, the third-person. Good first-person roleplaying might warrant a +2 modifier, while a truly exceptional performance might be worth a +4 bonus. A Judge should not confuse these first-person bonuses with bonuses that might be granted for a well-crafted third-person plan.

For instance when Zeke was attempting to trick the bartender in the Dry Gullet Saloon (see page 57) into giving him a drink, he received a +2 bonus on his Bluff check for making a convincing entrance. This bonus arose purely from the third-person description of the character's actions. He had a good plan and made preparations beforehand to make the Bluff more convincing. However, the Judge could have decided to grant Zeke an additional bonus to his Bluff check if the player controlling Zeke convincingly roleplayed the encounter in the first-person style. Whether or not a roleplaying performance garners a social skill bonus is purely a decision made by the Judge. The point of a roleplaying game is to have fun. Therefore, a Judge should reward those players that are fun to watch and interact with.

The advantages of a system that allows the results of social interactions to be determined by a skill check are manifold. One advantage is that players who are not naturally gregarious or comfortable speaking in public can still play glib and charming characters and improve their chances through a good third-person narrative. At the same time, those players who are naturally charismatic can show off and gain bonuses through excellent first-person improvisations.

Creating a Diversion to Hide (DC opposed Sense Motive check): A character can use Bluff to aid in hiding. A successful Bluff check gives the character the momentary diversion needed to attempt a Hide check while people are distracted (see the Hide skill, page 81).

Sending a Secret Message (DC varies): A character can use Bluff to send and understand secret messages while appearing to speak about other things. The DC for a basic message is 10. Complex messages or messages that communicate new information have DC's of 15 or 20. Both the sender and the receiver must make a successful check for the secret message to be successfully relayed and understood.

Anyone listening in on a secret message can attempt a Sense Motive check (DC equal to the sender's Bluff check result). If successful, the eavesdropper realizes that a secret message is contained in the communication. If the eavesdropper beats the DC by 5 or more, he or she understands the secret message.

Whether trying to send or intercept a message, a failure by 5 or more points means that one side or the other misinterprets the message in some fashion.

Try Again?: Generally, a failed Bluff check makes the target too suspicious for the character to try another bluff in the same circumstances. For feinting in combat or passing a secret message, the character may try again freely. However, in the case of passing a secret message, a character usually cannot determine whether he or she was successful at passing along the intended information.

Special: A character can take 10 when making a bluff (except for feinting in combat), but cannot take 20.

Synergy: If a character possesses 5 or more ranks in Bluff the character gains a +2 synergy bonus when using Sleight of Hand to pick a pocket or palm an object.

Time: A bluff takes at least 1 round (and is at least a full-round action) but can take much longer if the character tries something elaborate. Using Bluff to feint in combat is an attack action.

Climb (Str)

Armor Penalty

Whether scrambling up a majestic Redwood, scaling an overhanging cliff face high in the Rocky Mountains, descending down the back wall from the second story of the local hotel, or shinnying up a rope to the top of a well; the character is skilled at traversing a variety of steep, vertical, or even inverted surfaces.

Check: With each successful Climb check, the character can advance up, down, or across a slope, wall, or other steep incline (or even a ceiling with handholds). An incline of less than 60 degrees is a slope; a wall is any incline of 60 degrees or steeper. With a successful check, the character can move at either one-quarter his or her speed as a move action or at one-half his or her speed as a full-round action. If the Climb check fails, the character's forward progress comes to a halt. If the check fails by 5 or greater, the character falls from where progress halted.

The DC of the check depends on the conditions of the climb.

Table 3.9: Climb Check DC's

DC	Example Wall or Surface or Task
0	A slope too steep to walk up.
5	A knotted rope with a wall to brace against.
10	An unknotted rope with a wall to brace against. A knotted rope without a wall to brace against. A surface with sizable ledges to hold on to and stand on, such as a rugged cliff face.
15	Any surface with adequate handholds and footholds (natural or artificial), such as a rough natural rock surface, a tree, or a log cabin wall. An unknotted rope. Pulling yourself up when dangling by your hands.
20	An uneven surface with just a few narrow handholds and footholds, such as a coarse masonry wall or a sheer cliff face with a few crevices and small toeholds.
25	A rough surface without any real handholds or footholds, such as a brick wall.
25	Overhang or ceiling with handholds but not footholds.
—	A perfectly smooth, flat, vertical surface cannot be climbed.
–10 [1]	Climbing inside a chimney or other location where one can brace against two opposite walls (reduces normal DC by 10).
–5 [1]	Climbing a corner where a character can brace against perpendicular walls (reduces normal DC by 5).
–5 [1]	The climb is less than 10 feet (decreases normal DC by 5).
+5 [1]	Surface is slippery (increases normal DC by 5).

[1] These modifiers are cumulative; use any that apply.

Being Attacked while Climbing: Since it is impossible to move to avoid an attack while climbing, a character is flat-footed (the character loses any Dexterity bonus to Defense). Any time the character takes damage while climbing, make a Climb check against the DC of the slope or wall. If the check fails, the character falls from his or her current height and sustains the appropriate falling damage.

Accelerated Climbing: The normal movement rate of climbing is one-quarter of a character's land speed. However, a character can try to climb more quickly than normal. The character may move one-half his or her speed as a move action, but the character incurs a –5 penalty to the Climb check. The character can move his or her full speed as a full-round action, and the character suffers the same –5 penalty on the Climb check.

Making Handholds and Footholds: A character can make handholds and footholds by pounding pitons into a wall. Doing so takes 1 minute (10 rounds) per piton, and requires one piton per 3 feet. As with any surface with handholds and footholds, climbing a wall with pitons has a DC of 15. In similar fashion, a climber with an ice axe or other proper implement can cut handholds or footholds into a wall of ice.

Catching Yourself When Falling (DC varies): It is nearly impossible for a character to catch him or herself on a wall while falling. Make a Climb check (DC equal to wall's DC + 20) to do so. A slope is easier to grab onto (DC equal to slope's DC + 10).

Special: Someone using a rope can haul a character upward (or lower the character) by means of sheer strength. Use two times the lifting character's maximum load to determine how much weight can be lifted.

A character can take 10 while climbing, but cannot take 20.

A character without climbing gear normally incurs a –4 penalty on Climb checks. However, using discretion, a Judge may reduce or eliminate the penalty by determining that certain kinds of climbing attempts require only a rope or some other implement, or even just hands and feet, rather than a full set of climbing gear.

Time: Climbing one-half the character's speed is a full-round action. Moving one-quarter the character's speed is a move action. Accelerated climbing allows the character to climb his or her full speed as a full-round action or to climb one-half that far (one-half his or her speed) as a move action.

Concentration (Con)

The character has learned how to mentally block out distractions and maintain a detached emotional state. Even while the lead is flying, or the herd is stampeding, the character can remain calm, cool, and collected enough to accomplish the task at hand.

Check: A Concentration check is required whenever a character can be distracted (by taking damage, by harsh weather, and so forth) while engaged in some action that requires his or her full attention. Such actions include using those skills that provoke attacks of opportunity while in a threatened square (which is most skills; see Using Skills in Combat, page 58). In general, if an action would not normally incur an attack of opportunity, a character does not need to make a Concentration check to avoid being distracted. Any action listed on Table 7.3: Actions in Combat (see page 208) as provoking an attack of opportunity requires a Concentration check for completion when distractions occur. A common example of such an action is reloading a firearm (see Reloading a Ranged Weapon, page 146).

If the Concentration check succeeds, the character may continue with the action. If the check fails, the action automatically fails and that action is wasted.

A successful Concentration check still does not allow a character to take 10 when in stressful situations; the character must make the check as normal.

The Concentration check DC depends on the nature of the distraction. The following table provides some common examples:

Table 3.10: Concentration Check DC's

Distraction	DC
Damaged during the action [1]	10 + damage dealt
Taking continuous damage during the action [2]	10 + half of continuous damage last dealt
Vigorous motion (bouncy stagecoach ride, small boat in rough water, below decks in a storm-tossed ship, riding a horse)	10
Violent motion (very rough stagecoach ride, small boat in rapids, on deck of storm-tossed ship, galloping horse)	15
Extraordinarily violent motion (earthquake, landslide)	20
Entangled in net, snare, or lasso	15
Grappling or pinned	20
Weather is a high wind carrying blinding rain or sleet	5
Weather is wind driven hail, dust, or debris	10

1 Such as an activity that requires more than a single full-round action. Also from an attack of opportunity or readied attack made in response to the action being taken (for activities requiring no more than a full-round action).
2 Such as from catching on fire.

Defensive Skill Use (DC15): A character can use Concentration to avoid attacks of opportunity when attempting a skill check that normally provokes attacks of opportunity. The DC to do so is 15. If the Concentration check succeeds, the character may attempt the action normally without provoking any attacks of opportunity. If the Concentration check fails, the related check automatically fails, just as though a distraction had disrupted the character's concentration. However, the character does not provoke attacks of opportunity.

This use of Concentration applies only to skill checks. It does not apply to other actions that normally provoke attacks of opportunity, such as moving through a threatened area, punching an opponent, or reloading a hogleg.

Try Again?: Yes, though a success does not cancel the effects of a previous failure, such as the disruption of an action.

Special: Since Concentration checks are called for in stressful situations, a character cannot take 10 or take 20 on such checks.

Time: Making a Concentration check does not require an action; it is either a reaction (when attempted in response to a distraction) or part of another action (when actively trying to avoid attacks of opportunity).

Craft (Int)

The character has training in creating things of utility or beauty. Whether inventing a new means of telegraphy, painting a great masterpiece, writing the Great American Novel, or discovering a more powerful way of blowin' things all to heck, the character is skilled at creating the things that make life easier, more enjoyable, and possibly shorter.

"Hear what we're putting in? A bathroom right in the house."

"Inside the house? Well that ain't decent. Only someone from the East would think of that."

Strap Davis and Dempsey Rae – *Man Without a Star, 1955*

The Craft skill in *Sidewinder: Recoiled* actually encompasses several broad categories, each treated as a separate skill: Craft (chemical), Craft (electric), Craft (mechanical), Craft (pharmaceutical), Craft (structural), Craft (visual arts), and Craft (writing). The character must purchase skill ranks separately for each category. If, for instance, the character has skill ranks in Craft (mechanical), those ranks would not apply to any checks made for Craft (chemical) or Craft (writing). The character could have ranks in several, or all, of the Crafts, with each rank purchased separately.

Craft skills specifically focus on creating objects. To use a Craft skill effectively, a character must have a kit or some other set of basic tools. The purchase DC (or price, if using the optional Cold Hard Cash rule) of this equipment varies according to the particular Craft skill (see Tools and Kits, page 160). In addition, the procedure for using a Craft skill will differ slightly depending on whether the Judge is using the Wealth System or the optional Cold Hard Cash rules.

Wealth System: Decide what the character is trying to make and consult the category descriptions below. Make a Wealth check against the given purchase DC for the object to see if the character succeeds in acquiring the raw materials. If the character succeeds at that check, make the Craft check against the given DC for the object in question. If the check fails, the character does not make the object, and wastes the raw materials (unless otherwise noted).

Cold Hard Cash: First, decide on the item to make and consult the proper category below. The crafter then pays one-third of the purchase price to obtain the raw materials. For items that are normally mass-produced, the Judge may decide that the price of raw materials is higher, perhaps even equaling the purchase price. This arises because economies of scale make the procurement of materials and the manufacturing process cheaper for large manufacturers. This suppresses the market price of the mass-produced item below the purchase price for small amounts of the raw materials. Finally, make a Craft check against the provided DC to construct the item from the raw materials. If the check fails the raw materials are wasted and the item is not made.

Generally, a character can take 10 when using a Craft skill to construct an object, but cannot take 20 (since doing so represents multiple attempts, and the character uses up the raw materials after the first attempt). The exception is Craft (writing) when there are no raw materials; a character can take 20 because the character

does not use up any raw materials (and thus a Wealth check or cash expenditure is not required to use the skill).

Craft (chemical) (Int)

Trained Only

This skill allows a character to mix chemicals to create acids, bases, explosives, poisons, and other chemical compounds.

Acids and Bases: Acids and bases are both corrosive substances that, if mixed, act to neutralize each other. If a base and acid of equal volume are combined, the resultant solution is an acid or base with a reduced potency. If the two substances have equal potency, both the acid and base are neutralized, leaving behind a non-corrosive fluid. If either the base or acid is stronger than the other, the weaker of the two is neutralized and the stronger is diminished in strength. The loss of potency is equal to one level (e.g., Concentrated to Potent) if the weaker substance was Mild and two levels if the weaker substance was Potent.

Table 3.11: Acids and Bases summarizes the properties of acids and bases with different concentrations.

Damage Splash/Immersion: The damage inflicted per round of exposure to the acid or base for a splash or immersion.

Purchase DC: The DC for the Wealth check to obtain the raw materials to craft the acid or base, or to purchase one bottle of the acid or base directly.

Purchase Price: The cost (in dollars) to purchase one bottle of the acid or base.

Craft DC: The DC to create a single bottle of the acid or base from the raw materials.

Time: The time necessary to craft a bottle of the acid or base.

Explosives: Table 3.12: Scratch-Built Explosive summarizes the properties of various explosives that can be crafted.

Damage: The concussion damage inflicted to everything within the burst radius of the detonating explosive.

Burst Radius: The radius of the circle within which everything is damaged by the explosion.

Reflex Save DC: The Difficulty Class of the Reflex save needed to avoid full damage from the explosion. With a successful save, a character takes only one-half damage from the explosion.

Purchase DC: The DC for the Wealth check to obtain the raw materials needed to craft a brick of the explosive, or to purchase the explosive directly. This DC does not take into account the legality of the substance. If a character is purchasing the explosive on the black market, the purchase DC must be increased (see Purchasing on the Black Market, page 130).

Purchase Price: The cost (in dollars) to purchase a brick of the explosive. This price does not reflect price increases for purchasing illegal goods on the black market (see Purchasing on the Black Market, page 130).

Craft DC: The DC of the craft check to create a brick of the explosive.

Time: The time needed to craft a brick of the explosive.

Building an explosive from scratch is dangerous. If the Craft (chemical) check fails, the raw materials are wasted. If the check fails by 5 or more, the explosive compound detonates as it is being made, dealing one-half of its intended damage to the builder and anyone else in the burst radius.

If the check succeeds, the final product is a solid material (or, in some exotic cases, a gas or liquid), about the size and volume of a brick. An explosive compound does not include a fuse or detonator. Connecting a fuse or detonator requires a Demolitions check.

Poisonous Substances: Solid poisons are usually ingested. Liquid poisons are most effective when injected directly into the bloodstream. Gaseous poisons must be inhaled in order to be effective. Table 3.13: Poisons summarizes the characteristics of various poisons.

Date: The date the substance was invented, discovered, or first used as a poison, anesthesia, or medicine. If the date listed is "ancient" then the substance has been in use since ancient times.

Save DC: The Difficulty Class of the Fortitude save needed to negate the effects of the poison.

Table 3.11: Acids and Bases

Type of Chemical	Damage Splash/Immersion	Purchase DC	Purchase Price	Craft DC	Time
Mild Acid or Base	1d6/1d10	8	$3	15	1 min.
Potent Acid or Base	2d6/2d10	12	$8	20	30 min.
Concentrated Acid or Base	3d6/3d10	16	$25	30	1 hr.

Table 3.12: Scratch-Built Explosives

Type of Scratch-Built Explosive	Damage	Burst Radius	Reflex Save DC	Purchase DC	Purchase Price	Craft DC	Time
Improvised (black powder)	1d6	5 feet	10	6	$1	10	1 round
Simple (dynamite)	2d6	5 feet	12	12	$8	15	10 min.
Moderate (mercury fulminate)	4d6	10 feet	12	16	$25	20	1 hr.
Complex (TNT, nitroglycerin)	6d6	15 feet	15	20	$80	25	3 hr.
Powerful	8d6	20 feet	15	25	$350	30	12 hr.
Devastating	10d6	25 feet	18	30	$1,500	35	24 hr.

Initial Damage: The damage a character takes immediately upon failing a Fortitude save.

Secondary Damage: The damage a character takes after 1 minute (10 rounds) of exposure to the poison if the character fails a second saving throw. Ability score damage is temporary. Unconsciousness (listed as Unc) lasts for 1d3 hours, and paralysis (Par) lasts 2d6 minutes. The nauseated condition (Nau) lasts for 1d6 combat rounds.

Purchase DC (Pur DC): The DC for the Wealth check to obtain the raw materials to craft the poison, or to purchase one bottle of solid or liquid poison or one high-pressure cylinder of gaseous poison. A bottle holds four doses, while a cylinder holds enough gas to fill a 10-foot-radius area.

Purchase Price (Pur Price): The price to purchase one bottle of solid or liquid poison or one high-pressure cylinder of gaseous poison. A bottle holds four doses, while a cylinder holds enough gas to fill a 10-foot-radius area.

Restriction (Restr): The restriction rating for the poison, if any, and the appropriate black market purchase DC modifier. Remember to apply this modifier to the purchase DC when making a Wealth check to acquire the poison on the black market. If the Judge is using the optional Cold Hard Cash rule, increase the purchase price when purchasing on the black market (see Purchasing on the Black Market, page 130).

Craft DC: The DC of the Craft check to create a quantity of the poison. If the listed DC is "N/A", the poison cannot be synthesized chemically. It must be extracted from a natural source. The Judge may allow a character to perform this extraction on a successful Knowledge (earth and life sciences) skill check or by using the Craft (Pharmaceutical) skill.

Time: The amount of time required for the Craft check.

If the Craft check succeeds, the final product is a synthesized solid or liquid poison stored in a bottle (containing 4 doses) or a gas stored in a pressurized cylinder. When released, the gas is sufficient to fill a 10-foot-radius area and requires 1 round to fill the area.

Special: A character without a chemical kit incurs a –4 penalty on Craft (chemical) checks. A character with

Table 3.13: Poisons

Poison	Date	Type	Save DC	Initial Damage	Secondary Damage	Pur DC	Pur Price	Restr	Craft DC	Time
Lead arsenate (solid)	1891	Ingested	12	1d2 Con	1d4 Con	6	$1	Res (+2)	18	2 hr.
Atropine	1830	Injury	13	1d6 Dex	1d6 Str	9	$4	Res (+2)	14	1 hr.
Belladonna (plant)	ancient	Injury	18	1d6 Str	2d6 Str	14	$15	Lic (+1)	N/A	N/A
Blue vitriol	1644	Injury	12	1d2 Con	1d2 Con	3	$0.05	Res (+2)	9	1 hr.
Chloral hydrate	1832	Ingested	18	1d6 Dex	Unc 1d3 hr	12	$8	Res (+2)	28	8 hr.
Chloroform [1]	1831	Inhaled	17	Unc 1d3 hr	—	9	$4	Res (+2)	24	4 hr.
Curare (plant)	1595	Injury	18	2d4 Dex	2d4 Wis	15	$20	Res (+2)	N/A	N/A
Cyanide	1782	Injury	16	1d6 Con	2d6 Con	15	$20	Mil (+3)	31	15 hr.
Cyanogen	1802	Inhaled	19	1d4 Dex	2d4 Con	12	$8	Mil (+3)	28	8 hr.
Ether [1]	1842	Inhaled	18	1d3 Dex	Unc 1d3 hr.	12	$8	Res (+2)	26	8 hr.
Lead arsenate (gas)	1891	Inhaled	12	1d2 Str	1d4 Con	6	$1	Res (+2)	17	2 hr.
Lead arsenate (solid)	1891	Ingested	12	1d2 Con	1d4 Con	6	$1	Res (+2)	18	2 hr.
Mustard gas	1886	Inhaled	17	1d4 Con	2d4 Con	12	$8	Mil (+3)	26	8 hr.
Paris green (gas)	1867	Inhaled	14	1d2 Con	1d4 Con	9	$4	Res (+2)	20	4 hr.
Paris green (solid)	1867	Ingested	14	1d4 Con	1d4 Con	9	$4	Res (+2)	24	4 hr.
Puffer poison (fish)	ancient	Injury	13	1d6 Str	Par 2d6 min	13	$11	Lic (+1)	N/A	N/A
Rattlesnake venom	ancient	Injury	12	1d6 Con	1d6 Con	12	$8	Lic (+1)	N/A	N/A
Scorpion/tarantula venom	ancient	Injury	11	1d2 Str	1d2 Str	12	$8	Lic (+1)	N/A	N/A
Strychnine	1818	Injury	19	1d3 Dex	2d4 Con	9	$4	Res (+2)	23	4 hr.
Tear gas	ancient	Inhaled	15	Nau 1d6 r	—	9	$4	Res (+2)	21	4 hr.

[1] Chloroform and ether give off vapors that cause unconsciousness. Applying either to an unwilling subject requires a successful grapple check and pin.

COMPRESSED GAS

Portable compressed gas cylinders were first introduced for public use in 1819, in London.

access to a complete chemist's laboratory gains a +2 circumstance bonus on Craft (chemical) checks.

Synergy: A character with 5 or more ranks in Craft (chemical) receives a +2 synergy bonus to Craft (pharmaceutical) checks when crafting inorganic medicines and drugs.

Time: The amount of time required to craft a particular compound is listed on the appropriate table: Table 3.11: Acids and Bases, Table 3.12: Scratch-Built Explosives, or Table 3.13: Poisons.

Craft (electric) (Int)

Trained Only

This skill allows a character to build electric equipment from scratch, such as telegraph transmitters, electric motors, or phonographs.

When building an electric device from scratch, describe the kind of device the character wants to construct; then the Judge decides whether the device is simple, moderate, complex, or advanced compared to the technology of the age. The listed purchase price is merely a guideline. If the project is particularly ambitious, such as a telegraph line connecting Denver to Chicago, the Judge should increase the purchase DC (or price) accordingly.

Table 3.14: Scratch-Built Electric Devices

Electric Device	Purchase DC	Purchase Price	Craft DC	Time
Simple (telegraph transmitter)	8	$3	15	1 hr.
Moderate (electric motor)	12	$8	20	12 hr.
Complex (phonograph)	16	$25	25	24 hr.
Advanced (mimeograph)	22	$150	30	60 hr.

Special: A character without an electrical tool kit incurs a –4 penalty on Craft (electric) checks. A character with access to a complete electrician's shop gains a +2 circumstance bonus on Craft (electric) checks.

Synergy: A character with 5 or more ranks in Craft (electric) receives a +2 synergy bonus to Repair checks when repairing an electric device.

Time: The length of time required to craft an electric device is listed in Table 3.14: Scratch-Built Electric Devices.

Craft (mechanical) (Int)

Trained Only

This skill allows a character to build mechanical devices from scratch, including engines and engine parts, weapons and other gadgets. When building a mechanical device from scratch, describe the kind of device the character wants to construct; then the Judge decides if the device is simple, moderate, complex, or advanced compared to the technology of the age. The listed purchase price is merely a guideline. The Judge should modify the purchase DC (or price) accordingly if the project is extremely ambitious.

Table 3.15: Scratch-Built Mechanical Devices

Mechanical Device	Purchase DC	Purchase Price	Craft DC	Time
Simple (tripwire trap)	5	$0.50	15	1 hr
Moderate) (boiler, revolver	12	$8	20	12 hr.
Complex (steam engine, lever-action rifle)	20	$80	25	24 hr.
Advanced (locomotive engine, Gatling gun)	30	$1,500	30	60 hr.

Special: A character without a mechanical tool kit incurs a –4 penalty on Craft (mechanical) checks. A character with access to a complete smithy gains a +2 circumstance bonus on Craft (mechanical) checks.

Synergy: A character with 5 or more ranks in Craft (mechanical) receives a +2 synergy bonus to Repair checks when repairing a mechanical device.

Time: The length of time required to craft a mechanical device is listed in Table 3.15: Scratch-Built Mechanical Devices.

Craft (pharmaceutical) (Int)

Trained Only

This skill allows a character to compound medicinal drugs to aid in recovery from treatable illnesses or to fight off the effects of a toxin. A medicinal drug gives a +2 circumstance bonus on Fortitude saves made to resist the effects of disease or poison.

The severity of the disease or toxin to be countered determines the DC of the Craft (pharmaceutical) check. The DC of the Fortitude save needed to resist a disease or toxin determines the severity.

Special: A character without a druggist's kit incurs a –4 penalty on Craft (pharmaceutical) checks. A character with access to a complete chemist's laboratory gains a +2 circumstance bonus on Craft (pharmaceutical) checks.

Table 3.16: Pharmaceuticals

Fortitude Save DC	Purchase DC	Purchase Price	Craft DC	Time
14 or lower	5	$0.50	15	1 hr.
15–18	10	$5	20	3 hr.
19–22	15	$20	25	6 hr.
23 or higher	20	$80	30	12 hr.

Synergy: A character with 5 or more ranks in Craft (chemical) receives a +2 synergy bonus to Craft (pharmaceutical) checks when crafting inorganic medicines and drugs.

Time: The length of time required to craft a pharmaceutical is listed in Table 3.16: Pharmaceuticals.

Craft (structural) (Int)

This skill allows a character to build wooden, concrete, or metal structures from scratch, including furniture, wagons, houses, barns, and so forth. This Craft also includes such handyman skills as plumbing, house painting, stuccoing, masonry, and cabinetry. When building a structure from scratch, describe the kind of structure the character wants to construct; then the Judge decides if the structure is simple, moderate, complex, or advanced in scope and difficulty. If the project is truly immense, or if it uses expensive construction materials (Italian marble, mahogany, etc.), the Judge should increase the purchase DC (or price) accordingly.

Table 3.17: Scratch-Built Structures

Type of Structure	Purchase DC	Purchase Price	Craft DC	Time
Simple (bookcase, split-rail fence)	5	$0.50	15	12 hr.
Moderate (wagon, shed, house deck)	10	$5	20	24 hr.
Complex (bunker, domed ceiling)	15	$20	25	60 hr.
Advanced (small house).	20	$80	30	600 hr

Special: A character without a mechanical tool kit incurs a –4 penalty on Craft (structural) checks.

Synergy: A character with 5 or more ranks in Craft (structural) receives a +2 synergy bonus on Demolitions checks when placing charges to maximize damage against a structure.

Time: Typical times required to build structures are listed in Table 3.17: Scratch-Built Structures. The Judge should feel free to modify the length of time for particularly ambitious projects.

Craft (visual art) (Int)

This skill allows a character to create paintings or drawings, take photographs, use a motion picture camera or in some other way create a work of visual art. When attempting to create a work of visual art, the character simply makes a Craft (visual art) check, the result of which determines the quality of the work.

Unless the effort is particularly elaborate or the character must acquire an expensive piece of equipment, the basic components have a purchase DC of 5 (or a price of 50¢).

Table 3.18: Craft (visual art) Check Results

Skill Check Result	Effort Achieved
9 or lower	Untalented amateur
10–19	Talented amateur
20–24	Professional
25–30	Expert
31 or higher	Master

Art Forgery: A character may also use this skill to copy an existing work of art. This requires that the forger possesses the appropriate materials needed to recreate the original piece of art, and the artist must have seen the original piece of art or an excellent copy thereof. The technical complexity of the piece and the artist's familiarity with it provide modifiers to the Craft (visual art) check as shown below.

Table 3.19: Art Forgery

Technical Complexity of the Piece of Art	Modifier
Simple	+0
Moderate	–2
Complex	–4
Difficult	–8
Extreme	–16
Familiarity	**Modifier**
Unfamiliar (seen once for less than a minute)	–4
Fairly familiar (seen for several minutes)	+0
Quite familiar (on hand, or studied at leisure)	+4
Forger has produced other pieces of same type	+4

If working from a copy, the resulting reproduction cannot be of better quality than the reference copy. This means that the Craft (visual art) skill check cannot exceed the skill check used to make the reference copy.

Detecting an art forgery requires a Knowledge (art) skill check opposed by the original Craft (visual art) skill check that created the forgery. If the examiner's check result is equal to or higher than the original Craft (visual art) check, the artwork is determined to be fraudulent.

Synergy: A character with 5 or more ranks in Knowledge (art) receives a +2 synergy bonus on Craft (visual art) checks when trying to forge a work of art.

Time: Creating a work of visual art requires at least a full-round action, but usually requires an hour, a day, or more, depending on the scope of the project.

Craft (writing) (Int)

This skill allows a character to create short stories, novels, plays, newspaper articles, and similar works of writing. When creating a work of writing, the character simply makes a Craft (writing) check, the result of which determines the quality of the work.

Depending on the size of the project, a Wealth check may or may not be required. Writing tools are required and if the project is substantial, the writer may need to purchase paper. Paper has a purchase DC of 5 for 100 sheets (50¢ if using the optional Cold Hard Cash rule). If the work requires more than 100 sheets, the Judge should increase the purchase DC (or price) appropriately.

Table 3.20: Craft (writing) Check Results

Skill Check Result	Effort Achieved
9 or lower	Untalented amateur
10–19	Talented amateur
20–24	Professional
25–30	Expert
31 or higher	Master

Time: Creating a work of writing requires at least 1 hour, but usually requires a day, a week, or more, depending on the scope of the project. (*Note:* We can testify to that! – The Dog House Gang)

Decipher Script (Int)

Trained Only

The character is skilled at determining the meaning of penciled, drawn, carved, chiseled, or painted symbols, or breaking coded messages. A character could use this skill to deduce the history of a Sioux chief from the pictures painted on a tipi, translate ancient pictographs on a river canyon wall, or figure out the general location of a lost Spanish mine from the cryptic scrawling in an old prospector's diary.

Check: A character can decipher writing in an ancient language or in code, or interpret the meaning of an incomplete text. The base DC is 20 for the simplest messages, 25 for standard codes, and 30 or higher for intricate or complex codes or exotic messages. Helpful texts or materials can provide a bonus (usually a +2 circumstance bonus) on the check, provided they are applicable to the script in question.

If the check succeeds, the character understands the general content of a piece of writing, reading approximately one page of text or the equivalent in 1 minute. If the check fails, the character makes a Wisdom check (DC 10) to see if he or she avoids drawing a false conclusion about the text. (Success means that the character does not draw a false conclusion; failure means that the character does.)

The Judge secretly makes both the skill and Wisdom checks so the character cannot tell whether the conclusion drawn is accurate or not.

Try Again?: No, unless conditions change or new information is uncovered.

Special: A character can take 10 when making a Decipher Script check, but cannot take 20.

Time: Decipher Script requires 1 minute or more, depending on the complexity of the code.

MORSE CODE AND DECIPHER SCRIPT

At first glance, it might appear that a telegraph operator would use Decipher Script to receive a message in Morse code. However, Decipher Script is only useful for translating written messages. If someone else wrote down the message in the form of dots and dashes, or if a Teletype was used to receive the transmission in code form, Decipher Script could be used to decipher the message. On the other hand, deciphering a telegraph message in real time during transmission requires that the operator be fluent in Morse code. *Sidewinder: Recoiled* treats Morse code as a separate language. To become fluent in Morse code, a character must buy a rank in the Speak Language skill (see Speak Language, page 95) and select Morse code as the new language learned.

Demolitions (Int)

Trained Only

The character has learned how to handle explosives to maximize the damage against the intended target while minimizing personal danger.

Check: Setting a simple explosive to blow up at a certain spot does not require a check, but connecting and setting a detonator does. In addition, placing an explosive for maximum effect against a structure calls for a check, as does disarming an explosive device.

Set Detonator (DC 10): Most explosives require a detonator to fulminate. Connecting a detonator to an explosive requires a Demolitions check (DC 10). Failure means that the explosive fails to detonate as planned. Failure by 10 or more means the explosive goes off during the installation of the detonator.

A character can choose to make an explosive more difficult to disarm. To do so, the character decides upon the new disarm DC before making the check to set the

detonator (it must be higher than 10). The character's DC to set the detonator will be equal to the new disarm DC.

Place Explosive Device (DC 15): Carefully placing an explosive against a fixed structure (a stationary, unattended inanimate object) can maximize the damage dealt by exploiting vulnerabilities in the structure's construction. The Judge makes the check in secret (so that the character will not know the success of the check). On a result of 15 or higher, the explosive deals double damage to the structure against which it is placed. On a result of 25 or higher, it deals triple damage to the structure. In all cases, it deals normal damage to all other targets within its burst radius.

Disarm Explosive Device (DC 10): Disarming an explosive that has been set to go off requires a Demolitions check. The DC is usually 10, unless the person who set the detonator chose a higher disarm DC. If the check fails, the character does not disarm the explosive. If the check fails by more than 5, the explosive detonates immediately.

Special: A character can take 10 when using the Demolitions skill, but cannot take 20. A character without a demolitions kit incurs a –4 penalty on Demolitions checks.

Making an explosive requires the Craft (chemical) skill. (See that skill description on page 67 for details).

Synergy: A character with 5 or more ranks in Craft (structural) receives a +2 synergy bonus to Demolitions checks when placing an explosive against a structure to maximize the damage.

A character with 5 or more ranks in Disable Device receives a +2 synergy bonus when disarming an explosive device.

Time: Setting a detonator is usually a full-round action. Placing an explosive device requires 1 minute or more, depending on the scope of the job.

Diplomacy (Cha)

The character is skilled in the intricacies of civilized human communication and interaction. From the lowest circles of society to the highest, the character knows the proper speech, mannerisms, and codes of conduct expected. Using this skill, the character can talk their way into the Cheyenne Club, halt a range war between cattlemen and grangers, or convince the local deputy to look the other way. Diplomacy represents the ability to give the proper impression, influence others, and apply the right negotiation technique for the situation, whether tact and subtlety, or braggadocio, bravado and bribery.

"Who's the best lawman?"
"The toughest? Or the easiest to bribe?"
Butch and Sundance – *Butch Cassidy and The Sundance Kid, 1969*

Check: A character can change others' attitudes with a successful check (see Table 3.21: Attitudes). In negotiations, participants roll opposed Diplomacy checks to see who gains the advantage. Opposed checks also resolve cases where two advocates, lawyers, or diplomats plead opposing cases before a third party.

Diplomacy can be used to influence the attitude of a Judge-controlled character. The Judge chooses the initial attitude of the character based on circumstances. Most of the time, the people the heroes meet are indifferent toward them, but a specific situation may call for a different initial attitude. The DC's given in the accompanying table show what it requires to change someone's attitude with the use of the Diplomacy skill. The character cannot try for a specific outcome; instead, make the check and compare the result to Table 3.22: Diplomacy Check Results.

Table 3.21: Attitudes

Attitude	Meaning of Attitude	Possible Actions
Hostile	Will take risks to hurt or avoid you	Attack, interfere, berate, flee
Unfriendly	Wishes you ill	Mislead, gossip, avoid, watch suspiciously, insult
Indifferent	Does not much care	Act as socially expected
Friendly	Wishes you well	Chat, advise, offer limited help, advocate
Helpful	Will take risks to help you	Protect, back up, heal, aid

BRIBERY AND DIPLOMACY

In the right situations, offering money or another form of favor can improve a character's chances with a Diplomacy skill check. When a person in a position of trust or authority is willing to accept such an offering, bribery allows a character to circumvent various official obstacles.

Often an illegal act, bribery requires two willing participants—one to offer a bribe and the other to accept it. If someone requires a bribe to render services, your cowpoke's Diplomacy check will automatically fail if not accompanied by a bribe. If a bribe is not required, your cowpoke can add a bribe to receive a bonus on the skill check. However, this can backfire, as some people are insulted by offers of a bribe (their attitude changes one step for the worse) and, if the bribe is illegal, may report the miscreant to the proper authorities.

Unless a character actively solicits a bribe, it is dangerous to offer that character a bribe unless there is good reason to believe that it will be accepted. If the character has a reputation for routinely accepting bribes, an appropriate Knowledge skill check might reveal this fact. Alternatively, your cowpoke could make a successful Sense Motive check to interpret the subtle hand motions of a corrupt official. For instance, Sheriff Patterson has caught Zeke Phelps. Zeke would like to bribe the lawman into letting him escape. Sheriff Patterson is a corrupt official, and the Judge decides that Zeke will know this if he succeeds on a DC 20 Knowledge (streetwise) skill check.

Bribery will use different rules, depending on whether the Judge utilizes the Wealth System or the optional Cold Hard Cash rule.

Wealth System: To bribe a character, make a Wealth check. Typical DC's are shown in Table 3.23: Bribery Costs, but the Judge may modify these numbers as he or she sees fit. If the check succeeds, your cowpoke gains a +5 bonus on the Diplomacy check. For every point by which the character beats the DC, increase the bonus by +1 (to a total maximum bonus of +10). You may take 10 on the Wealth check, but you cannot take 20.

Cold Hard Cash: Offering less than the bribe cost (see Table 3.23: Bribery Costs) garners no special advantage on the Diplomacy check. Offering the bribe cost results in a +5 bonus on the Diplomacy check. If the bribe exceeds the bribe cost, the character receives an additional bonus on the Diplomacy check equal to +1 for every full multiple of 2 by which the bribe exceeds the bribe cost. For example, if the bribe were twice as much as the cost, a bonus of +6 (+5 base, +1 for a larger bribe) would be added to the Diplomacy check. If the bribe were four times as much as the cost, the bonus would be +7. If the bribe were eight times the cost, the Diplomacy bonus would be +8. The maximum Diplomacy bonus a character can acquire through Bribery is +10.

Table 3.23: Bribery Costs

Bribe Target	Purchase DC	Bribe Cost
Barkeep	6	$1
Bureaucrat	10	$5
Informant	7	$2
Local sheriff	10	$5

Try Again?: Generally, trying again does not work. Even if the initial check succeeds, the character can only be so persuasive. If the initial check fails, the other character has probably become more firmly committed to his or her position, and trying again is futile.

Special: A character can take 10 when making a Diplomacy check, but cannot take 20.

Synergy: A character with 5 or more ranks in Knowledge (business) receives a +2 synergy bonus on Diplomacy checks when dealing with a large business's bureaucracy.

A character with 5 or more ranks in Knowledge (civics) receives a +2 synergy bonus on Diplomacy checks when dealing with government agents.

Time: Diplomacy is at least a full-round action. The Judge may determine that some negotiations require longer periods of time.

Table 3.22: Diplomacy Check Results

Initial Attitude	New Attitude: Hostile	Unfriendly	Indifferent	Friendly	Helpful
Hostile	19 or less	20	25	35	45
Unfriendly	4 or less	5	15	25	35
Indifferent	—	0 or less	1	15	25
Friendly	—	—	0 or less	1	15

Disable Device (Int)

Trained Only

The character is skilled in the ways of the thief and saboteur. The character knows how to examine small mechanical devices and determine the most effective way to disable them, while leaving little evidence of the tampering. Use of this skill will usually require the appropriate tools.

Check: The Judge makes the Disable Device check so that the character will not necessarily know whether the attempt has succeeded.

Open Lock (DC 20 or higher): A character can pick conventional locks and finesse combination locks. The character must have a lockpick set. The DC depends on the quality of the lock.

Table 3.24: Lock Picking DC's

Lock Type (Example)	DC
Cheap (steamer trunk lock)	20
Average (home deadbolt)	25
High quality (business deadbolt or lockbox)	30
High security (branch bank vault)	40
Ultra-high security (bank headquarters vault)	50

Disable Security Device (DC 20 or higher): A character can disable a security device, such as a silent alarm. The character must be able to reach the actual device. If someone is monitoring the device, the fact that the character attempted to disable it will probably be noticed.

The DC of the check depends on the complexity of the device, simple devices have a DC of 20 while extremely complex systems might have a DC of 40. When disabling a monitored device, the character can prevent someone from noticing the tampering. Doing so requires 10 minutes and an electrical tool kit, and increases the DC of the check by +10.

Traps and Sabotage (DC 10 or higher): Disabling (or rigging or jamming) a simple mechanical device has a DC of 10. More intricate and complex devices have higher DC's. The Judge rolls the check. If the check succeeds, the character disables the device. If the check fails by 4 or less, the character has failed but can try again. If the character fails by 5 or more, something goes wrong. If it is a trap, the character springs it. If it is some sort of sabotage, the character thinks the device is disabled, but it still works normally. A character can rig simple devices to work normally for a while and then fail some time later (usually after 1d4 rounds or minutes of use).

Try Again?: Yes, though a character must be aware that the check has failed in order to try again.

Special: A character can take 10 when making a Disable Device check. A character can take 20 to open a lock or to disable a security device, unless the character is trying to prevent someone from noticing the tampering.

Possessing the proper tools gives a character the best chance of succeeding on a Disable Device check. Opening a lock requires a lockpick set. Disabling a security device requires either a mechanical tool kit or an electrical tool kit, depending on the nature of the device. If a character does not have the appropriate tools, he or she incurs a –4 penalty on the check.

Synergy: A character with 5 or more ranks in Disable Device receives a +2 synergy bonus when disarming an explosive device through the use of the Demolitions skill.

Time: Disabling a simple mechanical device is a full-round action. Intricate or complex devices require 2d4 rounds.

ELECTRIC ALARMS

The first electric alarms went into use circa 1852.

Disguise (Cha)

The character is skilled in the techniques of stage make-up and impersonation. The character can use this skill to change his or her general appearance by using make-up, specially crafted prosthetics and costumes. In addition, the character can use this skill to impersonate either a specific individual or a general stereotype. For example, a character, with or without using any actual disguise, could seem like a seasoned gunslinger even if he or she has never fired a single shot.

Check: A character's Disguise check result determines how convincing the disguise is. To see through the disguise observers may make Spot checks opposing the Disguise check. The character makes only one Disguise check, even if several observers make Spot checks. The Judge makes the character's Disguise check in secret so that the character will be unsure as to how well the disguise will hold up to scrutiny.

However, if the character does not draw any attention, others do not get to make Spot checks. If someone becomes suspicious, the suspicious person can attempt a Spot check. (The Judge can assume that such observers take 10 on their Spot checks.)

The effectiveness of a character's disguise depends, in part, on how radically the character is attempting to change his or her appearance.

If the character is impersonating a particular individual, those who are familiar with that person's appearance automatically get to make Spot checks. Furthermore, they receive a bonus to their Spot checks.

Usually, an individual makes a Spot check to detect a disguise immediately upon first meeting the character and each hour thereafter. If the character casually meets many different people, each for a short time, the Judge checks once per day or hour, using an average Spot modifier for the group (assuming they take 10).

Table 3.25: Disguise Check Modifiers

Disguise	Modifier
Minor details only	+5
Appropriate uniform or costume	+2
Disguised as different sex	–2
Disguised as different age category	–2 [1]

[1] Per step of difference between the character's age category and the disguised age category (child, young adult, adult, middle age, old, or venerable).

Table 3.26: Familiarity Modifiers

Familiarity	Bonus
Recognizes on sight	+4
Friend or associate	+6
Close friend	+8
Intimate	+10

Try Again?: No, though the character can assume the same disguise again at a later time. However, if others saw through the previous disguise, they will automatically be suspicious if the character assumes the same disguise again.

Special: A character can take 10 or take 20 when establishing a disguise. A character without a disguise kit incurs a –4 penalty on Disguise checks. A character can help someone else create a disguise, treating it as an aid another attempt.

Synergy: A character with 5 or more ranks in Perform (act) receives +2 synergy bonus on Disguise checks when pretending to be someone else.

Time: A Disguise check requires 1d4 x 10 minutes of preparation.

Escape Artist (Dex)

Armor Penalty

Whether through training in mysterious eastern arts, or by just having a natural physical trait such as being double jointed, the character has a knack for escaping confinement. The character can use this skill to slip out of a set of manacles or rope bindings, to escape the grapple of an angry grizzly, or wriggle through a tight crawl space in an abandoned mine.

Check: Make a check to escape from restraints or to squeeze through a tight space.

Table 3.27: Escape Artist Check DC's

Restraint	DC
Ropes	Opponent's Dex check +20
Net or lasso	20
Handcuffs	35
Tight space	30
Grappler	Opponent's grapple check

Escaping From Rope Bonds (DC opposed Dexterity check): For ropes, a character's Escape Artist check is opposed by the Dexterity check result of the opponent who tied the bonds. Since it is easier to tie someone up than to escape, the opponent receives a +20 bonus on his or her Dexterity check.

Crawling Through a Tight Space (DC 30): For a tight space, a check is only called for if the character's head fits but shoulders do not. If the space is long, such as in an airshaft, the Judge may call for multiple checks. A character cannot fit through a space smaller than his or her head.

Escaping from a Grapple (DC opposed grapple check): A character can make an Escape Artist check opposed by his or her opponent's grapple check to escape a grapple or get out of a pinned condition. However, a character that escapes a pinned condition is still grappled, unless the character makes a second successful Escape Artist check. Escaping a grapple is an attack action, so if the character escapes the grapple he or she can move in the same round.

Try Again?: If squeezing through a tight space, a character can make another check after a failed check. If the situation permits and active opposition does not exist, the character can make additional checks.

Special: A character can take 10 on an Escape Artist check. A character can take 20 in the absence of active opposition. (A character can take 20 if tied up, because the DC was set by the opponent's initial Dexterity check).

Time: Making a check to escape from being bound by ropes, handcuffs, or other passive restraints requires 1 minute. Escaping a net or lasso is a full-round action, while escaping from a grapple is an attack action. Squeezing through a tight space requires at least 1 minute, maybe longer, depending on the distance the character must traverse.

Forgery (Int)

The character is skilled at creating false documents. The character might use this skill to fake a pardon from the territorial governor, falsify a gold claim, or counterfeit bank notes. In addition, the character can use this skill to detect forgeries that others try to pass off.

Check: Forgery requires materials appropriate to the original document, and some time. To forge a document the character needs to have previously seen a similar

document. The complexity of the document, the character's degree of familiarity with it, and whether the character needs to reproduce the signature or handwriting of a specific individual, provide modifiers to the Forgery check, as shown in the following table.

Table 3.28: Document Forgery

Document Type	Modifier	Time
Simple	+0	10 min.
Moderate	–2	20 min.
Complex	–4	1 hr.
Difficult	–8	4 hr.
Extreme	–16	24 hr.
Familiarity	**Modifier**	
Unfamiliar (seen once for less than a minute)	–4	
Fairly familiar (seen for several minutes)	+0	
Quite familiar (on hand, or studied at leisure)	+4	
Forger has produced other pieces of same type	+4	
Document includes specific signature	–4	

Some documents require security or authorization codes, whether authentic ones or additional forgeries. The Judge makes the character's check secretly so a character will not be sure how successful they were at the forgery.

Detecting a Forgery (DC opposed Forgery check): A character also applies the Forgery skill to detect someone else's forgery. The result of the original Forgery check that created the document is opposed by a Forgery check made by the person who examines the document to check its authenticity. If the examiner's check result is equal to or higher than the original Forgery check, the document is determined to be fraudulent. The examiner gains bonuses or penalties on his or her check as given in Table 3.29: Examiner's Forgery Check Modifiers.

A document that contradicts procedure, orders, or previous knowledge, or one that requires the examiner to relinquish a possession or a piece of information, can increase the examiner's suspicion (and thus create favorable circumstances for the examiner's opposed Forgery check).

Try Again?: No, since the forger is not sure of the quality of the original forgery.

Special: To forge documents and detect forgeries, one must be able to read and write the language in question. (The skill is language-dependent.) A character can take 10 when making a Forgery check, but cannot take 20. A character without a forgery kit incurs a –4 penalty on Forgery checks.

Time: Forging a short, simple document requires about 1 minute. Longer or more complex documents take 1d4 minutes per page, or longer.

Table 3.29: Examiner's Forgery Check Modifiers

Condition	Examiner's Check Modifier
Type of document unknown to examiner	–4
Type of document somewhat known to examiner	–2
Type of document well known to examiner	+0
Document is put through additional tests [1]	+4
Examiner only casually reviews the document [1]	–2

[1] Cumulative with any of the first three conditions on the table. Apply this modifier along with one of the other three whenever appropriate.

Gamble (Wis)

The character is knowledgeable in, and skilled at the play of, various games of chance, such as poker, roulette, blackjack, keno, faro, and betting on the horses. The character has an advantage over non-experts, and can generally win when playing against them. Gambling, however, does not apply to games of pure luck, such as lotteries or Russian roulette.

"Well, looks like you just about cleaned everybody out, fella. You haven't lost a hand since you got the deal. What's the secret of your success?"

"Prayer."

Macon and the Sundance Kid – *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid, 1969*

Check: Gamble checks are executed in either of two fashions, depending on whether the Judge is using the standard Wealth System or the Optional Cold Hard Cash Rules.

Wealth System: To join or start a game, a character must first pay a stake ("buy in"). If a character starts the game, he or she sets the purchase DC of the stake. If the character joins a game in progress, the Judge determines the purchase DC of the stake. Stakes can range from penny-ante (purchase DC 4), to astronomical (purchase DC 24). A character cannot take 20 when purchasing a stake.

If the stake is within the means of the character, (it is equal to or less than his or her Wealth bonus), the character does not stand a chance of winning any significant amount. The character might come out ahead, but the amount is not enough to affect his or her Wealth bonus. Since paying the stake did not cost any points of Wealth bonus, the character does not lose anything either.

If the stake is higher than what the character's Wealth bonus was before "buying in", the character receives a +1 bonus on the Gamble check for every point the purchase DC is above the character's Wealth bonus.

The character's Gamble check is opposed by the Gamble checks of all other participants in the game. (If playing at a casino, assume the house has a Gamble skill modifier equal to the stake purchase DC. The house never receives a bonus or penalty on its Gamble check.) If there are many characters participating, the Judge can opt to make a single roll for all of them, using the highest Gamble skill modifier among them and adding a +2 bonus to the check.

If the character beats all other participants, he or she wins and gains an increase to his or her Wealth bonus. The amount of the increase depends on the difference between the character's check result and the next highest result among the other participants (see Table 3.30: Wealth Increases from Gambling).

Cold Hard Cash: If the Judge is using the optional Cold Hard Cash Rule, the gambler pays the stake (in dollars) and makes the Gamble skill check. Making a large bet does not modify the skill check when the optional rule is used. The result of the Gamble check determines whether the character wins or loses and, if the character wins, how much is won. Table 3.30: Wealth Increases from Gambling indicates how much the character wins in terms of multiples of the stake. A result of x1 means that the character recovers the stake (the character neither wins nor loses). On the result of x2 the character doubles the original stake.

Table 3.30: Wealth Increases from Gambling

Check Result Difference	Wealth Bonus Increase	Cold Hard Cash Winnings
1–9	+1	x1
10–19	+2	x2
20–29	+3	x3
30–39	+4	x4
40 or more	+5	x5

Try Again?: No, unless the character wants to put up another stake.

Special: A character cannot take 10 or take 20 when making a Gamble check.

Time: A Gamble check requires 1 hour.

Gather Information (Cha)

The character is talented at talking to the right people to uncover the local gossip, rumors, and general facts about the area. Given time, the character can discover the most unsavory secrets or protected information. In addition, the character can use these same connections to plant false rumors, malicious gossip, or deceptive stories.

"Well, What's the news in Dodge?"

"Well, just about the same as always. Gambling and drinking and killing. Mostly killing."

Wade Hatton and Charlie – *Dodge City, 1939*

Check: By succeeding at a skill check (DC 10) and spending 1d4+1 hours passing out money and buying drinks, a character can get a feel for the major news items in a neighborhood. This assumes, of course, no obvious reasons exist for people to withhold information. The higher the check result, the better the information.

Information ranges from general to protected, and the cost and DC increases accordingly for the type of information the character seeks to gather, as given in Table 3.31: Gather Information DC's and Costs.

Table 3.31: Gather Information DC's and Costs

Type of Information	DC	Purchase DC	Purchase Price
General	10	5	$0.50
Specific	15	10	$5
Restricted	20	15	$20
Protected	25	20	$80

General information concerns local happenings, rumors, gossip, and the like. Specific information usually relates to a particular question. Restricted information includes facts not generally known to the public at large and requires that the character locate someone who has access to such information. Protected information is even harder to obtain, and might involve some danger for the one asking the questions or the one providing the answers. There is a chance that someone will take note of anyone asking about restricted or protected information.

The character can increase the amount of money used to gather information, gaining a circumstance bonus by effectively offering a bribe (though the process

might entail buying more expensive drinks, not necessarily offering a character extra money). Increase the Wealth check DC by 2 (or double the purchase price) for each +1 (up to a maximum of +5) circumstance bonus the character wants to add to the skill check.

If the Judge deems that the situation does not require the expenditure of money, a Wealth check (or cash expenditure) is unnecessary.

Try Again?: Yes, but it requires 1d4+1 hours for each check, and a character may draw unwanted attention if repeatedly pursuing a certain type of information.

Special: A character can take 10 when making a Gather Information check, but cannot take 20.

Synergy: A character with 5 or more ranks in Knowledge (streetwise) receives a +2 synergy bonus on Gather Information checks to acquire information about the local black market.

Time: A Gather Information check requires 1d4+1 hours.

Handle Animal (Cha)

Trained Only

The character is an experienced hand at dealing with animals, whether wild or domestic, and has extensive knowledge in the breeding, rearing, caring and training of animals. The character can use this skill to drive a hitch of horses pulling a stagecoach across a river ford, raise an orphaned bear cub, or drive a herd of stubborn longhorns up the cattle trail.

"A horse is a man's slave, but treat 'em like a slave and you're not a man. Remember that."

Jeremy Rodack – *Tribute to a Bad Man, 1956*

Check: The time and the DC required depend on what the character is trying to accomplish.

Table 3.32: Handle Animal Tasks

Task	Time	DC
Handle an animal	Move action	10
"Push" an animal	Full-round action	25
Teach an animal a trick	1 week	See text
Train an animal for a purpose	See text	See text
Drive a Team	Move action	See text
Rear a wild animal	See text	See text
Tame a feral domestic animal	1 week	See text

Handle an Animal (DC 10): This means to command a critter to perform a task or trick that it knows. The DC increases by +5 if the critter is wounded or has taken any ability score damage. If the check is successful, the critter performs the task or trick on its next action.

"Push" an Animal (DC 25): To push an animal means to get it to perform a task or trick that it does not know, but is physically capable of performing. If the check is successful, the critter performs the task or trick on its next action.

SO HOW COME MY HORSE AIN'T AS SMART AS THOSE IN THE MOVIES? OR "THE TRIGGER RULE"

Under the d20 Modern rules a horse is a horse is a horse. No matter how hard a character tries, his steed will never be able to know more than six "tricks" or one "general purpose." However, this is not what we remember from our favorite Saturday matinees or television shows. Trigger was down right brilliant, and Silver came to the Lone Ranger's rescue on more than one occasion. So, to help those characters (and Judges) who want their favorite steed or critter to be like those we so fondly remember, *Sidewinder: Recoiled* introduces the following optional rule:

An animal with an Intelligence of 2 is no longer limited to a maximum of six tricks. Instead, the limit is equal to 6 plus the critter's Wisdom bonus. A critter with a Wisdom penalty can still learn up to six tricks. For every trick that a character attempts to teach a critter after the sixth trick, the character incurs a cumulative –5 penalty to the Handle Animal check. So, for the seventh trick the penalty would be -5, for the eighth trick -10, and so forth.

Teach an Animal a Trick (DC varies): With one week of work and a successful Handle Animal check the character can teach an animal a specific trick, such as "attack" or "stay". A critter with an Intelligence of 1 can learn a maximum of three tricks, while a critter with an Intelligence of 2 can learn a maximum of six tricks.

Possible tricks include, but are not limited to, the following.

Attack (DC 20): The critter attacks apparent enemies. The character may point to a particular foe to direct the critter to attack that enemy.

Come (DC 15): The critter comes to the character, even if the critter normally would not do so (such as charging into a saloon).

Defend (DC 20): The critter defends the character (or is ready to defend the character if no threat is present). Alternatively, the character can command the critter to defend another specific character.

Down (DC 15): The critter breaks off from combat or otherwise backs down.

Fetch (DC 15): The critter goes and gets something. The character must point out a specific object, or else the critter fetches some random object.

Guard (DC 20): The critter stays in place and prevents others from approaching.

Heel (DC 15): The critter follows the character closely, even to places where it normally would not go (such as following the character onto a river barge).

Loyalty (DC 0): The character can teach a critter to obey only the character. Any others attempting to make the critter perform a trick incur a –10 penalty on their Handle Animal check. A critter that knows the Loyalty trick is more difficult to train. All subsequent tricks are taught with DC's that are increased by 5. If the critter already knows some tricks, whether taught by the character or others, it cannot be taught to obey only the character.

Perform (DC 15): The critter does a variety of simple tricks such as sitting up, rolling over, and so on.

Seek (DC 15): The critter moves into an area and searches for something of interest. It stops and indicates the first thing of interest it finds. What constitutes an item of interest to a critter can vary. Critters almost always find other critters or characters interesting. To understand that it is looking for a specific object, the critter must make an Intelligence check (DC 10).

Stay (DC 15): The critter stays in place waiting for the character to return. It does not challenge other creatures that come by, though it still defends itself if it needs to.

Track (DC 20): The critter tracks the scent presented to it.

Work (DC 15): The critter pulls or pushes a medium or heavy load.

Train an Animal (DC varies): Rather than teaching a critter individual tricks, the character can train a critter for a general purpose. Essentially, a critter's purpose represents a specific set of interrelated tricks that fit into a common scheme. A character can train a critter for only a single general purpose. However, the critter may still have the capacity to learn additional tricks beyond those included in its general purpose. Training a critter for a purpose requires fewer checks than teaching individual tricks.

Combat Riding (DC 20, 6 weeks): A critter trained to bear a rider into combat knows Attack, Come, Defend, Down, Guard, and Heel. A critter trained in riding may be "upgraded" to a critter trained in combat riding by spending three weeks and making a Handle Animal check (DC 20). If the critter was trained in other tricks (in addition to those provided by training the critter for riding), those tricks are completely replaced by the combat riding tricks.

Fighting (DC 20, 3 weeks): A critter trained for combat knows the following tricks: Attack, Down, and Stay.

Guarding (DC 20, 4 weeks): A critter trained to guard knows the following tricks: Attack, Defend, Down, and Guard.

Laboring (DC 15, 2 weeks): A critter trained for heavy labor knows Come and Work.

Hunting (DC 20, 6 weeks): A critter trained for hunting knows Attack, Down, Fetch, Heel, Seek, and Track.

Performing (DC 15, 4 weeks): A critter trained for performing knows Come, Fetch, Heel, Perform, and Stay.

Riding (DC 15, 3 weeks): A critter trained to bear a rider knows Come, Heel, and Stay.

Driving a Team (DC varies): Driving a horse or ox drawn conveyance uses the Handle Animal skill. Generally, the only trick that the animal needs to execute is Work. Performing simple maneuvers with a trained team does not require a skill check. However, a Judge may require a character to make a check for unusual circumstances (taking a stage off road), dramatic situations (a chase or attack), or driving at an unsafe speed (trying to reach the next stage stop before nightfall). Driving a Team is a move action and the DC depends on the ground conditions.

Rear a Wild Animal (DC varies): The character can raise an infant or juvenile wild critter so that it becomes tame. A character can rear a maximum of three critters simultaneously, and the critters must be of the same type. The character can teach the tamed critter tricks during the rearing process or at a later time. Taming a wild animal is not the same as domesticating it. Wild animals can never be truly domesticated, and if abused or left alone for any extended length of time will revert to their natural ways. Rearing a wild animal requires 12 weeks for an infant or 24 weeks for a juvenile. The DC to rear a wild animal is equal to 15 plus the number of grit dice that the animal will have when fully mature.

Tame a Feral Domestic Animal (DC varies): Some domestic animals become feral when raised away from human contact. A classic example, are the mustangs that roam the west. Unlike wild animals, a character can tame

VEHICLES AND SKILLS

Folks got around in a variety of fashions in the Old West. Of course, the standard was your own two feet; however, horses, coaches, wagons, trains, and riverboats were also common conveyances. How does a cowpoke in *Sidewinder: Recoiled* use or operate any of these means of transportation? The answer is with skills.

There are five skills in *Sidewinder: Recoiled* that deal with conveyances. Handle Animal allows a character to perform as a teamster, driving an animal-drawn wagon or coach. The Ride skill allows a cowboy to ride a horse (or camel, ox, etc.). Less commonly used is the Operate Vehicle skill. The Operate Vehicle skill encompasses three categories: aircraft, ground vehicles, and watercraft. These skills allow a character to use vehicles that travel in the air, on the ground, or in the water.

In order to determine which of the many forms of transportation each of these skills covers, all vehicles are separated into ***classes***. Each class is exclusively governed by a particular skill, which may also control the use of other classes. Listed below are all vehicle classes appearing in the Wild West, along with the skill that governs their use.

Airships
Operate Vehicle (aircraft)
This class covers hot-air balloons, dirigibles, aerostats and any other flying vehicle that achieves lift through buoyant gases.

Animal-Drawn Vehicles
Handle Animal
This class covers all horse and ox-drawn wagons, carriages, and coaches.

Human-Powered Boats
Operate Vehicle (watercraft)
This class includes all boats propelled by paddles, poles, or oars. Canoes, kayaks, rafts, and skiffs all belong to this category.

Human-Powered Ground Vehicles
Operate Vehicle (ground vehicles)
This class includes the bicycle and related vehicles.

Motorized Ground Vehicles
Operate Vehicle (ground vehicles)
All stream-powered ground vehicles fall into this class. This includes the Iron Horse as well as, in later years, the horseless carriage.

Riding Animals
Ride
This class of transportation covers the riding of all animals, including horses, camels, oxen, etc.

Sailing Ships
Operate Vehicle (watercraft)
Any ship with sails, independent of size or the possession of steam engines and screws, belongs to this class.

Steamships
Operate Vehicle (watercraft)
This class covers all ships exclusively powered by steam engines. The most common vehicle of this sort in the Wild West was the paddle wheeler.

Submersibles
Operate Vehicle (watercraft)
This class covers all vehicles that travel underwater, including diving bells and submarines.

(or "break") even fully mature specimens of these critters. Taming a feral domestic animal requires one week. The DC to tame a feral critter is equal to 10 plus the number of grit dice that the animal possesses.

Try Again?: Yes for handling, pushing, taming, teaching, or training animals. Maybe for driving a team. When driving a team, however, most failed Handle Animal checks have consequences that eliminate the option to try again. No for rearing a wild animal.

Special: A character can take 10 or take 20 when handling, pushing, taming, teaching, or training animals. When driving a team a character can take 10 but not 20. A character cannot take 10 or take 20 when rearing a wild animal.

An untrained character uses Charisma checks to handle and push animals as well as to drive a team. Untrained characters cannot tame, teach, rear or train animals.

A character that has the Animal Affinity feat gains a +2 bonus on all Handle Animal checks as long as the character has at least 1 rank in the skill.

Synergy: A character with 5 or more ranks in Handle Animal receives a +2 synergy bonus on Ride checks when riding a mount that the character has trained.

Time: See above. Teaching, rearing, taming, or training an animal requires a number of days. The character does not have to spend every hour training the critter; 3 hours per day is enough. (Spending more than 3 hours per day

does not reduce the number of days required.) However, the days spent in training must be consecutive; if the character does not complete the training during a period of consecutive days, the effort is wasted. When teaching, rearing, taming, or training an animal the Handle Animal check occurs halfway through the time required. If the check succeeds, the character must still invest the remainder of the time to complete the training. If the check fails, the character must begin again if attempting to teach, tame or train a domestic animal. However, if the failed check was for rearing a wild animal the critter proves to be untamable and the character need not complete the rearing.

Hide (Dex)

Armor Penalty

Using this skill, a character can use shadows to conceal movement, or use the cover of dense mesquite brush to slowly approach a Comanche encampment unseen, or avoid being spotted while following a bounty through the streets of Laredo.

"If you can see them, they're not Apaches."
Captain Kirby York – *Fort Apache, 1948*

Check: A character's Hide check is opposed by the Spot check of anyone in a position to see the character. The character can move up to one-half normal speed without incurring a penalty to a Hide check. At more than one-half and up to the character's full speed, the character incurs a –5 penalty. It is nearly impossible (–20 penalty) to hide while attacking, running, or charging.

In addition, the size of the character will determine a modifier to the Hide check:

Table 3.33: Hide Check Modifiers

Size	Modifier	Size	Modifier
Fine	+16	Large	–4
Diminutive	+12	Huge	–8
Tiny	+8	Gargantuan	–12
Small	+4	Colossal	–16
Medium-size	+0		

If people are observing the character, even casually, the character cannot hide. The character can run around a corner, duck out of sight, and then hide. However, the observers will still know where the character last went.

Cover and concealment grant circumstance bonuses to Hide checks, as shown below. Note that a character cannot hide with less than one-half cover or concealment.

Table 3.34: Cover and Concealment and Hide Checks

Cover or Concealment	Circumstance Bonus
Three-quarters	+5
Nine-tenths	+10

Creating a Diversion to Hide: A character can use the Bluff skill to assist in hiding. A successful Bluff check can give the character the momentary diversion needed to attempt a Hide check. While the others are distracted, a character can make a Hide check if he or she can get to a hiding place of some kind. (As a general guideline, the hiding place has to be within 1 foot for every rank the character has in Hide.) However, because the character has to move fast, The Hide check incurs a –10 penalty.

Tailing: A character can use Hide to tail a person through public places. Using the skill in this manner assumes that there are other people milling about, among whom the character can mingle to remain unnoticed. If a subject is unsuspecting, they make a Spot check (opposed by the character's Hide check) after each hour of tailing. However, if the subject is worried about being followed, he or she can make a Spot check every course change (turning a street corner, exiting a building, and so on).

Special: A character can take 10 when making a Hide check, but cannot take 20.

Time: A Hide check is a move action.

Intimidate (Cha)

The character has developed the ability to force others to do what he or she desires of them, without immediately resorting to physical violence. A character can accomplish this by bullying, browbeating, insulting, threatening, embarrassing, or using the sheer force of his or her personality or imposing presence.

"He's a murderer. A hired killer. His nose was bit off in a fight."

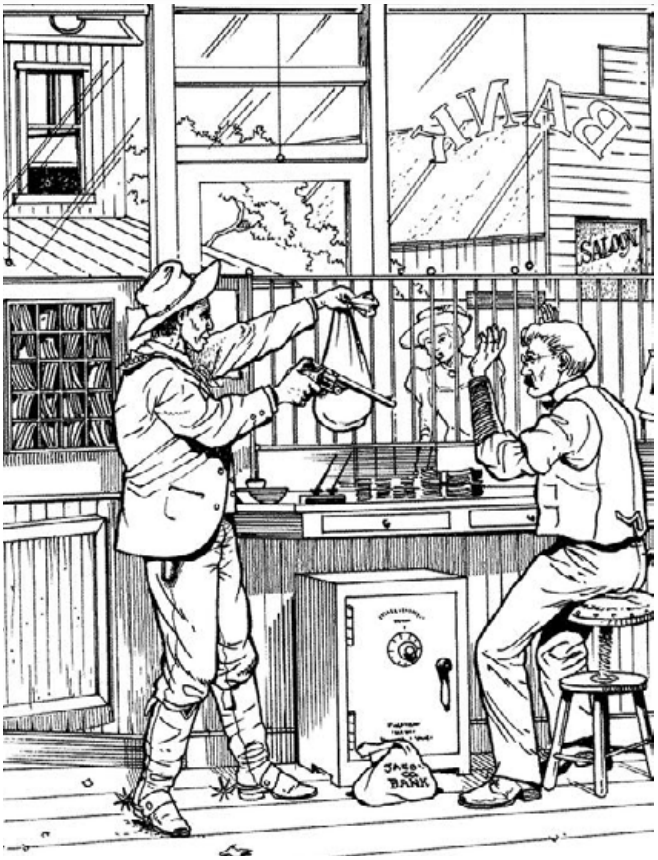
"If I was going to be scared, I'd be scared of the fellow who bit it off, not him!"

Jackson Two-Bears and Frankie Ballou – *Cat Ballou, 1965*

Check: With a successful check, a character can forcibly persuade another character to perform some task or behave in a certain way. An hombre's Intimidate check is opposed by the target's level check (1d20 + the target's character level or Grit Dice). Any modifiers that a target may have on Will saving throws against fear effects apply to this level check. If the check succeeds, the character may treat the target as friendly for 10 minutes, but only for purposes of actions taken while in the character's presence. That is, while intimidated, the target retains his or her normal attitude, but will chat, advise, offer limited help, or advocate on behalf of the character. (See Table 3.21: Attitudes on page 72 for details).

Circumstances dramatically affect the effectiveness of an Intimidate check. There are limits to what a successful Intimidate check can do. The character cannot force someone to obey his or her every command or do something that endangers that person's life. If the check fails by more than 5, the target may actually do the opposite of what the character wishes.

Frightening Displays: If the victim is subjected to a



threatening display (such as straightening a horseshoe bare-handed) prior to the intimidation, the Judge may decide to grant a +2 circumstance bonus to the Intimidate check. Successful execution of a threatening display usually requires an ability or skill check (such as a DC 20 Strength check to bend that horseshoe). The display does not need to be a show of strength. A successful gunplay check, or shooting a cigar out of the victim's lips, or even a frightening display of intellect, might garner a circumstance bonus in the right situation.

Showdowns (DC opposed Intimidate check): During a showdown, every hombre does his level best to shake their opponent's confidence, thereby causing the opponent to hesitate ever so slightly. Of course in a gunfight, the slightest hesitation leads to a dirt nap. *Sidewinder: Recoiled* simulates this contest of wills by opposed Intimidate checks. Losers suffer a –2 penalty to their initiative check in the upcoming fast draw round. If a cowpoke loses the opposed Intimidate check by 5 or more, the penalty increases to –4.

If more than two gunslingers are involved in a showdown, each hombre makes a separate Intimidate check. Each check is compared with highest Intimidate check from the opposition, and if it is lower, that cowpoke receives a –2 penalty on the upcoming initiative check. If that cowpoke's Intimidate check looses by 5 or more, then the penalty becomes –4. (See Showdowns on page 206 for more details and an example).

A gunslinger immune to fear effects participates normally in the showdown. However, he or she does not suffer any of the adverse effects for losing an opposed Intimidate check.

Try Again?: No. Even if the initial check succeeds, the other character can only be intimidated so much, and trying again does not help. If the initial check fails, the other character has become more firmly resolved to resist the intimidator, and trying again is futile.

Special: A character can take 10 when making an Intimidate check, but cannot take 20.

A character immune to fear effects cannot be intimidated.

A character may add a +2 bonus to the Intimidate check for every size category the character is larger than the target. Conversely, the character incurs a –2 penalty to the check for every size category the character is smaller than the target.

Time: An Intimidate check is a full-round action.

Investigate (Int)

Trained Only

The character has training in crime scene analysis, collecting evidence and deducing answers from that evidence.

Check: A character generally uses Search to discover clues and Investigate to analyze them. If the character has access to a crime laboratory, the character uses the Investigate skill to collect and prepare samples for later analysis in the laboratory. The result of the Investigate check provides bonuses or penalties to the subsequent analysis of the sample.

Analyze Clue (DC 15): The character can make an Investigate check to apply forensics knowledge to a clue. For example, by examining the body of a murdered stagecoach driver and his empty stage, a character might be able to determine what type of weapon was used, whether the stage was or was not moving when the driver subsequently fell to the ground, and possibly whether the driver was attacked from inside or outside of the stage. This function of the Investigate skill does not give the character clues where none existed before. It simply allows a character to extract extra information from a clue found.

The base DC to analyze a clue is 15. The time that has elapsed since the clue was left, and whether or not the scene was disturbed, modify the DC.

Collect Evidence (DC 15): The character can collect and prepare evidentiary material for a laboratory. This use of the Investigate skill requires an evidence kit.

Table 3.35: Investigate DC Modifiers

Circumstances	DC Modifier
Every day since event (max modifier +10)	+2
Scene is outdoors	+5
Scene slightly disturbed	+2
Scene moderately disturbed	+4
Scene extremely disturbed	+6

To collect a piece of evidence, make an Investigate check (DC 15). If the character succeeds, the evidence is usable by a crime laboratory. If the character fails, a crime laboratory analysis can be done, but the laboratory incurs a –5 penalty on any necessary checks. If the character fails by 5 or more, the laboratory analysis simply cannot be done. On the other hand, if the character succeeds by 10 or more, the laboratory gains a +2 circumstance bonus on its checks to analyze the material.

This function of the Investigate skill does not provide a character with evidentiary items. It simply allows the character to collect items he or she has found in a manner that best aids in later analysis at a crime laboratory.

Try Again?: Generally, analyzing a clue again does not add new insight unless another clue is introduced. A particular piece of evidence can only be collected once, unless some was left behind at the scene.

Special: A character can take 10 when making an Investigate check, but cannot take 20.

Collecting evidence requires an evidence kit. If the character does not have the appropriate kit, the character incurs a –4 penalty on the check.

Synergy: A character with 5 or more ranks in Investigate receives a +2 synergy bonus on Knowledge (art) checks when trying to detect a forged piece of art.

Time: Analyzing a clue is a full-round action. Collecting evidence generally requires 1d4 minutes per object.

Jump (Str)

Armor Penalty

A character uses this skill when attempting to jump across a narrow ravine, drop from the top of a water tower, or leap from one tree branch to another.

Check: The DC and the distance the character can cover vary according to the type of jump the character is attempting.

The Jump check is modified by the character's speed. The following specific DC's assume a speed of 30 feet (the speed of a typical human). If the speed is less than 30 feet, the character incurs a penalty of –6 for every 10 feet of speed less than 30. If the speed is greater than 30 feet, the character gains a bonus of +4 for every 10 feet over 30. For instance, a typical horse with a speed of 60 feet gains a +12 bonus on Jump checks.

If the character has ranks in the Jump skill and succeeds on a check, the character lands on his or her feet (when appropriate) and can move as far as the character's remaining movement allows. If the character attempts a Jump check untrained, the character lands prone unless he or she beats the DC by 5 or more. Standing from a prone position is a move action.

Distance moved by jumping counts against a character's maximum movement in a round. A character can start a jump at the end of one turn and complete the jump at the beginning of his or her next turn.

Long Jump (DC varies): This is a horizontal jump, made across a gap such as a chasm or stream. At the midpoint of the jump, the character attains a vertical height equal to one-quarter the horizontal distance. The DC for the jump is equal to the distance jumped (in feet) + 5. The DC's for long jumps of 5 to 30 feet are listed in Table 3.36: Long Jump DC's. A character cannot jump a distance greater than his or her normal speed.

All Jump DC's covered here assume that the character can move at least 20 feet in a straight line before attempting the jump. If this is not the case, double the DC for the jump.

Table 3.36: Long Jump DC's

Long Jump Distance	DC [1]
5 feet	10
10 feet	15
15 feet	20
20 feet	25
25 feet	30
30 feet	35

[1] Requires a 20-foot move. Without a 20-foot move, double the DC.

If the check fails by less than 5, the character does not clear the distance, but can make a Reflex save (DC 15) to grab the far edge of the gap. The character ends his or her movement grasping the far edge. If that leaves the character dangling over a chasm or gap, getting up requires a move action and a Climb check (DC 15).

High Jump (DC varies): This is a vertical leap, executed to grasp something overhead, such as a tree limb or ledge. The DC for the jump is 2 + the height (in feet) x 4. The DC's for high jumps of 1 to 8 feet are listed in Table 3.37: High Jump DC's.

All Jump DC's covered here assume that the character can move at least 20 feet in a straight line before attempting the jump. If this is not the case, double the DC for the jump.

Table 3.37: High Jump DC's

High Jump Distance	DC [1]
1 foot	6
2 feet	10
3 feet	14
4 feet	18
5 feet	22
6 feet	26
7 feet	30
8 feet	34

[1] Requires a 20-foot move. Without a running start, double the DC.

If the check succeeds, the character can reach the height. The character grasps the object he or she was trying to reach. If the character wishes to climb up, the character can do so with a move action and a Climb check (DC 15). If the Jump check fails, the character does not reach the height, and lands on his or her feet in the same square from which the character jumped.

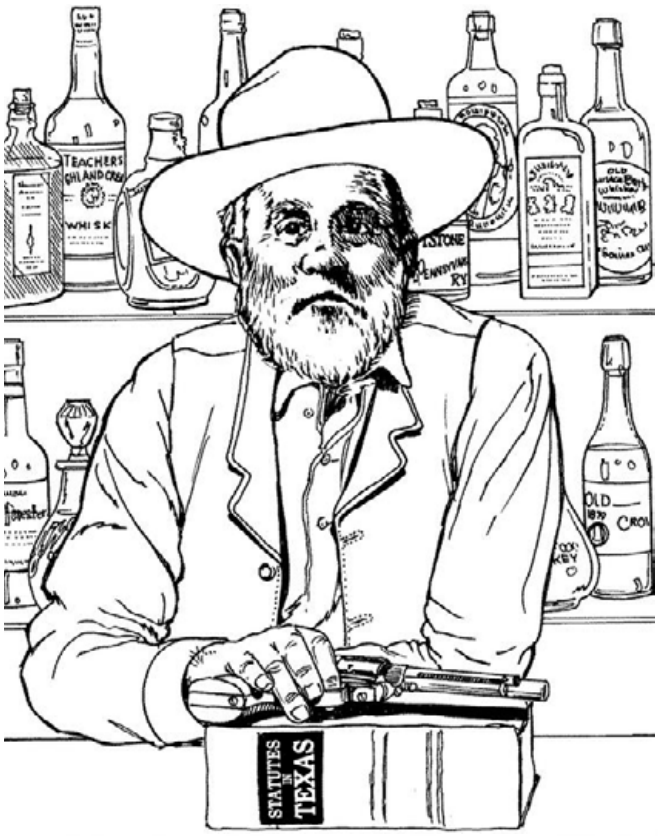
The difficulty of reaching a given height varies according to the size of the character or creature. Generally, the maximum height a creature can reach without jumping is given in Table 3.38: Maximum Vertical Reach. (As a Medium-size creature, a typical human can reach 8 feet without jumping.) If the creature is long instead of tall, treat it as one size category smaller.

Table 3.38: Maximum Vertical Reach

Creature Size	Maximum Vertical Reach
Colossal	128 ft.
Gargantuan	64 ft.
Huge	32 ft.
Large	16 ft.
Medium-size	8 ft.
Small	4 ft.
Tiny	2 ft.
Diminutive	1 ft.
Fine	0.5 ft.

Hop Up (DC 10): The character can jump up onto an object as tall as his or her waist with a Jump check (DC 10). Doing so counts as 10 feet of movement. The character does not need to get a running start to hop up (the DC is not doubled if you do not get a running start).

Jumping Down (DC 15): If intentionally jumping from a height, the character takes less damage than if he or she just falls. The DC to jump down from a height is 15.



The character doesn't have to get a running start to jump down (the DC isn't doubled if the character doesn't get a running start). If the check succeeds, the character takes falling damage as though the distance fallen was 10 feet less than it actually was.

Special: Effects that increase a character's speed also increase the character's jumping distance, since the character's speed modifies the check.

A character can take 10 when making a Jump check. If there is no danger associated with failing, the character can take 20. However, a character cannot take 20 on a Jump check in combat.

A character with the Run feat gains a +2 competence bonus on Jump checks preceded by a 20-foot move.

Synergy: A character with 5 or more ranks in Tumble gains a +2 synergy bonus on Jump checks when jumping down or otherwise making an acrobatic jump.

A character with 5 or more ranks in Jump receives a +2 synergy bonus on Tumble checks when tumbling to reduce falling damage.

Time: Using the Jump skill is either a move action or a full-round action, depending on whether the character starts and completes the jump during a single move action or a full-round action.

Knowledge (Int)

Trained Only

Knowledge isn't just about book learning. Many a man who could neither read nor write was an acknowledged master in his field.

This skill encompasses several categories, each of them treated as a separate skill. These categories are identified and defined below. The number of Knowledge categories has been kept finite on purpose. When trying to determine what Knowledge skill a particular question or field of expertise falls under, use a broad interpretation of the existing categories. Do not arbitrarily make up new categories.

Check: A character makes a Knowledge check to see if the character knows something.

Recall Information (DC varies): The DC for answering a question within the character's field of study is 10 for easy questions, 15 for basic questions, and 20 to 30 for tough questions.

Appraising (DC varies): A character can use Knowledge to appraise the value of an object. The DC will depend on how common or obscure the object. On a success, the character accurately identifies the purchase DC or price of the object. If the check fails, the character thinks the object has a purchase DC 1d2 higher or lower (determine randomly) than the actual value. If the check fails by 5 or more, the character thinks it has a purchase DC 1d4+2 higher or lower than the actual value. The Judge should make the Knowledge roll in secret, so the character will not know the accuracy of the appraisal.

If the Judge is employing the optional Cold Hard Cash rule, the character accurately identifies the purchase price of the object on a successful Knowledge check. On a failed check the character estimates the object to have a purchase price 50% to 150% ([2d6+3] x 10%) of the

actual value. If the check fails by 5 or more, the character estimates the price at 20% to 240% (2d12 x 10%) of the actual value.

The fourteen Knowledge categories, and the topics encompassed by each, are as follows.

Arcane Lore: The occult, magic and the supernatural, astrology, numerology, and similar topics.

Art: Fine arts and graphic arts, including art history and artistic techniques. Antiques, modern art, photography, and performance art forms such as music and dance, among others.

Behavioral Sciences: Psychology, sociology, and criminology.

Business: Business procedures, investment strategies, and corporate structures. Bureaucratic procedures and how to navigate them.

Civics: Law, legislation, litigation, and legal rights and obligations. Political and governmental institutions and processes.

Current Events: Recent happenings in the news, sports, politics, entertainment, and foreign affairs.

Earth and Life Sciences: Biology, botany, genetics, geology, and paleontology. Medicine and forensics.

History: Events, personalities, and cultures of the past. Anthropology, archaeology and antiquities.

Physical Sciences: Astronomy, chemistry, mathematics, physics, and engineering.

Popular Culture: Popular music and personalities, literature, pulp novellas, among others.

Streetwise: Street and urban culture, local underworld personalities and events.

Tactics: Techniques and strategies for disposing and maneuvering forces in combat.

Technology: Current developments in cutting-edge devices, as well as the background necessary to identify various technological devices.

Theology and Philosophy: Liberal arts, ethics, philosophical concepts, and the study of religious faith, practice, and experience.

Try Again?: No. The check represents what a character knows, and thinking about a topic a second time does not let the character suddenly know something never known in the first place.

Special: An untrained Knowledge check is simply an Intelligence check. Without actual training, a character only knows common knowledge about a given subject.

A character can take 10 when making a Knowledge check, but cannot take 20.

Synergy: The Judge may decide that having 5 or more ranks in a specific Knowledge skill provides a character with a +2 synergy bonus when making a related skill check (see Skill Synergy, page 60).

A character with 5 or more ranks in Investigate receives a +2 synergy bonus on Knowledge (art) checks when trying to detect a forged piece of art (see the Craft (visual art) skill, page 70).

A character with 5 or more ranks in Knowledge (art) receives a +2 synergy bonus on Craft (visual art) checks when trying to forge a work of art.

A character with 5 or more ranks in Knowledge (behavioral sciences) receives a +2 synergy bonus on Sense Motive checks when determining an individual's trustworthiness.

A character with 5 or more ranks in Knowledge (business) receives a +2 synergy bonus on Diplomacy checks when dealing with a business's bureaucracy.

A character with 5 or more ranks in Knowledge (civics) receives a +2 synergy bonus on Diplomacy checks when dealing with government agents.

A character with 5 or more ranks in Knowledge (earth and life sciences) receives a +2 synergy bonus when using the Treat Injury skill to perform surgery.

A character with 5 or more ranks in Knowledge (history) receives a +2 synergy bonus on Knowledge (art) checks when appraising an ancient work of art.

A character with 5 or more ranks in Knowledge (streetwise) receives a +2 synergy bonus on Gather Information checks to acquire information about the local black market.

Time: A Knowledge check can be a reaction, but otherwise requires a full-round action.

Listen (Wis)

A character uses this skill to hear faint or distant sounds, such as the snap of twig or the slight jingle of a spur indicating someone attempting an ambush, or the low rumble of thunder from an approaching storm. In addition, a character would use this skill to eavesdrop on the conversation of others.

"What'd you say?"
"You heard me."
"That's what I thought you said."
Mrs. Lily Belle Callahan and Frenchie – *Destry Rides Again, 1939*

Check: Make a Listen check against a DC that reflects how quiet the noise is or against an opposed Move Silently check (see the Move Silently skill, page 86).

Table 3.39: Listen Check DC's

DC	Sound
–20	A gun battle
–10	A saloon brawl
0	A conversation
5	A cowboy wearing spurs walking at a slow pace
10	A shopkeep walking at a slow pace, trying not to make any noise [1]
15	A 1st-level Fast hero sneaking up on someone [1]
20	A mountain lion stalking prey [1]
30	A bird flying through the air
+5	The sound is obscured by a louder noise that has a DC that is greater by 10 or more
+5	Through a door
+15	Through a solid wall

[1] This is actually an opposed check; the DC given is a typical Move Silently check result for such a character or creature.

Table 3.40: Listen Check Modifiers

Condition	Check Penalty
Per 10 feet of distance	–1
Listener distracted	–5
Listener is sleeping	–10

The Judge may call for a Listen check by a character in a position to hear a noise. A character can also voluntarily make a Listen check if he or she wishes to try to hear something in the vicinity. The Judge may make the Listen check in secret so that, if a character hears nothing, the character will not know if the Listen check was successful and there was nothing to be heard, or if the Listen check failed.

Try Again?: A character can make a Listen check every time the opportunity to hear something in a reactive manner arises. As a move action, a character may attempt to hear something he or she failed (or believes to have failed) to hear previously.

Special: When several characters are listening to the same thing, the Judge can make a single 1d20 roll and use it for all of the listeners' skill checks.

A character can take 10 or take 20 when making a Listen check. Taking 20 means the character spends 1 minute attempting to hear something that may or may not be there.

Time: A Listen check is either a reaction (if called for by the Judge) or a move action (if a character actively takes the time to try to hear something).

Move Silently (Dex)

Armor Penalty

The character can move without making a sound, like a bobcat stalking a jackrabbit.

MOVING SILENTLY WHILE CLIMBING

Fate is trying to climb quietly down a cliff into a camp of Union soldiers. If Fate climbs at the safest rate, he moves one-eighth his speed with a single move action (1/4 x 1/2, where the 1/4 arises from climbing and the 1/2 from moving silently). At this speed, Fate suffers no penalty to his Climb check and a –4 penalty to his Move Silently check. If Fate were in a rush, he could move at a rate of one-quarter his speed for each move action (1/2 x 1/2). However, when moving at this accelerated rate, Fate would receive a –5 penalty on his Climb check, while receiving the same –4 penalty to his Move Silently check.

Check: A character's Move Silently check is opposed by the Listen check of anyone in a position to hear the character. A character can move up to one-half normal speed without a penalty. At more than one-half speed and up to full speed, the character incurs a –5 penalty. It is nearly impossible (–20 penalty) to move silently while attacking, running, or charging.

Special: A character can take 10 when making a Move Silently check, but cannot take 20.

A character may attempt to move silently while climbing or swimming. However, the character suffers a –4 penalty on the Move Silently check and the character's speed is reduced by one-half.

Time: Move Silently is a move action.

Navigate (Int)

The character is skilled in the ability to identify his or her location by taking a bearing on landmarks, checking the stars, or by having knowledge of river currents. A character would also use this skill to mark a trail or make a map for others to follow.

"What a country. Forty miles from mud hole to mud hole."

Captain Kirby York – *Fort Apache, 1948*

Check: Navigate has a variety of uses pertaining to knowing one's location and bearings.

Trailblazing (DC varies): Make a Navigate check when a character is trying to find his or her way to a distant location without directions or other specific guidance. Generally, a character does not need to make a check to find a local street or other common urban site, or to follow an accurate map. However, the character might make a check to wend his or her way through a dense forest or a labyrinth of mine tunnels.

For movement over a great distance, make a Navigate check. The DC depends on the length of the trip. If the check succeeds, the character moves via the most reasonable course toward his or her goal. If the character fails, he or she still reaches the goal, but it takes the character twice as long (the character loses time backtracking and correcting his or her path). If the character fails by more than 5, then he or she travels the expected time, but becomes lost halfway to the intended destination.

A character may make a second Navigate check (DC 20) to regain the path. If the check succeeds, the character continues on to the destination; the total time for the trip is twice the normal time. If the check fails, the

Table 3.41: Navigate DC's

Length of Trip	DC
Short (a few hours)	20
Moderate (a day or two)	22
Long (up to a week)	25
Extreme (more than a week)	28

character loses one-half a day before he or she can try again. The character keeps trying until successful, losing one-half a day for each failure.

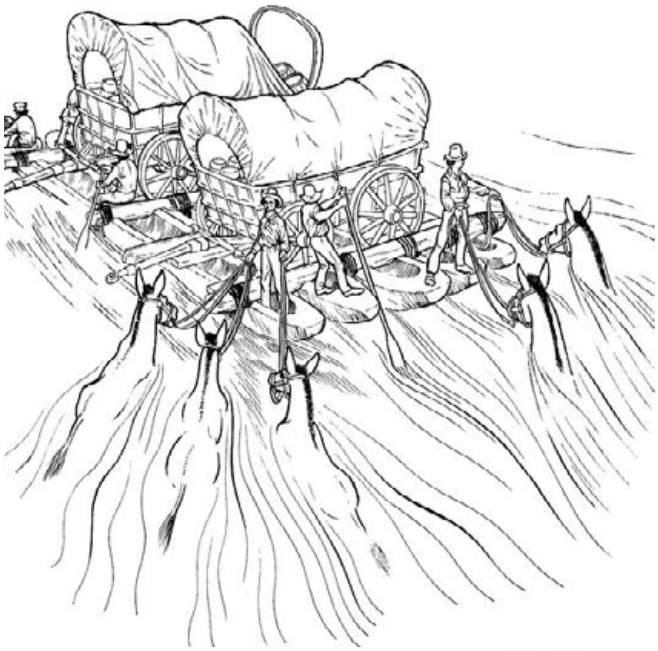
Intuit Direction (DC 20): When faced with multiple choices, such as at a branch in a mine tunnel, a character can make a Navigate check (DC 20) to intuit the choice that takes the character toward a known destination. If unsuccessful, the character chooses the wrong path, but at the next juncture, with a successful check, the character realizes the mistake.

A character cannot use this function of Navigate to find a path to a site if he or she has no idea where the site is located. The Judge may choose to make the Navigate check in secret, so the character will not know whether he or she is following the correct path.

Determine Location (DC 15): By checking the constellations or other natural landmarks, a character can use Navigate to determine his or her position on earth without the use of a compass or similar equipment. The character must have a clear view of the night sky to make this check. The DC is 15. If using navigational equipment (compass, sextant, stellar almanac, etc.), the character gains a +2 circumstance bonus on a Navigation check to determine location.

Special: A character can take 10 when making a Navigate check. A character can take 20 only when determining location, not when trailblazing.

Synergy: A character with 5 or more ranks in Navigate receives a +2 synergy bonus on Survival skill checks when trying to avoid getting lost.



A character with 5 or more ranks in Survival receives a +2 synergy bonus on Navigate skill checks to intuit direction or determine location.

Time: A Navigate check is a full-round action.

Operate Vehicle (Dex)

This skill allows a character to operate wind, motor, and human-powered vehicles. It actually encompasses three different categories: aircraft, ground vehicles, and watercraft. Each category is treated as a separate skill. The character must purchase skill ranks separately for each category.

Check: Routine tasks, such as ordinary vehicle maneuvers, do not require a skill check. Make a check only when unusual circumstances exist (inclement weather or an icy surface for a ground vehicle), the character is driving during a dramatic situation (being chased or attacked), or driving recklessly (when trying to reach a destination in a limited amount of time). When operating a vehicle, the character can attempt simple maneuvers or stunts.

Most vehicles possess a maneuver modifier that applies to all Operate Vehicle checks made when controlling one of those vehicles. This modifier is provided within each vehicle description (see Conveyances, page 161).

Aircraft: The character understands the principles underlying airborne vehicles, and is able to operate hot-air balloons, dirigibles, and aerostats. A character flying

WHAT IS AN AERONAUT?

In the d20 Modern Roleplaying Game the operation of aircraft requires the use of Pilot skill. However, in the Old West if you call a man a pilot, you are saying that the man is a riverboat or harbor pilot. This, coupled with the fact that the default varieties of aircraft covered by the Pilot skill (fixed winged aircraft, helicopters, etc.) did not exist in the western era, instigated the change in the skill's function, and name, to Operate Vehicle (aircraft).

An aeronaut is, specifically, the navigator or operator of a lighter-than-air vehicle. While such aircraft were not common in the Old West, they did exist. In particular, some hombres may have gotten their first exposure to hot-air balloons during the War of Secession. Occasionally, brave souls were launched skyward in reconnaissance balloons in order to better scout enemy lines.

an aircraft other than an airship is considered non-proficient with that vessel, suffering a –4 penalty on all Operate Vehicle (aircraft) skill checks.

Ground Vehicles: The character knows how to operate all mechanical ground transports including locomotives and horseless carriages. A character driving a conveyance other than a motorized ground vehicle suffers a –4 penalty on all Operate Vehicle (ground vehicles) skill checks.

Watercraft: The character can operate watercraft of all varieties. A character that operates a watercraft other than a human-powered boat suffers a –4 penalty on all Operate Vehicle (watercraft) skill checks.

Try Again?: Most Operate Vehicle checks have consequences for failure that make trying again impossible.

Special: A character can take 10 when operating a vehicle, but cannot take 20.

When operating a vehicle, with which the character is not proficient, all Operate Vehicle skill checks suffer a –4 penalty. By acquiring the Vehicle Proficiency feat, a character may learn to operate specific classes of vehicles without the –4 penalty (see Vehicles and Skills, page 80). Each time the feat is selected, the character becomes proficient with a new class of vehicles.

Time: An Operate Vehicle check is a move action.

Perform (Cha)

The open range can be a tedious place, one where many cowpokes spend any idle time entertaining themselves and their compadres with song around the campfire. The character has training in a particular form of public entertainment and performance. A character may be skilled in more than one category of performance, each with its own skill ranks.

"Is dancing hard to learn?"
"No, not the way I do it."
Lina Patch and Howard Kemp – *The Naked Spur, 1953*

This skill encompasses several categories, each of them treated as a separate skill. The number of Perform categories has been kept finite on purpose. When trying to determine what Perform skill a particular type of performance falls under, use a broad interpretation of the existing categories. Do not arbitrarily make up new categories.

Check: The character is accomplished in some type of artistic expression and knows how to put on a performance. A character can impress audiences through talent and skill. The quality of a performance depends on the character's skill check result.

The eight Perform categories, and the qualities each one encompasses, are as follows.

Act: The character is a gifted actor, capable of performing drama, comedy, or action-oriented roles with a high level of skill.

Dance: The character is a gifted dancer, capable of performing rhythmic and patterned bodily movements to music.

Table 3.42: Perform Check Results

Result	Performance
10	Amateur performance. Audience may appreciate the performance, but is not impressed.
15	Routine performance. Audience enjoys the performance, but it is not exceptional.
20	Great performance. Audience highly impressed.
25	Memorable performance. Audience enthusiastic.
30	Masterful performance. Audience awed.

Keyboards: The character is a musician gifted with a talent for playing keyboard instruments such as piano and organ.

Percussion Instruments: The character is a musician gifted with a talent for playing percussion instruments, such as drums, cymbals, triangle, xylophone, and tambourine.

Sing: The character is a musician gifted with a talent for producing musical tones with the voice.

Stand-Up: The character is a gifted comedian, capable of performing a stand-up routine before an audience. This category covers most vaudeville or showboat performances.

Stringed Instruments: The character is a musician gifted with a talent for playing stringed instruments, such as banjo, guitar, harp, lute, sitar, and violin.

Wind Instruments: The character is a musician gifted with a talent for playing wind instruments, such as flute, bugle, trumpet, tuba, bagpipes, and trombone.

Try Again?: Not for the same performance and audience.

Special: A character can take 10 when making a Perform check, but cannot take 20.

A character without an appropriate instrument automatically fails any Perform (keyboards), Perform (percussion instruments), Perform (stringed instruments), or Perform (wind instruments) check attempted. At the Judge's discretion, impromptu instruments may be employed, but the performer incurs a –4 penalty on the check because the equipment, although usable, is inappropriate for the skill.

Synergy: A character with 5 or more ranks in Tumble may receive a +2 synergy bonus on Perform (dance) checks when performing a dance with acrobatic or aerial maneuvers.

A character with 5 or more ranks in Perform (act) receives a +2 synergy bonus on Disguise checks when pretending to be someone else.

Time: A Perform check usually requires at least several minutes to an hour or more.

Profession (Wis)

The character has training in a livelihood or professional role. The Profession skill in *Sidewinder: Recoiled* actually encompasses several occupations in

which a character could earn an income. While a character could easily make a living through the various Craft, Perform, or Knowledge skills, Profession represents the combination of basic business principles with a broader application of less specific knowledge and skill.

"There are only two professions open to women these days. Hers and yours. Hers is respectable."

Woman to Lorena Dumont – *Frontier Gal, 1945*

Check: This skill will function differently depending on whether the Judge is using the Wealth System or the optional Cold Hard Cash rule (see Finances, Money, and Wealth, page 51).

Wealth System: The Wealth System automatically assumes that a character is plying their profession inbetween adventures, or that the character can pursue the profession simultaneously to adventuring. Characters make Profession checks to improve their Wealth bonus every time they attain a new level. The DC for the check is a character's current Wealth bonus. If a character succeeds at the Profession check, his or her Wealth bonus increases by +1. For every 5 by which a character exceeds the DC, the Wealth bonus increases by an additional +1. A character cannot take 10 or take 20 when making a Profession check to improve his or her Wealth bonus.

How many ranks a character has in the Profession skill (including ranks the character may have just acquired after gaining a level) also adds to the Wealth bonus increase received upon gaining a new level. In addition to the Wealth bonus increase a character gains from his or her Profession check result (if the check succeeds), the number of ranks a character has in this skill increases the Wealth bonus as follows.

Table 3.43: Profession Check Results

Ranks	Wealth Bonus Increase
1–5	+1
6–10	+2
11–15	+3
16–20	+4
21–23	+5

Cold Hard Cash: If the Judge is using the optional Cold Hard Cash rule, a character must be actively pursuing their profession to earn an income. Since adventuring can be disruptive to employment, a character may not be able to earn a paycheck.

Find Employment (DC varies): To obtain employment, a character must make a weekly search by contacting prospective employers and seeking job openings. At the end of the week, the character makes a Profession skill check to "find a job". The DC of this check depends on the wage that the character desires to obtain: DC 10 + weekly wage (in dollars). A character cannot take 10 or take 20 when making a Profession check to find employment. At the end of a week of employment, a character will earn a paycheck equal to the desired wage.

Maintain Employment (DC varies): At the end of each week of employment, a character must make a Profession check against a DC equal to 5 + the character's weekly wage. If the check fails, the character forfeits all pay for the week. If the check fails by 5 or more the character loses his or her job.

Entrepreneurship (DC 15): If characters wish to take on short-term jobs, run their own business, or speculate on the markets between adventures, they may make a weekly Profession skill check against a DC of 15. If the check fails, the character's schemes come to naught, and no money is made. If the check is a success, the character makes $1 for every point by which the check succeeds. The character may not take 10 or 20 on such Profession checks.

Synergy: When using the optional Cold Hard Cash rule, a character with 5 or more ranks in a skill that is essential for the performance of a particular job may gain a +2 synergy bonus on Profession checks. For example, the Judge might grant a character the synergy bonus for possessing 5 ranks in Diplomacy if the character was employed as a manservant. Or, a character with 5 ranks in the Ride skill might be granted the synergy bonus if he or she worked as a ranch hand.

Special: If the Judge deems it appropriate, characters can add their Profession modifier when making Reputation checks to deal with a work- or career-related situations.

Every time a character takes the Windfall feat, he or she gains a cumulative +1 bonus on all Profession checks.

Time: If using the Wealth System a Profession check is made every time the character gains a level. When using the optional Cold Hard Cash rule, a Profession check can be made once a week when actively working or looking for employment.

Read/Write Language (None)

Trained Only

The history of humanity is measured in the power of the written word. From the heroic epics of the Greeks to a simple document beginning with "When in the Course of human events…" reading and writing has been the foundation upon which great civilizations have been built.

"You should read the Bible, Mr. Rumson."
"I have read the Bible, Mrs. Fenty."
"Didn't that discourage you about drinking?"
"No, but it sure killed my appetite for reading."
Mrs. Fenty and Ben Rumson – *Paint Your Wagon, 1969*

The Read/Write Language skill does not work like a standard skill.

- A character automatically knows how to read and write his or her native language; the character does not need to purchase ranks to do so. Usually, a character's native language is determined by his or her cultural heritage (see Character Concepts, page 24).
- Each additional language costs 1 rank. When a character adds a rank to Read/Write Language, he or she chooses a new language. The character can now read and write in that language.
- A character never makes Read/Write Language checks. A character either knows how to read and write a specific language or does not.
- If a character wishes to speak a languages he or she can already read and write, he or she must purchase a Speak Language rank in that language.
- A character can choose any language, modern or ancient. (See Table 3.44: Language Groups for suggestions.) The Judge might determine that a character cannot learn a specific language due to the circumstances of the campaign.

Language Groups

There are thousands of languages to choose from when a character buys ranks in Speak Language or Read/Write Language. The following table lists a few possibilities, sorted into groups of related languages.

A language's group does not matter when a character

Table 3.44: Language Groups

Language Group	Sample Languages within the Group
Algonquian:	Algonkin, Arapaho, Blackfoot, Cheyenne, Shawnee.
Armenian:	Armenian.
Athapaskan:	Apache, Chipewayan, Navaho.
Attic:	Ancient Greek*, Greek.
Baltic:	Latvian, Lithuanian.
Braille:	Any.
Caddoan:	Caddo, Pawnee, Wichita.
Celtic:	Gaelic (Irish), Gaelic (Scots), Welsh.
Chinese:	Cantonese, Mandarin.
Finno-Lappic:	Estonian, Finnish, Lapp.
Germanic:	Afrikaans, Danish, Dutch, English, Flemish, German, Icelandic, Norwegian, Swedish, Yiddish.
Hamo-Semitic:	Coptic*, Middle Egyptian*.
Indic:	Hindi, Punjabi, Sanskrit*, Urdu.
Iranian:	Farsi, Pashto.
Iroquoian:	Cherokee, Iroquois, Tuscarora.
Japanese:	Japanese.
Korean:	Korean.
Muskogean:	Alabama, Chickasaw, Choctaw, Creek, Seminole.
Romance:	French, Italian, Latin*, Portuguese, Romanian, Spanish.
Sahaptian:	Nez Perce, Sahaptin (Yakima), Sahaptin (Umatilla).
Semitic:	Akkadian (aka Babylonian)*, Ancient Hebrew*, Arabic, Aramaic*, Hebrew.
Signaling:	Morse Code, Semaphore, Sign Language, Smoke Signals.
Siouian:	Crow, Dakota, Ho-Chunk, Iowa, Lakota, Mandan, Nakota, Osage.
Slavic:	Belorussian, Bulgarian, Czech, Polish, Russian, Serbo-Croatian, Slovak, Ukrainian.
Tibeto-Burman:	Burmese, Sherpa, Tibetan.
Turkic:	Azerbaijani, Turkish, Uzbek.
Ugric:	Hungarian (aka Magyar).
Uto-Aztecan:	Comanche, Kiowa, Shoshone, Ute.

*This is an ancient language. In the modern world it is only spoken by scholars, or in some cases, by small populations in isolated corners of the world.

is buying ranks in Speak Language or Read/Write Language. Language groups only pertain to the Smart hero's Linguist talent.

The signaling language group is unusual in that it includes non-verbal languages. A character cannot apply the Read/Write Languages skill to these languages. Instead, a character uses the Speak Languages skill. They have been included here to keep the languages on a common table.

Braille is another unusual group in that Braille is an alternate means to read a language (of course, without requiring eyesight). When a character purchases a rank in Braille the character must select the individual language that the character wishes to learn to read in Braille. If a character wishes to read several languages in Braille, he or she must purchase a separate Read/Write Language skill rank for each language.

This list is by no means exhaustive—there are many more language groups, and most groups contain more languages than those listed here.

Repair (Int)

Trained Only

The character has a knack for fixing damaged machinery or jury-rigging broken equipment. The ability to repair a busted firing pin, fix the boiler on a steam engine stranded in the middle of the badlands, or splice a telegraph wire running across Indian lands (often with nothing more than baling wire and chewing tobacco) can spell the difference between life and death.

Check: A character makes Repair checks to fix complex electric or mechanical devices. The Judge determines the DC. In general, simple repairs will have a DC ranging from 10 to 15 and require no more than a few minutes to accomplish. More complex repair work will have a DC of 20 or higher and can require an hour or more to complete. Making repairs may also involve a monetary cost if spare parts or new components are needed, necessitating a Wealth check (or cash expenditure). Using discretion, the Judge may decide that the type of repair the character is attempting doesn't require a Wealth check (or cash layout).

Table 3.45: Repair Tasks

Repair Task	Purchase DC	Materials Price	Repair DC	Time
Simple (tool, simple weapon)	4	$0.25	10	1 min.
Moderate (mechanical or electric component)	7	$2	15	10 min.
Complex (mechanical or electric device)	10	$5	20	1 hr.
Advanced (cutting-edge mechanical or electric device)	13	$11	25	10 hr.

Jury-Rig (DC varies): A character can choose to attempt jury-rigged, or temporary, repairs. Doing this reduces the purchase DC by 3 (or reduces the materials price by 50%) and the Repair check DC by 5, and allows the character to shorten the time required to make the check (to as short as a full-round action). However, a jury-rigged repair can only fix a single problem with a single skill check, and the temporary repair only lasts until the end of the current scene or encounter. An object can only be jury-rigged once, and afterwards must be fully repaired to be useable.

Try Again?: Yes, though in some specific cases, the Judge may decide that a failed Repair check has negative ramifications that prevent repeated checks.

Special: A character can take 10 or take 20 on a Repair check. However, a character cannot take 20 when making a Repair check to accomplish a jury-rig repair.

Repair requires and electrical tool kit or a mechanical tool kit, depending on the task. If a character does not have the appropriate tools, he or she incurs a –4 penalty on the check.

A character with the Mechanical feat and at least 1 rank in this skill gains a +2 bonus on all Repair checks.

The jury-rig application of the Repair skill can be used untrained.

Synergy: A character with 5 or more ranks in Craft (mechanical) or Craft (electric) receives a +2 synergy bonus on Repair checks made to repair mechanical or electric devices, respectively.

Time: See Table 3.45: Repair Tasks for guidelines. A character can make a jury-rigged repair as a full-round action, but the repair only lasts until the end of the current encounter.

Research (Int)

The character is familiar with the arcane mysteries of the book, the newspaper, and the dusty library. A character with the Research skill knows how to efficiently find information in the stacks of the town library, company reports and ledgers, or back issues of the local newspaper. Research covers finding answers hidden in the written word. The Research skill does not cover talking to people and asking questions, that is the role of the Gather Information skill.

Check: Researching a topic requires time, skill, and some luck. The Judge determines how obscure a particular topic is (the more obscure, the higher the DC) and what kind of information might be available, depending on where a character is conducting the research.

Information ranges from general to protected. Given enough time (usually 1d4 hours) and a successful skill check, the character gets a general idea about a given topic. This assumes that the character has a way to acquire restricted or protected information, and that obvious reasons do not exist that make such information unavailable.

The higher the check result, the more accurate and

Table 3.48: Typical Research Check DC's

Type of Information	DC
General	10
Specific	15
Restricted	20
Protected	25

complete the information. If the character wants to discover a specific fact, date, map, or similar bit of information, the Judge may add anywhere from +5 to +15 to the DC.

Try Again?: Yes.

Special: A character can take 10 or take 20 on a Research check.

A character with the Studious feat gains a +2 bonus on all Research checks.

Time: A Research check requires 1d4 hours.

Ride (Dex)

Any character can sit atop a saddled old nag and make the critter move. However, it takes someone with real skill to leap onto a running mustang and ride bareback at breakneck speed across the prairie while dodging bullets and arrows.

"You know what a bronc' rider is?"
"What?"
"He's a cowboy with his brains kicked out."
Ben Jones and Howdy Lewis – *The Rounders, 1965*

Check: Typical riding actions do not require checks. A character can saddle, mount, ride, and dismount without a problem. Mounting or dismounting an animal is a move action. Controlling a mount in combat is a move action. Some tasks, such as those undertaken in combat or other extreme circumstances, require checks. In addition, attempting trick riding or asking the animal to perform an unusual technique will also require a check.

Guide with Knees (DC 5): A rider can react instantly to guide a properly trained mount with his or her knees, allowing the character the use of both hands for combat or for performing other actions. At the beginning of each round, the character must make a skill check (as a free action). If the skill check succeeds, the character is free to use both hands. If the skill check fails, the character must use one hand to control the mount, leaving only one hand free for combat or other uses.

Stay in Saddle (DC 5): If a character takes damage in combat, or the mount unexpectedly rears or bolts, the character can react instantly to avoid falling.

Sleep in Saddle (DC 10): With a successful skill check, the character can sleep and remain seated in the saddle. Unless being led by a compadre or following another animal, the mount will likely simply stop moving, or move about randomly. If the Ride check fails, the cowpoke falls from the mount. The sleeping character must make a skill check hourly.

Bulldogging (DC 15): With a successful Ride check (DC 15), a cowboy is able to leap from his mount as a free-action in order to make an unarmed attack (including a bull-rush, grapple, tackle, or trip) against an opponent. If the Ride check fails, besides looking right foolish, the cowboy falls to the ground, takes the appropriate falling damage, and looses his attack action.

Cover (DC 15): A character can react instantly to drop down and hang alongside the mount, using it as one-half cover. The character cannot attack while using the mount as cover. If the check fails, the character does not receive the benefit of cover.

Soft Fall (DC 15): A character reacts instantly when falling off of a mount, such as when it falls or is killed, in an attempt to avoid taking damage. If the check fails, the character takes 1d6 points of falling damage.

Leap (DC 15): A character can coax the mount to leap obstacles as part of its movement. Use the character's Ride modifier or the mount's Jump modifier (whichever is lower) when the mount makes its Jump check (see the Jump skill, page 83). The character must make a second Ride check (DC 15) to stay on the mount when it leaps.

Spur Mount (DC 15): The cowboy can spur his mount to greater speed. On a successful Ride skill check (DC 15), the mount's speed increases by 10 feet for one round. Whether the check succeeds or fails, spurring a mount inflicts one point of damage to the mount's grit.

Fast Mount or Dismount (DC 20; armor penalty applies): A character can mount or dismount as a free action. If the character fails the check, mounting or dismounting is a move action. (A character cannot attempt a fast mount or dismount unless he or she still has a move action available this round). If the mount moved more that 5 feet during its last turn, the Ride skill check incurs a –2 circumstance penalty. If the mount was running during its last turn, the circumstance penalty increases to –4.

Fight while Mounted (DC 20): While in combat, the character can attempt to control a mount that lacks training in combat riding (see the Handle Animal skill 78). If the combat involves loud noises such as gunfire, the DC increases by 5. A character makes the skill check to control an untrained mount at the beginning of a round. If the check succeeds, the character uses only a move action, and the character can use his or her attack action to do something else. If the check fails, the character can do nothing else that round. If the check fails by more than 5, the character loses control of the animal, which then bolts at maximum speed away from the combat. Once a mount has bolted, regaining control of the mount requires a successful DC 25 Ride check.

For animals trained in combat riding, a character does not need to make this check. Instead, the character can use a move action to have the critter perform a trick (commonly, to attack). The character can use his or her attack action normally.

Comanche Riding (DC 20): Comanche riding is an advanced version of the cover task (see above). If a character makes the DC check, he or she gains the one-half cover bonus and can still perform an attack action. If the Ride check fails, the character must make a DC 20 Reflex save or fall from the mount. In either event, on a failed skill check the attack action is wasted.

Special: If a character is riding bareback, he or she incurs a –5 penalty on Ride checks.

A character incurs a –2 circumstance penalty to all Ride checks when riding a critter ill suited as a mount.

A character can take 10 when making a Ride check, but cannot take 20.

A character with the Animal Affinity feat gains a +2 bonus on all Ride checks.

Synergy: A character with 5 or more ranks in Ride gains a +2 synergy bonus when using the Balance skill to stand on the back of a horse.

A character with 5 or more ranks in Handle Animal receives a +2 synergy bonus when riding a mount trained by the character.

Time: Ride is a move action, except when otherwise noted for the special tasks listed above.

Search (Int)

The character has a gift at finding the little things that others overlook. Through a detailed examination of a specific location or object, the character can spot secret doors or compartments, locate hidden or camouflaged recesses, and discover other hidden, concealed, disguised, or otherwise hard to find objects and features.

Check: For large areas, the character must be within at least 10 feet of the surface searched. For medium-sized objects such as vehicles, trunks or furniture, the character must be adjacent (or closer) to the item examined. For most small objects, the character must handle the item to perform a search. A character can examine an area up to 5 feet x 5 feet, or a volume of goods 5 feet on a side, in 1 round with a single Search check.

A Search check can turn up individual footprints, but does not allow a character to follow tracks or tell the character which direction the creature or creatures went or came from.

Table 3.47: Search Check DC's

DC	Task
10	Ransack an area to find a certain object.
20	Notice a typical secret compartment, a simple trap, or an obscure clue.
25+	Find a complex or well-hidden secret compartment or trap; notice an extremely obscure clue.

Special: A character can take 10 or take 20 when making a Search check.

A character with the Meticulous feat gains a +2 bonus on all Search checks.

Synergy: A character with 5 or more ranks in Search receives a +2 synergy bonus to Survival checks when following tracks.

Time: A Search check is a full-round action.

Sense Motive (Wis)

The character has the ability to know when someone is bluffing, lying, withholding information, attempting to pull a con, or acting in bad faith or under duress. This skill represents a character's ability to "read" people by their body language, mannerisms, and speech patterns.

"Mr. Meechum, you're a blackguard, a liar, a hypocrite, and a stench in the nostrils of honest men."
Lt. Colonel Owen Thursday – *Fort Apache, 1948*

Check: Sense Motive allows a character to avoid being bluffed, determine another's honesty, detect odd behavior, and intercept secret messages passed as part of an innocuous conversation.

Avoid a Bluff (DC opposed Bluff check): A successful check allows the character to avoid a bluff (see the Bluff skill, page 63). The Judge may roll the Sense Motive check in secret so that, if the check fails, the character will remain unaware of the bluff.

Assess a Social Situation (DC 20): With a successful check (DC 20), the character can get the feeling from another's behavior that something is wrong. Alternatively, the character can correctly determine if someone is trustworthy and honorable.

Intercept a Secret Message (DC opposed Bluff check): A character can use Sense Motive to detect that a hidden

message is being transmitted via the bluff skill (DC equal to the bluff check result of the sender). If the character's check result beats the DC by 5 or more, the character understands the secret message as well. If the character's check fails by 5 or more, the character believes that there is a secret message (regardless of whether there is or not) and misinterprets the message (or supposed message) in some fashion (see the Bluff skill, page 63).

Try Again?: No, though the character may make a separate Sense Motive check for each bluff directed towards the character.

Special: A character can take 10 when making a Sense Motive check, but cannot take 20.

A character with the Attentive feat gains a +2 bonus on all Sense Motive checks.

Synergy: A character with 5 or more ranks in Knowledge (behavioral sciences) receives a +2 synergy bonus on Sense Motive checks when determining an individual's trustworthiness.

Time: A Sense Motive check may be made as a reaction to a bluff directed at the character. Using Sense Motive to gain information about someone's behavior or trustworthiness requires at least 1 minute.

Sleight of Hand (Dex)

Trained Only; Armor Penalty

The character is skilled in the manipulation of small objects for the purpose of deception, concealment, or theft. A character trained in this skill can lift a purse from an unsuspecting victim, palm an unattended pocket watch, hide a small weapon in his or her clothing, or perform other acts of adroitness with objects smaller than a hat or breadbox.

"I wouldn't play poker with Henry Drummond if his back was to a mirror!"

– A Big Hand for the Little Lady, 1966

Check: A character uses Sleight of Hand for any acts of prestidigitation or concealed motions of the hands. Several standard uses of the Sleight of Hand skill follow.

Legerdemain (DC 10 and opposed Spot check): With a successful skill check (DC 10), the character can palm an unattended coin-sized object, or perform minor feats of sleight of hand, such as making a coin disappear. If a character performs this skill under close observation, the observer can attempt a Spot check to oppose the Sleight of Hand check. The observer's Spot check cannot prevent the character from trying to perform the action, just from doing it unnoticed.

Pick Pockets (DC 20 and opposed Spot check): A character can use this skill to take an object from another person (DC 20). The victim can make a Spot check to detect the attempt. The victim detects the attempt if the Spot check result is greater than the Sleight of Hand check. If the Sleight of Hand check is successful, the character obtains the object, even if the victim has spotted the theft.

Holdout (DC opposed Spot check): A character can use Sleight of Hand to conceal a small weapon or object on his or her body. In such instances, the result of the Sleight of Hand skill check sets the DC necessary for a Spot check to detect the hidden object. The size of the object, the type of holster used or clothing worn, and any attempt to make a weapon easier to draw can affect the check.

Table 3.48: Concealing Weapons and Objects

Condition	Sleight of Hand Modifier
Size of weapon or object	
Fine	+12
Diminutive	+8
Tiny	+4
Small	+0
Medium-size	–4
Large	–8
Huge or larger	cannot conceal
Clothing is tight or small	–4
Clothing is especially loose or bulky	+2
Clothing is specifically modified for concealing object	+2
Weapon is carried in concealed carry holster	+4
Weapon can be drawn normally	–2
Weapon can be drawn as free action with Quick Draw feat	–4

Patting someone down for a hidden weapon requires a Search check. The searcher receives a +4 circumstance bonus because of the hands-on act of frisking the target.

Gun Tricks (DC varies): A character with the Gunplay feat may use Sleight of Hand checks to perform gun tricks (see the Gunplay feat, page 111).

Cheating (DC opposed Spot Check): A character with the Cardsharp feat may use Sleight of Hand to cheat while playing cards (see the Card Sharp feat, page 107).

Try Again?: Further Sleight of Hand attempts against the same target, or when being watched by the same observer, incur a –10 penalty if a previous attempt was noticed or failed.

Special: A character can take 10 when making a Sleight of Hand check, but cannot take 20.

Any character can make an untrained Sleight of Hand check to conceal a weapon or object, but must always take 10.

A character with the Nimble feat and at least 1 rank in this skill gains a +2 bonus on all Sleight of Hand checks.

Synergy: A character with 5 or more ranks in Bluff receives a +2 synergy bonus on Sleight of Hand checks to pick a pocket or palm an object.

Time: A Sleight of Hand check is an attack action.

Speak Language (None)

Trained Only

While English may have become the most common language of the Wild West, Spanish had already been in use for centuries. In addition to the hundreds of native tribal languages, tongues from across the globe peppered the landscape (and genre) as brave souls from around the world sought fame and fortune on the Western Frontier.

The Speak Language skill does not work like a standard skill.

- A character automatically knows how to speak his or her native language; the character is not required to possess Speak Language ranks to do so. Usually, a character's native language is determined by his or her cultural heritage (see Character Concepts, page 24).
- Each additional language costs 1 rank. When a character adds a rank to Speak Language, he or she selects a new language. The character can now communicate in the selected language.
- A character never makes a Speak Language check. A character either does or does not know how to speak and understand a specific language.
- If a character wishes to be able to read and write a language that he or she can speak, the character must take the Read/Write Language skill for the appropriate language.
- A character can choose any language, modern or ancient. (See Table 3.44: Language Groups for suggestions.) However, the Judge may determine that a character cannot learn a specific language due to the circumstances of the campaign.

There are thousands of languages to choose from when a character buys ranks in Speak Language. Table 3.44: Language Groups lists a few of the possibilities. The languages listed are by no means exhaustive—there are many more language groups, and most of the groups presented contain more languages than those listed. Furthermore there are language groups (such as Braille) that can only be selected with the Read/Write skill and not with Speak Language.

Spot (Wis)

The character is skilled at spotting an ambush, noticing people hiding in nearby shadows or discerning creatures using high brush as cover and concealment. The character is also adept at perceiving actions such as the use of Sleight of Hand to conceal a small handgun.

"Keep your eyes open and your holster closed."
Sergeant Jim Brett – *Northwest Mounted Police, 1940*

Check: A character primarily uses the Spot skill to detect hidden characters and critters, or to notice items that are not immediately obvious. Typically, Spot is opposed by the Hide check of any critter or character trying to remain unseen. The Judge may call for a Spot check by a character in a position to notice something. A character can also voluntarily make a Spot check if they want to try to notice something in their vicinity. The Judge may make the Spot check in secret so that, if the character notices nothing, the player will not know if the Spot check was successful and nothing was there, or if the Spot check simply failed.

Spot is also used to detect someone in disguise (see the Disguise skill, page 74), to notice a concealed weapon on another person (see the Sleight of Hand skill, page 94), or to detect someone cheating while playing cards (see the Card Sharp feat, page 107).

The Spot check of a character is modified by a –1 penalty for every 10 feet of distance between the character and the target of the Spot check. The check carries a further –5 penalty if the character is distracted by another activity.

Try Again?: A character can make a Spot check every time conditions change and create new opportunities to notice something. A character may take a full-round action to attempt to notice something the character has reason to believe he or she failed to notice previously.

Special: A character can take 10 or take 20 when making a Spot check.

A character with the Alertness feat gains a +2 bonus on all Spot checks.

Time: A Spot check is either a reaction (if called for by the Judge) or a full-round action (if a character actively takes the time to try to notice something).

Survival (Wis)

The character is skilled in the art of surviving in the wild, including finding sources of food and fresh water (when available) and avoiding harmful plants and dangerous critters (two or four-legged). The character also knows how to produce fires (where possible), find or create shelter, and deal with the hazards of inhospitable climates (raging blizzards, desert sandstorms, etc).

"This is a hard country to stay alive in, Colonel, much less stay young."
Captain Roper – *Escape from Fort Bravo, 1953*

Check: A successful Survival check can keep the character and any companions safe and fed while in the wild.

Subsist in the Wild (DC 10): The character can move up to one-half his or her overland speed while hunting and foraging (no food or water supplies needed). A character can provide food and water for one other person for every 2 points by which the check result exceeds 10.

Endure Severe Weather (DC 15): The character can gain a +2 circumstance bonus on Fortitude saves against severe weather while moving up to one-half his or her overland speed, or gain a +4 circumstance bonus if remaining stationary. The character may grant the same bonus to one other character for every point by which the check result exceeds 15.

Avoid Wilderness Hazards (DC 18): The character can

avoid getting hopelessly lost and avoid natural hazards, such as quicksand. Avoiding getting lost is not a substitute for the Navigation skill. This merely allows the character to move around and still find their way back to a known point (path, cave, watering hole, etc).

Tracking (DC varies): With the Track feat (see page 121), a character can use Survival checks to track a critter or another character across various terrain types.

Try Again?: A character can only make one check in a 24-hour period for subsisting in the wild, or gaining the Fortitude save bonus against inclement weather. The character makes a check to avoid getting lost or to avoid natural hazards whenever the situation arises, but may not try again for any given situation.

Special: A character can take 10 when making a Survival check. A character can take 20 when tracking, or when a danger or penalty for failure does not exist, but cannot take 20 on periodic checks to subsist in the wild.

A character with the Guide feat gains a +2 bonus on all Survival checks.

Synergy: A character with 5 or more ranks in Search receives a +2 synergy bonus to Survival checks when following tracks.

A character with 5 or more ranks in Navigate receives a +2 synergy bonus on Survival checks to avoid getting lost.

A character with 5 or more ranks in Survival receives a +2 synergy bonus on Navigate skill checks to intuit direction or determine his location.

Time: Basic Survival checks occur once per day in the wilderness, or whenever a hazard presents itself. When using the Track feat to track a character or critter, Survival checks are made according to distance, as described in the Track feat (see page 121).

Swim (Str)

Armor Penalty

The character is capable of remaining afloat, swimming (on or below the surface) and diving in a body of water.

Check: A skill check must be rolled once per round. A successful Swim check allows a character to swim one-quarter his or her speed as a move action or one-half his or her speed as a full-round action. If the Swim check is unsuccessful, the character remains floating in place, subject to any currents in the water. If the character fails by 5 or more, he or she begins sinking below the surface. The DC for the Swim check depends on the water conditions:

Table 3.49: Swim Check DC's

Water	DC
Calm water	10
Rough water	15
Stormy water	20

If a character is underwater (from failing a swim check or because the character is swimming underwater intentionally), the character must hold his or her breath. Characters can hold their breath for a number of rounds equal to their Constitution score, but only if they take nothing but move actions or free actions. If a character takes an attack action or a full-round action, the amount of breath the character has remaining is reduced by 1 round. (Effectively, characters in combat can hold their breath only one-half as long as normal.) After that period, a character must make a Constitution check (DC 10) every round to continue holding his or her breath. Each round, the DC of the check increases by 1. If a character fails that check, he or she begins to drown.

Long-Distance Swimming (DC 20): A character must make a DC 20 Swim check for each continuous hour of swimming. If the check fails, the character becomes fatigued. If the character fails a check while fatigued, he or she becomes exhausted. If the character fails a check while exhausted, he or she becomes unconscious. Unconscious characters go underwater and immediately begin to drown.

Try Again?: A new check is allowed the round after a check is failed. A new check is allowed every round unless the character has fallen unconscious.

Special: A character incurs a cumulative –1 penalty for every 5 pounds of gear carried, including armor and weapons.

A character can take 10 when making a Swim check, but cannot take 20.

A character with the Athletic feat receives a +2 bonus on all Swim checks.

A character with the Endurance feat receives a +4 bonus on hourly swim checks to avoid fatigue, exhaustion, and unconsciousness.

Time: A Swim check is either a move action or a full-round action, as described above.

Treat Injury (Wis)

The character has skill and training in the basic medical procedures necessary to help anyone wounded, poisoned or suffering from disease.

"How can you deliver a baby, set a broken leg, and look lovelier than a Christmas calendar all at once?"
Sergeant Jim Brett to April Logan – *Northwest Mounted Police, 1940*

Check: The DC and effect depend on the task attempted.

Restore Grit (DC 15): The character can attempt to restore grit lost through injury by combat or accident. With a successful check, the treating character can restore 1d4 grit. The amount of grit restored through treatment can never bring characters above their total grit. A character can be the recipient of a successful restore grit check only once per day. Restoring grit requires the use of a medical kit and requires the use of a full-round action.

Revive Dazed, Stunned, or Unconscious Character (DC 15): As an attack action, the character can attempt to remove the dazed, stunned, or unconscious condition from another character. On a successful Treat Injury skill check, the condition is removed. The character cannot revive an unconscious character that is at –1 grit or lower without first stabilizing the character (see below). Reviving a character requires the use of a first aid kit.

Stabilize Dying Character (DC 15): As an attack action, the character can attempt to save a dying character. A character is dying if that character has negative current grit and is continuing to lose grit every round. A successful Treat Injury check by the tending character stabilizes the dying character. The dying character stops losing grit, but does not regain any. Stabilizing a dying character requires the use of a medical kit.

Long-Term Care (DC 15): Long-term care is tending to a sick or injured patient for a day or longer. With a successful Treat Injury check the tending character can help a patient undergoing complete bed rest to recover grit or ability points (lost to temporary damage) at an enhanced rate. The patient recovers 3 grit per character level (the patient's level) or 3 ability points for each day of complete rest. The tending character must make a new Treat Injury check each day of rest; on a failed check, the patient's recovery occurs at the normal rate for that day (2 grit per character level and 2 ability points per day).

The number of patients a character may treat at one time is equal to the Treat Injury skill ranks of the character. The patients need to spend all of their time resting. The tending character needs to devote at least one-half an hour of the day to each patient. A character cannot simultaneously give and receive long-term care. Long-term care requires the use of a medical kit.

Surgery (DC 20): The character can conduct field surgery. If the character does not have the Surgery feat, the Treat Injury skill check incurs a –4 penalty. Surgery requires 1d4 hours; if the patient is at negative current grit, add an additional hour for every point below 0.

A successful surgery restores 1d6 grit for every character level of the patient. The amount of grit restored through surgery can never bring a patient above their total grit. A patient can only undergo surgery once in a 24-hour period, even if the surgery is unsuccessful.

A character who undergoes surgery is fatigued for 24 hours; for each point by which the surgeon exceeds the DC of the Treat Injury check reduce the period of fatigue by 2 hours. The period of fatigue can never be less than 6 hours.

Surgery requires the use of a surgeon's kit. Characters cannot perform surgery on themselves.

Treat Disease (DC 15): The character can tend to a character infected with a treatable disease. Before a diseased character makes a saving throw against disease effects (after the initial contamination), the tending character must make a Treat Injury check to try to help the diseased character fend off secondary damage. With a successful Treat Injury check, the tending character can provide a bonus equal to his or her skill ranks to the diseased character's saving throw (a Treat Injury check can be attempted only once per saving throw). Treat disease requires the use of a medical kit and takes 10 minutes per skill check.

Treat Poison (DC 15): The character can tend to a poisoned character continuing to take damage (or suffering some other secondary effect) from the poison. Before a poisoned character makes a saving throw against the poison, the tending character must make a Treat Injury check. With a successful Treat Injury check, the tending character can provide a bonus equal to his or her skill ranks to the poisoned character's saving throw (a Treat Injury check can be

attempted only once per saving throw). Treat poison requires the use of a medical kit and requires an attack action.

Try Again?: Yes, for restoring grit, reviving dazed, stunned, or unconscious characters, stabilizing dying characters, and surgery. No, for any other uses of the skill.

Special: The Surgery feat gives a character the extra training needed to use Treat Injury to operate on a wounded character. Without the feat, a character attempting surgery incurs a –4 penalty.

A character can take 10 when making a Treat Injury check. A character can take 20 only when restoring grit or attempting to revive dazed, stunned, or unconscious characters.

Long-term care, restoring grit, treating disease, treating poison, or stabilizing a dying character requires a medical kit. Reviving a dazed, stunned, or unconscious character requires either a first aid kit or a medical kit. Surgery requires a surgery kit. If the character does not have the appropriate kit, the character incurs a –4 penalty on the check. If the character performs any function that requires a medical kit or surgery kit while in a fully stocked hospital, the Treat Injury skill check receives a +2 circumstance bonus.

Characters can only use the Treat Injury skill on themselves to restore grit, treat disease, or treat poison. Characters take a –5 penalty on their check any time they treat themselves.

A character with the Medical Expert feat receives a +2 bonus on all Treat Injury checks.

Synergy: A character with 5 or more ranks in Knowledge (earth and life sciences) receives a +2 synergy bonus when using the Treat Injury skill to perform surgery.

Time: Based on the task at hand, Treat Injury checks require different amounts of time, as described above.

Tumble (Dex)

Trained Only; Armor Penalty

The character is skilled in performing various gymnastic moves such as somersaults, flips, dives, handstands, cartwheels and others. The character has also learned how to land softly at the end of a fall. Most armor, and an excessive load of carried items, adds to the difficulty of using this skill.

Check: A character can tumble through an opponent's threatened area, or through the area occupied by an opponent, without provoking an attack of opportunity. A character can also lessen the damaging effects of some falls.

Land Softly (DC15): The character can make a Tumble check (DC 15) when falling. Make the check before determining falling damage. If the check succeeds, treat the fall as though it were 10 feet shorter.

Tumble past Opponents (DC 15): With a successful Tumble check (DC 15), the character can weave, dodge, and roll up to 20 feet through squares adjacent to opponents, without risking attacks of opportunity. Failure means the character moves as planned but provokes attacks of opportunity as normal.

Tumble through Opponents (DC 25): With a successful Tumble check (DC 25), the character can move through squares occupied by opponents by jumping over, diving under, or rolling around the opponents. Failure means the character moves as planned but provokes attacks of opportunity as normal.

Try Again?: No.

Special: A character with 5 or more ranks in Tumble gains a +3 dodge bonus to Defense (instead of the normal +2) when fighting defensively, and a +6 dodge bonus (instead of the normal +4) when engaging in total defense.

A character can take 10 when making a Tumble check, but cannot take 20.

A character with the Acrobatic feat and at least 1 rank in this skill receives a +2 bonus on all Tumble checks.

Synergy: A character with 5 or more ranks in Jump gains a +2 synergy bonus on Tumble checks to reduce falling damage.

A character with 5 or more ranks in Tumble receives a +2 synergy bonus on Jump checks when jumping down to reduce the distance fallen, or when performing an acrobatic jump.

A character with 5 or more ranks in Tumble may receive a +2 synergy bonus on Perform (dance) checks.

Time: A character can try to reduce damage from a fall as a free action once per fall. A character can perform tumbling in combat as part of a move action.

CHAPTER FOUR : FEATS

"Dyin ain't much of a livin', boy. You know, this really isn't necessary. You can just turn around and walk on outta here."

Josey Wales – *The Outlaw Josey Wales, 1976*

While Hildi finished patching up Sam, the others scanned the plain from the bluff where they had stopped for temporary cover. "We've been here too long," Zeke said. "News 'bout Sam's dynamite show is bound to reach Martel fast. "

Fate nodded. "A shame that near everything was ruined in the blast. At least we saved a few souvenirs, intact, before the wind scattered 'em to high heaven." He patted a breast pocket.

Nearby, Melody sulked, but she still got the jump on everyone. She spotted five horses pounding toward them, still far up the pass. Mounting, she alerted everyone. "Get movin', it's Martel!"

Melody reined her horse, waiting for Zeke to climb into his saddle. Even hurt, Sam's reflexes had him moving as soon as Melody called out. He mounted effortlessly, charging off and taking the point, followed by Zeke and then Melody. She hung back, guarding the rear and firing a couple of Spencer rounds from her hip until the three of them had raced out of the pass.

Hildi and Fate spurred their horses last. They easily maintained the distance separating them and Martel's men, while their friends up ahead pulled away. Fate guessed that Martel had already ridden hard just to find them. He voiced that to Hildi, who, like her sister, leaned back and squeezed off a couple of Spencer rounds while they rode. She knew they were at the edge of her range but she thought she hit someone. She glanced back after hearing Martel's return fire; it looked like only four riders pursued now.

Neither party's shots seemed to do much damage, even though a few bullets whirred close by. Soon enough, Martel's men pulled off the trail. The Gunter Gang pushed on until the horses were spent. After Melody found a suitable place to hide, they watered the horses, hunkered down and rested. They knew they would have to push hard to stay ahead of Martel and reach their hideout.

Feats

Feats are those special qualities that separate a real hombre from a tinhorn. Feats grant a cowpoke special abilities or provide bonuses when using specific skills or performing certain tasks. For example, the latest installment of the Gunter Gang's exploits opened with Sam flat on his back, but due to his Improved Initiative he was the first to saddle-up and ride when Melody gave warning. Unlike skills, a character doesn't have ranks in a feat. A character either possesses a feat (gaining the benefits associated with it) or doesn't.

Acquiring Feats

A cowpoke may acquire feats through a variety of means. In addition to the feats awarded based upon character level (see the d20 Modern Roleplaying Game: Chapter 1, Level-Dependent Benefits), bonus feats may be granted as class features at certain levels of the basic and advanced classes.

Some feats may require the fulfillment of certain prerequisites before a character can select them to augment his existing arsenal of tricks. The requirements may be the possession of a minimum number of ranks in a particular skill, a minimum ability score or base attack bonus, or a previous selection of one or more additional feats. When gaining a new level that grants a feat, a character may gain that feat simultaneously with its prerequisites.

For instance, Melody Gunter is advancing to 8th level. She plans on taking another level in Fast hero (becoming a Dedicated 2 / Fast 2 / Scout 4). As a 2nd level Fast hero, she gains a bonus feat and wishes to learn Combat Expertise, which has a prerequisite of an Intelligence score of 13. Currently, Melody's Intelligence score is only 12. However, upon advancing to 8th level, a character can add one point to any single ability score (see the d20 Modern Roleplaying Game: Chapter 1, Level-Dependent Benefits). Therefore, Melody could choose to increase her Intelligence thereby becoming eligible for Combat Expertise.

A character cannot use a feat if the character loses one of its prerequisites, even if that loss is temporary. However, if the character regains the lost prerequisite then he or she also regains the use of the affected feat.

WHAT'S DIFFERENT?

Upon making a detailed comparison between this chapter and chapter 3 of the d20 Modern Roleplaying Game, you will find that while a number of new feats have been added, several of the standard feats have been reworked or even eliminated. The majority of the changes and omissions are necessary to adapt to the technology available in a realistic Western genre. For example, Advanced Firearms Proficiency, Double Tap, and Quick Reload have been modified to cover the types of firearms that were actually available during the halcyon days of the frontier. Vehicle Dodge has been changed and Surface Vehicle Operations has been replaced because of differences between 19th and 20th century modes of transportation. Finally, a few feats, such as Gear Head, Force Stop, and Vehicle Expert have been eliminated as inappropriate. But don't worry pardner, you ain't getting hornswoggled. *Sidewinder: Recoiled* adds more than 25 new feats that you can use to round out the development of your hero and expand his repertoire of tricks.

Table 4.1: Feats

Feat	Prerequisites	Benefit
Acrobatic	-	+2 on Jump and Tumble checks
Alertness	-	+2 on Listen and Spot checks
Animal Affinity	-	+2 on Handle Animal and Ride checks
Archaic Weapons Proficiency	-	Proficient in sabers, bows, etc.
Armor Proficiency (light)	-	Add equipment bonus for armor type to your defense; armor penalty for fewer skill checks
Armor Proficiency (medium)	Armor Proficiency (light)	Add equipment bonus for armor type to your defense; armor penalty for fewer skill checks
Armor Proficiency (heavy)	Armor Proficiency (light), Armor Proficiency (medium)	Add equipment bonus for armor type to your defense; armor penalty for fewer skill checks
Athletic	-	+2 on Climb and Swim checks
Attentive	-	+2 on Investigate and Sense Motive checks
Blind-Fight	-	Reroll miss chance
Brawl	-	+1 on unarmed attacks, 1d6 + Str bonus nonlethal damage
Improved Brawl	Brawl, base attack bonus +3	+2 on unarmed attacks, 1d8 + Str bonus nonlethal damage
Knockout Punch	Brawl, base attack bonus +3	Nonlethal unarmed attack is automatically a critical hit
Improved Knockout Punch	Brawl, Knockout Punch, base attack bonus +6	Nonlethal unarmed critical hit deals triple damage
Streetfighting	Brawl, base attack bonus +2	+1d4 damage once per round with unarmed attack or light melee weapon
Improved Feint	Intelligence 13, Brawl, Streetfighting	+2 on Bluff checks to feint; feint as move action
Builder [1]	-	+2 on any two of Craft (chemical, electric, mechanical, structural) skills
Card Sharp	Dexterity 13	Use Sleight of Hand to cheat at cards
Cautious	-	+2 on Demolitions and Disable Device checks
Combat Expertise	Intelligence 13	Reduce attack bonus by up to -5, increase Defense bonus by up to +5
Improved Disarm	Intelligence 13, Combat Expertise	Disarm doesn't provoke attack of opportunity
Improved Trip	Intelligence 13, Combat Expertise	Trip opponent and make an immediate melee attack
Whirlwind Attack	Dexterity 13, Intelligence 13, Dodge, Mobility, Spring Attack, Combat Expertise, base attack bonus +4	One melee attack at each opponent within 5 feet
Combat Martial Arts	Base attack bonus +1	1d4 + Str lethal or nonlethal damage, considered armed
Improved Combat Martial Arts	Combat Martial Arts, base attack bonus +4	Unarmed strike threatens critical hit on 19 or 20
Advanced Combat Martial Arts	Combat Martial Arts, Improved Combat Martial Arts, base attack bonus +8	Unarmed strike critical hit deals triple damage
Combat Reflexes	-	Additional attacks of opportunity
Confident	-	+2 on Gamble and Intimidate checks
Creative [1]	-	+2 on any two of Craft (visual arts, writing), or Perform skills
Deceptive	-	+2 on Bluff and Disguise checks

Table 4.1: Feats (Cont.)

Feat	Prerequisites	Benefit
Defensive Martial Arts	-	+1 dodge bonus to Defense against melee attacks
Combat Throw	Defensive Martial Arts	+2 to Str or Dex checks on trips and grapples
Improved Combat Throw	Defensive Martial Arts, Combat Throw, base attack bonus +3	Free trip attack when opponent misses the character
Elusive Target	Dexterity 13, Defensive Martial Arts	-4 on ranged attacks against the character while engaged in melee combat
Unbalance Opponent	Defensive Martial Arts, base attack bonus +6	Opponent receives no Strength bonus to attack, only to damage
Defensive Riding	Ride 4 ranks	+1 Defense bonus while riding
Blazing Saddle	Ride 6 ranks, Defensive Riding	Reduce penalties for firing from horseback
Cavalry Training	Ride 10 ranks, Blazing Saddle, Defensive Riding	No penalties when firing from a mount
Ride-By Attack	Ride 6 ranks, Defensive Riding	Move both before and after a melee attack from horseback
Spirited Charge	Ride 6 ranks, Defensive Riding, Ride-By Attack	Double damage with melee weapon when mounted
Trample	Ride 6 ranks, Defensive Riding, Ride-By Attack	Overrun target may not choose to avoid the character
Dodge	Dexterity 13	+1 dodge bonus against selected opponent
Agile Riposte	Dexterity 13, Dodge	Make one attack of opportunity when your designated target fails a melee attack against the character
Mobility	Dexterity 13, Dodge	+4 dodge bonus against attacks of opportunity
Spring Attack	Dexterity 13, Dodge, Mobility, base attack bonus +4	Move both before and after melee attack
Sidewinder	Dexterity 13, Dodge	+1 dodge bonus against ranged attacks.
Drive-By Attack	-	No speed penalty when attacking from a moving vehicle
Educated [1]	-	+2 on any two Knowledge skills
Endurance	-	+4 on certain Swim and Con checks, some Fort saves
Exotic Melee Weapon Proficiency [1]	Base attack bonus +1	Proficient in specific exotic melee weapon
Exotic Ranged Weapon Proficiency [1]	Base attack bonus +1	Proficient in specific exotic ranged weapon
Far Shot	-	Multiply range increments by 1.5 (2 for thrown weapons)
Dead Aim	Wisdom 13, Far Shot	+2 on ranged attack if full round spent aiming
Improved Dead Aim	Wisdom 13, Far Shot, Dead Aim	+3 on ranged attack if full round spent aiming
Sniping	Wisdom 13, Far Shot, Dead Aim	Add Wisdom bonus to damage with Dead Aim
Focused	-	+2 on Balance and Concentration checks
Frightful Presence	Charisma 15, Intimidate 9 ranks	Lower-level foes are shaken (Will save negates)
Great Fortitude	-	+2 on Fortitude saves
Guide	-	+2 on Navigate and Survival checks
Gunplay	Sleight of Hand 4 ranks	Perform fancy tricks with firearms
Heroic Surge	-	Extra move or attack action
Hollow Leg	-	+4 bonus to saves against alcohol consumption
Home Ground	-	Bonuses if defending allegiances
Horse Tradin'	Diplomacy 6 ranks	Increase or decrease purchase price or DC
Improved Damage Threshold [2]	-	Massive damage threshold = Con +3 instead of Con

Table 4.1: Feats (Cont.)

Feat	Prerequisites	Benefit
Improved Initiative	-	+4 on initiative checks
Improvised Weapon Proficiency	Base attack bonus +2	Proficient with improvised weapons
Improvised Weapon Damage	Base attack bonus +2, Improvised Weapon Proficiency	Improvised weapons do damage as one size larger
Indian Lore	-	Bonus to Knowledge skill checks relating to Native American cultures and customs
Tribal Lore [1]	Indian Lore	Bonus to Knowledge skill checks relating to a specific Indian tribe
Iron Will	-	+2 on Will saves
Lightning Reflexes	-	+2 on Reflex saves
Low Profile	-	Reduce your reputation bonus by 3 points
Master Craftsman	-	Create mastercraft items
Mechanical	-	+2 on Operate Vehicle and Repair checks
Medical Expert	-	+2 on Craft (pharmaceutical) and Treat Injury checks
Meticulous	-	+2 on Forgery and Search checks
Nimble	-	+2 on Escape Artist and Sleight of Hand checks
Personal Firearms Proficiency	-	Proficient in use of personal firearms
Advanced Firearms Proficiency	Personal Firearms Proficiency	No -4 penalty when using autofire weapons
Strafe	Personal Firearms Proficiency, Advanced Firearms Proficiency	Autofire area 5 by 20 ft. instead of 10 by 10 ft.
Exotic Firearms Proficiency [1]	Personal Firearms Proficiency	Proficient in specific class of exotic firearms
Point Blank Shot	-	+1 on attack and damage up to 30 ft.
Double Tap	Dexterity 13, Point Blank Shot	-2 on attack, +1 die damage
Precise Shot	Point Blank Shot	No -4 penalty for shooting into melee
Skip Shot	Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot	Ignore cover, -2 on attack, -1 die damage
Sundering Shot	Dexterity 13, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot	+4 bonus to attack held objects with ranged attack
Shot on the Run	Dexterity 13, Point Blank Shot, Dodge, Mobility	Move before and after ranged attack
Blaze of Glory	Dexterity 15, Dodge, Mobility, Point Blank Shot, Shot on the Run, Two-Weapon Fighting	Make two-weapon ranged attacks as attack action
Slip Hammer	Dexterity 13, Point Blank Shot, base attack bonus +1	-2 on attack, +1 die damage; requires 2 hands to use
Hammer Down	Dexterity 13, Point Blank Shot, Slip Hammer, base attack bonus +6	-4 on attack, +2 dice damage; requires 2 hands to use
Sprayin' Lead	Dexterity 15, Point Blank Shot, Slip Hammer, Hammer Down, base attack bonus +11	Attack 10 by 10 ft area as full round action
Thumb Buster	Dexterity 15, Point Blank Shot, Slip Hammer, base attack bonus +4	-2 on attack, +1 die damage; requires only 1 hand to use

Table 4.1: Feats (Cont.)

Feat	Prerequisites	Benefit
Power Attack	Strength 13	Subtract from melee attack to add to melee damage
Cleave	Strength 13, Power Attack	Extra attack after dropping target to 0 grit
Great Cleave	Strength 13, Power Attack, Cleave, base attack bonus +4	No limit to Cleave in a round
Improved Bull Rush	Strength 13, Power Attack	No attack of opportunity for bull rush
Improved Sunder	Strength 13, Power Attack	+4 on attack, double damage, no attack of opportunity when striking weapon
Quick Draw	Base attack bonus +1	Draw weapon as free action
Quick Reload	Base attack bonus +1	Quicker loading time for firearms
Combat Loading	Quick Reload, base attack bonus +1	+4 on Concentration checks to reload and loading does not provoke attacks of opportunity
Renown	-	The character's Reputation bonus increases by +3.
Run	-	Move up to 5 times normal speed, +2 on running Jump checks
Simple Weapons Proficiency	-	Proficient in clubs, knives, etc.
Stealthy	-	+2 on Hide and Move Silently checks
Studious	-	+2 on Decipher Script and Research checks
Surgery	Treat Injury 4 ranks	No -4 penalty for performing surgery
Toughness [2]	-	+3 to total grit
True Grit	Toughness	+4 to all massive damage Fortitude saves
Track	-	Use Survival skill to track
Trail Lore [1]	-	Bonus to Knowledge skill checks relating to a specific state or territory
Trustworthy	-	+2 on Diplomacy and Gather Information checks
Two-Weapon Fighting	Dexterity 13	Lessens two-weapon penalties (see page 211)
Improved Two-Weapon Fighting	Dexterity 13, Two-Weapon Fighting, base attack bonus +6	Extra attack with off-hand weapon
Advanced Two-Weapon Fighting	Dexterity 13, Two-Weapon Fighting, Improved Two-Weapon Fighting, base attack bonus +11	Third attack with off-hand weapon
Vehicle Dodge	Dexterity 13	+1 dodge bonus on Defense
Vehicle Proficiency [1]	-	No -4 penalty on Operate Vehicle checks or attack rolls with selected class of vehicle
Weapon Finesse	Base attack bonus +1	Use Dex modifier instead of Str modifier with light melee weapons
Weapon Focus [1]	Proficient with weapon, base attack bonus +1	+1 on attack rolls with selected weapon
Windfall [2]	-	+3 Wealth bonus increase; +1 on Profession checks

[1] The character can take this feat multiple times; each time it applies to a different skill, weapon, set of weapons, class of vehicles, state, territory, or Indian tribe.
[2] The character can take this feat multiple times; its effects stack.

Feat Descriptions

The feats are presented in alphabetical order, each appearing with the following format.

Feat Name

Prerequisite: A minimum ability score, another feat or feats, a minimum base attack bonus, and/or the minimum ranks in a skill that a character must have to acquire this feat. This entry is absent if a feat doesn't require a prerequisite.

Benefit: What the feat enables a character to do.

Normal: Any normal rules of the game that the feat may now change, override, or supercede. This entry will be absent if the normal rules are not affected by the feat.

Special: Additional facts about the feat.

Acrobatic

The character is supremely agile and knows how to make difficult maneuvers and landings better than the average Joe. The cowpoke moves like a flea on a hot griddle.

Benefit: The character receives a +2 bonus on all Jump and Tumble skill checks.

Normal: Remember that the Tumble skill cannot be used untrained.

Advanced Combat Martial Arts

The character has become a master at dealing deadly damage without weapons. The character has a wallop like a bear and a kick like a mule.

"Now you can pull that gun of yours and shoot me where I stand. Or you can defend yourself as best you can. Because I intend to beat you into the ground with my fists. Now, I'm waiting on ya!"

Sergeant Otto Hahnsbach – *Chuka, 1967*

Prerequisites: Combat Martial Arts, Improved Combat Martial Arts, base attack bonus +8.

Benefit: The character deals triple damage when scoring a critical hit with an unarmed strike.

Normal: A critical hit with an unarmed strike normally deals double damage.

Advanced Firearms Proficiency

The character knows how to control the rapid rate of fire of that newfangled weapon, the Gatling gun (and any other automatic weapon).

"War isn't just killing you know. It's a contest. It's man against man. That's (*Ed. – the Gatling gun*) a machine! Personal courage wouldn't count. Honor, duty, loyalty…everything a soldier lives by would be wiped out. All you would have left is statistics. How many men would the machine murder today? 100? 1000? 10,000? If this is the future, I don't want any part of it."

Lt. Colonel George A. Custer – *Custer of the West, 1968*

Prerequisite: Personal Firearms Proficiency.

Benefit: The character can fire any firearm on autofire without penalty (provided, of course, that it has an autofire setting).

Normal: Characters without this feat take a –4 penalty on attack rolls made with firearms set on autofire.

Advanced Two-Weapon Fighting

The character has mastered the art of attacking with two weapons. Iffin' the right hand don't git ya, the left one will.

Prerequisites: Dexterity 13, Two-Weapon Fighting, Improved Two-Weapon Fighting, base attack bonus +11.

Benefit: A character may make a third attack with an off-hand weapon, albeit at a –10 penalty.

Agile Riposte

The character has learned to take advantage of an opponent's misstep. Pardner, ya had better not miss, or yer gonna git gutted.

Prerequisites: Dexterity 13, Dodge.

Benefit: Once per round, if the opponent the character has designated as his dodge target (see the Dodge feat, page 109) makes a melee attack or melee touch attack against the character and misses, the character may make an attack of opportunity against that opponent. The effects of both attacks are applied simultaneously and independently of each other.

Special: Even a character with the Combat Reflexes feat cannot use the Agile Riposte feat more than once per round. This feat doesn't grant more attacks of opportunity than the character is normally allowed in a round.

Alertness

The character is known to have "eyes in the back of his head" and is hard to surprise.

Benefit: The character receives a +2 bonus on all Listen and Spot skill checks.

Animal Affinity

The character has a knack for getting along with all types of critters.

"The cow is nothing but a lot of trouble tied up in a leather bag. And the horse ain't much better."
Wil Anderson – *The Cowboys, 1972*

Benefit: The character receives a +2 bonus on all Handle Animal and Ride skill checks.

Normal: Remember that the Handle Animal skill cannot be used untrained.

Archaic Weapons Proficiency

The character is familiar with all forms of archaic weapons, such as the tomahawk or the bow and arrow (See pages 135 and 151 for a list of archaic weapons.)

Benefit: The character can now make attack rolls with any kind of archaic weapon without suffering the –4 non-proficiency penalty.

Normal: A character without this feat suffers the –4 non-proficiency penalty when making attacks with archaic weapons.

Armor Proficiency (heavy)

The character has trained in the wearing and using of heavy armor.

Prerequisites: Armor Proficiency (light), Armor Proficiency (medium).

Benefit: See Armor Proficiency (light).

Normal: See Armor Proficiency (light).

Armor Proficiency (light)

The character has trained in the wearing and using of light armor.

Benefit: When a character wears a type of armor with which he is proficient, the character may now add the armor's entire equipment bonus to Defense. However, the character must still apply the armor penalty to Balance, Climb, Escape Artist, Hide, Jump, Move Silently, Sleight of Hand and Tumble checks.

Normal: A character wearing armor with which he or she is non-proficient adds only the armor's non-proficient equipment bonus to Defense. In addition, the character must apply the armor penalty to all attack rolls as well as to skill checks involving movement.

Armor Proficiency (medium)

The character has trained in the wearing and using of medium armor.

Prerequisite: Armor Proficiency (light).

Benefit: See Armor Proficiency (light).

Normal: See Armor Proficiency (light).

Athletic

The character excels at skills of strength.

Benefit: The character receives a +2 bonus on all Climb and Swim skill checks.

Attentive

The character has a knack for recognizing the importance of subtle clues, gestures, and expressions.

Benefit: The character receives a +2 bonus on all Investigate and Sense Motive skill checks.

Normal: Remember that the Investigate skill cannot be used untrained.

Blaze of Glory

The character is skilled at delivering a massive barrage of pistol fire while on the move.

Prerequisites: Dexterity 15, Dodge, Mobility, Point Blank Shot, Shot on the Run, Two-Weapon Fighting.

Benefit: When wielding a pistol in each hand, the character may make one attack with each weapon as a single attack action. The character suffers a –4 penalty on each attack roll in addition to the normal penalties suffered for attacking with two weapons.

Normal: Attacking with two weapons is a full attack and requires a full-round action.

Special: This feat can be used only once per round as part of an attack action and not as part of a full-round action.

Blazing Saddle

The character has become an expert at firing ranged weapons from horseback.

Prerequisites: Ride 6 ranks, Defensive Riding.

Benefit: When making a ranged attack from horseback (or on any other sort of mount), the penalty for firing from an unstable platform is reduced by half. In addition, the rider can take this ranged attack action at any point along the mount's movement.

Normal: While riding a horse (or any other animal), a character suffers a penalty to all ranged attack rolls based on how vigorously the rider is jostled. The penalty is –4 for a horse that is making a double move and –8 for a horse that is running.

While additional riders can ready an action to make an attack at any point along the mount's movement, the controlling rider can only make an attack action before or after the mount's movement.

Blind-Fight

The character has such finely tuned instincts that he or she is able to move about more effectively in darkness and fight unseen foes in melee combat.

Benefit: Every time a character misses with a melee combat attack because of concealment, the character may make a second miss chance roll to determine if the character's attack actually hits.

The character suffers only half the usual movement penalty for being unable to see. Darkness and general poor visibility will reduce the character's speed to three-quarters of normal, instead of one-half.

Brawl

The character is familiar in fighting without weapons. Whether slugging it out in a barroom fracas or wrasslin' around in a muddy street, a cowpoke with this feat is a man or woman to be reckoned with.

Benefit: When making an unarmed attack, the character receives a +1 competence bonus on attack rolls, and the character deals nonlethal damage equal to 1d6 + Strength modifier.

Normal: Unarmed attacks normally deal nonlethal damage equal to 1d3 + Strength modifier.

Special: Neither the increased damage or the +1 competence bonus on unarmed attack rolls granted by the Brawl feat can be used when making an unarmed attack that causes lethal damage.

Builder

The character has a natural talent for constructing or making things.

Benefit: Pick two of the following skills: Craft (chemical), Craft (electric), Craft (mechanical), and Craft (structural). The character gains a +2 bonus on all checks with those two skills.

Special: A character can select this feat twice. The second time, the character applies it to the two skills he didn't pick originally. Remember that Craft (chemical), Craft (electric), and Craft (mechanical) cannot be used untrained.

Card Sharp

The character is particularly adept at manipulating cards. Pick a card, any card.

Prerequisite: Dexterity 13.

Benefit: The character can use the Sleight of Hand skill to cheat at cards by palming and switching cards. The character gains a bonus to his Gamble check and must succeed at a Sleight of Hand skill check to avoid getting caught. The character may take a bonus of up to +5 to his Gamble skill check. This selected bonus may never exceed the character's ranks in the Sleight of Hand skill. To avoid detection the cheater must make a Sleight of Hand check opposed by the other gamblers', or other close observers', Spot checks. This Sleight of Hand check is modified by a penalty (as low as -5) equal in magnitude to the bonus that was selected for the Gamble check. If any observer wins the opposed roll, that observer has caught the character cheating.

Cavalry Training

The character has specialized training or experience in handling a mount during combat situations.

Prerequisites: Ride 10 ranks, Blazing Saddle, Defensive Riding.

Benefit: When making a ranged attack from horseback (or any other four-legged critter), the rider no longer suffers any penalties for firing from an unstable platform.

Normal: When attacking while mounted, a character without the Cavalry Training feat suffers an attack penalty to all ranged attacks based on the how vigorously the rider is jostled. This penalty is –4 for a horse that is making a double move and –8 for a horse that is running. A character that possesses the Blazing Saddle feat suffers only half of these penalties.

Cautious

The character has learned how to keep his head and remain calm when dealing with explosives, disarming a damage-dealing trap, or disabling a device.

GIDDY'UP PARDNER

The old saying "A dog is a man's best friend" may be true for city slickers and Easterners, but in the wild and woolly west, a cowboy prefers a good steed to a mangy cur any day. Therefore, it behooves a cowpoke to learn at least a couple of the riding feats. However, the bevy of choices for riding feats can be a bit confusing at first glance. So, just how do these feats interact with each other? Which ones are right for your cowpoke? Well now, that would depend on whether the character plans on getting up close and personal with the enemy, or wants to be as accurate as possible while shooting his foes from afar.

Whether a shooter or a slasher, the first feat required is **Defensive Riding.** This feat grants both the rider and the mount a +1 dodge bonus to Defense. Now for the slashers, **Ride-By Attack** allows the rider to execute a melee attack at any point along the mount's movement, while **Spirited Charge** doubles melee damage dealt from a charging mount, and **Trample** makes opponents unable to avoid the attack during an overrun as well as granting the mount a hoof attack if the overrun is successful.

When it comes to the shooters, trying to shoot a firearm from horseback invokes a penalty for the roughness of the ride. **Blazing Saddle** halves the penalty, while **Cavalry Training** negates the penalty altogether.

The penalties associated with firing from a moving mount are as follows:

- Vigorous Motion (bouncy wagon ride, small boat in rough water, below decks in a storm-tossed ship, walking horse) -4
- Violent Motion (very rough wagon ride, small boat in rapids, on deck of storm-tossed ship, galloping horse) -8
- Extremely Violent Motion (earthquake, landslide) -12

Benefit: The character receives a +2 bonus on all Demolitions and Disable Device skill checks.

Normal: Remember that the Demolitions skill and the Disable Device skill cannot be used untrained.

Cleave

The character knows how to exploit the momentum of a successful melee attack.

Prerequisites: Strength 13, Power Attack.

Benefit: If the character deals enough damage to drop an opponent (either by knocking the opponent unconscious through massive damage or by reducing the opponent's grit to less than 0), the character can immediately make an extra melee attack against another opponent within reach. The character cannot take a 5-foot step before making this extra attack. The extra attack must be made with the same weapon and at the same bonus as the attack that felled the previous opponent. The character can use this ability only once per round.

Combat Expertise

The character knows how to apply offensive combat training to bolster defense in melee.

Prerequisite: Intelligence 13.

Benefit: When a character uses the attack action or the full-attack action in melee, the character can take a penalty of up to –5 on his attack roll and add the same number (up to +5) to Defense. This number may not exceed the character's base attack bonus. The changes to attack rolls and Defense last until the character's next action. The bonus to the character's Defense is a dodge bonus.

Normal: A character without the Combat Expertise feat can fight defensively while using the attack or full-attack action, gaining a +2 dodge bonus to Defense by taking a –4 penalty on attacks.

Special: Any condition that causes the character to lose a Dexterity bonus to Defense also makes the character lose any dodge bonuses. In addition, unlike most other bonus types, dodge bonuses stack.

Combat Loading

The character is cool under pressure when reloading a firearm.

Prerequisites: Quick Reload, base attack bonus +1

Benefit: When loading a firearm in combat, the character no longer provokes an attack of opportunity. Furthermore, if the character is forced to make a Concentration check while loading due to distractions or duress, the character receives a +4 bonus on that Concentration check.

Combat Martial Arts

The character knows how to deal deadly damage without using weapons.

Prerequisite: Base attack bonus +1.

Benefit: With an unarmed strike, the character deals lethal or nonlethal damage (the character's choice) equal to 1d4 + the character's Strength modifier. In addition, the character's unarmed attacks now count as armed, which means the character no longer provokes an attack of opportunity with an unarmed attack. An unarmed character may make attacks of opportunity against opponents that provoke such attacks.

Normal: Without this feat, a character deals only 1d3 points of nonlethal damage. Unarmed attacks normally provoke attacks of opportunity, and unarmed combatants cannot normally make attacks of opportunity.

MARTIAL ARTS IN THE WILD WEST? OR THEIR KUNG FU IS STRANGE, GRASSHOPPER!

It may seem out of place to have martial arts feats in a Western game, but it is more appropriate than you may realize. Don't think of the martial arts as a traditional eastern fighting style; rather, think of it as a way to attack without a weapon, such as the way a trained boxer, experienced street fighter, or brawler attacks.

Combat Reflexes

The character has highly honed reflexes; he or she is able to take advantage of any opening presented by opponents in combat.

Benefit: The maximum number of attacks of opportunity the character may make each round is equal to the character's Dexterity bonus + 1. Nevertheless, the character can still make only one attack of opportunity per round against any individual opponent, as per the normal limitations for such attacks. In addition, with this feat, the character may also make attacks of opportunity when flat-footed.

Normal: A character without the Combat Reflexes feat can make only one attack of opportunity per round and cannot make attacks of opportunity when flat-footed.

Special: The Combat Reflexes feat doesn't allow a Fast hero with the Opportunist talent to use that talent more than once per round. Nor does it allow a character with the Agile Riposte feat to use that feat more than once per round.

Combat Throw

The character knows how to control an opponent's body momentum and balance in unarmed combat.

Prerequisite: Defensive Martial Arts.

Benefit: The character gains a +2 bonus on opposed Strength and Dexterity checks any time the character attempts a trip or grapple attack, or when trying to avoid a trip or grapple attack.

Confident

The character has an unusually high sense of self-worth.

"Mr. Hawkes, it's good that you believe in the cards. But it's better that you believe in yourself."

Butterfingers O'Malley – *The Gambler Returns: The Luck of the Draw, 1991*

Benefit: The character receives a +2 bonus on all Gamble and Intimidate skill checks. In addition, the character gains a +2 bonus on level checks opposing an Intimidate check

Creative

The character has a special gift in the creative arts.

Benefit: Pick two of the following skills: Craft (visual art, writing), Perform (act, dance, keyboards, percussion instruments, sing, stand-up, stringed instruments, wind instruments). The character receives a +2 bonus on all checks using those two skills.

Special: A character can select this feat up to five times. Each time, the character selects two new skills from the choices given above.

Dead Aim

The character has learned the patience required to line up a long shot for deadly accuracy.

Prerequisites: Wisdom 13, Far Shot.

Benefit: Before making a ranged attack, a character may take a full-round action to line up a shot. This grants the character a +2 circumstance bonus on the next attack roll. Once a character begins aiming, the character cannot move, even to take a 5-foot step, until after his next attack, or the benefit of the feat is lost. Likewise, if the character's concentration is disrupted or the character is attacked before his next action, the character loses the benefit of aiming.

Deceptive

The character has a knack for deceiving and misleading others. The character is a natural-born snake-oil salesman.

"The first time I met him, I conned him. I sold him a horse."

"What's wrong with that?"

"It was the sheriff's horse."

Quincy Draw and Ginger – *Skin Game, 1971*

Benefit: The character receives a +2 bonus on all Bluff and Disguise skill checks.

Defensive Martial Arts

The character has extensive training in how to avoid strikes in close combat.

Benefit: The character gains a +1 dodge bonus to Defense against melee attacks.

Special: Any condition that causes a character to lose his Dexterity bonus to Defense also makes the character lose any dodge bonuses. In addition, unlike most other bonus types, dodge bonuses stack.

Defensive Riding

The character rides as though born in the saddle.

Prerequisite: Ride 4 ranks.

Benefit: While riding, both the character and mount gain a +1 dodge bonus to Defense.

Special: Any condition that causes the character to lose his Dexterity bonus to Defense also makes the character lose any dodge bonuses. In addition, the mount will also lose the +1 dodge bonus granted by this feat. Remember, unlike most other bonus types, dodge bonuses stack.

Dodge

The character has a natural adeptness at avoiding attacks.

Prerequisite: Dexterity 13.

Benefit: During the character's action, the character designates an opponent and receives a +1 dodge bonus to Defense against any subsequent attacks from that opponent. The character can select a new opponent the next round.

Special: Any condition that causes the character to lose his Dexterity bonus to Defense also makes the character lose any dodge bonuses. In addition, unlike most other bonus types, dodge bonuses stack.

Double Tap

The character can quickly fire off two shots in a single attack.

Prerequisites: Dexterity 13, Point Blank Shot.

Benefit: When using a double-action revolver with at least two bullets loaded, the character may fire two bullets as a single attack against a single target. The character suffers a –2 penalty on this attack, but deals +1 die of damage with a successful hit. For example, a pistol that normally inflicted 2d6 damage on a successful attack would inflict 3d6 when utilizing the Double Tap feat.

Special: This feat can be used only with double-action revolvers (and for time-travelers with semi-automatic firearms).

Drive-By Attack

The character is skilled at making an attack from a moving platform, such as a wagon or canoe.

Benefit: The character doesn't suffer a vehicle speed penalty when making an attack while in a moving vehicle. In addition, if the character is the driver, he can use his attack action to make an attack at any point along the vehicle's movement.

Normal: When attacking from a moving vehicle, a character takes a penalty based on the vehicle's speed. Passengers can ready an action to make an attack when the vehicle reaches a particular location, but the driver must make his attack action either before or after the vehicle's movement.

Educated

The character has advanced education in certain areas of knowledge. A cowpoke with this feat has either regular schoolin' or been through the school of hard knocks.

Benefit: Pick any two Knowledge skills. The character receives a +2 bonus on all checks using those skills.

Special: A character can select this feat up to seven times. Each time, the character must select two new Knowledge skills.

Elusive Target

The character has learned how to get close enough to opponents in melee to maximize the use of their bodies as cover from ranged attacks.

Prerequisites: Dexterity 13, Defensive Martial Arts.

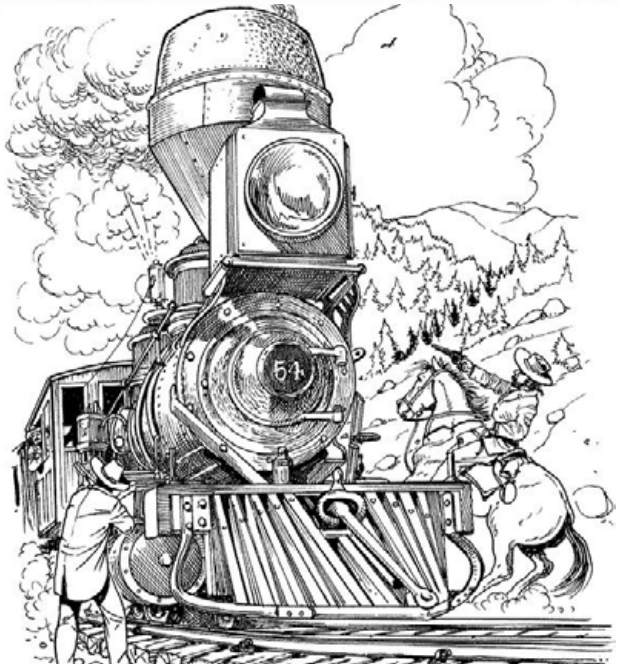
Benefit: When fighting in melee, opponents attempting to target the character with ranged attacks receive an additional –4 penalty. This additional penalty, when combined with the normal –4 penalty for firing into melee, brings the total penalty to target the character to –8.

Special: An opponent with the Precise Shot feat has the penalty lessened to –4 when targeting the character.

Endurance

The character has an exceptional ability to withstand the rigors of long and strenuous physical activity.

Benefit: The character gains a +4 bonus on the following checks and saves: hourly Swim checks to avoid becoming fatigued, Constitution checks to continue running, Constitution checks to hold the character's breath, Constitution checks to avoid damage from starvation or thirst, Fortitude saves to avoid damage from hot or cold environments, and Fortitude saves to resist suffocation or drowning.



In addition, the character may sleep in medium or light armor without becoming fatigued.

Normal: A character without this feat that sleeps in armor is automatically fatigued the following day.

Exotic Firearms Proficiency

Choose a weapon type from the following list: cannons, heavy machine guns (e.g. the Gatling gun), grenade launchers, and rocket launchers. The character is proficient with the chosen type of exotic firearm. (See page 143 for a sample exotic firearm.)

Prerequisite: Personal Firearms Proficiency.

Benefit: The character makes attack rolls with weapons of the chosen type without incurring the –4 non-proficiency penalty.

Normal: A character who uses a weapon without being proficient with it takes a –4 penalty on attack rolls.

Special: A character can gain this feat up to four times. Each time this feat is gained, the character must select a different weapon type.

Exotic Melee Weapon Proficiency

Choose one exotic melee weapon, such as the chain. The character is proficient with that melee weapon in combat. (See page 151 for a list of exotic melee weapons.)

Prerequisite: Base attack bonus +1.

Benefit: The character makes attack rolls with the chosen weapon without incurring the –4 non-proficiency penalty.

Normal: A character who uses a weapon without being proficient with it receives a –4 penalty on attack rolls.

Special: A character can gain this feat multiple times. Each time this feat is gained, the character must select a different exotic melee weapon.

Exotic Ranged Weapon Proficiency

Choose one exotic ranged weapon, such as the lasso. The character is proficient with that weapon in combat. (See page 135 for a list of exotic ranged weapons.)

Prerequisite: Base attack bonus +1.

Benefit: The character makes attack rolls with the chosen weapon without incurring the –4 non-proficiency penalty.

Normal: A character who uses a weapon without being proficient with it receives a –4 penalty on attack rolls.

Special: A character can gain this feat multiple times. Each time this feat is gained, the character must select a different exotic ranged weapon.

Far Shot

The character has an exceptional talent at coaxing extra distance from a ranged weapon.

Benefit: When the character uses a firearm or archaic ranged weapon, the range increment of the weapon increases by one-half (multiply by 1.5). When the character throws a weapon that is meant to be thrown (such as a stick of dynamite or a tomahawk), the weapon's range increment is doubled.

Focused

The character has an innate ability to maintain a clear head in trying situations.

Benefit: The character receives a +2 bonus on all Balance and Concentration skill checks.

Frightful Presence

The character has a countenance, mien and natural presence that can scare the bejeesuz out of enemies.

Prerequisites: Charisma 15, Intimidate 9 ranks.

Benefit: When the character uses this feat, all opponents within 10 feet who have fewer levels than the character must make a Will saving throw (DC 10 + 1/2 the character's level + the character's Charisma modifier). An opponent who fails the save is shaken, receiving a –2 penalty on attack rolls, saves, and skill checks for a number of rounds equal to 1d6 + the character's Charisma modifier. The character can use the feat once per round as a free action.

A successful save indicates that the opponent is immune to the character's use of this feat for 24 hours. This feat doesn't affect creatures with an Intelligence of 3 or lower or those creatures immune to fear.

If the character has the Renown feat, the Will saving throw's DC increases by 5.

Great Cleave

The character wields melee weapons with such force that he can strike another opponent each time he drops an enemy.

Prerequisites: Strength 13, Power Attack, Cleave, base attack bonus +4.

Benefit: As Cleave, except that the character has no limit to the number of times per round that he or she can gain an extra attack when downing an opponent.

Great Fortitude

The character is able to withstand intense levels of pain and fatigue, even holding off the effects of shock for a short period.

Benefit: The character receives a +2 bonus on all Fortitude saving throws.

Guide

The character has an innate ability to find his way in the wilderness. The character is a right regular Daniel Boone.

"Do you think we're headin' in the right direction?"

"We wouldn't be headin' in this direction if it weren't right."

Wanda and Beaudray – *Wanda Nevada, 1979*

Benefit: The character receives a +2 bonus on all Navigate and Survival skill checks.

Gunplay

The character is truly skilled in fancy displays with firearms.

Prerequisite: Sleight of Hand 4 ranks.

Benefit: The character can use the Sleight of Hand skill to attempt fancy tricks with hoglegs and longarms.

Table 4.2: Gunplay Tricks and DC

DC	Trick
10	Pistol Spin
15	Quick Holster
15	Rifle Spin
20	Road Agent Spin (1 pistol)
25	Road Agent Spin (2 pistols)
25	Border Shift

Pistol Spin (DC 10): As a move equivalent action, the character can holster his pistol with a spinning flourish. Under the right circumstances, the Judge may grant the gunfighter that successfully performs this maneuver a +2 circumstance bonus on Intimidate checks (see the Intimidate skill, page 81).

Quick Holster (DC 15): As a free action, a character may attempt to holster a firearm without provoking an attack of opportunity. A successful DC 15 Sleight of Hand check is required. The size of the weapon provides a

THE BORDER SHIFT

By some accounts "Long-haired" Jim Courtright was a masterful gunfighter, but others said he simply had luck on his side when it counted, until one fateful night outside the White Elephant Saloon in Fort Worth, Texas.

Personal animosity created a feud between former city marshal Courtright, who now operated a detective agency, and part-time gunfighter, full-time gambler and owner of the White Elephant Luke Short. That rivalry ended in gunfire on February 8, 1877, with what has since been described as "the luckiest shot the Old West ever heard of." Courtright had approached Short about "protection" money which Short refused to pay. The ensuing argument climaxed with both men reaching for iron. While Jim was the faster on the draw, his piece became entangled in his own watch chain. Meanwhile, Short let loose a shot that blew the former marshal's right-hand thumb clean off. Long-haired Jim frantically attempted a Border Shift but Short calmly pumped three more bullets into him before it could be completed. It is perhaps ironic (in a way that can occur only in the Wild West) that in Luke Short's last shootout, he lost his left-hand thumb to an opponent's shotgun blast.

OFF-HAND PENALTIES

While the designers of the d20 Modern system opted to remove the concept of "handedness" from the rules, this causes some consternation amongst those who prefer a little more "reality" in their gameplay, as well as making the Border Shift maneuver practically useless except for cinematic effect. Since the gang here at Dog House Rules wants to accommodate as many gaming styles as possible, it won't hurt our feelings none if a Judge decides to have characters declare a handedness. If doing so, we suggest that any actions (such as shooting, lockpicking, card-dealing, etc.) performed with the "off" hand suffer a –4 penalty. However, the two-weapon fighting rules already consider this penalty. Therefore, if your cowpoke fights two fisted, he or she shouldn't suffer this additional penalty. Furthermore, if using this optional handedness rule, the Judge may decide that a cowpoke with the Two-Weapon Fighting feat is ambidextrous, thus eliminating the handedness penalty for any other actions.

"Left handed, hey?"

"I'm saving my right hand to shake hands with friends."

Dan Hickey and Billy the Kid – *Billy the Kid, 1941*

modifier to this check. Use the Sleight of Hand size modifiers listed in Table 3.48: Concealing Weapons and Objects (see page 94). If the Sleight of Hand check fails, the character fails to successfully holster the weapon. If the check fails by 5 or more, the character drops the weapon.

With a successful DC 20 Sleight of Hand check, the character can combine a Quick Holster with a Pistol Spin maneuver. If the maneuver succeeds, (and if the Judge allows), increase the circumstance bonus on Intimidate checks to +3.

Rifle Spin (DC 15): Cocking a lever-action rifle is normally a free action that requires the use of two hands. With the maneuver known as a Rifle Spin, a character can attempt to cock a lever-action rifle as a free action with only one hand. A Rifle Spin requires a DC 15 Sleight of Hand skill check. If the character fails, a new round is not chambered but the character may retry a Rifle Spin without penalty. However, if the skill check fails by more than 5, the character drops the rifle.

Road Agent Spin (DC 20 or 25): This is a favorite maneuver among the black-hat-wearing crowd. The character holds his pistol or pistols out butt-first, as though surrendering to his opponent. Then, assuming his Sleight of Hand check is successful, he quickly spins and flips the smokewagons, turning them on his opponent as a free action. The character can immediately make a Bluff check with a +4 circumstance modifier (opposed by his opponent's Sense Motive skill); if he wins the contest, the opponent is surprised and caught flat-footed. Of course, if the character fails the initial Sleight of Hand check, he is left with his guns tangled up in his fingers looking mighty foolish. If he fails the Sleight of Hand check by 5, he drops one gun; if he fails by 10 or more, he drops both guns (if spinning both guns).

Border Shift (DC 25): This maneuver is a favorite among cowpokes who carry two guns but do not fight two-fisted. To use this maneuver, the character must have both guns drawn, one in each hand. When the primary weapon runs out of ammunition, a character

can attempt, as a free action, a Sleight of Hand skill check to make a Border Shift. A Border Shift consists of tossing the two guns from hand to hand, moving the fully loaded pistol to the shooting hand and the empty one to the off hand. The character can continue firing in that round without pause, up to his full number of attacks.

If he fails the roll, the swap takes place, but the character spends the rest of the turn bobbling for his pistols. The character cannot make any further attacks, nor can the character spend a move action. The only action available is a 5-foot step, provided the character has not previously moved in the round. Should the Sleight of Hand check fail by 5 or more, the character bobbles for his pistols, loses all subsequent actions (except perhaps for a 5-foot step), and drops both weapons.

Hammer Down

As a single attack action, the character can hold down the trigger of a single-action revolver while rapidly fanning the hammer with his palm, emptying the revolver for one devastating attack.

Prerequisites: Dexterity 13, Point Blank Shot, Slip Hammer, base attack bonus +6.

Benefit: When using a single-action revolver with at least five bullets loaded, the character may fire five bullets as a full attack against a single target. The character suffers a –4 penalty on this attack, but deals +2 dice of damage with a successful hit. For example, a weapon that normally deals 2d6 points of damage does 4d6 instead.

Special: In order to use this feat, the character must have both hands free and must be firing a single-action revolver.

Heroic Surge

The character has uncanny speed and is able to perform additional actions in combat.

Benefit: The character may take an extra move action or attack action in a round, either before or after the character's regular actions. The character may use Heroic Surge a number of times per day depending on his character level (as shown below), but never more than once per round. Heroic Surge cannot be used during a fast-draw round.

Table 4.3: Heroic Surge Usage

Character Level	Times per Day
1st–4th	1
5th–8th	2
9th–12th	3
13th–16th	4
17th–20th	5

Hollow Leg

The character can stomach the foulest rotgut the West has to offer. In fact, he likes it.

"I've seen a man take two drinks of that stuff and go out and hunt bear with a willow switch."

"What did he want the switch for?"

Bartender and Reb – *Gunsmoke, 1953*

Benefit: A character with this feat receives a +4 circumstance bonus on saving throws to avoid the adverse effects of alcohol consumption.

Home Ground

Like a mother bear protecting her cubs, or a stallion his herd, the character is particularly ferocious when defending hearth and home.

Benefit: A character receives a +1 circumstance bonus to attack rolls and saving throws when defending something in relation to his allegiance (see Allegiances, page 49).

Special: All bonuses granted by this feat are at the Judge's discretion.

Horse Tradin'

The character is particularly shrewd at negotiating the purchase or sale of goods. The character knows all of the tricks of bartering and haggling with other individuals. The character is a shrewd bargainer, able to secure deals that no one else can.

Prerequisite: Diplomacy 6 ranks.

Benefit: When purchasing or selling equipment, the character may raise or lower an item's purchase DC by 1 point. If using the Cold Hard Cash system, he may raise or lower the purchase price of the item by 20%.

Improved Brawl

The character has acquired an improved knowledge of the tactics of fighting unarmed. An hombre with this feat can hold his own in any fracas, even against the likes of Mike Fink or Man-eater McGowan.

Prerequisites: Brawl, base attack bonus +3.

Benefit: When making an unarmed attack, a character receives a +2 competence bonus on attack rolls, and the character deals nonlethal damage equal to 1d8 + the character's Strength modifier.

Normal: Unarmed attacks normally deal nonlethal damage equal to 1d3 + Strength modifier.

Special: Neither the increased damage or the +2 competence bonus on unarmed attack rolls granted by the Improved Brawl feat can be used when making an unarmed attack that causes lethal damage.

Improved Bull Rush

The character is able to force back opponents by using overwhelming strength.

Prerequisites: Strength 13, Power Attack.

Benefit: When the character performs a bull rush, the character doesn't provoke an attack of opportunity from the defender.

Special: The character may still provoke attacks of opportunity from opponents other than the defender.

Improved Combat Martial Arts

The character has a heightened ability for dealing deadly damage without weapons.

Prerequisites: Combat Martial Arts, base attack bonus +4.

Benefit: The character's critical threat range on an unarmed strike improves to 19–20.

Normal: A character without this feat threatens a critical hit with an unarmed strike only on a 20.

Improved Combat Throw

The character excels at turning an opponent's momentum against him.

Prerequisites: Defensive Martial Arts, Combat Throw, base attack bonus +3.

Benefit: In melee combat, if an opponent attacks and misses the character, the character may immediately make a trip attack against that opponent. This counts as an attack of opportunity, which the character can make even if unarmed.

Special: This feat doesn't grant a character more attacks of opportunity in a round than is normally allowed.

Improved Damage Threshold

The character is as sturdy as an old oak and refuses to allow pain to take him down.

Benefit: The character increases his massive damage threshold by 3 points.

Normal: A character without this feat has a massive damage threshold equal to his current Constitution score. With this feat, the character's massive damage threshold is current Con +3.

Special: A character may gain this feat multiple times. Its effects stack.

Improved Dead Aim

The character's skill at using ranged weapons is unmatched.

Prerequisites: Wisdom 13, Far Shot, Dead Aim.

Benefit: The circumstance bonus on attack rolls granted by the Dead Aim feat increases from +2 to +3.

Improved Disarm

The character knows how to disarm an opponent in melee without risking damage.

Prerequisites: Intelligence 13, Combat Expertise.

Benefit: The character doesn't provoke an attack of opportunity when the character attempts to disarm an opponent, nor does the opponent get a chance to disarm the character if the original disarm attempt fails.

Improved Feint

The character is an expert at hoodwinking an opponent in melee combat.

Prerequisites: Intelligence 13, Brawl, Streetfighting.

Benefit: The character receives a +2 bonus on the Bluff checks made to feint in melee combat. In addition, the character can now attempt a feint in combat as a move action.

Normal: Without the Improved Feint feat, feinting in combat requires an attack action.

Improved Initiative

The character has preternatural instincts and reacts in combat quicker than the average person.

"He's fast!"
"As fast as you are?"
"I'd hate to have to live on the difference."
Chris and Frank – *Return of the Seven, 1966*

Benefit: The character receives a +4 circumstance bonus on initiative checks.

Improved Knockout Punch

The character is an expert at knocking out unaware or off-guard opponents.

Prerequisites: Brawl, Knockout Punch, base attack bonus +6.

Benefit: The first unarmed attack a character makes

against a flat-footed opponent, if successful, is an automatic critical hit. This critical hit deals triple damage. The damage is always nonlethal damage.

Special: Even if the character has the ability to treat unarmed damage as lethal damage, the damage from a knockout punch is always nonlethal.

Improved Sunder

The character is adept at using a melee attack to destroy an opponent's weapon, shield, or other objects.

Prerequisites: Strength 13, Power Attack.

Benefit: When the character strikes an object held or carried by an opponent, such as a weapon, the character no longer provokes an attack of opportunity. The character gains a +4 bonus on any melee attack roll made to attack an object held or carried by another character. The character deals double normal damage to any object.

Normal: A character without this feat provokes an attack of opportunity from an opponent when he strikes at an object held or carried by that opponent.

Special: Remember that an object held, carried, or worn has a Defense equal to the object's base Defense + 5 + the opponent's Dexterity modifier + the opponent's class Defense bonus. (See Table 7.13: Size and Defense of Objects on page 219 for the object's base Defense).

Improved Trip

The character has become an expert at tripping opponents before following through with a melee attack.

Prerequisites: Intelligence 13, Combat Expertise.

Benefit: An unarmed character no longer provokes an attack of opportunity when trying to trip an opponent.

If the character trips an opponent in melee combat, the character is immediately allowed to make a melee attack on that opponent as a free action using the same attack bonus as the trip attack.

Normal: When an unarmed character tries a trip attack against an opponent, the character provokes an attack of opportunity from the opponent.

Improved Two-Weapon Fighting

The character is highly trained at two-weapon combat. The character has become so skilled at fighting with both hands that he or she may even use disparate types of weapons. As an example, the character could use a bowie knife or cavalry saber (melee weapons) in one hand while still firing a revolver or pepperbox (ranged weapons) with the other.

Prerequisites: Dexterity 13, Two-Weapon Fighting, base attack bonus +6.

Benefit: The character receives a second attack with an off-hand weapon, albeit at a –5 penalty. In addition, this feat now allows a character to treat both ranged weapons and melee weapons the same for purposes of two-weapon fighting.

Normal: Without this feat, a character can make only a single extra attack with an off-hand weapon, and both weapons must be of the same type (either both ranged weapons or both melee weapons).

Improvised Weapon Damage

The character knows how to deal extra damage with improvised weapons.

Prerequisites: Base attack bonus +2, Improvised Weapon Proficiency.

Benefit: The character treats an improvised weapon as one object size category larger for the purpose of determining the damage it deals (see Table 5.14: Improvised Weapon Damage by Size, page 153).

Improvised Weapon Proficiency

The character can use chairs, whiskey bottles, billiard cues, or just about anything as a weapon.

Prerequisite: Base attack bonus +2.

Benefit: The character no longer suffers the -4 non-proficiency attack penalty for wielding an improvised weapon.

Normal: The character suffers a -4 non-proficiency penalty when using an improvised weapon.

Special: This feat can be used only with items that are not intended to be used as weapons.

Indian Lore

The character is exceptionally knowledgeable on Indian cultures and customs.

Benefit: The character receives a +2 bonus on any Knowledge skill checks that relate to the culture or customs of any Indian tribe.

Special: All bonuses granted by this feat are at the Judge's discretion.

Iron Will

The character is as stubborn as a Missouri mule.

Benefit: The character receives a +2 bonus on all Will saving throws.

Knockout Punch

The character knows just how and where to hit unaware opponents in order to knock them out with one punch.

Prerequisites: Brawl, base attack bonus +3.

Benefit: The first unarmed attack a character makes against a flat-footed opponent, if successful, is an automatic critical hit. The damage from this attack is always nonlethal damage.

Special: Even if the character has the ability to treat unarmed damage as lethal damage, the damage from a knockout punch is always nonlethal.

Lightning Reflexes

The character has the reflexes of a wild cat.

Benefit: The character receives a +2 bonus on all Reflex saving throws.

Low Profile

The character has managed to stay out of the limelight normally associated with someone of his class and level.

"Is that all you're running away from...a reputation?"
"Well, it can get too big for a man to live with."
Nadine Corrigan and Wes Steele – *A Man Alone, 1955*

Benefit: Reduce the Reputation bonus of the character by 3 points.

Master Craftsman

Using great care, patience and skill, the character excels at creating items that outshine normal objects. Called mastercraft objects, these special items confer bonuses that reflect the quality of the craftsman's work.

Benefit: Select a particular Craft skill: Craft (chemical), Craft (electric), Craft (mechanical), Craft structural), Craft (visual art), or Craft (writing). The character can create mastercraft objects using the selected Craft skill, either by crafting the object from scratch or by customizing an already existing object. A mastercraft object may provide a bonus on attack rolls, damage rolls, Defense, skill checks, saving throws, or any other statistic involving the use of the object. Each augmentation of a mastercraft object has a rating based on its "effective mastercraft bonus." In the case of a bonus to a damage roll or to a d20 roll, the effective mastercraft bonus is equal to the granted bonus. When not providing a bonus to a d20 roll or to a damage roll, the effective mastercraft bonus is specified by the Judge as +1, +2, or +3, based on the utility of the augmentation. For example, a mastercraft pistol with an enhanced range increment of +10 feet might have an effective mastercraft bonus of +1. The number of ranks that the character possesses in the selected Craft skill (see Table 4.4: Maximum Effective Mastercraft Bonus) limits the maximum effective bonus that a character may add to an object with a single augmentation. Since each mastercraft bonus granted on a particular statistic is an equipment bonus, further bonuses on the same statistic (i.e. attack rolls, Defense, damage rolls, etc.) don't stack. For example, a character modifies a rifle twice, once with a modification granting a +1 bonus on attack rolls and once with a +2 feature on attack rolls. The rifle doesn't grant a +3 bonus to hit, because the equipment bonuses don't stack. Only the largest bonus applies, in this case +2.

Table 4.4: Maximum Effective Mastercraft Bonus

Craft Skill Ranks	Maximum Effective Mastercraft Bonus
10	+1
15	+2
20	+3

Creating a mastercraft object from scratch takes longer than creating a common specimen of the same object. For each +1 of effective bonus, the item takes twice as long to make as an ordinary object of the same kind (i.e., x2 for a +1 item, x4 for +2, and x8 for +3). If modifying a preexisting item, the added mastercraft feature takes the same amount of time to construct minus the amount of time to construct an ordinary version of the object.

When using the Wealth System, the cost to build a mastercraft object equals the purchase DC for the components (see the appropriate Craft skill description) + the effective bonus of the mastercraft feature. If the optional Cold Hard Cash rule is used, the amount that must be paid is the cost of the components doubled for a +1, tripled for a +2, and quadrupled for a +3. If modifying a preexisting item, the purchase DC or purchase price is identical to the cost to construct the mastercraft item from scratch.

When creating a mastercraft object from scratch, the Craft DC increases by 5 for each +1 of effective bonus. In other words, the Craft DC increases by 5 for an object with an effective bonus of +1; it is increased by 10 for a +2 item, and by 15 for a +3 item. If adding a mastercraft feature to an existing object, a successful Craft check must be completed against the same DC required to create the object from scratch. In addition to the Wealth check (or cash expenditure), the creator of a mastercraft object must pay a cost in experience points equal to 250 x the effective bonus provided by the mastercraft feature. The experience point cost must be paid before making the Craft check. If the expenditure of these experience points would drop the crafter to below the minimum needed for his or her current level, then the experience

points cannot be paid and the item cannot be made until the character gains enough additional experience points to remain at his or her current level after the expenditure.

Special: A character can gain this feat multiple times. Each time the character takes this feat, it must be applied to a different Craft skill.

The Judge has full control over what mastercraft features are allowed. Always check with your Judge before using this feat.

Mechanical

The character has an aptitude for operating and maintaining machines.

Benefit: The character may choose two of the following skills: Operate Vehicle (aircraft, ground vehicles, watercraft) or Repair. The character receives a +2 bonus on all checks using those skills.

Special: A character can select this feat twice. The second time the character selects this feat, the effects are applied to the remaining two skills.

Medical Expert

The character is naturally gifted at treating the sick and injured.

Benefit: The character receives a +2 bonus on all Craft (pharmaceutical) and Treat Injury skill checks.

Normal: Remember that the Craft (pharmaceutical) skill cannot be used untrained.

Meticulous

The character pays painstaking attention to the tiniest details and isn't satisfied until a task is thoroughly completed.

Benefit: The character receives a +2 bonus on all Forgery and Search skill checks.

Mobility

The character is adept at dodging past opponents and dancing away from their blows.

Prerequisites: Dexterity 13, Dodge.

Benefit: The character receives a +4 dodge bonus to Defense against attacks of opportunity provoked by the character moving through or out of a threatened square.

Special: A condition that makes a character lose his Dexterity bonus to Defense also makes the character lose dodge bonuses. In addition, unlike most other types of bonuses, dodge bonuses stack with each other.

Nimble

The character is blessed with an exceptionally flexible body and nimble fingers.

Benefit: The character receives a +2 bonus on all Escape Artist and Sleight of Hand skill checks.

Normal: Remember that the Sleight of Hand skill cannot be used untrained.

Personal Firearms Proficiency

The character is trained in the use of personal firearms. (See page 135 for a list of personal firearms.)

Benefit: The character can fire any personal firearm without suffering the –4 non-proficiency penalty.

Normal: Characters without this feat suffer a –4 penalty on attack rolls made with personal firearms.

Point Blank Shot

The character is skilled at accurately placing shots against opponents in close combat.

Benefit: The character receives a +1 bonus on attack and damage rolls with ranged weapons against opponents within 30 feet.

Power Attack

The character knows how to apply raw strength to increase damage with melee attacks.

Prerequisite: Strength 13.

Benefit: On the character's action, before making attack rolls for a round, the character may choose to subtract a number equal to or less than the character's base attack bonus from all melee attack rolls and add

that same number to all melee damage rolls. This number may never exceed the character's base attack bonus. The penalty on attacks and bonus on damage applies until the character's next action.

Precise Shot

The character knows how to precisely line up shots against a target involved in melee or surrounded by a crowd of people.

Prerequisite: Point Blank Shot.

Benefit: The character can shoot or throw ranged weapons at an opponent engaged in melee without suffering the usual –4 penalty.

Normal: A character takes a –4 penalty when using a ranged weapon to attack an opponent who is engaged in melee combat.

Quick Draw

Few can "clear leather" faster.

Prerequisite: Base attack bonus +1.

Benefit: The character can draw a weapon (melee or ranged) as a free action. A character with this feat may throw weapons at his or her normal rate.

Normal: A character can draw a weapon as a move action. If a character has a base attack bonus of +1 or higher, the character can draw a weapon as a free action only during movement.

Quick Reload

The character has become so skilled at reloading firearms that it has now become almost second nature.

Prerequisite: Base attack bonus +1.

Benefit: The character can reload his firearm in half the normal time.

RELOADING YOUR SMOKEWAGON

The Quick Reload feat allows a cowpoke who has emptied his weapon to reload in half the normal amount of time. Table 4.5: Firearm Reload Times indicates how long it takes to reload a firearm for both those with and without the Quick Reload feat. (See Reloading a Ranged Weapon on page 146 for more details.)

Table 4.5: Firearm Reload Times

Weapon Type	Standard	With Quick Reload
Box Magazines (Gatling gun and some rifles)		
Replace magazine	1 move action	Free action
Reload magazine	1 full-round action	1 move action
Reload large capacity magazine (more than 6 shots)*	6 shells per full-round action	6 shells per move action
Cylinder Magazine (revolvers and some pepperboxes)		
Percussion: replace the cylinder of a revolver	4 full-round actions	2 full-round actions
Percussion: reload the cylinder	20 full-round actions	10 full-round actions
Metal cartridge (rim- or center-fire)	2 full-round actions	1 full-round action
Internal Magazine (breechloaders and repeating rifles)		
Percussion breechloader	1 full-round action	1 move action
Metal cartridge (rim- or center-fire) breechloader	1 full-round action	1 move action
Large capacity magazine (more than 6 shots)*	6 shells per full-round action	6 shells per move action
Muzzleloaders (flintlock or percussion)		
Musket or smooth-bore pistol	6 full-round actions	3 full-round actions
Rifle or rifled pistol	10 full-round actions	5 full-round actions

*Note: Some large magazine weapons may have special rules, consult the appropriate entry in Chapter 5 – Equipment.

Renown

The character's fame (or infamy) has spread far and wide.

Benefit: The character's Reputation bonus increases by +3.

Ride-By Attack

The character is trained in the art of fast cavalry melee skirmishing.

Prerequisites: Ride 6 ranks, Defensive Riding.

Benefit: When the character is mounted and uses the charge action, the character may move and make a melee attack at any point along the mount's movement. The mount's movement must be in a continuous straight line and the character's total movement for the round cannot exceed double the mount's speed. The melee attack receives the same bonuses as one delivered by a standard charge. Neither the character nor his mount provoke an attack of opportunity from the defending opponent.

Special: Attacks of opportunity may still be provoked from opponents other than the defender.

Run

The character is as swift as a running antelope.

Benefit: When running, a character may now move a maximum of five times normal speed instead of four times. If a character is in heavy armor, the character can move four times speed rather than three times. If a character makes a long jump, the character gains a +2 competence bonus on the Jump check.

Shot on the Run

The character is exceptionally trained in the "move and fire" skirmish tactic.

Prerequisites: Dexterity 13, Point Blank Shot, Dodge, Mobility.

Benefit: When using an attack action with a ranged weapon, a character can move both before and after the attack, provided that the total distance covered doesn't exceed the character's speed. Moving in this way doesn't provoke an attack of opportunity from the defender.

Special: The character may still provoke attacks of opportunity from opponents other than the defender.

Sidewinder

The character is adept at dodging attacks from ranged weapons.

Prerequisites: Dexterity 13+, Dodge.

Benefit: The character receives a +1 dodge bonus to Defense when being attacked by ranged weapons.

Special: Any condition that causes the character to lose his Dexterity bonus to Defense also makes the character lose any dodge bonuses. In addition, unlike most other bonus types, dodge bonuses stack.

Simple Weapons Proficiency

The character knows how to use simple weapons in combat. (See pages 135 and 151 for a list of simple weapons.)

Benefit: The character makes attack rolls with simple weapons without incurring the –4 non-proficiency penalty.

Normal: A character without this feat receives a –4 non-proficiency penalty when making attacks with simple weapons.

Skip Shot

The character knows how to make trick shots, bouncing the bullets around cover.

Prerequisites: Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot.

Benefit: If the character has a solid, relatively smooth surface on which to skip a bullet (such as a cobbled street or a stone wall), and a target is within 10 feet of that surface, the character may ignore any cover between the character and the target. However, the character suffers a –2 penalty on the attack roll, and the character's attack deals –1 die of damage.

Special: The surface doesn't have to be perfectly smooth and level; a brick wall or an iron-bound barrel will suffice. A character cannot attempt a skip shot against a target under full-cover.

Slip Hammer

The character can make two quick shots as a single attack action by thumbing the hammer of a single-action

revolver while holding the trigger down.

Prerequisites: Dexterity 13, Point Blank Shot, base attack bonus +1.

Benefit: When using a single-action revolver with at least two bullets loaded, the character may fire two bullets as a single attack against a single target. The character suffers a –2 penalty on this attack, but deals +1 die of damage with a successful hit. For example, a weapon that normally deals 2d6 points of damage does 3d6 instead.

Special: The character must have both hands free and be using a single-action revolver to fire in this fashion.

Sniping

The character is so patient he can shoot the stripe off a skunk.

Prerequisites: Wisdom 13, Dead Aim, Far Shot.

Benefit: When the character makes a successful ranged attack using the Dead Aim feat, the character may add his Wisdom bonus to the damage inflicted by the attack.

Spirited Charge

Using the extra momentum provided by a mount, the character is skilled at delivering a devastating melee attack during a charge.

Prerequisites: Ride 6 ranks, Defensive Riding, Ride-By Attack.

Benefit: When mounted and using the charge action, the character deals double damage with a melee weapon.

Sprayin' Lead

The character has learned how to fan the hammer of single-action revolver in such a way as to fire a barrage of bullets into an entire area.

Prerequisites: Dexterity 15, Point Blank Shot, Slip Hammer, Hammer Down, base attack bonus +11.

Benefit: When using a single-action revolver with at least five bullets loaded, the character may fire five bullets as a full-round action against all characters in an area. The character targets a 10 ft. x 10 ft. area and makes an attack roll with a -8 penalty to hit; the targeted area has an effective Defense of 10. If the attack is successful, every creature within the affected area takes full damage; a successful DC 10 Reflex save reduces the damage to half.

Special: The character must have both hands free and must be firing a single-action revolver to attack an area in this fashion.

Spring Attack

The character is trained at applying "hit and run" tactics in melee combat.

Prerequisites: Dexterity 13, Dodge, Mobility, base attack bonus +4.

Benefit: When using an attack action with a melee weapon, the character can move both before and after the attack, provided that the total distance covered doesn't exceed the character's speed. Moving in this way doesn't provoke an attack of opportunity from the defender.

Special: The character may still provoke attacks of opportunity from opponents other than the defender. A character cannot use this feat if he or she is carrying a heavy load or wearing heavy armor.

Stealthy

The character has a knack for blending into the background and remaining unnoticed. The hombre is darn near as sneaky as an Apache on a moonless night.

Benefit: The character receives a +2 bonus on all Hide and Move Silently skill checks.

Strafe

The character can affect a wider than normal area with automatic weapon fire.

Prerequisites: Personal Firearms Proficiency, Advanced Firearms Proficiency.

Benefit: When using a firearm on autofire, the character can affect a 20 ft. x 5 ft. area (that is, any four squares in a straight line).

Normal: A firearm on autofire normally affects a 10 ft. x 10 ft. area.

Special: This can be used in conjunction with the Sprayin' Lead feat.

Streetfighting

The character is familiar with savage tactics and dirty tricks of the barroom brawl and back alley brouhaha.

Prerequisites: Brawl, base attack bonus +2.

Benefit: Once per round, if the character makes a successful melee attack with an unarmed strike or a light weapon, the character deals an extra 1d4 points of damage.

Studious

The character has a natural talent for uncovering facts and figures.

Benefit: The character receives a +2 bonus on all Decipher Script and Research skill checks.

Sundering Shot

The character is adept at using a ranged attack to destroy an opponent's weapon, shield, or other objects.

Prerequisites: Dexterity 13, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot.

Benefit: The character gains a +4 bonus on any ranged attack roll made to attack an object held or carried by another character.

Special: Remember that an object held, carried, or worn has a Defense equal to the object's base Defense + 5 + the opponent's Dexterity modifier + the opponent's class Defense bonus (see Table 7.13: Size and Defense of Objects on page 219 for the object's base Defense).

Surgery

The character has the training and qualifications to perform surgical procedures.

Prerequisite: Treat Injury 4 ranks.

Benefit: The character can use the Treat Injury skill to perform surgery without the usual –4 penalty.

Normal: Characters without this feat take a –4 penalty on Treat Injury checks made to perform surgery.

Thumb Buster

While using a single hand to both hold down the trigger and thumb the hammer of a single-action revolver, the character can fire two quick shots as a single attack action.

Prerequisites: Dexterity 15, Point Blank Shot, Slip Hammer, base attack bonus +4.

Benefit: When using the Slip Hammer feat with a single-action revolver, the character doesn't need to use both hands. He may thumb the hammer (firing both shots) with only a single hand.

Normal: Characters without this feat must use both hands in order to use the Slip Hammer feat.

Special: The character must be using a single-action revolver to fire in this fashion.

Toughness

The character is as tough as a mountain goat.

"Wounded 16 times? That's unbelievable!"

"Well, I wouldn't play that up too much if I were you. Bullet holes in man weren't all that uncommon back then. Even today, they ain't exactly a certificate of smart."

Reporter and Bitter Creek – *Last Ride of the Dalton Gang, 1979*

Benefit: The character gains +3 total grit.

Special: A character may gain this feat multiple times. Its effects stack.

Track

The character has learned how to locate, identify, and follow the trail of most people, animals, or vehicles.

Benefit: To find tracks or follow them for one mile requires a Survival check. The character must make another Survival check for each additional mile covered and every time the tracks become more difficult to follow.

As a full-round action the character moves at half normal speed (or at the character's normal speed with a –5 penalty on the check, or up to twice normal speed with a –20 penalty on the check). The DC depends on the surface and the prevailing conditions.

Table 4.6: Track DC

Surface	Track DC
Very soft	5
Soft	10
Firm	15
Hard	20

Very Soft: Any surface (fresh snow, thick dust, wet mud) that holds deep, clear impressions of footprints.

Soft: Any surface soft enough to yield to pressure, but firmer than wet mud or fresh snow, in which the quarry leaves frequent but shallow footprints.

Firm: Most normal outdoor or exceptionally soft or dirty indoor surfaces. The quarry might leave some traces of its passage, but only occasional or partial footprints can be found.

Hard: Any surface that doesn't hold footprints, such as bare rock, concrete, metal decking, or indoor floors. The quarry leaves only traces, such as scuff marks.

If the Survival check fails, the character can retry after searching for 1 hour (outdoors) or 10 minutes (indoors).

Table 4.7: Track DC Modifiers

Condition	DC Modifier
Every three targets in the group being tracked	–1
Size of targets being tracked: [1]	
Fine	+8
Diminutive	+4
Tiny	+2
Small	+1
Medium-size	+0
Large	–1
Huge	–2
Gargantuan	–4
Colossal	–8
Every 24 hours since the trail was made	+1
Every hour of rain since the trail was made	+1
Fresh snow cover since the trail was made	+10
Poor visibility: [2]	
Overcast or moonless night	+6
Moonlight	+3
Fog or precipitation	+3
Tracked target hides trail (and moves at half speed)	+5

[1] For a group of mixed sizes, apply only the modifier for the largest size category represented.

[2] Apply only the largest modifier from this category.

Normal: A character without this feat can use the Survival skill to find tracks, but can only follow tracks if the DC is 10 or less. A character can use the Search skill to find individual footprints, but cannot follow tracks using Search.

Trail Lore

The character is exceptionally knowledgeable about a specific state or territory.

Benefit: Choose one state or territory. The character receives a +2 competence bonus on any Knowledge skill check that relates to the chosen state or territory (Judge's discretion).

Special: A character can gain this feat multiple times. Each time the character takes the feat, the character must select a different state or territory.

Trample

The character knows how to use a mount to knock down an opponent, giving the mount an opportunity to trample the opponent.

Prerequisites: Ride 6 ranks, Defensive Riding, Ride-By Attack.

Benefit: When the character attempts to overrun an opponent while mounted, the target may not choose to avoid the character. If the character knocks down the target, the character's mount may make one hoof attack against the target, gaining the standard +4 bonus on attack rolls against prone targets.

Tribal Lore

The character is exceptionally knowledgeable on the culture and customs of a specific tribe.

Prerequisite: Indian Lore.

Benefit: Choose one Indian tribe or nation. The character receives a +2 competence bonus on any Knowledge skill checks that relate to the culture or customs of the chosen Indian tribe (Judge's discretion).

Special: A character can gain this feat multiple times. Each additional time the character takes the feat, the character must select a different Indian tribe. All bonuses granted by this feat are at the Judge's discretion. The bonuses granted here stack with the bonuses from Indian Lore.

True Grit

The character is one of the toughest hombres west of the Mississippi, easily able to shake off the pain and effects of devastating wounds.

Prerequisite: Toughness.

Benefit: The character gains a +4 on all Fortitude saving throws to avoid the ill effects of massive damage.

Trustworthy

The character has that down-home, all-around honest and upright look about him. Folks just feel good about being around the character, and are more than willing to open up and take him into their confidences.

Benefit: The character receives a +2 bonus on all Diplomacy and Gather Information skill checks.

Two-Weapon Fighting

The character has training in fighting with two weapons simultaneously, one in each hand. The character can use the second weapon to make one extra attack each round.

Prerequisite: Dexterity 13.

Benefit: The character's penalties for fighting with two weapons are lessened by 2 for the primary hand and 6 for the off hand. (See page 211 for details.)

Special: The weapons used must be of the same type (i.e. either melee or ranged); the character cannot mix the types.

Unbalance Opponent

The character is skilled at moving with such quickness and agility in close combat as to keep opponents off balance.

Prerequisites: Defensive Martial Arts, base attack bonus +6.

Benefit: During the character's action, the character designates an opponent and that opponent may no longer add his or her Strength modifier to attack rolls when targeting the character. (If the opponent has a Strength penalty, that penalty still applies.) The designated opponent must be no more than one size category larger or smaller than the character. The opponent's Strength modifier applies to damage, as usual. The character can select a new opponent on any action.

Vehicle Dodge

The character has become skilled at maneuvering a vehicle to dodge attacks.

Prerequisite: Dexterity 13.

Benefit: When driving a vehicle with which the

character is proficient, during the character's action, the character designates an opposing vehicle or opponent. The character's vehicle and everyone aboard it receive a +1 dodge bonus to Defense against attacks from that vehicle or opponent. The character can select a new vehicle or opponent on any action.

Vehicle Proficiency

Select a class of vehicle (human-powered ground vehicles, sailing ships, steamships, or submersibles). The character is proficient at operating that class of vehicle.

Benefit: A character making Operate Vehicle checks or attack rolls while operating the selected class of vehicle no longer suffers the usual –4 penalty.

Normal: Characters without this feat suffer a –4 penalty on Operate Vehicle checks made to operate a vehicle that falls under any of these classes, and on any attacks made with vehicle weapons.

Special: A character may gain this feat four times. Each time a character takes this feat, he must select a different class of vehicle.

Weapon Finesse

The character has learned how to apply the finesse of Dexterity rather than force of Strength to light or maneuverable weapons. Some hombres just naturally strike like a rattler.

Prerequisite: Base attack bonus +1.

Benefit: With a light weapon, rapier or chain a character may use his Dexterity modifier instead of Strength modifier on attack rolls. (A light weapon is size Small or smaller.)

WEAPON FINESSE CHANGES

Note that in *Sidewinder: Recoiled*, unlike standard d20 Modern, you do not have to select a specific weapon for the Weapon Finesse feat. Instead the benefit applies to all of the weapons listed in the feat's text.

Weapon Focus

The character studies, practices and practically lives with a specific type of weapon, such as a Henry Rifle, Colt Dragoon or saber. The character has become so familiar with that weapon type that he has become highly proficient in its use. Choose a specific weapon. For purposes of this feat, a character can choose brawl, improvised weapon, unarmed strike, or grapple as a weapon.

Prerequisites: Proficient with weapon, base attack bonus +1.

Benefit: A character adds +1 to all attack rolls he makes using the selected weapon.

Special: A character can gain this feat multiple times. Each time the character takes the feat, it applies to a different weapon.

Whirlwind Attack

The character has become a master of melee combat, able to strike, like a swarm of hornets in a Texas twister, at all opponents within reach.

Prerequisites: Dexterity 13, Intelligence 13, Dodge, Mobility, Spring Attack, Combat Expertise, base attack bonus +4.

Benefit: When a character performs a full-round action, the character may give up his regular attacks and instead make one melee attack at the character's highest base attack bonus against each adjacent opponent.

Windfall

The wealth of the character compares favorably with that of cattle barons or captains of industry.

Benefit: The Wealth bonus of the character increases by +3. Also, this feat provides a +1 bonus on all Profession checks.

Special: A character can select this feat multiple times. Each time, both effects stack.

If the campaign is using Cold Hard Cash, this feat provides a +2 bonus on all Profession checks but a character can only acquire the feat once. Furthermore, if taken at first level the Windfall feat changes the character's starting cash (see Starting Cash, page 128).

CHAPTER FIVE : EQUIPMENT

"A gun is a tool, Marion, no better or no worse than any other tool, an axe, a shovel or anything. A gun is as good or as bad as the man using it. Remember that."

Shane – *Shane, 1953*

On the second day holed up in their hideout, Hildi and Sam speculated on their situation while Fate kept watch. The fresh snow outside had helped cover their trail after eluding Martel's men, but it wasn't making their stay any easier. Melody, eavesdropping, said she was sure they hadn't been tracked. They had circled around and around until it was safe to reach the hideout—and the snow added a little insurance.

Sam agreed. "That damn fool has no ideah we're squattin' right in his backyard." Sam gestured to the run-down barn on the land that Martel stole from Ma and Pa Gunter after he murdered them. "That rat will nevah find us."

"Maybe not, if we never leave," Hildi said. "But we'll run out of supplies 'fore long."

Zeke looked up from his inventory work. "I reckon we can hold up here for another week before we starve or die of thirst. Mind you, we could fight a small war with the ammunition we stocked, but we can't eat Spencer and Colt rounds."

Fate spoke up. "That's the last time we leave requisitions to Melody and Sam. Why, I knew an old quartermaster who would have had you two flogged for coming back with so little packed meat. Yessir, a flogging, as sure as the sun comes up."

"There's no use jawin' about it now," Hildi said. "We'll make do with what we got, and go out for more when we need to. We'll be out riding the range in no time, finding new ways to confound that no-good bastard. "

Zeke raised an eyebrow. "You want to stick around? I got some other ideas . . ."

"Yep." Hildi answered. "I got a feeling it's gonna work out."

"That's what you said when Zeke hatched that crazy train robbery plan," Melody said.

Equipment

What would the Wild West be without saddlebags, canteens, and six-guns for your hombre to haul around...deadlier, that's what! Whether a greenhorn experiencing the thrill of purchasing his first Colt or the quartermaster for a long wagon train en route to Oregon, the success of your character will depend, in part, on the way he or she is equipped for adventure.

This chapter addresses the money, equipment, and weapons found on the Western Frontier. Much of this gear can be purchased from a local merchant, or even via mail order, such as through the ever-useful Sears and Roebuck catalog. Others, particularly certain weapons, may require more effort to acquire (whether through honest or larcenous means) because they are sold only to the military or have passed out of production.

Purchasing Goods and Services

Sidewinder: Recoiled presents two systems for handling monetary matters within the game, either the Wealth System (as presented in the d20 Modern Roleplaying Game) or the time-honored usage of Cold Hard Cash. We leave it up to the Judge to choose which system to use in his or her game.

Wealth System

The Wealth System replaces the often tedious bookkeeping required to track a character's net worth. In real life, folks can buy an item in many ways. They can pay out of pocket, secure a loan, cash in bonds and stocks, or charge on a line of credit. The list goes on and on. The Wealth System simplifies the use of such assets by distilling a character's buying power into a single number called the Wealth bonus. A character's Wealth bonus represents both the character's net worth as well as readily accessible cash. A character accomplishes all purchases through a Wealth check (see below) in which the Wealth bonus acts as a modifier. The Wealth bonus is fluid. It increases as a character gains Wealth and decreases as the character makes purchases.

Wealth Checks

Wealth checks determine what characters can afford and what gear they might find reasonably accessible. Every character has a Wealth bonus that reflects his or her buying power. Every object and service has a purchase DC. To purchase an object, make a Wealth check against the purchase DC.

Wealth check = 1d20 + Wealth bonus

If the check is successful, the character has managed to scrape up enough cash, credit, or trade to make the purchase. On a failure, the character doesn't have the means to buy the object.

If the character's current Wealth bonus is equal to or greater than the DC, the character automatically succeeds and the character's Wealth bonus will usually remain unchanged. However, there is a penalty for a character spending beyond his or her means or buying particularly expensive items. Whenever a character buys

"THE HOMESTEADER'S BIBLE" OR "THE WISH BOOK"

When the subject of mail-order catalogs comes up, most folks will just naturally think of Sears and Roebuck. However, mail-order had been in existence long before the introduction of the Sears and Roebuck catalog. In fact, theirs wasn't even the first catalog, just the most successful. Aaron Montgomery Ward attempted to organize the first mail-order house in 1871; unfortunately, the Great Chicago Fire upset his plans by destroying his initial stock. It wasn't until 1872 that Montgomery Ward was able to launch his first catalog. It consisted of one-page and was distributed to members of the National Grange of the Patrons of Husbandry (more commonly known as "grangers"). By 1875 the catalog contained some 3,899 listings and had "wood cuts" picturing some of the items. While the buying public loved it, the rural retailers who had been charging farmers excessive prices for years reviled and even publicly burned the catalog. After the introduction of parcel post, the mail-order catalog soon became the most important book in the farmhouse next to the Bible; in fact, it was often called "The Homesteader's Bible" or "The Wish Book."

Richard W. Sears didn't enter the mail-order picture until 1886 when he began selling watches and jewelry by mail. In 1894, Sears, with partner A.C. Roebuck, incorporated as Sears, Roebuck, and Company. In the 1894 catalog, Sears began to seriously compete with Ward by billing itself as "The Cheapest Supply House on Earth," one-upping Ward's slogan "The Cheapest Cash Supply House in America." By 1897, Sears boasted it was selling four suits and a watch every minute, a revolver every two minutes and a buggy every 10 minutes. In 1900, Sears and Roebuck surpassed Montgomery Ward in sales for the first time, and never again would a mail-order house surpass Sears in sales.

an object that has a purchase DC higher than his or her current Wealth bonus or when buying items with a DC of 15 or greater, the character's Wealth bonus decreases (see Losing Wealth, below).

Shopping and Time

Generally, buying less common objects requires a number of hours equal to the purchase DC of the object or service, reflecting the time needed to locate the wanted goods and to close the deal. Regardless, in some of the more rural areas of the Old West, the desired goods and services may not be available at any cost.

Taking 10 and Taking 20

A character can usually take 10 or take 20 when making a Wealth check. Taking 20 requires 20 times as long as normal.

Try Again?

A character can try again if he or she fails a Wealth check, but not until the character has spent an additional number of hours of shopping equal to the purchase DC of the object or service wanted. In some cases, the Judge may rule that a cowpoke cannot make another Wealth check until his or her financial situation changes. In particular, this might occur in a small western town with only one supplier of the desired goods. Additional time spent shopping won't unearth another seller asking a lower price. Therefore, the cowpoke's financial wherewithal must change before the item can be bought.

Aid Another

A character can make an aid another attempt to help another character purchase an object or service that would normally be outside of his or her means. If the attempt is successful, then the aiding character provides the purchaser with a +2 bonus on his or her Wealth check. However, the character providing the aid reduces his or her Wealth bonus by 1.

Losing Wealth

Any time a character purchases gear or goods, there is the potential that the character's Wealth bonus will be reduced. Whether a reduction in Wealth bonus occurs depends on the purchase DC of the item and the character's current Wealth bonus. If the purchase DC is greater than 15 or if the purchase DC exceeds the character's Wealth bonus, the Wealth bonus decreases. Use the following table to determine how much of a reduction occurs.

Table 5.1: Wealth Bonus Decrease from Purchases

Object or Service Purchase DC	Wealth Bonus Decrease
Equal to or less than current Wealth bonus	0 points
1–10 points higher than current Wealth bonus	1 point
11–15 points higher than current Wealth bonus	1d6 points
16 or more points higher than current Wealth bonus	2d6 points
Purchase DC is 15 or higher	+1 point

A character's Wealth bonus is reduced only if he or she successfully buys an object or service. If the character attempts to buy something and the check fails, his or her Wealth bonus remains unaffected.

Wealth Bonus of +0

A character's Wealth bonus can never decrease to less than +0. If a character's Wealth bonus is +0, the character doesn't have the buying power to purchase any object or service with a purchase DC of 10 or higher, and cannot take 10 or take 20 when making a purchase.

Gaining Wealth

As a character undergoes adventures, his or her Wealth bonus can increase in several ways. The character's profession (other than adventuring) can bring home the bacon, leading to an increase in wealth (see the Profession skill, page 88). Alternatively, during his or her adventures, a character may gain rewards, loot, or payments that will augment his or her Wealth bonus. Finally, the acquisition of the Windfall feat will increase a character's Wealth bonus (see the Windfall feat, page 123).

Professional Gains

Every time a character gains a new level (with the approval of the Judge), make a Profession check. The DC is equal to the character's current Wealth bonus. If the character succeeds, his or her current Wealth bonus increases by +1. For every 5 points by which the character exceeds the DC, he or she gains an additional +1 to his or her Wealth bonus.

Wealth Awards

Adventuring may result in characters finding valuable items, such as the hidden stash of a deranged gold miner or the missing payroll from a stagecoach robbery. In such cases, the benefit translates into a Wealth award. Whether a character gains a Wealth award as part of an adventure is under the sole discretion of the Judge. The size of such awards is also the Judge's purview.

Starting Wealth

A newly created 1st-level character's Wealth bonus is 2d4 plus:

- Wealth provided by the character's starting occupation.
- Bonus from the Windfall feat, if taken.
- +1 for having 1 to 4 ranks in the Profession skill.

Starting Equipment

A character may begin play with an inventory of gear and equipment. The player specifies which items appear on this inventory within limits defined by the Judge. (The Judge may decide that certain goods are unavailable to starting characters). A character must purchase all starting equipment by making Wealth checks. A character can obtain any item with a purchase DC less than his or her starting Wealth bonus without the necessity of making a roll. Items that are more expensive require a Wealth check on which the character may take 10 or 20. Expensive items should be purchased sequentially, and the appropriate reduction in Wealth bonus must be accounted for after each item is purchased (see Losing Wealth, page 126).

On-Hand Objects

In real life, most people possess a myriad of innocuous goods for which an accurate and current accounting would be exceedingly cumbersome to maintain. Determining whether a character owns a particular mundane object requires a Wealth check.

With the Judge's permission, a character can make a Wealth check to see if he or she has a particular mundane object on hand, as long as the object has a purchase DC of 10 or lower. (The Judge determines the purchase DC for any object that isn't mentioned in this chapter, using similarly priced objects as a guide.) The Wealth check works the same as for buying the object, except that the character incurs a –10 penalty on the check and cannot take 10 or take 20. However, a character cannot make a Wealth check to see if he or she has a specific mundane object on hand during character generation or between adventures—only during play. If the character succeeds, his or her Wealth bonus is unaffected, even if the purchase DC of the object is higher than his or her Wealth bonus.

Depending on the situation, the Judge can rule that a certain mundane object is unavailable; in order to obtain any given object, the character must be in a place where that object might actually exist. For example, a cowpoke cannot make a check for a frying pan while sitting in the town jail.

Selling Goods

To sell something, a character first needs to determine its sale value. Assuming the object is undamaged and in working condition, the sale value is equal to the object's purchase DC (as though purchased new) minus 3.

Selling an object can increase a character's Wealth bonus. To determine how large the Wealth bonus increase is, first determine the object's sale value. If the character would lose wealth if he or she bought an item with a purchase DC equal to the object's sale value, then the character gains wealth when selling the object. The Wealth bonus increase (from the sale) is equal to the Wealth bonus decrease that would be produced by the aforementioned hypothetical purchase.

Regardless of the character's current Wealth bonus, he or she gains a Wealth bonus increase of 1 whenever the character sells an object with a sale value of 15 or higher. If a character sells an object with a sale value less than or equal to his or her current Wealth bonus, and that sale value is 14 or lower, the character gains nothing.

A character cannot legally sell restricted objects unless the character has a license to own or sell them. A character also cannot legally sell objects reported as stolen. Selling objects illegally usually requires that the character have contacts in the black market, and reduces the sale value by an additional 3.

Cold Hard Cash

If the Judge decides that the Wealth System is too abstract, or if it just isn't to his or her liking, the Judge can choose to use this optional system of tracking wealth the old fashioned way, with dollars and cents. When using the Cold Hard Cash system, each player must be his or her own accountant, recording the amount of money and assets the character owns. A character makes all purchases in cash or trade, with prices indicated by a cash value stated in dollars.

Simply put, in this system, if your cowpoke doesn't have the cash, he cannot buy the stash. The Judge may allow for loans, credit or other means of rounding up cash, but the character must have adequate funds to purchase items. This system offers a more real-world method of acquiring goods and allows for roleplaying scenarios that may arise from the search for specific items. Don't forget to haggle.

Currency

Cold hard cash took many different forms in the Old West, from gold dust and paper money (both Union and Confederate) to the tried and true metal coins. Not every company or local merchant would accept all forms of currency. Even if they did, they might not accept a particular form of currency at face value. This was particularly true for paper money, the value of which could rapidly change depending on the financial fortunes and policies of its backer, making most folks a might hesitant to accept it at all.

Coins

Coins were a universally accepted form of currency because the value of the metal used to mint the coin largely determined the coin's true value. Therefore, coins were a stable form of currency that everyone trusted. Table 5.2: Coins of the Old West provides a list of coins commonly used on the frontier.

Table 5.2: Coins of the Old West

Coin	Value	Number per Pound
Gold Coins		
Double Eagle	$20	12
Gold Eagle	$10	25
Half Eagle	$5	50
Three-Dollar Piece	$3	75
Quarter Eagle	$2.50	100
Silver Coins		
Morgan Silver Dollar	$1	15
Liberty Dollar (Mexico)	$1	15
Half Dollar	50¢	30
Quarter Dollar	25¢	60
Dime	10¢	180
Half Dime	5¢	360
Copper/Bronze Coins		
Two-Cent Piece (bronze)	2¢	75
Indian Cent (copper)	1¢	100

Script

Before and during the Civil War, paper money came in many forms. Each individual state bank issued paper currency in the form of bank notes. Both the Union and Confederate governments printed notes as well. Of course, after the Civil War, all Confederate money became worthless.

Because of the vagaries of paper money, it is possible that any given establishment out West may or may not accept it (at least through 1880, see the Currency Reform sidebar). Even if they do, they will usually charge an additional 10 to 20 percent on top of the normal price of goods. After 1880, folks had finally come to trust paper money. Therefore, after this date, most reputable businesses should accept legitimate paper currency.

CURRENCY REFORM

The money and credit problems of the United States intensified during the Civil War. In 1863, President Abraham Lincoln, urged by Salmon Chase, the Secretary of the Treasury, signed the National Bank Act to help solve the nation's money problems. The act established a national banking system and the issuing of a uniform national currency by new "national" banks. The banks were required to purchase U.S. government securities as backing for their national bank notes. In 1865, a 10-percent tax levied against state bank notes essentially taxed those notes out of existence.

From 1863 to 1877, national bank notes were issued privately by the national banks. After 1877, the Bureau of Engraving and Printing, a division of the U.S. Department of the Treasury, assumed responsibility for printing all notes.

Gold and Silver

Gold and silver in their pure form are highly valued in the Wild West and will be readily accepted by most establishments.

Table 5.3: Average Price of Metals from 1870—1890

Mineral	Value/Oz.
Silver	65¢
Gold	$20

Starting Cash

A character begins play with an amount of money determined by both a random factor (determined by a die roll) and a static factor.

Starting Cash = (2d4 + Wealth bonus) x $20

The wealth bonus used in the above formula is the bonus arising from the character's starting occupation and the bonus from the Windfall feat (if taken).

Starting Equipment

The character uses this starting cash to purchase equipment. The character may purchase anything the Judge allows and shopping time isn't a consideration. After purchasing gear, the character retains any cash left over for use during play.

Selling Goods

Selling goods under the Cold Hard Cash system works just like purchasing; a character simply changes hats from buyer to seller. In general, a piece of operational and serviceable used gear has a price equal to one-half of its original purchase price. However, when selling goods to a merchant whose intent is to turn around and sell those goods to someone else, it is usually not possible to sell equipment at this price. Since the merchant must be able to make a profit on the resale, he or she will generally be willing to buy a used item at no more than one-quarter of its original value.

Purchase DC and Price Conversion

For situations in which an item is supplied with either a purchase DC or a purchase price, but not the other, Table 5.4: Converting Between Purchase DC and Price supplies a list of DC's and prices so you can perform a conversion.

Table 5.4: Converting Between Purchase DC and Price

Purchase Price	Purchase DC	Purchase Price	Purchase DC
1¢	2	$600	27
5¢	3	$800	28
25¢	4	$1,100	29
50¢	5	$1,500	30
$1	6	$2,000	31
$2	7	$1,500	32
$3	8	$2,000	33
$4	9	$2,500	34
$5	10	$3,500	35
$6	11	$4,500	36
$8	12	$6,000	37
$11	13	$8,000	38
$15	14	$11,000	39
$20	15	$15,000	40
$25	16	$20,000	41
$35	17	$25,000	42
$45	18	$35,000	43
$60	19	$45,000	44
$80	20	$60,000	45
$110	21	$80,000	46
$150	22	$110,000	47
$200	23	$150,000	48
$250	24	$200,000	49
$350	25	$250,000	50
$450	26	$350,000	51

Restricted Goods

Some objects require licenses to own or operate, or are restricted to members of qualifying organizations (such as the military). In such cases, a character must purchase a license or pay a fee to own the object legally. A license or fee is a separate item, purchased in addition to (and usually before) the object to which it applies. The four levels of restriction are as follows.

Licensed: The owner must obtain a license to own or operate the object legally. Generally, the license isn't expensive, and obtaining it has few, if any, additional legal requirements.

Restricted: Technically, only specially qualified individuals or organizations may own the object. However, the real obstacles to ownership are time and money; anyone with sufficient patience and cash can eventually acquire the necessary license.

Military: The object is sold primarily to legitimate police and military organizations. A military rating is essentially the same as restricted (see above), except that manufacturers and dealers are generally under tight government scrutiny and thus especially wary of selling to private individuals.

Illegal: The object is illegal in all but specific, highly regulated circumstances.

A character can purchase a restricted item either legally or illegally. If purchased legally, a license must be acquired first (see below). If purchased illegally, the cost of the item increases and the character must make black market contacts (see page 130).

GOVERNMENT REGULATION IN THE OLD WEST

The FDA, ATF, and many other federal regulatory agencies came into existence well after the Wild West era. Therefore, government imposed restrictions on what a merchant could sell and a consumer could buy were relatively uncommon. *Sidewinder: Recoiled* still uses the restriction system for those instances where a higher authority controls the availability of an item. In general, there will be a dramatic reduction in the prevalence of such restricted or regulated goods from the frequency assumed in the d20 Modern Roleplaying Game.

Purchasing a License

To purchase a license or pay necessary fees, the character must make a Wealth check against the purchase DC given in Table 5.5: Restriction Ratings. With a success, the license is issued to the character after the number of days indicated. If the Judge is using the optional Cold Hard Cash rules, the character obtains the

license after the given number of days once the purchase price is paid. To speed the process, the hero can make a Knowledge (business) check against a DC equal to the license purchase DC. Success results in the license being issued in 1d6 hours. (During the process of character creation, a character just needs to purchase the license or pay the fee; the time required takes place before game play begins.) For some restricted items, it may not be possible to purchase a license (legally) without meeting certain prerequisites. For example, a character may need to be an officer in the Army's procurement office in order to gain a license to purchase a Gatling Gun.

As a general rule, a character must obtain the appropriate license before buying a restricted object. Legitimate dealers will not sell restricted objects to a character without the necessary license; however, a character without a license may be able to turn to the black market (see below) to obtain restricted objects.

Purchasing on the Black Market

Sometimes an hombre wants to obtain an object without going through the hassle of getting a license. Pert' near anything is available on the black market. The character can make a Knowledge (streetwise) check to locate a black market merchant. The DC depends on where the character looks: 15 to find a black market merchant in a big city, 20 for a small town, and 25 or higher for a rural location.

Objects purchased on the black market are more expensive than those purchased legally. Add the black market purchase DC modifier from Table 5.5: Restriction Ratings to the purchase DC of the object. If the Judge is using the optional Cold Hard Cash rule, a purchase price multiplier is supplied on that same table.

Obtaining an object on the black market takes a number of days according to the Time Required column on Table 5.5: Restriction Ratings. The character can hurry the process, but each day cut out of the process (to a minimum of one day) increases the purchase DC by an additional +1 or the purchase price by a factor of 50% of the original price.

Mastercraft Equipment

Weapons, armor, and some other types of equipment can be constructed as mastercraft objects. The exceptional quality of these objects can provide the user a bonus on attack rolls, damage, Defense, skill checks or some other characteristic improved by use of the object.

A mastercraft object that provides a +1 bonus can usually be purchased on the open market as a custom version of a common object. The increased cost of such an object adds +3 to the purchase DC, or multiplies the purchase price by x3 if using the optional Cold Hard Cash rule. Mastercraft objects with a bonus of +2 or +3 are uncommon and generally won't be found for sale over-the-counter (but could be commissioned). If a mastercraft +2 object were found for purchase, its cost would add +6 to the normal purchase DC (or x6 for the purchase price). The cost of a mastercraft +3 object would add +9 to the normal purchase DC (or x12 for the price).

A rare few objects qualify as mastercraft quality even without customization—the off-the-shelf version of the object is of such high quality that it always provides a bonus of +1. In these cases, the purchase DC isn't increased (such objects are already priced higher than similar objects of lower quality).

In some cases, a mastercraft object will be superior in some fashion that doesn't involve a +1, +2, or +3 bonus on a d20 roll. For example, a mastercraft pistol with an elongated barrel might increase the range increment of the customized weapon. Such augmentations are rated with an "effective bonus." For example, a customized mastercraft pistol

Table 5.5: Restriction Ratings

	License or Fee		*Black Market Modifier*		
Restriction Rating	**Purchase DC**	**Purchase Price**	**Purchase DC [1]**	**Purchase Price [2]**	**Time Required**
Licensed	10	$5	+1	x1.5	1 day
Restricted	15	$20	+2	x2.0	2 days
Military	20	$80	+3	x2.5	3 days
Illegal	25	$350	+4	x3.0	4 days

[1] Add to the object's purchase DC if the character tries to buy it on the black market without first obtaining a license; see Purchasing on the Black Market, this page.

[2] Multiply by the object's purchase price if the character tries to buy it on the black market without first obtaining a license; see Purchasing on the Black Market, this page.

with an increased range increment of +10 feet might be considered to have an effective mastercraft bonus of +1. The pistol would have a purchase DC that was +3 larger than a standard pistol. Similarly, an object with an effective mastercraft bonus of +2 would have +6 on the purchase DC. A mastercraft item with multiple customizations adds the increase in purchase DC separately for each customization. For example, a mastercraft pistol that was +1 to hit and +10 feet on range (both +1 effective bonuses) would have a purchase DC that was 6 higher (+3 + 3) than the standard pistol. If using the optional Cold Hard Cash rule, the cost multipliers are added before multiplying the cost. In the previous example, the pistol would cost 6 times as much as normal (total cost = normal cost x [3 + 3]).

WHAT'S DIFFERENT?

In many ways, this chapter has received the most renovation from what appears in the d20 Modern Roleplaying Game. Obviously, the type of equipment available in the 19th century is very different from what is available in the 21st. Therefore, the equipment lists (particularly the firearms) have been heavily modified. In addition, it should be noted that the purchase DC of objects available in both centuries have often been changed to represent the different availability of goods and services on the Western Frontier. Finally, in addition to the Wealth System used in d20 Modern, we have introduced an entirely different method of tracking money and wealth. While not an original system, the Cold Hard Cash rules are tried and true and many Judges may feel they are more appropriate to the western setting.

Carrying Capacity

In the Old West, one of the several reasons why a man's horse is his best friend is that rifles, pistols, ammunition, grub, and gear are downright heavy. Three levels of carried gear dictate just how heavily encumbered a cowboy (or his horse) actually is: light, medium and heavy. The type of load directly determines a character's movement rate and penalizes skills and actions requiring free motion. Table 5.6: Carrying Capacity provides the amount of weight a cowboy can carry before reaching a particular level of load. The amount of weight depends on the character's Strength score.

Table 5.6: Carrying Capacity

Strength	Light Load	Medium Load	Heavy Load
1	up to 3 lb.	4–6 lb.	7–10 lb.
2	up to 6 lb.	7–13 lb.	14–20 lb.
3	up to 10 lb.	11–20 lb.	21–30 lb.
4	up to 13 lb.	14–26 lb.	27–40 lb.
5	up to 16 lb.	17–33 lb.	34–50 lb.
6	up to 20 lb.	21–40 lb.	41–60 lb.
7	up to 23 lb.	24–46 lb.	47–70 lb.
8	up to 26 lb.	27–53 lb.	54–80 lb.
9	up to 30 lb.	31–60 lb.	61–90 lb.
10	up to 33 lb.	34–66 lb.	67–100 lb.
11	up to 38 lb.	39–76 lb.	77–115 lb.
12	up to 43 lb.	44–86 lb.	87–130 lb.
13	up to 50 lb.	51–100 lb.	101–150 lb.
14	up to 58 lb.	59–116 lb.	117–175 lb.
15	up to 66 lb.	67–133 lb.	134–200 lb.
16	up to 76 lb.	77–153 lb.	154–230 lb.
17	up to 86 lb.	87–173 lb.	174–260 lb.
18	up to 100 lb.	101–200 lb.	201–300 lb.
19	up to 116 lb.	117–233 lb.	234–350 lb.
20	up to 133 lb.	134–266 lb.	267–400 lb.
21	up to 153 lb.	154–306 lb.	307–460 lb.
22	up to 173 lb.	174–346 lb.	347–520 lb.
23	up to 200 lb.	201–400 lb.	401–600 lb.
24	up to 233 lb.	234–466 lb.	467–700 lb.
25	up to 266 lb.	267–533 lb.	534–800 lb.
26	up to 306 lb.	307–613 lb.	614–920 lb.
27	up to 346 lb.	347–693 lb.	694–1,040 lb.
28	up to 400 lb.	401–800 lb.	801–1,200 lb.
29	up to 466 lb.	467–933 lb.	934–1,400 lb.
+10	x4	x4	x4

If the weight of everything a character is wearing and carrying amounts to a light load or less, the character can move and perform any actions normally (though the character's speed may already be slowed by the type of armor worn).

If the weight of the character's gear falls into the medium load range, the character is considered encumbered. If the weight of a character's gear falls into the heavy load range, the character is considered heavily encumbered. An encumbered or heavily encumbered character's speed is reduced to the value given in the table below, provided the character isn't already slowed to that speed for some other reason.

Table 5.7: Speed Reduction Due to Load

"Naked" Speed	Light Load Speed	Medium Load Speed	Heavy Load Speed
20 ft.	20 ft.	15 ft.	10 ft.
30 ft.	30 ft.	20 ft.	15 ft.
40 ft.	40 ft.	30 ft.	20 ft.
50 ft.	50 ft.	40 ft.	25 ft.
60 ft.	60 ft.	50 ft.	30 ft.

Encumbered Characters (medium load): An encumbered character (medium load) performs as if his or her Dexterity modifier were no higher than +3. In addition, the character incurs a –3 circumstance penalty on all attack rolls as well as checks involving the following skills: Balance, Climb, Escape Artist, Hide, Jump, Move Silently, Sleight of Hand, and Tumble. This penalty stacks with any armor penalty that may also apply.

Heavily Encumbered Characters (heavy load): A heavily encumbered character performs as if his or her Dexterity modifier were no higher than +1. In addition, the character suffers a –6 penalty on all attack rolls as well as checks involving the following skills: Balance, Climb, Escape Artist, Hide, Jump, Move Silently, Sleight of Hand, and Tumble. This penalty stacks with any armor penalty that may also apply. Finally, a heavily encumbered character's maximum running speed is his or her speed x3 instead of speed x4.

The figure at the upper end of a character's heavy load range is his or her maximum load. No character can use a move action or perform any other actions while carrying more than a maximum load.

Lifting and Dragging: A character can lift up to his or her maximum load over his or her head.

A character can lift up to double his or her maximum load off the ground, but can only stagger around with it. While overloaded in this way, the character loses any Dexterity bonus to Defense and can move only 5 feet per round (as a full-round action).

A character can generally push or drag along the ground up to five times his or her maximum load. Favorable conditions (smooth ground, dragging a slick object) can double these numbers, and bad circumstances (broken ground, pushing an object that snags) can reduce them to one-half or less.

Bigger and Smaller Creatures: The figures on Table 5.6: Carrying Capacity are for Medium-size bipedal creatures. Larger bipedal creatures can carry more weight depending on size category: Large x2, Huge x4, Gargantuan x8, and Colossal x16. Smaller creatures can carry less weight depending on size category: Small x3/4, Tiny x1/2, Diminutive x1/4, and Fine x1/8.

Quadrupeds, such as horses, can carry heavier loads than characters can. Use these multipliers instead of the ones given above: Fine x1/4, Diminutive x1/2, Tiny x3/4, Small x1, Medium-size x1.5, Large x3, Huge x6, Gargantuan x12, and Colossal x24.

Tremendous Strength: For Strength scores not listed, find the Strength score between 20 and 29 that has the same "ones" digit as the creature's Strength score. Multiply the figures by 4 if the creature's Strength is in the 30s, 16 if it's in the 40s, 64 if it's in the 50s, and so on (e.g. a strength of 42 would use the load numbers listed for 22, multiplied by 16).

Weapons

"Where would any man be on this border without guns? . . . Gun packin' in the West since the Civil War has growed into a kind of moral law. An' out here on this border it's the difference between a man and something not a man."

Lassiter – *Riders of the Purple Sage, 1912, by Zane Grey*

Weapons form the backbone of a character's gear. Without a rifle or pistol, a cowpoke won't last long in the Wild West. The weapons covered here are grouped into three categories based on their general utility: ranged weapons, explosives and splash weapons, and melee weapons.

Ranged Weapons

Ranged weapons fall into five general classifications: handguns, longarms, exotic firearms, archaic ranged weapons, and exotic ranged weapons such as lassos and bolas. Handguns and longarms are defined as personal firearms, that is, firearms designed to be carried and operated by a single person.

Attacking with a Ranged Weapon

When using a ranged weapon, the wielder applies his or her Dexterity modifier to the attack roll. If the weapon is thrown, the character's Strength modifier is applied to damage.

Proficiency with Ranged Weapons

Unless a character is proficient with a particular weapon, he or she suffers a –4 non-proficiency penalty on all attack rolls made when using that weapon. Possessing the appropriate feat eliminates this non-proficiency penalty. Which feat is required depends on the classification of the weapon. Personal firearms (handguns and longarms) require the Personal Firearms Proficiency, while most other ranged weapons are archaic weapons and require the Archaic Weapons Proficiency. A few unusual ranged weapons exist, and these require either the Exotic Ranged Weapon Proficiency or the Exotic Firearms Proficiency.

Ranged Weapons Table

Ranged weapons are described by a number of statistics, as shown on Table 5.8: Ranged Weapons. The weapons are broken down by type and listed with the proficiency required to use the weapon to full advantage. The columns of the table contain the following information.

LET THE BULLETS FLY

There is a fist full of feats available to make any gunfighter deadlier than the average Joe (or is that Josey?). But which are the best for your character? The following list gives a quick rundown of the feats that affect firearm usage.

Advanced Firearm Proficiency: Your character can control the rapid rate of fire possible with automatic weapons such as the Gatling Gun.

Advanced Two-Weapon Fighting: Your character can make a third attack with his off-hand weapon with a -10 penalty to hit.

Blaze of Glory: Your character can fire a pistol in each hand as a single attack action.

Blazing Saddle: This feat reduces the penalties when shooting from a moving horse.

Cavalry Training: This feat eliminates the penalties when shooting from a moving horse.

Combat Loading: This feat eliminates attacks of opportunity arising from reloading in combat and provides a +4 bonus on all Concentration checks to reload firearms under duress.

Dead Aim: Your gunfighter may spend a full-round action to aim, receiving a +2 bonus on his next ranged attack.

Double Tap: A one-handed feat granting two shots with one attack, the damage is increased by one die at the expense of –2 penalty on attack rolls.

Exotic Firearms Proficiency: Some firearms simply aren't common to the Wild West; this feat allows your character to use a certain type of exotic firearm without penalty.

Far Shot: This increases the range increment for firearms by a multiplicative factor of 1.5 and for thrown weapons by a factor of 2.

Gunplay: Your cowpoke can perform fanciful tricks with firearms. Not always useful in combat, but it sure impresses the gals.

Hammer Down: Your gunfighter may fan the hammer of single-action revolver to fire a barrage of bullets as a single attack. The damage is increased by two dice at the expense of a –4 penalty on attack rolls.

Improved Dead Aim: This feat increases the bonus granted by Dead Aim to +3.

Improved Two-Weapon Fighting: Your character can make an extra attack with his off-hand weapon with a -5 penalty to hit.

Personal Firearms Proficiency: This feat is required to use all hoglegs and longarms without penalty.

Point Blank Shot: Your gunfighter is deadly at close range, gaining a +1 to hit and damage within 30 feet.

Precise Shot: This eliminates the -4 penalty for firing into melee combat.

Quick Draw: Your gunfighter can draw his weapon as a free action.

Quick Reload: You may reload firearms twice as fast as normal.

Shot on the Run: This feat allows your character to move before and after a ranged attack.

Skip Shot: Your gunfighter can ignore cover when firing his smokewagon, suffering a -2 to hit and doing one die less of damage.

Slip Hammer: When using a single-action revolver with both hands, your character can fire two bullets as a single attack. He receives a -2 penalty to hit, but does +1 die of damage.

Sniping: The character can add his Wisdom modifier to all damage done when using the Dead Aim feat.

Sprayin' Lead: When fanning the hammer (see Hammer Down), your gunfighter may attack all targets within an area.

Strafe: A character can target an area 5 ft by 20 ft when using autofire or Sprayin' Lead instead of a 10 ft by 10 ft area.

Sundering Shot: The character receives a +4 bonus to attack objects held by an opponent.

Thumb Buster: Your character may use the Slip Hammer feat with only one hand.

Two Weapon Fighting: The penalties for fighting with two weapons (one in each hand) are reduced by 2.

Date: The model year or date of first issue. If a dash appears in the column, the weapon has ancient origins.

Ammunition (Ammo): The type of ammunition that the weapon requires. For firearms, the caliber of bullet is listed first and a code indicating the ammunition variety follows.

F: The weapon is a flintlock muzzleloader.

M: The weapon is a percussion muzzleloader.

P: The weapon uses a percussion cap to ignite a paper or cloth cartridge

R: The weapon uses rim-fire metallic cartridge ammunition

C: The weapon uses center-fire metallic cartridge ammunition

Damage (Dam): The damage the weapon deals on a successful hit. The damage dealt by all firearms is ballistic damage. If the weapon inflicts a damage type other than ballistic, that type is indicated by a code letter

following the damage amount.

No letter code: Ballistic damage

B: Bludgeoning damage

P: Piercing damage

S: Slashing damage

Some creatures or characters may be resistant or immune to some forms of damage.

Critical Threat Range (Crit): The range of raw numbers that indicate a possible critical hit, when rolled (on a d20) during an attack roll. If the threat is confirmed, the weapon deals double damage (roll damage twice, as if hitting the target twice).

Range Increment (Rng): Any attack made at less than this distance isn't penalized for range; however, each full range increment causes a cumulative –2 penalty on the attack roll. Ranged weapons have a maximum range of ten range increments, except for thrown weapons, which have a maximum range of five range increments.

Rate of Fire: Due to advances in technology, some ranged weapons are naturally quicker to load and fire than others. Crack British troops were able to load and fire a muzzle-loading musket at a rate of 3 shots a minute, while any fool with a Gatling Gun could deliver around 300 bullets a minute. There are four categories listed below that describe what effect the rate of fire has on combat in *Sidewinder: Recoiled*.

One-Shot (1): Some ranged weapons have a rate of fire of 1, which simply means they can be employed only once before they must be reloaded or replaced. Muzzle-loading muskets and a single-barrel breech-loading shotgun are examples of one-shot weapons.

Single Shot (SS): A weapon with the single shot rate of fire requires the user to manually operate the action (the mechanism that feeds and cocks the weapon) between each shot. Lever-action rifles and pepperboxes are examples of firearms with single shot rates of fire. A weapon with the single shot rate of fire can fire only one shot per attack, even if the user has a feat or other ability that would normally allow more than one shot per attack.

Semiautomatic (S): Single-action and double-action pistols have the semiautomatic rate of fire. These pistols fire one shot per attack (effectively acting as a single shot weapon), but some feats allow characters armed with these weapons to fire multiple shots in rapid succession, getting in more than one shot per attack.

Automatic (A): Automatic weapons fire a burst or stream of shots with a single operation of the firing mechanism. Only weapons with the automatic rate of fire can be set on autofire or be used with feats that take advantage of automatic fire.

Magazine (Mag): This column provides the weapon's magazine capacity and type. The magazine capacity determines the amount of ammunition a weapon carries, and hence how many shots can be fired before the weapon needs reloading. How the firearm is reloaded depends upon its magazine type (see Reloading a Ranged Weapon, page 146). The number in this entry is the magazine's capacity in shots; the word that follows the number indicates the magazine type: box, cylinder, internal, or muzzleloader. Weapons with a dash in this column don't have magazines; these are generally thrown weapons.

Box (box): A box magazine is any type of magazine that can be removed and reloaded separately from the weapon.

Cylinder (cyl): A revolver keeps its ammunition in a cylinder, which is part of the weapon and serves as the firing chamber for each round as well. Some pepperboxes also have cylindrical magazines; however, each chamber has its own separate barrel and the entire set of barrels and chambers rotates in order to place fresh ammunition before the firing pin.

Internal (int): Some weapons keep their ammunition in an internal space, which must be loaded by hand. This is the case with most shotguns, some rifles, and a few pistols.

Muzzleloader (mzl): This weapon is a one-shot weapon in which the charge of black powder is dumped down the barrel and the shot is tamped down afterwards with a ramrod.

Size: Size categories for weapons and other objects are defined differently from the size categories for creatures. The relationship between a weapon's size and that of its wielder defines whether it's a light weapon, requires only one-hand to use, or if it requires two hands.

A Medium-size or smaller weapon can be used one-handed or two-handed. A Large weapon requires two hands. A Huge weapon requires two hands and a bipod or other mount.

A Small or smaller weapon is considered a light weapon. It can be used one-handed and, as a light weapon, is easier for a character to use in his or her off hand.

Weight (Wgt): This column gives the weight of the weapon when fully loaded. All weights are measured in pounds, rounded to the nearest half-pound.

Purchase DC (Pur DC): This is the purchase DC for a Wealth check to acquire the weapon. This number reflects the base price and doesn't include any modifier for purchasing the weapon on the black market.

Purchase Price (Pur Price): The cost of the weapon in dollars when using the optional Cold Hard Cash rule.

Handguns

A handgun is a personal firearm that can be used one-handed without penalty. This includes all pistols and sawed-off shotguns. All handguns require the Personal Firearms Proficiency feat. Using a handgun without this feat imposes a –4 penalty on attack rolls.

To facilitate play, handguns are broken down into four smaller groups: muzzleloaders, breechloaders, single-action revolvers, and double-action revolvers.

Muzzle-Loading Pistols

Muzzleloaders can be smoothbore or rifled. A flintlock or a percussion cap can ignite both versions, and both are primarily loaded in the following fashion. The character bites the end of a paper cartridge releasing a pre-measured charge of powder that is subsequently

Table 5.8: Ranged Weapons

Weapon	Date	Ammo	Dam	Crit	Rng ft	Rate of fire	Mag	Size	Wgt lbs	Pur DC	Pur Price
Handguns (requires the Personal Firearms Proficiency)											
Muzzleloaders											
Harpers Ferry Pistol	1805	.58 F	2d8	20	20	1	1 mzl	M	2.5	7	$2
U.S. Percussion Navy Pistol	1842	.54 M	2d8	20	20	1	1 mzl	M	2.5	10	$5
Rifled version	1843	.54 M	2d8	20	30	1	1 mzl	M	2.5	12	$7
Allen and Thurber Pepperbox *	1845	.31 M	2d4	20	10	SS	6 mzl	M	4.0	15	$20
Pocket Deringer	1850	.44 M	2d6	20	10	1	1 mzl	T	0.5	13	$11
Breechloaders											
Sharps Pepperbox *	1859	.32 R	2d4	20	10	SS	4 int	T	1.5	13	$10
Remington Double-Derringer	1866	.41 R	2d6	20	10	SS	2 int	T	0.5	12	$8
Single-Action Revolvers											
Colt Walker Dragoon *	1847	.44 P	2d6	20	40	S	6 cyl	M	4.5	15	$20
Colt New Model Army	1861	.44 P	2d6	20	30	S	6 cyl	M	3	15	$18
Remington Pocket Pistol	1863	.31 P	2d4	20	20	S	5 cyl	S	1	14	$15
Reid's Knuckleduster *	1869	.22 R	2d4	20	10	S	7 cyl	T	1	7	$2
Colt Peacemaker	1873	.45 C	2d6	20	30	S	6 cyl	M	3	15	$18
S&W Schofield*	1875	.45 C	2d6	20	30	S	6 cyl	M	2.5	16	$28
Double-Action Revolvers											
Starr Army Revolver	1858	.44 P	2d6	20	30	S	6 cyl	M	3	15	$20
Webley RIC	1867	.45 R	2d6	20	30	S	5 cyl	S	2	15	$22
Colt Lightning *	1877	.38 C	2d4	20	20	S	6 cyl	S	2	16	$25
Colt Thunderer *	1877	.41 C	2d6	20	30	S	6 cyl	M	2.5	16	$28
Longarms (requires the Personal Firearm Proficiency)											
Muskets											
M1816 Flintlock Musket	1816	.69 F	2d12	20	70	1	1 mzl	L	9	12	$8
M1842 Percussion Musket	1842	.69 M	2d12	20	70	1	1 mzl	L	9	12	$8
Rifles											
Harpers Ferry Rifle	1803	.54 F	2d12	20	70	1	1 mzl	L	8.5	13	$10
Hawken Rifle	1820	.54 M	2d12	20	80	1	1 mzl	L	10	16	$25
Sharps Rifle	1849	.44 P	2d8	20	90	1	1 int	L	9.5	16	$25
Sharps Carbine *	1851	.44 P	2d8	20	80	1	1 int	L	8	16	$25
Spencer Carbine *	1862	.52 R	2d10	20	70	SS	7 box	L	8.5	17	$35
Henry Rifle *	1862	.44 R	2d8	20	60	SS	15 int	L	9.5	18	$42
Winchester '73	1873	.44-40 C	2d8	20	70	SS	17 int	L	10	17	$35
Sharps Big Fifty	1875	.50 R	2d12	20	120	1	1 int	L	14	18	$40
Shotguns											
Loomis Side-by-Side *	1859	15 ga	2d6	20	20	SS	2 int	L	9	15	$20
Remington Single-Barrel	1873	12 ga	2d8	20	30	1	1 int	L	8	16	$25
Remington-Whitmore M1873 *	1873	10 ga	2d10	20	30	SS	2 int	L	10	17	$35
Winchester Lever-Action	1887	10 ga	2d10	20	30	SS	5 int	L	9	18	$40
Exotic Firearms (requires the Exotic Firearms Proficiency)											
Gatling Gun (HMG) *	1871	.50 C	2d12	20	70	A	400 box	H	90	32	$1500
Simple Ranged Weapons (requires the Simple Weapons Proficiency)											
Crossbow *	—	bolt	1d10P	19-20	40	1	1 int	M	7	9	$4
Javelin *	—	—	1d6P	20	30	1	—	M	2	6	$1
Whip *	—	—	1d2S	20	15	1	—	S	2	6	$1
Archaic Ranged Weapons (Archaic Weapons Proficiency)											
Bow *	—	arrow	1d6P	20	40	1	—	L	3	9	$4
Shuriken *	—	—	1 P	20	10	1	—	T	0.5	4	$0.50
Exotic Ranged Weapons (Exotic Ranged Weapons Proficiency)											
Bola *	—	—	1d4B	20	10	1	—	M	2	7	$2
Lasso *	—	—	—	—	20	1	—	S	3	6	$1
Net *	—	—	—	—	10	1	—	S	2	7	$2

* Special rules may apply. See the weapon's description.

poured down the muzzle of the barrel. The ball-shaped shot is then tamped down the barrel with a ramrod. Additionally, for a rifled pistol, the ball is wrapped in a greased patch before being rammed down the barrel. This allows for a tighter seal and permits the rifling to impart spin to the bullet.

For flintlock pistols, after loading the ball, the flashpan is primed with a judicious amount of black powder and the frizzen shut on top of it. When fired, the flint strikes the steel frizzen, igniting the powder in the flashpan. Through a small hole called the "touch hole," the burning powder ignites the main charge in the breech, firing the pistol.

For a percussion pistol, after loading the ball, the character places a percussion cap over a tube called a "nipple" that replaced the "touch hole" of the flintlock. When fired, the hammer strikes the copper cap, ignites the encased fulminate and the resulting spark travels down the vent tube into the breech.

Harpers Ferry Pistol (1805)

The U.S. Flintlock Pistol Model 1805 was the first U.S. martial pistol and is typical of the large-bore flintlock pistols of the early 19th century. The pistol is known as the Harpers Ferry Pistol because it was manufactured at the Harpers Ferry Armory between 1806 and 1808.

Barrel Length: 10 inches, **Overall Length:** 14 1/2 inches, **Full Reload Time:** 6 full-round actions.

U.S. Percussion Navy Pistol (1842)

The first percussion pistol delivered under contract to the U.S. government, the Model 1842 U.S. Percussion Navy Pistol is a smoothbore muzzleloader manufactured between 1842 and 1847 by two separate manufacturers: Ames of Springfield and Deringer of Philadelphia. A similar pistol of the same caliber but with a longer barrel, referred to as the 1842 Army Percussion Pistol, also exists.

Barrel Length: 6 inches, **Overall Length:** 12 3/8 inches, **Full Reload Time:** 6 full-round actions.

U.S. Percussion Navy Pistol, rifled version (1842)

Some of the M1842 Percussion Navy Pistols manufactured by Deringer were rifled, being the first U.S. government issue rifled handguns. In all other respects, the rifled pistol is mechanically identical to the smoothbore version. The rifling increases the pistol's effective range at the expense of increasing reload times. If necessary, the pistol can be reloaded without the greased patch, reducing the reloading time to that of the smoothbore version. In this case, the pistol's performance is the same as that of the smoothbore (use the smoothbore's range increment).

Barrel Length: 6 inches, **Overall Length:** 12 3/8 inches, **Full Reload Time:** 10 full-round actions.

Allen and Thurber Pepperbox (1845)

This unique pistol has six barrels that rotate on a central axis. Each barrel has a separate nipple and percussion cap at its base. A bar hammer that comes down alongside the barrel ignites the percussion cap. The Allen is a smoothbore muzzleloader with double action; a single pull of the trigger rotates the cluster of barrels and drops the hammer firing the weapon. Reloading all six barrels takes roughly 3 1/2 minutes. In a pinch, a single barrel can be loaded in 36 seconds (6 full-round actions).

Barrel Length: 3 1/4 inches, **Overall Length:** 9 inches, **Full Reload Time:** 36 full-round actions.

Pocket Deringer (1850)

A gunsmith from Philadelphia, Henry Deringer crafted large-caliber single-shot percussion pistols designed for easy concealment. His pistols became so popular that other manufacturers copied them, even to the extent of using a misspelling of his name in their advertisements (hence the common use of the name Derringer with two r's). For those who didn't use the misspelling, there was a tailor in Philadelphia named Jacob Deringer who made a pretty penny renting the use of his name to such counterfeiters. The statistics of this muzzle-loading hold-out pistol match the Deringer that was used by John Wilkes Booth to assassinate President Lincoln. This pistol design, as well as most other authentic Deringers, was sold in a matching pair set.

"THE ALLEN"

The following text is an excerpt from Mark Twain's travelogue *Roughing It, 1872*. Twain provides a colorful description of the Allen pistol carried by fellow traveler George Benis.

He wore in his belt an old original "Allen" revolver, such as irreverent people called a "pepperbox." Simply drawing the trigger back, the hammer would begin to rise and the barrel speed the ball. To aim along the turning barrel and hit the thing aimed at was a feat (*Ed. note-No, not one of those feats*) which was probably never done with an "Allen" in the world. But George's was a reliable weapon, nonetheless, because, as one of the stage drivers afterward said, "if she didn't get what she went after, she would fetch something else." And so she did. She went after a deuce of spades nailed against a tree, once, and fetched a mule standing about thirty yards to the left of it. Benis didn't want the mule; but the owner came out with a double-barreled shotgun and persuaded him to buy it anyhow. It was a cheerful weapon–the "Allen". Sometimes all its six barrels would go off at once, and then there was no safe place in all the region roundabout but behind it.

Barrel Length: 2 1/2 inches, **Overall Length:** 5 7/8 inches, **Full Reload Time:** 6 full-round actions.

Breech-Loading Pistols

This class of pistols includes a wide variety of mechanisms that open the breech by sliding or swinging the barrels clear. A single round of ammunition is placed into the barrel (or each of the barrels) and the breech is closed. Both of the pistols detailed here use metal cartridge ammunition; however, breech-loading percussion handguns also exist.

Sharps Pepperbox (1859)

The 4-barrel breech-loading Pepperbox is typically associated with gamblers, ladies of the evening, and as a hide-out gun of outlaws and lawmen on the Western Frontier. Production of the single-action Sharps 4-shot Pepperbox pistols ended in 1874. Obtaining access to the breech requires sliding the four barrels (one solid unit) forward. Unlike the Allen and Thurber Pepperbox, the barrels of the Sharps don't rotate. Instead, the firing pin rotates. The Sharps Pepperbox was produced in .22 caliber, .30 caliber and .32 long as well as the .32 short model detailed here. Due to the large number of barrels possessed by this breechloader, reloading takes a might longer than normal, 2 full-round actions. A character with the Quick Reload feat can load this pepperbox in half that time, 1 full-round action.

Barrel Length: 3 inches, **Overall Length:** 5 1/2 inches, **Full Reload Time:** 2 full-round actions.

Remington Double-Derringer (1866)

The Remington Double-Derringer (also known as the Over-Under Derringer or Model 95 Double-Derringer) was an extremely common stingy pistol that remained on the market for 69 years, from 1866 to 1935. Due to its small size and light weight, this single-action 2-shot model was particularly popular with the "soiled doves" of the frontier. The firing pin automatically switches barrels. Obtaining access to the breech requires pivoting the barrels on a pin located at the top in front of the hammer. Ejecting the spent cartridges accounts for most of the time required for reloading.

Barrel Length: 3 inches, **Overall Length:** 4 3/4 inches, **Full Reload Time:** 1 full-round action.

Single-Action Revolvers

Revolvers contain the ammunition in a cylinder that rotates a fresh load into position during the cocking of the hammer. Pulling the trigger releases the hammer, igniting either a percussion cap or a cartridge primer. When using a single-action revolver (as opposed to a double-action revolver), the hammer must be manually cocked; the cowpoke using such a hogleg first cocks the hammer and then pulls the trigger to fire a shot. This makes for a bit slower draw-and-fire action, but it allows the shooter to use various feats to fire off more than one bullet per attack (see the Slip Hammer and Hammer Down feats, pages 119 and 113 respectively).

Colt Walker Dragoon (1847)

Designed by Captain Samuel H. Walker of the Texas Rangers mainly as a weapon for cavalry troops, the immense Colt Walker is inhospitable to being worn on a belt. Because of this, characters using a Colt Walker incur a –6 penalty on any Sleight of Hand check (such as with the Gunplay feat) to conceal or manipulate the pistol, instead of the normal –4 penalty for being a medium-sized weapon. As with all percussion Colt pistols of its era, reloading the weapon requires breaking the pistol apart into three pieces: the barrel, the grip, and the cylinder. This requires pulling down on a lever that normally lies underneath the barrel. The quickest way to reload is to reassemble the handgun with a preloaded spare cylinder. When a spare cylinder isn't available, reloading is a laborious process. The process consists of punching out the debris, reloading a paper cartridge into each chamber by hand, seating the cartridge firmly with a seating rod, and attaching percussion caps to the nipples. This lengthy process takes 2 minutes.

Barrel Length: 9 inches, **Overall Length:** 15 3/4 inches, **Cylinder Replacement Time:** 4 full-round actions, **Full Reload Time:** 20 full-round actions.

Colt New Model Army (1861)

The first Colt Army Revolver went into production in 1850 and evolved in form and mechanism throughout the frontier era. The model detailed here is the 1861 New Model Army Revolver, a single-action percussion pistol. The use of combustible cartridges made this model a major improvement over previous models. By impregnating the paper (or cloth) casings with nitric and sulfuric acid, they would burn away cleanly, leaving little residue in the cylinder. The New Model Army was adopted as military standard issue and this pistol was a common weapon during the American Civil War. The New Model Army is loaded in a similar fashion as the Walker Dragoon.

Barrel Length: 8 inches, **Overall Length:** 13 1/2 inches, **Cylinder Replacement Time:** 4 full-round actions, **Full Reload Time:** 20 full-round actions.

Remington Pocket Pistol (1863)

The 1863 Remington Pocket Pistol offered the buyer the advantages of easy concealment without the abysmal accuracy of a derringer. Of course, increased accuracy was accomplished through a longer barrel. Therefore, while small, this pistol is slightly larger than many other hold-out pistols.

Barrel Length: 3 1/2 inches, **Overall Length:** 7 3/4 inches, **Cylinder Replacement Time:** 4 full-round actions, **Full Reload Time:** 20 full-round actions.

Reid's Knuckleduster (1869)

An easily concealed stingy pistol without a barrel, the single action Knuckleduster has a unique grip that is useful in any brawl. The Knuckleduster is -1 on all ranged attack rolls, but can be used as brass knuckles in melee (see Brass Knuckles, page 151). The

Knuckleduster came in .22 or .32 caliber and used rimfire cartridges. Reloading the Knuckleduster requires unscrewing the cylinder pin, removing the cylinder, punching out the spent cartridges and placing in the new cartridges, then returning the cylinder to the frame.

Barrel Length: 0 inches, **Overall Length:** 4 1/4 inches, **Cylinder Replacement Time:** 4 full-round actions, **Full Reload Time:** 20 full-round actions.

Colt Peacemaker (1873)

Originally intended for use by the U.S. Cavalry, the Colt Peacemaker was one of the most popular weapons on the Western Frontier. This model marked Colt's first use of metal cartridge ammunition. The Peacemaker came in many varieties with different barrel lengths, ranging from the 3-inch barrel in the Shopkeeper model to a 16-inch barrel on the custom-made Buntline Special. Another variation, the Colt Frontier, was even chambered to use the popular .44-40 cartridge used by Winchester rifles, which meant a cowpoke only needed to carry one type of ammo for both rifle and pistol. The model described here is the Model P, with a 7.5-inch barrel. Reloading requires the opening of a swing-down loading gate, providing direct access to the cylinder chambers. The spent cartridge is punched out with an ejector rod that fits underneath the barrel. A new shell is loaded and the cylinder is then advanced to repeat the process.

Barrel Length: 7 1/2 inches, **Overall Length:** 13 1/4 inches, **Full Reload Time:** 2 full-round actions.

Smith & Wesson Schofield (1875)

The .45 caliber Smith & Wesson Schofield was manufactured from 1875-1878, with the vast majority of these weapons being purchased by the United States Army. Like other variants of the Smith and Wesson Model 3, it was popular with both lawmen and outlaws in the American West, and was reportedly used by Frank and Jesse James, and Bill Tilghman, among others. One of the major attractions of Smith & Wesson revolvers was the novel cartridge-ejection system. To reload, the gun is broken open at the top, with a hinge just before and below the cylinder holding the gun together. As the hinge opens, rods automatically push the spent shells loose. The user dumps the shells by turning the gun over, places new shells in the cylinder, and closes the revolver. This requires less time to accomplish than reloading a Colt from the same era.

Barrel Length: 7 inches, **Overall Length:** 12 3/4 inches, **Full Reload Time:** 1 full-round action.

Double-Action Revolvers

Double-action revolvers are both cocked and fired by simply pulling the trigger, giving them a slight edge when performing a fast draw. Characters using double-action revolvers receive a +1 equipment bonus to initiative checks occurring during a Showdown. In addition, due to their quick operation, experienced gunfighters can use the Double Tap feat to fire off more than one bullet in an attack. However, as a compensating drawback, due to the

stiff trigger action, most double-action revolvers of the period were less accurate than their single-action kin. Unless otherwise noted, characters using double-action revolvers suffer a –1 penalty to hit.

Starr Army Revolver (1858)

The double-action Starr revolver is actually a hybrid between a double and single-action gun. A "self cocker," this weapon appears to have two triggers; however, the large front "trigger" actually cocks the hammer and rotates the cylinder and the rear trigger releases the hammer. Starr was in business for a relatively short period (1858 – 1867). However, over 47,000 revolvers (in three different models: .36 and .44 double action and .44 single action) were manufactured and sold during that time. Most of these ended up in the hands of the military; Starr revolvers became the third most common pistol used in the Civil War (behind Colt and Remington). To reload, the Starr is broken open at the top, and spread via a hinge located in front of the cylinder. The cylinder is removed and reloaded or replaced with a spare (the Starr is a percussion pistol).

Barrel Length: 6 inches, **Overall Length:** 12 5/8 inches, **Cylinder Replacement Time:** 4 full-round actions, **Full Reload Time:** 20 full-round actions.

Webley RIC (1867)

This solid-frame rim-fire pistol was originally adopted by the Royal Irish Constabulary (hence RIC). It became rather popular on the American frontier, as did a later Webley model released in 1878 called the "British Bulldog." Lt. Col. George Armstrong Custer carried a pair of Webley RIC's in the battle of the Little Bighorn. (But don't blame the guns for his failure.)

Barrel Length: 4 1/2 inches, **Overall Length:** 9 inches, **Full Reload Time:** 2 full-round actions.

Colt Lightning (1877)

Designed as a lighter, double-action counterpart to the Peacemaker, some Lightnings came with barrels as short as 2 inches. Because of this pistol's small size, gunfighters that liked to fight two-fisted often chose the Lightning (or its sister weapon, the Thunderer). Its enduring popularity ensured its continued manufacture until 1909. Some of the lawmen and outlaws known to have carried a Colt Lightning were John Wesley Hardin and Pat Garret. Hardin in particular is said to have loved both the Lightning and the Thunderer. The trigger mechanism of the Colt Lightning was much smoother than previous double-action pistols. Thus, a character using a Lightning doesn't suffer the –1 penalty on attack rolls that is associated with most double-action revolvers.

Barrel Length: 4 1/2 inches, **Overall Length:** 9 inches, **Full Reload Time:** 2 full-round actions.

Colt Thunderer (1877)

The Thunderer was an updated version of the Colt Lightning modified to use .41 caliber ammunition. It was a popular pistol back east, and Billy the Kid was rumored to have carried one. Reloading either the Colt Lighting or the Thunderer follows the same procedure as other Colt pistols of the time: a loading gate is swung down revealing the chamber, the spent shell is punched out with an ejector rod that normally fits underneath the barrel, a new shell is loaded, the cylinder is advanced, and the process is repeated. The trigger mechanism of the Colt Thunderer was much smoother than previous double-action pistols. Thus, characters using the Thunderer don't incur the –1 penalty on attack rolls that is associated with most double-action revolvers.

Barrel Length: 6 inches, **Overall Length:** 11 1/2 inches, **Full Reload Time:** 2 full-round actions.

Longarms

Longarms are personal firearms that require two hands to fire. This group includes muskets, rifles and shotguns. Just as pistols come with a variety of firing mechanisms, ammunition types, and feed systems, so do longarms. Flintlock, percussion cap, rim-fire, and center-fire are all available. Some are single shot (particularly for flintlock and percussion longarms), while others have magazines with multiple rounds chambered through the cocking of a lever.

The Personal Firearms Proficiency feat covers all longarms. Without this feat, any character using a longarm suffers a –4 non-proficiency penalty to all attack rolls.

Longarms aren't well suited to close combat. A character incurs a –4 penalty on the attack roll when firing at an adjacent target. Furthermore, longarms over a certain length are difficult to employ from horseback. Any character attempting to fire such a longarm while mounted suffers an additional –2 penalty to attack rolls. Longarms specially designed for the cavalry, often called carbines, have a shorter barrel. A character using a carbine doesn't suffer the additional –2 penalty when firing from a mount. Whether a particular weapon is a carbine is indicated in its description.

COLT REVOLVING RIFLE

In the late 1830's Colt came out with an early repeating rifle (and a shotgun) that used the same revolving cylinder technology as its famous pistols; however these Colt rifles proved unpopular. Early percussion technology had a tendency to "chain fire," where all of the rounds accidentally fired simultaneously. While a bad flaw in a pistol, this was devastating in a rifle, since the shooters left hand often rested in front of the cylinder.

Muskets

Muskets are muzzle-loading smoothbore firearms used in large numbers up through the American Civil War. Ignited by either a flintlock or a percussion cap, reloading a musket is a lengthy process. The character bites the end of a paper cartridge, releasing a pre-measured charge of powder that is subsequently poured down the muzzle of the barrel. The ball-shaped shot is then tamped down the barrel with a ramrod.

For a flintlock, after loading the ball, the flashpan is primed with a judicious amount of black powder and the frizzen shut on top of it. When fired, the flint strikes the steel frizzen, igniting the powder in the flashpan. Through a small hole called the "touch hole," the burning powder ignites the main charge in the breech, firing the musket.

For a percussion musket, the process is slightly different. After ramming home the ball, a copper percussion cap is placed over a tube called a "nipple" that replaced the "touch hole" of the flintlock. When fired, the hammer strikes the cap, ignites the encased fulminate and the resulting spark travels down the vent tube into the breech. The main charge of powder explodes and the musket fires.

All the muskets presented here are one-shot weapons, although muskets with two barrels, loaded and fired separately, did exist. In addition, for military use, inventive gunsmiths designed volley guns having six barrels or more.

M1816 U.S. Flintlock Musket (1816)

After the war of 1812, the U.S government commissioned a new infantry musket, the Model 1816 U.S. Flintlock Musket. The musket had an extremely long production run (1816 to 1844), with a total of 821,000 muskets being made at both national armories (one at Harpers Ferry and the other at Springfield) and through private contractors. Many of these muskets made their way into the hands of state militias, and by the time of the American Civil War many were still in use, despite being a flintlock. Large caliber (.69) and long (almost 5 feet), the M1816 Flintlock Musket is typical of the smoothbore muskets of the time.

Barrel Length: 42 inches, **Overall Length:** 58 inches, **Full-Reload Time:** 6 full-round actions.

M1842 Percussion Musket (1842)

The M1842 U.S. Percussion Musket is an upgrade to the ignition system of the M1816 Flintlock Musket. Both the Springfield and Harpers Ferry armories were involved in its production, making a total of 175,000 muskets from 1844 to 1855. This musket was the first weapon with completely interchangeable parts produced by the armories. As with its earlier relative, the M1816 Flintlock Musket, many of the M1842s were used by state militias during the American Civil War.

Barrel Length: 42 inches, **Overall Length:** 58 inches, **Full-Reload Time:** 6 full-round actions.

Rifles

Rifles are longarms in which a number of grooves (or rifles) spiral down the inside length of the barrel. The rifles cause the bullet to spin, thereby imparting a more stable flight and increasing the weapon's range. Rifling was a very early invention; however, constructing barrels with this property proved difficult and the muzzle-loaders of the time were slower to load when they had a rifled barrel. Therefore, the musket remained in common usage well past the middle of the 19th century.

Harpers Ferry Rifle (1803)

The Harpers Ferry Rifle (otherwise known as the M1803 U.S. Flintlock Rifle) is a flintlock rifle, produced at the Harpers Ferry armory from 1803 to 1820. It had a smaller caliber and shorter barrel than its smoothbore cousins. Because of the rifling it was also slower to load, but had longer range. In order for the rifling to impart spin to the shot, the ball was wrapped in a greased patch before being rammed down the barrel. Tamping down the ball took more time than with a musket, and often required the use of a wooden mallet to pound the ball into place. If necessary, the rifle can be loaded without the greased patch, reducing the reloading time to that of a smoothbore musket. In this case, rifle's performance is the same as that of a short musket (reduce the range increment by 10 feet).

Barrel Length: 35 inches, **Overall Length:** 50 1/2 inches, **Full-Reload Time:** 10 full-round actions.

Hawken Rifle (1820)

The percussion ignition muzzle-loading rifles made by the Hawken brothers of St. Louis were well known to the explorers and frontiersman who headed west in search of wealth and adventure. Superb quality and the heavy octagonal barrels allowed a larger charge of powder, which allowed the killing of even the largest of animals. Kit Carson and Jim Bridger both swore by Hawken rifles (sometimes called plains rifles). Hawken rifles were built from the 1820s to the mid-1850s. Due to their craftsmanship, Hawken rifles are considered mastercraft and provide a +1 equipment bonus on all attack rolls.

Barrel Length: 34 inches, **Overall Length:** 51 inches, **Full-Reload Time:** 10 full-round actions.

Sharps Rifle (1849)

In 1848, Christian Sharps patented a practical breech-loading rifle that gained instant popularity. The Sharps system utilized a movable block that was lowered by pulling forward on the trigger guard, which acted as a lever. Once the block (which contained the percussion nipple) was lowered, it revealed the breech, allowing a fresh paper or linen cartridge to be inserted. Returning the lever (and thus the block) back to its original position then closed the breech. Subsequently, a percussion cap was placed on the nipple. Cocking the hammer prepared the weapon to fire. The simplicity of the design and the ease of loading made the Sharps Rifle a commonly used firearm in both the military and amongst civilian shootists. The statistics presented here are for the .44 caliber 1849 model, the first Sharps Rifle made. Later models included .36 caliber, .45 caliber, .52 caliber, .44-70 and .50-70 rounds as well as conversion, after the American Civil War, to metal cartridges instead of the original percussion system.

Barrel Length: 30 inches, **Overall Length:** 47 inches, **Full-Reload Time:** 1 full-round action.

Sharps Carbine (1851)

The Sharps Carbine was a short-barreled version of the Sharps Rifle designed for use from horseback. This weapon earned the nickname "Beecher's Bibles" after the Reverend Henry Ward Beecher, a staunch abolitionist, sent crates of them marked as "bibles" to Kansas in the prelude to the American Civil War. The reverend is noted as saying about of the rifles, "There is more moral power in one of these than a hundred bibles!" Due to its short barrel and design, when using a Sharps Carbine a rider doesn't suffer the –2 penalty for firing a longarm from horseback.

Barrel Length: 22 inches, **Overall Length:** 39 inches, **Full-Reload Time:** 1 full-round action.

Spencer Carbine (1862)

Another invention of Christian Sharps, the Spencer Carbine was the world's first practical repeating rifle, and used metallic-cartridge rim-fire .52 caliber ammunition. A spring-loaded removable tubular magazine holding 7 rounds was slid into the butt of the rifle, and new shells were chambered through lever action. The trigger guard acted as the lever, which when depressed rotated the block downward and extracted the spent cartridge. When the lever was subsequently raised back into its normal position, a new round was drawn from the magazine and inserted into the breech. The Spencer could also be loaded with a bullet in the chamber to increase the weapon's capacity to 8 rounds. Resistance to innovation in the military caused the Spencer and other repeating rifles to see limited production during the American Civil War. However, due to the direct intervention of President Lincoln, some 84,000 Spencer Carbines were produced, and they were used to great effect. As with other carbines, a mounted shooter doesn't suffer the –2 penalty for firing a longarm from horseback when using this Spencer.

Barrel Length: 22 inches, **Overall Length:** 39 inches, **Magazine Replacement Time:** 1 move action, **Full-Reload Time:** 2 full-round actions.

Henry Rifle (1862)

The Henry Rifle, like the Spencer, was a repeating rifle released early in the Civil War. Although the reliable metal-cartridge repeating Henry rifle had great potential for military use, many military officers didn't understand how to use the new repeaters to best effect. Many voiced the concern that the Henry would just lead to the waste of ammunition. Due to this resistance (particularly by the Union Chief of Ordnance, Brigadier General James W.

Ripley), only 13,000 Henry rifles were purchased during the war years. Despite the meager procurement of the repeater by the army, many Henrys saw battle. It wasn't uncommon for soldiers to buy a Henry Rifle for their own use instead of the standard issue muzzleloader. The Henry had a 15-round internal tube magazine placed underneath the barrel. Reloading was rather awkward, as it required turning the rifle around and inserting the bullets from the muzzle end. This affects reload time: 4 cartridges per full-round action can be inserted into the magazine (4 cartridges per move action for those with the Quick Reload feat).

Barrel Length: 24 inches, **Overall Length:** 43 1/2 inches, **Reload Rate:** 4 bullets per full-round action, **Full-Reload Time:** 4 full-round actions.

Winchester '73 (1873)

One of the most dependable and popular weapons on the open range, the Winchester '73 directly descended from the Henry rifle. The Model 1873 was updated to receive the more powerful .44-40 center-fire cartridge, and a hinged loading gate was added to the right side of the frame. No longer did the rifle need to be turned around to be reloaded. In fact, an agile cowboy can reload with the right hand while maintaining aim with the left. The internal magazine contains 17 shots and an additional round in the chamber makes for a total capacity of 18.

Barrel Length: 24 inches, **Overall Length:** 44 inches, **Reload Rate:** 6 bullets per full-round action, **Full-Reload Time:** 3 full-round actions.

Sharps Big Fifty (1875)

The Sharps Big Fifty is a breechloader that packs a huge punch. But, while popular with well-to-do buffalo and big-game hunters, it has limited usefulness in a gunfight due to its single-shot capability. Mechanically the Sharps Big Fifty operates very similarly to the 1849 Sharps Rifle and 1851 Sharps Carbine; the major difference being the use of rim-fire ammunition with an immense .50 caliber slug an inch and a quarter long. Sharps hunting rifles of the era come in a variety of calibers (.40-90, .44-77, .45-70, .45-110, .50-70, and .50-90), but the .50-90 round of the "Big Fifty" is definitely the most deadly.

Barrel Length: 32 inches, **Overall Length:** 49 inches, **Full-Reload Time:** 1 full-round action.

Shotguns

Shotguns (or scatterguns) are large-bore firearms designed to fire a cloud of small pellets that spreads in diameter as it travels. Usually used for purposes of hunting small game, shotguns can also be quite effective as man-stoppers at close range. Early shotguns were muzzleloaders with a horrific shot spread. At a range of 30 feet, a shooter would be lucky to get half of the shot within a 2-foot circle. The invention of choked barrels in the late 1860s almost doubled the effective range of a shotgun. A choked barrel has an inside diameter that tapers slightly from breech to muzzle, with a narrower end at the muzzle.

Shotguns tend to be powerful, but only at short range; reduce shotgun damage by 1 point for every range increment of the attack. However, due the spread of the pellet pattern with distance, shotguns require less accuracy to hit the target. Instead of a –2 penalty per range increment in distance, apply a cumulative penalty of –1 per range increment.

Loomis Side-by-Side (1859)

One of the earliest double-barrel shotguns, the Loomis packs a serious punch at close range; however, its unchoked barrels limit its range. Black Bart, the famous stagecoach robber and amateur poet used a double-barrel shotgun like this in his heists. The Loomis is a single-action percussion muzzleloader with 15-gauge unchoked barrels. As with all muzzleloaders, loading is time consuming. Each barrel requires 6 full-round actions to reload. Each barrel has a separate percussion nipple and hammer allowing them to be fired separately. By pulling both triggers, both barrels can be discharged simultaneously as a single attack. If fired in this fashion the weapon inflicts an extra die of damage (3d6 in this case).

Barrel Length: 28 inches, **Overall Length:** 45 inches, **Full-Reload Time:** 12 full-round actions.

Remington Single-Barrel (1873)

The Remington Single-Barrel Shotgun provides a standard example of the single-barrel breechloaders of the time. They used copper cartridges, loaded by breaking open the shotgun at the breech (the entire barrel assembly rotated downwards), pulling out the spent cartridge, inserting a new cartridge, and then snapping the breech closed. Shotguns of this type were single-action with external hammers.

Barrel Length: 30 inches, **Overall Length:** 47 inches, **Full-Reload Time:** 1 full-round action.

Remington-Whitmore M1873 (1873)

A double-barreled shotgun (a side-by-side), the Remington-Whitmore had a unique safety mechanism called the "hammer lifter." When the top lever was lifted to open the breech, a sliding plate pulled back the hammers. This kept the weapon from accidentally misfiring when the breech snapped shut. The Remington-Whitmore was available in 10 or 12 gauge with barrel lengths of 26, 28, or 30 inches. The model featured here is the 10-gauge with 30-inch barrel. As with most side-by-sides, both barrels can be fired simultaneously as a single attack, inflicting an extra die of damage (3d10 in this case).

Barrel Length: 30 inches, **Overall Length:** 47 inches, **Full-Reload Time:** 1 full-round action.

Winchester Lever-Action Shotgun (1887)

The Winchester-Lever Action Shotgun was the brainchild of the prolific gunsmith, John Browning, who

over many years designed a large number of guns for a variety of manufacturers. In addition to the lever-action shotgun, Browning also designed a pump-action and self-loading shotgun for Winchester. The Winchester Lever-Action Shotgun holds five shells in a tubular magazine that fits under the barrel. It was available in both 10 and 12 gauge with a variety of barrel lengths. The potent 10 gauge is detailed here.

Barrel Length: 32 inches, **Overall Length:** 49 inches, **Full-Reload Time:** 1 full-round action.

Exotic Firearms

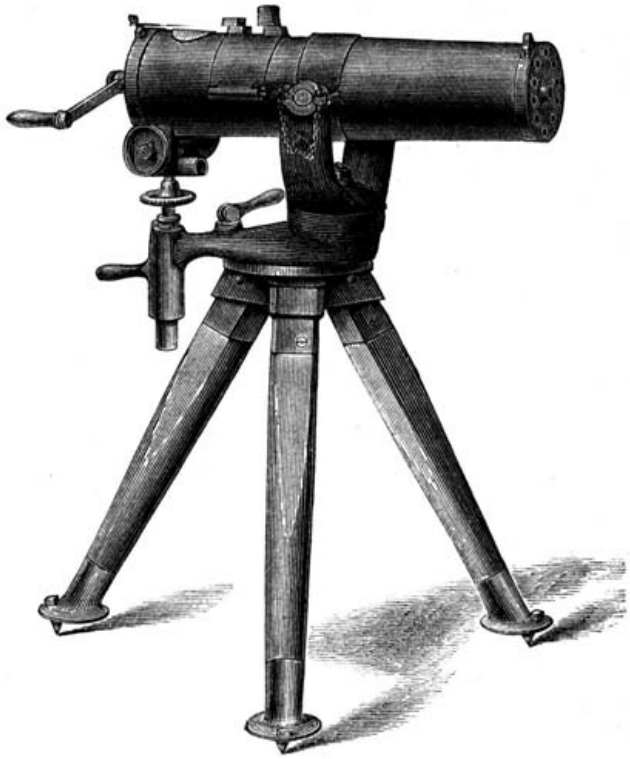
Exotic Firearms are heavy weapons that come in four classes: cannons, heavy machine guns, grenade launchers, and rocket launchers. Proficiency with these weapons is conferred through the Exotic Firearms Proficiency feat. Each time the feat is selected, a character becomes proficient with one class of heavy weapons. Someone who uses a heavy weapon without the appropriate proficiency takes a –4 penalty on all attack rolls with the weapon.

Weapons of each of the four classes did appear on the battlefield in the Civil War era. However, most remained strictly military weapons and won't commonly appear in a Western era roleplaying game, unless that campaign concentrates on military actions. Therefore, only one heavy weapon, the Gatling Gun, has been included in this set of rules.

Gatling Gun (1871)

In 1862 Richard J. Gatling patented the first practical machine gun. Gatling's original gun utilized a lock cylinder with six separate strikers that revolved in unison with six barrels. The entire mechanism was powered by a hand crank, which revolved the barrels. As each barrel rotated upwards, the firing pin or hammer for that barrel pushed back against the tension of a spring. While passing under the top mounted ammunition hopper, a cartridge dropped into that barrel's breech, loading the weapon. Immediately following in the cycle, the pin was released, the round fired, and the spent cartridge dropped out of an ejection port as the barrel rotated around to the bottom, ready to start the cycle over again.

The first Gatling Gun used paper .58 caliber cartridges and percussion caps. Later models switched to metallic cartridges in a variety of calibers: 1 inch, .50 caliber and .45 caliber. Some had added barrels, up to a total of 10. The statistics shown here are for the .50 caliber 1871 model, one of the 10-barrel guns that used metallic cartridges. This model also possessed an improved feed system consisting of a 400-round Broadwell drum. The drum held 20 separate vertical feed magazines of 20 rounds each. When a magazine emptied the operator had to manually turn the drum, aligning the intake with a fresh magazine partition. This requires a full-round action to accomplish. Once all of the magazines are emptied, the drum can be replaced by spending 6-full round actions. Those who possess the Quick Reload feat can advance the drum with 1 move



action and replace the drum in 3 full-round actions.

The Gatling Gun is a heavy machine gun and thus requires the Exotic Weapon Proficiency (heavy machine guns) to be used at full efficiency (i.e. without the –4 non-proficiency penalty). Furthermore, as a strictly autofire weapon, all users suffer a –4 penalty on all attack rolls unless they possess the Advanced Firearms Proficiency feat. (See Autofire on page 217 for full details on using an autofire weapon). Each attack with a Gatling Gun expends 10 rounds of ammunition. The weapon cannot be fired in a single shot mode.

As a military armament available only to the Army, Navy, and state militias, the Gatling Gun has a restriction rating of Military. A general member of the public who wishes to procure a Gatling Gun will need to purchase one on the black market with all the difficulties and expenses that entails (see Purchasing on the Black Market, page 130).

Barrel Length: 30 inches, **Overall Length:** 50 inches, **Fresh Magazine Advancement Time:** 1 full-round action, **Drum Replacement Time:** 6 full-round actions, **Full-Reload Time:** 40 full-round actions.

Simple Ranged Weapons

Simple ranged weapons include a handful of weapons so simple to use that most individuals can handle them successfully. The use of simple ranged weapons is governed by the Simple Weapons Proficiency feat. Characters without this feat suffer a –4 non-proficiency penalty when using a simple weapon. All characters start play with the Simple Weapons Proficiency, so all characters can fully use simple ranged weapons.

Crossbow

An ancient weapon consisting of a bow fixed on a wooden stock, the crossbow is loaded by pulling a lever that draws the bow and places the string behind a catch that holds the string in the taut position. A feathered bolt is placed in a groove on the top of the stock and placed directly against the taut string. Pulling a trigger underneath the stock releases the catch, thus releasing the string, which in turn launches the bolt forward. A crossbow requires two hands to use. Pulling the lever that draws the bow is a move action that provokes attacks of opportunity.

Full-Reload Time: 1 move action.

Javelin

The javelin is a light, flexible spear built for throwing. It can be used in melee, but since it's not designed for such use, characters using it in this manner are always considered non-proficient and take a –4 penalty on their melee attack rolls.

Whip

A whip is a long flexible lash typically used to goad reluctant animals forward. In the right hands, the whip can be an impressive weapon. Whips deal a small amount of lethal damage. Although a character doesn't "fire" the weapon, treat a whip as a ranged weapon with a maximum range of 15 feet and no range penalties.

Because a whip can wrap around the limb of an enemy, a character can make a trip attack with it by succeeding at a ranged touch attack. The character doesn't provoke an attack of opportunity when using a whip in this way. If the character using the whip is tripped during the trip attempt, the character can drop the whip to avoid being tripped.

A whip can also be used to perform a standard disarm maneuver as if it were a melee weapon. When using a whip to disarm, a character gets a +2 bonus on the opposed attack roll to disarm an opponent (including the roll to keep from being disarmed if the character fails to disarm the opponent).

Archaic Ranged Weapons

Archaic ranged weapons cover a broad class of ranged weapons generally considered obsolete by the 21st century standards of the d20 Modern Roleplaying game. Therefore, any particular archaic ranged weapon might not be considered obsolete during the era of the Old West, the 19th century. While most of the weapons appearing below would be considered obsolete in both centuries, cases may arise in which the distinction is important.

To be used at full efficiency, archaic ranged weapons require that a character possess the Archaic Weapons Proficiency. Those characters without the Archaic Weapons Proficiency incur a –4 non-proficiency penalty to all attack rolls when wielding an archaic weapon.

Bow

Bows come in many varieties, from the simple bow and arrow used around the world to the immense English longbow and the composite bow of the Mongols. The statistics listed are for a typical bow used by the Indian natives before the introduction of firearms. Drawing an arrow from a quiver and reloading a bow is a free action.

Full-Reload Time: 1 free action

Shuriken

A shuriken is a thrown, star-shaped projectile with four to eight razor-sharp points. Originally introduced by the Chinese who came to the Western Frontier during the Gold Rush and later helped build the railroad, the statistics for the shuriken can be used for any small throwing knife. A character may draw a shuriken as a free action.

Exotic Ranged Weapons

Exotic ranged weapons covers all ranged weapons that aren't firearms and that require an unusual amount of skill to use properly. The most common of these is the lasso (or lariat), a staple of the Western genre.

Bola

A bola is a weapon more often associated with the cowboys of the pampas of South America. The weapon consists of three stones or metal balls wrapped in cord and connected at a common point by three equal lengths of rope. The Bola is thrown by swinging it over the head and releasing. When the bola hits a target the heavy balls inflict damage and tend to wrap around the victim binding his limbs to his body.

A bola can be used to make a ranged trip attack against an opponent. The ranged trip attempt is executed similarly to a standard trip in melee combat. A ranged touch attack is required to initiate the trip. The attacker makes a Strength check opposed by the victim's Strength or Dexterity check (the victim's choice). If the attacker and defender are different sizes, the larger combatant receives a bonus on the Strength check equal to +4 per difference in size category. Targets with more than two legs (or who are otherwise exceptionally stable) receive a bonus of +4 on the check. If the attacker wins the check, the target is tripped and becomes prone. If the defender wins the check, nothing further occurs. The attacker cannot be tripped during the ranged trip attempt (unlike during an unarmed melee trip).

Lasso

A lasso, or lariat, consists of a hemp, horsehair or rawhide rope of generally thirty-to-forty feet in length with a slipknot tied at one end to make a loop. With a DC 15 Dexterity check, a character can make a lasso from any rope of sufficient length. A lasso requires two hands to use and generally entails throwing a loop over the opponent and yanking it tight.

To use a lasso a character must first make a ranged touch attack. The maximum range of a lasso is 20 feet. If the attack is successful, the target is entangled. An entangled character incurs a –2 penalty on all attack rolls and a –4 penalty to Dexterity (see Character Condition Summary, page 228). Unlike most entangled characters, the victim of a lasso suffers no reduction in speed. Furthermore, the victim may run or charge. However, if the lasso user succeeds at an opposed Strength check, the target can move only within the limits allowed by the length of the rope.

The target can escape from a lasso with an Escape Artist check against a DC of 20 or burst it with a DC 22 Strength check, both of which use full-round actions; a lasso has 2 points of grit and a hardness of 0.

If the attacker misses with the ranged touch attack, or if the victim subsequently escapes after a successful hit, as a full-round action the lasso can be drawn in, recoiled, and made ready to throw again.

Net

This weapon is a net designed to capture men instead of fish. It possesses weights around the rim so that it can be thrown, by making a ranged touch attack against the target. A net's maximum range is 10 feet. If the net hits, the target is entangled. An entangled character receives a –2 penalty to all attack rolls and a –4 penalty to Dexterity. Furthermore, the character can only move at half speed and may not run or charge.

An entangled character can escape with a DC 20 Escape Artist check or by bursting the net with a DC 22 Strength check, both of which use full-round actions; a net has 5 points of grit and a hardness of 0.

After a net has been thrown, it must be folded in order to be thrown again. A character who is proficient with the net can fold a net with 2 full-round actions. A non-proficient character takes twice as long.

Ammunition

The Wild West saw the use of a variety of ammunition, coming in not only a wide range of calibers, but a plethora of firing systems. Early in the 19th century, firearms were flintlock muzzleloaders whose ammunition usually consisted of a paper cartridge containing both the shot and a pre-measured amount of powder. Later in the century, percussion ignition replaced the flintlock system. So now, in addition to the cartridge, a percussion cap was needed. In the middle of the century, metallic cartridge ammunition, both rim- and center-fire, came into use. To complicate matters further, ammunition wasn't standardized. While a Colt Peacemaker, a Smith & Wesson Schofield and a Webley RIC were all .45 caliber revolvers, the proprietary interests of the competing companies insured that ammunition for one was useless for the others.

Table 5.9: Ammunition covers ammunition for firearms and other ranged weapons. For simplicity, many unique types of ammunition have been combined into a single category. For example, paper cartridges for flintlocks and all varieties of percussion weapons have been combined into common entries organized by caliber. Likewise, rim-fire and center-fire ammunition has been combined, regardless of maker or primer position.

Table 5.9: Ammunition

Ammunition Type (Quantity)	Purchase DC	Purchase Price
Paper Cartridges		
.31 caliber (20)	4	25¢
.44 caliber (20)	4	25¢
.54 caliber (20)	4	25¢
.58 caliber (20)	5	50¢
.69 caliber (20)	5	50¢
Metal Cartridges		
.32 caliber (20)	5	50¢
.38 caliber (20)	4	25¢
.41 caliber (20)	6	$1
.44 caliber (20)	6	$1
.44-40 (50)	7	$2
.45 caliber (20)	6	$1
.50 caliber (20)	7	$2
.52 caliber (20)	7	$2
Shotgun Shells		
10-gauge buckshot (10)	5	50¢
12-gauge buckshot (10)	4	25¢
15-gauge buckshot (10)	4	25¢
Arrows and Bolts		
Arrow (12)	8	$3
Crossbow bolt (12)	7	$2

Reloading a Ranged Weapon

Reloading a ranged weapon can be as simple as drawing a second blade when using throwing knives, or as complicated as the half-minute procedure of pouring in the powder, dropping in the shot, ramming home the wad, and then priming the pan of a flintlock musket. Consequently, reloading requires a different amount of time depending on the weapon a character is using.

Loading a firearm is dangerous and difficult to perform in the heat of a conflict. Not only does loading provoke attacks of opportunity from all nearby opponents, but to load a weapon successfully while under pressure and duress requires a successful Concentration check (see the Concentration skill, page 65). Even when the only distraction is the smoke and noise of distant combat, the Judge may require a successful (DC 5) Concentration check to load a firearm.

Table 5.10: Reloading Times for Ranged Weapons

Weapon Type	Reloading Time
Archaic and Simple Weapons	
Bow	Free action
Crossbow	1 move action
Box Magazines (Gatling Gun and some rifles)	
Replace magazine	1 move action
Reload magazine	1 full-round action
Reload large capacity magazine (more than 6 shots) *	6 shells per full-round action
Cylinder Magazine (revolvers and some pepperboxes)	
Percussion: replace the cylinder of a revolver	4 full-round actions
Percussion: reload the cylinder	20 full-round actions
Metal cartridge (rim- or center-fire)	2 full-round actions
Internal Magazine (breechloaders and repeating rifles)	
Percussion breechloader	1 full-round action
Metal cartridge (rim- or center-fire) breechloader	1 full-round action
Large capacity magazine (more than 6 shots) *	6 shells per full-round action
Muzzleloaders (flintlock or percussion)	
Musket or smooth-bore pistol	6 full-round actions
Rifle or rifled pistol	10 full-round actions

* Large magazine weapons may have special rules. See the individual weapon descriptions for details.

RELOADING TIMES

The reloading times listed in Table 5.10: Reloading Times for Ranged Weapons aren't historically accurate. They have been shortened (dramatically in some cases) in order to make reloading an actual possibility during game play. *Sidewinder: Recoiled* encourages a more cinematic style of play. Thus, a typical gunfight will include a huge amount of wasted lead. While many bullets may "hit" very few actually cause physical damage to their target. Therefore, you will probably find that, when in a serious gunfight, your cowpoke will empty several weapons before a telling shot takes out the opposition. If loading takes so long that it is a nigh impossibility to perform in combat, your typical hombre is going to be toting around a half-dozen pistols. We here at Dog House Rules decided that it was better to shorten reloading times than to force every cowpoke to lug around a hundred-pound arsenal. Of course, there will always be those who insist on doing so anyway; just make sure you keep track of their encumbrance.

Mastercraft Firearms

The deadliest of gunmen won't settle for just any standard hogleg right off the store shelf. No sir, most will insist on having some type of modification done to their favorite firearm. All mastercraft firearms require that someone with the Craft (mechanical) skill perform modifications to the weapon. If the craftsman fails the skill check, the weapon has been damaged and must be repaired before it can be used or modified further.

Table 5.11: Firearm Modifications provides a brief list of common customizations that a gunsmith can do to a firearm. Manufacturers may also produce many of these customizations as standard options. The table provides the following information:

Effective Mastercraft Bonus: The effective bonus of a mastercraft modification. The effective bonus determines the Craft DC and cost of the modification. It also specifies how skilled the craftsman must be in order to perform the customization (see the Master Craftsman feat, page 116).

Weight Modification: The increase or decrease of the weapon (in pounds) caused by the customization.

Purchase DC: The increase in purchase DC for a weapon already possessing the modification.

Purchase Price: If using the optional Cold Hard Cash

Table 5.11: Firearm Modifications

Modification	Effective Mastercraft Bonus	Weight Modification (lbs)	Purchase DC	Purchase Price
Handguns				
Custom Grip	+1	+0	+3	x3
Hair Trigger	+1	+0	+3	x3
Lengthened Barrel	+1	+1	+3	x3
Shortened Barrel	+1	-0.5	+3	x3
Detachable Stock	+1	+1	+3	x3
Longarms				
Custom Sights	+1	+0	+3	x3
Lengthened Barrel	+1	+2	+3	x3
Shortened Barrel	+1	-1	+3	x3
Sawed-off Barrel	+1	-2	+3	x3

rule, multiply the purchase price by the indicated factor when purchasing a weapon already possessing the modification.

Handgun Modifications

Handguns can be customized in a variety of fashions.

Custom Grip: This hogleg feels as if it was born in your hand. Any ranged attack rolls made with this weapon gain a +1 equipment bonus. This bonus is conferred only upon the hombre for which the grip was made. The pistol functions as a standard weapon in any other cowpoke's hand.

Hair Trigger: Better not be fiddlin' around with this thing idly; it just may go off by accident. Any character using this pistol during a fast draw round gains a +1 equipment bonus to the initiative check.

Lengthened Barrel: This hogleg's effective range increases by a few extra paces, but it is a tad slower to draw. While the range increment of this weapon increases by 10 feet, any character using it suffers a –2 penalty to initiative checks during a fast draw round. In addition, the size category for the weapon increases by one step (e.g. from Tiny to Small).

Shortened Barrel: Although you can whip this smokewagon out of your holster a lot quicker, if shootin' more than a few feet you're gonna have a hard time hittin' the broadside of a horse. Any hombre using this pistol gains a +2 equipment bonus to the initiative check made during a fast draw round. However, the weapon's range increment is reduced by 10 feet. In addition, the size category of the pistol is decreased by one step. This modification cannot be applied to pistols that have a size of Tiny or smaller.

Detachable Stock: Adding a detachable stock, in essence, converts a pistol into a longarm. The weapon becomes more stable, granting a +2 equipment bonus to attack rolls made at targets past the first range increment. With the stock attached, the weapon becomes Large size and follows all the rules for a longarm; however, the weapon should be considered a carbine for determining the penalty for firing from horseback.

Longarm Modifications

Table 5.11: Firearm Modifications lists common modifications that can be made to a longarm, either during production at the factory or by a gunsmith post-production.

Custom Sights: You could shoot a nut out of a squirrel's grip at 50 paces with this longarm. A character using such a modified rifle gains a +2 equipment bonus on attack rolls past the first range increment of the rifle.

Lengthened Barrel: This longarm can shoot a mile, but it's a bear to use. This modification increases the range increment of the rifle by 10 feet. However, a character using such a longarm incurs a -2 penalty on the initiative check made during a fast draw round (see Initiative, page 205). This penalty is in addition to any penalty for drawing a longarm. In addition, the weapon is more difficult to conceal and manipulate. Increase the weapon size penalty on all Sleight of Hand checks involving this weapon by –2.

Shortened Barrel: This stubby fella' is much easier to use from horseback. This modification decreases the range increment of the longarm by 10 feet, but converts a rifle into a carbine. A character firing a carbine no longer suffers the penalty for firing a longarm from horseback.

Sawed-off Barrel: This modification can be applied only to scatter guns. It typically involves cutting off most of the barrel and a good bit of the stock as well, in essence, converting the shotgun into a large pistol. Having now been reduced to a medium-sized weapon, it follows all rules pertaining to handguns rather than longarms. The weapon is still more bulky than the average pistol. Drawing the weapon in a fast draw round incurs a –2 penalty to initiative checks. In addition, all

Sleight of Hand checks to conceal or manipulate the sawed-off shotgun receive a –2 penalty above and beyond any modifiers for being a medium-sized object. Finally, the range increment of the shotgun is reduced by 10 feet.

Explosives and Splash Weapons

These weapons explode or burst, dealing damage to creatures or objects within an area. Explosives can either be thrown or detonated in place, depending on the type of explosive device. Dynamite and hand grenades are common examples of these weapons. A splash weapon is a projectile that bursts on impact, spewing its contents over an area and damaging any creature or object within that area. Generally, creatures directly hit by splash weapons take the most damage, while those nearby take less damage. Splash weapons usually must be thrown to have effect.

To use explosives or splash weapons a character need not possess any special proficiency feat, unless he or she wishes to fire or propel the weapon from some sort of launcher. In such cases, the character must have the appropriate Weapon Proficiency feat for the launching device or incur the standard –4 non-proficiency penalty.

Attacking with a Thrown Weapon

When using a thrown weapon, the wielder applies his or her Dexterity modifier to the attack roll. Unlike most thrown weapons, a character's Strength modifier isn't applied to the damage inflicted by thrown explosives or splash weapons.

Explosives and Splash Weapons Table

Explosives and splash weapons are described by a number of statistics, as shown on Table 5.12: Explosives and Splash Weapons.

Damage: The primary damage dealt by the weapon. For explosives, the Damage column shows the damage dealt to all creatures within the burst radius of the explosive. For splash weapons, two damage ratings are listed. The amount before the slash indicates the damage inflicted on a target struck directly by the weapon. The amount after the slash denotes the damage inflicted on all creatures within 5 feet of the weapon's impact point. A code letter after the damage amount indicates the type of damage that the weapon inflicts.

C: Concussion energy damage
S: Slashing damage
A: Acid energy damage
F: Fire energy damage

Some creatures or characters may be resistant or immune to some forms of damage.

Critical (Crit): The threat range for a critical hit. If the threat is confirmed, the weapon deals double damage (roll damage twice, as if hitting the target twice). Splash weapons can cause critical hits; explosives cannot, since the attack roll is made against an area, not an individual.

Burst Radius: For explosives, the burst radius is the area affected by the explosive. All creatures or objects within the burst radius take damage from the explosive.

Reflex DC: Any creature caught within the burst radius of an explosive may make a Reflex save against the DC given in this column for half damage.

Range Increment: If the weapon can be thrown, its range increment is shown in this column. Explosives with no range increment must be set in place before being detonated (see the Demolitions skill, page 71).

Size: Size categories for weapons and other objects are defined differently from the size categories for creatures. The relationship between a weapon's size and that of its wielder defines if it can be used one-handed, if it requires two hands, and if it's a light weapon. A Medium-size or smaller weapon can be used one-handed or two-handed. A Small or smaller weapon is considered a light weapon, and as such, is easier to use in a character's off hand (see Attacking With Two Weapons, page 211).

Weight: This column provides the weight of the weapon.

Purchase DC: This is the purchase DC for a Wealth check to acquire the weapon. This number reflects the base price and doesn't include any modifier for purchasing the weapon on the black market.

Purchase Price: The cost of the weapon in dollars when using the optional Cold Hard Cash rule.

Table 5.1 2: Explosives and Splash Weapons

Weapon	Damage	Crit [2]	Burst Radius	Reflex DC	Range Increment	Size	Weight lbs	Purchase DC	Purchase Price
Grenades and Explosives									
Black Powder	1d6 C	—	5	12	—	M	5	8	$3
Dynamite	2d6 C	—	5	15	10 ft	T	1	12	$8
Excelsior Grenade	2d6 S	—	10	15	10 ft	T	2.5	16	$25
Ketcham Grenade	2d6 S	—	10	15	20 ft	S	2	15	$20
Nitroglycerin Vial	6d6 C	—	15	15	10 ft	T	0.5	14	$15
Splash Weapons									
Acid, Mild	1d6/1 A	20	—	—	10 ft	T	1	6	$1
Incendiary Bomb [1]	1d6/1 F	20	—	—	10 ft	S	1	3	$0.05

[1] This weapon cannot be purchased as an item; the purchase DC given is for the weapon's components.
[2] Threat range applies to direct hits only; splash damage doesn't threaten a critical hit.

Grenades and Explosives

All explosives require a detonator. In the case of dynamite, the detonator is usually a blasting cap. Hand grenades of the era exploded on impact using percussion caps as a detonator.

Black Powder

Tried and true, black powder is used for everything from mining to munitions. Detonating a charge of black powder simply requires a spark, flame, or high heat. Setting of a charge of black powder from a safe distance requires a fuse or blasting cap. To set off black powder using a fuse requires a move action (and some source of flame) to light the fuse. The amount of time until the powder explodes depends on the length of the fuse. A fuse can be cut short enough for the powder to detonate in the same round (suicidal but allowed), or long enough to take several minutes to detonate. Cutting the fuse to the appropriate length requires a move action and a DC 15 Demolitions skill check.

A character may also make an impromptu fuse by pouring a trail of powder. The amount of time that the powder trail takes to burn is more difficult to gauge than that of a standard fuse. Therefore, a DC 20 Demolitions check is required to correctly estimate the burn time.

The damage and burst radius shown is for a 5-pound cask or satchel of black powder. Every additional 5 pounds of black powder increases the damage by +1d6 (maximum of 10d6) and the burst radius by 5 feet (maximum of 20 feet).

Black powder is sold in 5-pound casks. For the purpose of manufacturing it using a Craft (chemical) check, black powder is considered an improvised explosive.

Dynamite

Perhaps one of the most common and straightforward explosives, dynamite is very stable under normal conditions. Dynamite requires a fuse or detonator to set it off. To detonate dynamite using a fuse requires a move action (and match or other source of flame) to light the fuse. Like black powder, the length of the fuse will determine the amount of time until the dynamite explodes. A fuse can be cut short enough for the dynamite to detonate in the same round (allowing it to be used much like a grenade), or long enough to take several minutes to detonate. Cutting the fuse to the appropriate length requires a move action and a DC 15 Demolitions skill check. Dynamite may be detonated by other means, such as by electrical ignition or the simple expedient of shooting it with a firearm.

Additional sticks can be detonated at the same time if they are within the burst radius of the first stick, increasing the damage and burst radius of the explosion. Each additional stick increases the damage by +1d6 (maximum 10d6) and the burst radius by 5 feet (maximum 20 feet). A character can wire together several sticks of dynamite for even greater explosive effect. Doing so requires a Demolitions skill check (DC 10 + 1 per

stick). If the character succeeds on the check, either the damage or the burst radius of the explosion increases by 50% (the character's choice).

Dynamite is sold in boxes of 12 sticks. For the purpose of manufacturing it using a Craft (chemical) check, dynamite is considered a simple explosive.

Excelsior Grenade

The full name of this weapon is the Haynes' Excelsior Grenade. Invented in 1862 by W. W. Haynes for the Union Army, the Excelsior consisted of two hollow metal spheres, one inside the other. The inner sphere was packed with explosives. In between the two spheres were 14 nipples, each tipped with a percussion cap that, when fulminated, would discharge the explosive. The large number of caps ensured that, no matter how the grenade landed, at least one cap was likely to trigger. Unfortunately, this design also ensured that, in practice, caps were often accidentally triggered.

The listed Purchase DC and Purchase Price are for one box of 6 Excelsior grenades.

Ketcham Grenade

An improvement on grenade design was the Ketcham Grenade. Football-shaped with wooden tail fins attached to the tail end, the leading end possessed a plunger mechanism that, when depressed, activated a single percussion cap. The tail fins helped ensure a stable flight so that, hopefully, the plunger made contact with the ground upon landing. By keeping the percussion cap separate from the explosive, these grenades were safer to store, handle and transport. The percussion cap was inserted into the grenade just prior to use (requiring a full round action).

The listed Purchase DC and Purchase Price are for a box of 6 Ketcham grenades.

Nitroglycerin Vial

Nitroglycerin is a particularly volatile liquid used for demolitions. For cowpokes who like a little bang in their gunfights, it also explodes on impact if tossed at a target.

Unfortunately, it may just as easily explode while carried, especially if violently jarred or struck by a wayward bullet.

The listed Purchase DC and Purchase Price are for one vial.

NITROGLYCERIN VERSUS DYNAMITE

In reality, nitroglycerin is extremely unstable and almost impossible to handle and transport safely. The slightest movement or jarring can cause it to explode suddenly, so a cowpoke really wouldn't want to try throwing it. On the other hand, dynamite (which is actually a paste made from silica and nitroglycerin) is much safer to handle and transport. Nitroglycerin has only been included on the explosive weapons chart because western films, books and TV shows don't always cleave to fact, and some Judges may not want to either. If the image of a mad prospector throwing vials of nitroglycerin fits into a Judge's campaign, he or she should feel free to allow it.

Splash Weapons

Most splash weapons are essentially homemade incendiary or caustic devices. The purchase DC given in Table 5.12: Explosives and Splash Weapons reflects the typical cost of the necessary components. See the Craft (chemical) skill on page 67 for details on making improvised explosives and caustic solutions.

Acid, Mild

A character can throw a flask of acid as a grenade-like weapon. A flask is made of ceramic, metal, or glass (depending on the substance it has to hold), with a tight stopper, and holds about 1 pint of liquid. This entry represents any mild caustic substance. Acid may be purchased in many places, including most general stores.

Incendiary Bomb

An incendiary bomb is a flask containing a flammable liquid such as kerosene or alcohol, plugged with a rag. Such a weapon is easily made by hand, requiring a DC 10 Craft (chemical) check or DC 15 Intelligence check. Using it requires a move action (and some source of flame) to light the rag, and an attack action to throw it. The bomb detonates in 2 rounds or on impact with a solid object, whichever comes first. A target taking a direct hit is dealt an additional 1d6 points of fire damage in the following round and risks catching on fire (see page 234).

Melee Weapons

Used in close combat, melee weapons are generally among the simplest of weapons. The feat required for proficiency with a particular melee weapon varies. Some melee weapons are considered simple (covered by the Simple Weapons Proficiency feat); while others are archaic (Archaic Weapons Proficiency) or exotic (Exotic Melee Weapon Proficiency).

Attacking with a Melee Weapon

When using a melee weapon, the wielder applies his or her Strength modifier to both the attack and damage rolls. However, if the melee attack is made with the character's off hand, only one-half of his or her Strength modifier is applied to the damage roll. If a character is using both hands to wield a single melee weapon, the character adds 1.5 times the Strength modifier (rounded down) to the damage roll, provided that the weapon isn't considered a light weapon.

Melee Weapons Table

Melee weapons are described by a number of statistics, as shown on Table 5.13: Melee Weapons.

Damage: The damage the weapon deals on a successful hit. The code letter after the damage amount indicates the type of damage inflicted by the weapon.

B: Bludgeoning damage
P: Piercing damage
S: Slashing damage

Some creatures or characters may be resistant or immune to some forms of damage.

Critical: The threat range for a critical hit. If the threat is confirmed, the weapon deals double damage (roll damage twice, as if hitting the target twice).

Range Increment: Melee weapons designed to be thrown can be used to make ranged attacks. As such, they have a range increment (measured in feet) just as other ranged weapons do—but the maximum range for a thrown weapon is five range increments instead of ten. Any attack at less than the given range increment isn't penalized for range. However, each full range increment causes a cumulative –2 penalty on the attack roll.

Size: Size categories for weapons and other objects are defined differently from the size categories for creatures. The relationship between the size of a weapon and that of its wielder determines whether it can be used one-handed, or requires two hands, and if it qualifies as a light weapon. A Medium-size or smaller weapon can be used one-handed or two-handed. A Large weapon requires two hands. A Small or smaller weapon qualifies as a light weapon. It requires the use of one hand only and, as a light weapon, is easier to use in a character's off hand.

Weight: This column gives the weight of the weapon in pounds.

Purchase DC: This is the purchase DC for a Wealth check to acquire the weapon.

Purchase Price: The cost of the weapon in dollars when using the optional Cold Hard Cash rule.

Table 5.1 3: Melee Weapons

Weapon	Damage	Critical	Range Increment	Size	Weight lbs	Purchase DC	Purchase Price
Simple Weapons (requires the Simple Weapons Proficiency)							
Brass knuckles	1	20	—	T	1	5	$0.50
Cleaver	1d6 S	19–20	—	S	2	5	$0.50
Club	1d6 B	20	10	M	3	4	$0.25
Coup Stick [1]	1d4 B	20	10	M	2	6	$1
Knife	1d4 P	19–20	10	T	1	7	$2
Pistol Whip	1d4 B	20	—	S	—	—	
Pitchfork	1d6 P	20	10	M	4	6	$1
Rifle Butt	1d6 B	20	—	L	—	—	
Sap [1]	1d6 B	20	—	S	3	2	$0.01
Sledgehammer	1d8 B	20	—	L	8	7	$2
Staff [1]	1d6/1d6 B	20	—	L	4	4	$0.25
Archaic Weapons (requires the Archaic Weapons Proficiency)							
Ax	1d10 S	20	—	L	6	7	$2
Bayonet (fixed) [1]	1d4/1d6 P	20	—	L	1	7	$2
Bowie Knife	1d4 S	18-20	—	S	3	7	$2
Hatchet/Tomahawk	1d6 S	20	10	S	4	4	$0.25
Longsword	1d8 S	19-20	—	M	4	11	$6
Pickax	1d6 P	20	—	L	6	7	$2
Rapier	1d6 P	18-20	—	M	3	10	$5
Saber	1d6 S	18-20	—	M	4	12	$8
Spear [1]	1d8 P	20	—	L	9	6	$1
Straight Razor	1d4 S	19-20	—	T	0.5	4	$0.25
Sword Cane [1]	1d6 P	18-20	—	M	3	9	$4
Exotic Melee Weapons (requires the Exotic Melee Weapons Proficiency)							
Chain [1]	1d6/1d6 B	20	—	L	5	5	$0.50
Claymore [1]	2d6	19-20	—	L	6	14	$15

[1] See the description of this weapon for special rules.

Simple Melee Weapons

Generally inexpensive and common, simple weapons get the job done just the same.

Brass Knuckles

These pieces of molded metal fit over the outside of the fingers and allow an unarmed strike to deal lethal instead of nonlethal damage. A strike with brass knuckles is otherwise considered an unarmed attack. When used by a character with the Brawl feat, brass knuckles increase the base damage dealt by an unarmed strike by +1 and turn the damage into lethal damage.

Cleaver

Heavy kitchen knives can be snatched up for use as weapons when defending the homestead. (*Ed. Note: Or when going after the low-down back shootin' varmint that killed your man. See page 34*)

Club

Almost anything can be used as a club. This entry represents the wooden nightsticks sometimes carried by police forces, or the axe and pick handles used by miners during strike confrontations.

Coup Stick

This ceremonial club is used by several Indian tribes to "count coup" in combat. When counting coup, the Indian touches his opponent with the coup stick in melee usually in a non-injurious fashion. Counting coup demonstrates the warrior's bravery and his contempt for the enemy.

Knife

This category of weapon includes hunting knives and bayonets (when not attached to rifles).

Pistol Whip

Using a pistol as a melee weapon can deal greater damage than attacking unarmed. No weight or purchase DC is given for this weapon, since both depend on the pistol used. (Refer to Table 5.8: Ranged Weapons for Purchase DC values).

Pitchfork

The classic weapon of the sodbuster—whether used for hunting rogues courting a straying daughter or rounding up stray cattle—pitchforks can be found wherever there may be livestock.

Rifle Butt

The butt of a rifle works as an impromptu club.

Sap

This weapon, essentially a smaller version of a club, deals nonlethal damage instead of lethal damage.

Sledgehammer

Normally used for busting rock, a sledgehammer is also good for busting heads.

Staff

Commonly used as an aid for hiking, a staff can be turned to personal defense. A character can fight with a staff as though fighting with two weapons, incurring all the normal attack penalties as though using a one-handed weapon and a light weapon.

Archaic Melee Weapons

Archaic melee weapons encompass a broad class of weapons that are, by and large, obsolete on the 21st century battlefield. As with archaic ranged weapons, a melee weapon is classified as archaic based on the technology of the 21st century.

The use of archaic weapons is governed by the Archaic Weapons Proficiency feat. Those characters not possessing this feat incur a –4 non-proficiency penalty on all attack rolls made when using an archaic melee weapon.

Ax

This weapon is a single bladed ax typically used for chopping wood instead of enemies.

Bayonet (Fixed)

The statistics given describe a bayonet fixed at the end of a longarm with an appropriate mounting. With the bayonet fixed, the longarm becomes a double weapon—club-like at one end and spear-like at the other. A character can fight with it as though fighting with two weapons, but when doing so, incurs all the normal attack penalties as though using a one-handed weapon and a light weapon.

Bowie Knife

This immense hunting knife serves admirably as a weapon for close combat.

Hatchet/Tomahawk

This light axe is a chopping tool that deals slashing damage when employed as a weapon.

Longsword

This classic, straight blade is the weapon of knighthood and valor (and some secret societies and fraternal orders).

Pickax

Normally used for mining, the sharp pointed spike of the pickax also doubles as an effective weapon.

Rapier

A rapier is a lightweight fencing sword with a thin blade that can be used with the Weapon Finesse feat (see the Weapon Finesse feat, page 123).

Saber

The saber is a light curved sword issued as a standard cavalry weapon.

Spear

This primitive device is a reach weapon. A character can use it to strike opponents 10 feet away, but not against an adjacent foe.

Straight Razor

Found in any barbershop or shaving kit, the straight razor can, in a pinch, function as a weapon.

Sword Cane

This lightweight, concealed sword hides its blade in the shaft of a walking stick or umbrella. Because of this special construction, a sword cane is always considered concealed until drawn; it is noticed only with a Spot check (DC 18). (The walking stick or umbrella isn't concealed, only the blade within.)

Exotic Melee Weapons

Most exotic weapons are either atypical in form or improved variations of other melee weapons. Because each exotic weapon is unique in how it is manipulated and employed, a separate Exotic Melee Weapon Proficiency feat is required for each to avoid the –4 non-proficiency penalty.

Chain

A simple chain with weighted ends, this weapon can be whirled quickly, striking with hard blows from the weights. Additionally, one end can be swung to entangle an opponent. A character can use a chain either as a double weapon or as a reach weapon. When used as a double weapon, a character is considered to be fighting with two weapons, incurring all the normal attack penalties as if using a one-handed weapon and a light weapon. In this case, the character can strike only at an adjacent opponent.

If a character uses the chain as a reach weapon, he or she can strike opponents up to 10 feet away. In addition, unlike other reach weapons, the character can use it against an adjacent foe. When used as a reach weapon, the character can use only one end of the chain effectively; he or she cannot use it as a double weapon.

Because a chain can wrap around an enemy's leg or other limb, a character can make a trip attack with it by

succeeding at a melee touch attack. If tripped during his or her own trip attempt, the character can drop the chain to avoid being tripped.

When using a chain, the character gains a +2 equipment bonus on his or her opposed attack roll when attempting to disarm an opponent (including the roll to avoid being disarmed if the character fails to disarm the opponent).

Claymore

The claymore is the traditional highland sword. A character with the Exotic Melee Weapon Proficiency feat may wield a claymore one-handed. For a character without the feat, the claymore must be used with two hands and the standard –4 non-proficiency penalty applies.

Improvised Weapons

In a pinch, a character can use any portable object as a weapon. In most cases, an object can be wielded as either a melee weapon or a thrown ranged weapon. Any character without the Improvised Weapon Proficiency suffers a –4 non-proficiency penalty on his or her attack roll when wielding or throwing an improvised weapon.

Table 5.14: Improvised Weapon Damage by Size

Object Size	Examples	Damage
Diminutive	Ashtray, hair brush, crystal paperweight	1
Tiny	Fist-sized rock, mug, screwdriver, wrench	1d2
Small	Bottle, coffee pot, helmet, frying pan, vase	1d3
Medium-size	Bar stool, brick, satchel, ax handle, fire poker	1d4
Large	Guitar, coat rack, office chair, lead pipe, oar	1d6
Huge	10-foot ladder, barrel, park bench, sawhorse	1d8
Gargantuan	Desk, coal bin, file cabinet, large sofa	2d6
Colossal	Wagon, iron stove, telegraph pole	2d8

A character can effectively wield or throw an object of his or her size category or smaller using one hand. A character can effectively wield or throw an object one size category larger than his or her size category using two hands, but cannot wield or throw an object two or more size categories larger. An improvised thrown weapon has a range increment of 10 feet. Increase the range increment for creatures of Large size or larger as follows: Large 15 feet, Huge 30 feet, Gargantuan 60 feet, and Colossal 120 feet.

Damage: Improvised weapons deal lethal damage based on their size, although the Judge may adjust the damage of an object that is especially light or heavy for its size, such as a big fluffy pillow or a pouch of gold coins. The wielder's Strength modifier applies only to damage from Tiny or larger improvised weapons; do not apply the wielder's Strength modifier to damage from Diminutive objects. Table 5.14: Improvised Weapon Damage by Size gives the damage for improvised weapons of varying size. Improvised weapons threaten a critical hit on a natural roll of 20. Improvised weapons of Fine size deal no damage.

Unlike intentionally constructed weapons, improvised weapons aren't designed to absorb damage. They tend to shatter, bend, crumple, or fall apart after a few blows. An improvised weapon has a 50% chance of breaking each time it deals damage or, in the case of thrown objects, strikes a surface (such as a wall) or an object larger than itself.

Armor

Armor comes in a variety of shapes and sizes, providing varying degrees of coverage and having different weight. Three feats cover proficiency in the use of armor: Armor Proficiency (light), Armor Proficiency (medium), and Armor Proficiency (heavy). Gaining the full defensive value of armor requires that a character possess the appropriate armor proficiency. Without the appropriate proficiency, the character gains a smaller bonus to Defense, and applies the armor penalty to attack rolls as well as to certain skill checks.

Armor Table

Armor is described by a number of statistics, as shown on Table 5.15: Armor.

Equipment Bonus: The protective value of the armor. This bonus adds to the wearer's Defense. A character gains the full equipment bonus only if he or she possesses the proper armor proficiency.

Non-proficient Bonus: The maximum amount of the armor's equipment bonus that can be applied to the wearer's Defense if the wearer doesn't possess the appropriate feat for that armor type.

Maximum Dexterity Bonus: This number is the maximum Dexterity bonus to Defense allowed by this type of armor. Heavier armor limits mobility, reducing a character's ability to avoid attacks. Even if a character's Dexterity bonus drops to +0 because of armor (which none of the listed armors do), the character isn't considered to have lost his or her Dexterity bonus.

Armor Penalty: The heavier or bulkier the armor, the more it affects certain skills. This penalty applies to checks involving the following skills: Balance, Climb, Escape Artist, Hide, Jump, Move Silently, Sleight of Hand, and Tumble. If the character is non-proficient with the armor, the armor penalty applies to all attack rolls and all skills that involve movement.

Speed (30 ft.): Medium and heavy armor slows a character. The number in this column is the character's speed while in armor, assuming his or her base speed is 30 feet (the normal speed for most human beings).

Table 5.1 5: Armor

Armor	Equipment Bonus	Non-proficient Bonus	Maximum Dexterity Bonus	Armor Penalty	Speed (30 ft)	Weight	Purchase DC	Purchase Price
Light Armor (requires the Light Armor Proficiency)								
Soft Leather	+1	+1	+8	-0	30	4	10	$5
Leather Armor	+2	+1	+6	-0	30	15	12	$8
Medium Armor (requires the Medium Armor Proficiency)								
Hide Armor	+3	+1	+4	-3	20	25	10	$5
Bullet-Proof Vest	+4	+2	+4	-3	25	25	12	$8
Chainmail Shirt	+5	+2	+2	-5	20	40	18	$45
Breastplate	+5	+2	+3	-4	20	30	20	$80
Heavy Armor (requires the Heavy Armor Proficiency)								
Plate Mail	+8	+3	+1	-6	20	50	23	$200
Shields (requires the Light Armor Proficiency)								
Tribal Shield	+2	+1	—	-2	—	10	9	$4

Weight: This column gives the armor's weight.

Purchase DC: This is the purchase DC for a Wealth check to acquire the armor.

Purchase Price: The cost of the armor in dollars when using the optional Cold Hard Cash rule.

Light Armor

For the cowpoke who doesn't wish to be bogged down by the more cumbersome armor types, a leather garment is just the ticket. Gaining the full protective value of light armor requires that a character possess the Light Armor Proficiency feat.

Soft Leather

This armor can be any piece of soft leather or heavy fabric clothing that covers most of the body, such as a set of buckskins, a leather coat, or perhaps even a duster.

Leather Armor

This archaic armor consists of a breastplate made of thick, lacquered leather, along with softer leather coverings for other parts of the body.

Medium Armor

In the Western era, most medium armor is rather heavy and has the added expense of a reduction in speed. However, it does provide a significant amount of protection. The Medium Armor Proficiency feat is required for a character to gain the full equipment bonus to Defense and to avoid applying the armor penalty to attacks and all skills involving movement.

Hide Armor

This armor is a set of clothing constructed out of extremely thick leather, such as buffalo hide.

Bullet-Proof Vest

Early bullet-proof vests consisted of heavy wool clothing lined with metal plates. The hucksters that followed the Union Army would sell soldiers vests constructed with cast iron plates. Such protection was really no protection at all. The cast iron, being brittle, would shatter on impact, compounding the damage inflicted. However, a well-crafted vest (as featured here) was comprised of steel plates that could indeed stop a musket or pistol slug, particularly at long range after the bullet had lost much of its kinetic energy.

Chainmail Shirt

This medieval-era armor is a long shirt made of interlocking metal rings, with a layer of padding underneath. It is heavy, making it uncomfortable to wear for long periods of time.

Breastplate

A breastplate consists of two formed solid steel plates that cover the front and back of the torso. As archaic forms of armor, breastplates were worn by the Spanish conquistadors. An occasional breastplate may be unearthed on old battle sites, or even found amongst Indian tribes who have handed the armor down through the ages.

Heavy Armor

Despite its protective value, heavy armor is largely obsolete due to the huge loss of speed and mobility suffered by its wearer. Characters without the Heavy Armor Proficiency feat may add only the non-proficient bonus to their Defense and must apply the armor penalty to all attack rolls and skill checks involving movement.

Plate Mail

This medieval-era armor consists of metal plates that cover the entire body. While quite heavy and cumbersome, it does provide a great deal of protection.

THE KELLY GANG

Plate mail doesn't necessarily need to be ancient in origin. In 1880, the Australian "bushwhacker" Ned Kelly and his gang confounded Australian police by donning 90-pound suits of armor forged from plowshares. Unfortunately for Ned and his men, they didn't armor their legs and arms. So, while the police couldn't shoot Ned in the vitals, he went down just the same when a barrage of shots took away his ability to stand.

Shields

Proper use of a shield requires that the character possess the Light Armor Proficiency feat.

Tribal Shield

Many Indian tribal warriors used shields in combat, typically made from wood and leather.

General Goods and Services

This section covers a large variety of gear and services that your cowpoke may wish to acquire. All potential purchases have been organized into a number of categories with the prices and purchase DC provided on separate tables.

Equipment is described by a number of statistics, as shown on Table 5.16 to Table 5.31.

Weight: This column gives the item's weight measured in pounds.

Size: The size category of a piece of gear determines how easy that object is to conceal (see the Sleight of Hand skill, page 94). Furthermore, it indicates whether the object requires one or two hands to use. In general, a character needs one hand to use a medium object or smaller. Finally, the size of the object determines how much damage the object inflicts when it is used as an improvised weapon (see Improvised Weapons, page 153).

Purchase DC: This is the purchase DC for a Wealth check to acquire the item.

Purchase Price: The cost of the item in dollars for those using the optional Cold Hard Cash rule.

Maneuver Modifier (Man. Modifier): In addition to the other entries, Table 5.26: Conveyances lists the bonus or penalty that the operator receives on Operate Vehicle checks (see the Operate Vehicle skill, page 87).

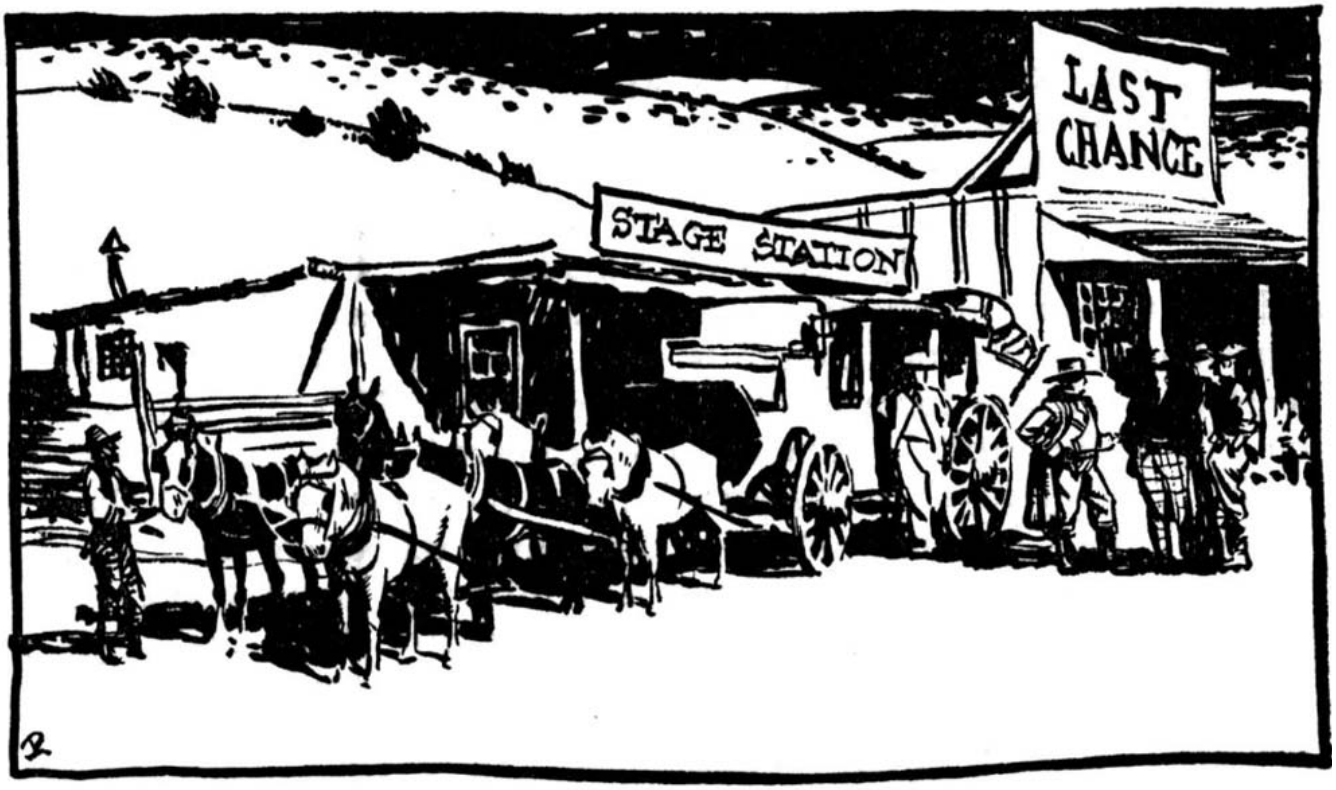


Table 5.1 6: Clothing and Personal Items

Item	Weight (lbs)	Size	Purchase DC	Purchase Price
Bandana	–	Tiny	4	10¢
Boots, military or cowboy	3.5	Medium	10	$5
Boots, custom	3.5	Medium	16	$25
Buckskin shirt	3	Medium	7	$2
Buckskin trousers	3	Medium	7	$1.75
Buffalo robe	40	Medium	13	$10
Candles, wax (1 dozen)	1	Tiny	4	10¢
Cap, broadcloth	–	Small	5	50¢
Cartridge belt (holds 50 rounds)	2	Small	6	$1
Chaps (leather or sheepskin)	6.5	Medium	10	$4.50
Cigar, cheroot	–	Tiny	3	5¢
Cigar, high quality	–	Tiny	4	2 for 25¢
Dress	4	Medium	7	$1.50
Gloves	–	Tiny	7	$2
Hat, derby	0.5	Small	7	$2
Hat, cowboy	1	Medium	8	$3
Hat, Stetson	1	Medium	15	$20
Hat, lady's feathered	1	Medium	9	$4
Hat, sombrero	0.5	Medium	9	$3.50
Holster, fancy	0.5.	Small	10	$5
Holster, plain	0.5	Small	6	$1
Holster, shoulder	0.5	Small	7	$1.50
Holster, swivel	0.5	Small	9	$3.75
Knife, pocket	–	Tiny	5	50¢
Matches, safety (box of 240)	–	Tiny	4	10¢
Mirror, brush, comb set	2	Small	8	$3
Overcoat, cloth	10	Medium	12	$8
Overcoat, fur	20	Medium	14	$15
Razor, straight	–	Tiny	6	$1
Shirt, average quality	–	Medium	5	50¢
Shirt, good quality	–	Medium	6	$1
Shirt, women's, good quality	–	Medium	7	$1.50
Shoes, men's or women's	2	Medium	9	$3.50
Skirt, women's	–	Medium	9	$4
Slicker, rain	4.5	Medium	9	$4
Soap, cake	–	Tiny	3	3¢
Socks, 1 pr	–	Tiny	2	1¢
Spurs, plain	–	Small	7	1.50¢
Spurs, fancy	–	Small	13	$10
Suit, men's, plain	6	Medium	10	$5
Suit, men's, fancy	6	Medium	14	$12
Suit, men's or women's	6	Medium	14	$12
Tobacco (1 oz.)	–	Fine	4	10¢
Travel trunk (Steamer)	25	Huge	10	$5
Trousers	3	Medium	7	$1.50
Watch, pocket with chain	–	Fine	9	$4
Wrap, women's	–	Small	14	$15
Vest	–	Small	6	$1

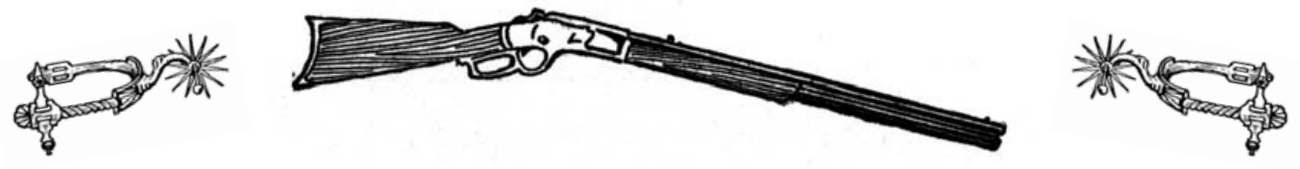


Table 5.17: Provisions

Item	Weight (lbs)	Size	Purchase DC	Purchase Price
Bacon, side	40	Huge	11	$6
Beef, side	65	Huge	10	$5
Beef, dried (1 lb.)	1	Tiny	4	20¢
Beer, glass	–	Small	3	5¢
Beer, small keg	10	Large	7	$2
Chewing gum, 100 pieces	5	Tiny	4	25¢
Chocolate, 8 oz. Tin	0.5	Tiny	4	10¢
Coffee, 2 lb. tin	2	Tiny	5	50¢
Corned beef	100	Huge	11	$5.75
Crackers	25	Huge	7	$1.50
Flour, sack	50	Huge	15	$20
Jerky, pouch	1	Tiny	4	15¢
Meal, average	–	–	4	25¢
Meal, good	–	–	6	75¢
Meal, aboard train	–	–	7	$1.50
Oatmeal, sack	50	Huge	9	$4
Rations (1 week)	10	–	13	$10
Root Beer, bottle	1	Tiny	4	10¢
Sugar, 1 lb.	1	Small	4	10¢
Tea, 8 oz. tin	0.5	Tiny	5	50¢
Whiskey, shot	–	Fine	4	10¢
Whiskey, bottle	3	Tiny	7	$2

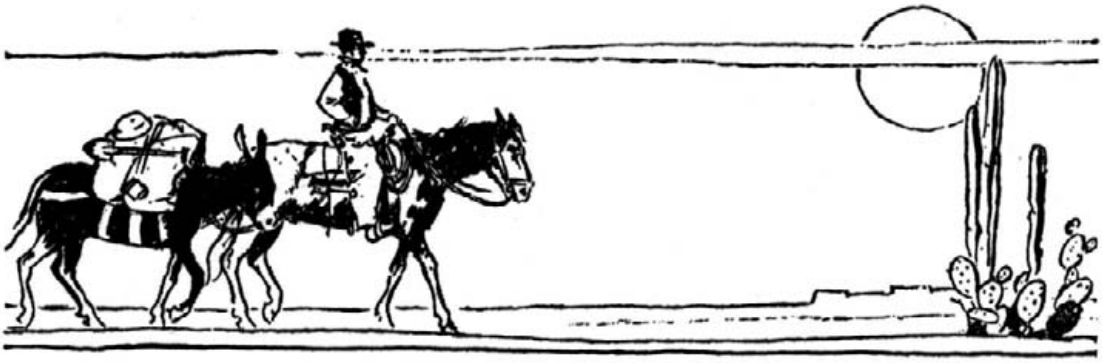


Table 5.18: Outdoor Equipment

Item	Weight (lbs)	Size	Purchase DC	Purchase Price
Bed Roll	10	Medium	9	$4
Binoculars, 5x	2.5	Small	14	$15
Binoculars, 10x	3	Small	16	$25
Canteen	1	Small	5	50¢
Compass	–	Fine	7	$2
Gun cleaning kit	1	Small	7	$1.50
Oil for lamps, etc. (1 gallon)	8	Medium	4	10¢
Oil lamp	4	Medium	7	$1.50
Scabbard, rifle	2	Small	8	$2.50
Tent, miner's (for one)	30	Huge	11	$6
Trail cook's kit (fry pan, stew pot, coffee pot, etc.)	80	Huge	8	$3
Trap w/chain, 5" jaw (mink)	2.5	Medium	4	25¢
Trap w/chain, 6.5" jaw (beaver)	3	Medium	5	39¢
Trap w/chain, 8" jaw (wolf)	9	Medium	7	$1.85
Trap w/chain, 16" jaw (bear)	17	Medium	14	$11.75

Table 5.19: Animals, Livestock and Pelts

Item	Weight (lbs)	Size	Purchase DC	Purchase Price
Beaver (pelt)	5	Medium	7	$2
Buffalo (hide)	40	Huge	10	$5
Burro	–	–	17	$30
Cattle, as calf	–	–	10	$5
Cattle, as yearling	–	–	13	$10
Cattle, at railhead	–	–	17	$30
Coyote (skin/bounty)	–	–	6	75¢
Horse, excellent	–	–	22	$150
Horse, good	–	–	21	$100
Horse, fair	–	–	19	$50
Horse, poor	–	–	15	$20
Jackrabbit (pelt)	0.5	Small	3	5¢
Lynx (pelt)	6	Large	6	$1
Mule	–	–	19	$50
Oxen (yoke of two)	–	–	22	$150
Pony	–	–	19	$50
Puma (pelt)	10	Large	7	$2
Raccoon (pelt)	1	Small	5	50¢
Sheep	–	–	10	$5
Wolverine (pelt)	4	Medium	6	$1

Table 5.20: Household Items

Item	Weight (lbs)	Size	Purchase DC	Purchase Price
Bedroom set	275	–	16	$21
Cook stove	300	Gargantuan	18	$40
Cookware set	80	–	8	$3
Dining room set	400	–	19	$50
Dishes, setting for six	80	–	14	$12
Glassware, setting for six	40	–	12	$8
Oil lamp, fancy parlor type	10	Large	7	$1.50
Parlor suite (couch, 4 chairs)	325	–	18	$40
Sewing machine	50	Huge	16	$25
Silverware, setting for six	4	–	10	$5

Table 5.21: Land

Item	Weight (lbs)	Size	Purchase DC	Purchase Price
Homestead (160 acres, land must be worked for five years)	–	–	13	$10
Townsite (320 acres, to be subdivided) (Founder's price)	–	–	26	$400
Townsite quarter (80 acres) (Founder's price)	–	–	21	$100
Town lot (Poor location)	–	–	19	$50
Town lot (Main Street location)	–	–	26	$400
Town lot (Choice location)	–	–	29	$1,000

Table 5.22: Business Supplies

Item	Weight (lbs)	Size	Purchase DC	Purchase Price
Cash box with lock	2	Medium	6	$1
Envelopes (1 dozen)	–	Tiny	3	5¢
Handcuffs	1	Tiny	7	$2
Paper (100 sheets)	–	Tiny	5	50¢
Pen, fountain	–	Fine	8	$3
Pen, quill	–	Tiny	3	5¢
Pencil (1 dozen)	–	Tiny	4	$25
Postcard	–	Fine	2	1¢
Printing press, small	50	Huge	18	$45
Steel Safe, small	300	Gargantuan	14	$15
Steel Safe, large	2000	Colossal	20	$80
Telegraph Key	5	Medium	16	$25
Tombstone	50	Huge	13	$11
Typewriter	20	Large	17	$35

Table 5.23: Medical Equipment

Item	Weight (lbs)	Size	Purchase DC	Purchase Price
Doctor's bag with instruments	15	Large	16	$25
Ether (1 dose)	–	–	4	25¢
Eyeglasses	–	Tiny	7	$2
Laudanum (1 dose)	–	–	5	35¢
Nitrous Oxide (1 dose)	–	–	4	25¢
Quinine	–	–	5	50¢
Veterinary bag with instruments	20	Large	16	$22

Table 5.24: Tools and Kits

Item	Weight (lbs)	Size	Purchase DC	Purchase Price
Anvil	80	Gargantuan	14	$15
Axe	5	Large	6	$1
Barbed Wire (50 yards)	20	Huge	6	$1
Blacksmith's tool set (bellows, hammer, tongs, etc.)	100	Gargantuan	14	$15
Blasting caps (1 dozen)	-	Small	5	50¢
Carpenter's tool set (level, plane, saw, square, etc.)	30	Huge	16	$21
Chemical kit	50	Huge	20	$80
Demolitions kit	20	Large	13	$11
Disguise kit	5	Medium	12	$8
Druggist's kit	50	Huge	21	$110
Dynamite, stick	0.5	Small	4	25¢
Electric detonator	1	Medium	10	$5
Electrical tool kit	50	Huge	21	$110
Evidence kit	10	Large	15	$14
First aid kit	5	Medium	10	$5
Forgery kit	5	Medium	12	$8
Fuse (per yard)	–	–	3	5¢
Handsaw	2	Medium	7	$1.50
Hammer	2	Medium	5	50¢
Lantern	2	Medium	6	80¢
Lockpick set	1	Small	12	$8
Mechanical tool kit	50	Huge	17	$30
Medical kit	15	Large	16	$25
Ore car	150	Gargantuan	14	$15
Pan	0.5	Medium	4	10¢
Pick	4	Large	6	$1
Plow (horse drawn)	80	Huge	12	$6.50
Rope (per yard)	–	–	3	5¢
Scales	10	Large	8	$3
Shovel	6	Large	6	$1
Surgeon's kit	20	Large	17	$35
Wirecutters	2	Small	8	$2.50
Wheelbarrow, steel (miner's)	80	Gargantuan	11	$6

Table 5.25: Shops and Laboratories

Item	Weight (lbs)	Size	Purchase DC	Purchase Price
Chemist's laboratory	–	–	36	$4,500
Electrician shop	–	–	36	$4,500
Field hospital	–	–	33	$2,000
Smithy	–	–	29	$1,000

Table 5.26: Conveyances

Item	Weight (lbs)	Size	Man. Modifier	Purchase DC	Purchase Price
Buggy (capacity two people or 500 lbs.)	380	Large	-4	18	$40
Buggy (capacity four people or 800 lbs.)	500	Huge	-4	21	$90
Canoe	90	Medium	-4	13	$10
Flatboat (30 ft)	8,000	Gargantuan	-8	23	$200
Harness (single)	15	Medium	–	13	$10
Harness (team, per 2 horses)	40	Medium	–	16	$25
Keelboat (30 ft)	12,000	Gargantuan	-6	26	$500
Quirt (riding whip)	–	Small	–	7	$1.25
Saddle and bridle, fancy	25	Small	–	19	$60
Saddle and bridle, plain	20	Small	–	16	$25
Saddlebags and saddle blanket	10	Small	–	12	$8
Stagecoach (not including horses)	2,500	Huge	-4	30	$1,500
Wagon, light (capacity 1,200 lbs.)	500	Huge	-6	17	$30
Wagon, heavy (capacity 4,500 lbs.)	1,085	Huge	-8	18	$40

Table 5.27: Travel Fares

Item	Weight (lbs)	Size	Purchase DC	Purchase Price
Stagecoach, Local (per mile)	–	–	4	15¢
Stagecoach, Express (per 50 miles)	–	–	8	$3
Stagecoach, St. Louis to San Francisco (25 days)	–	–	23	$200
Steamboat, St. Louis to Fort Benton	–	–	25	$300
Train, Omaha to Sacramento, 1st class, express	–	–	21	$100
Train, Omaha to Sacramento, 2nd class, express	–	–	20	$75

Table 5.28: Mail

Item	Weight (lbs)	Size	Purchase DC	Purchase Price
Letter, by mail	1 oz.	Tiny	3	2¢
Package, by overland mail	10	Large	14	$15
Package, by rail freight	100	Gargantuan	12	$8.
Telegram (50 words @ 1/2 cent per word)	–	–	4	25¢

Table 5.29: Entertainment

Item	Weight (lbs)	Size	Purchase DC	Purchase Price
Banjo	12	Medium	14	$12.50
Bible	2	Small	10	$5
Bordello, “Boarding”	–	–	17	$30
Bordello, fancy, “Boarding”	–	–	19-21	$50-$100
Bugle	3	Small	12	$8
Dance Hall, one dance ticket	–	–	5	50¢
Dance Hall, “quick date”	–	–	10	$5
Deck of Marked Cards	–	–	7	$1.25
Dice	–	Fine	4	25¢
Guitar	10	Large	12	$8
Harmonica	–	Tiny	5	50¢
Musical Production, ticket	–	–	5	50¢
Newspaper	–	Small	2	1¢
Novel, paperback	–	Tiny	4	10¢
Piano, upright	800	Gargantuan	21	$100
Poker chips, 1000	1	–	8	$3
Stage Play, ticket	–	–	6	$1
Stereoscope	1	Small	6	75¢
Trombone	5	Large	13	$9
Trumpet (coronet)	4	Small	13	$11
Violin (fiddle)	4	Medium	13	$9.50

Table 5.30: Lodging and Services

Item	Weight (lbs)	Size	Purchase DC	Purchase Price
Bath	–	–	5	50¢
Bath (with clean and warm water)	–	–	6	$1
Hotel, poor (per night)	–	–	5	50¢
Hotel, average (per night)	–	–	6	$1
Hotel, good (per night)	–	–	7	$2
Hotel, luxury (per night)	–	–	11	$6
Room (per week)	–	–	6	$1
Room and board (per week)	–	–	8	$2.50
Shave and haircut	–	–	4	25¢
Stable, overnight for man or animal (per night)	–	–	4	25¢

Table 5.31: Medical Services

Item	Weight (lbs)	Size	Purchase DC	Purchase Price
Amputation	–	–	10	$5
Broken bone set	–	–	5	50¢
Broken bone splinted	–	–	6	75¢
Buckshot removed	–	–	7	$2
Bullet hole patched	–	–	5	50¢
Bullet removed	–	–	4	25¢
Concussion treated	–	–	5	50¢
Lacerations stitched	–	–	5	50¢
Leeching	–	–	4	25¢
Other burns treated	–	–	7	$2
"Other" diseases treated	–	–	7	$2
Powder burns treated	–	–	6	$1

CHAPTER SIX : ADVANCED CLASSES

"Always bear in mind that your own resolution to succeed is more important than any other one thing."

Abraham Lincoln

Months later, Melody remained unconvinced. The gang camped in the hills outside of Denver, waiting for Martel's stagecoach. Before the last snow, when they were still hiding out, Zeke had convinced them that he could infiltrate Martel's organization and get the dirt on him. They gave him one month. Incredibly, Melody thought, that part of his plan had worked. Now, on this fine spring day, they waited for Martel's new payroll run.

Fate lay to Melody's left, Sam to her right on the craggy outcropping. They all studied the valley below. Zeke dozed off under his hat. Hildi worked with her horse, Pacer. She whispered to the filly, beginning to teach it another trick.

Sam's keen eye picked up the stage far down the road. He whistled and everyone mounted. Sam saw that Zeke was right: four armed riders and two more driving. Nothing special. Martel always hired the cheapest, dirtiest, and dumbest guns.

While Zeke rode forward to cut them off, the rest of the gang galloped straight ahead – on a collision course. The startled guards urged their mounts and started shooting, just as Fate had predicted. Hildi whispered again to Pacer, who then raced in and kicked up a wake of dust. She drew the guards' fire while Sam, Fate and Melody drifted momentarily into the dust cloud. Hildi leaned back to take one measured rifle shot, knocking one of the guards clean off his horse, somehow without killing him. Fate spurred Ill Wind. He charged in with saber ready, engaging, and then chasing off, another rider.

Melody and Sam pursued the stage and the remaining two riders. Sam grazed one, then riding low against his mount to avoid the return fire, plugged the man with another shot, finally forcing him to withdraw. Melody aimed her Spencer, taking the last rider down with three shots. "I recognized that skunk," she explained.

Zeke waited up ahead, blocking the trail at a slow gait while the stagecoach careened closer. Flanked now by Melody and Sam, and seeing Zeke causing problems ahead, the driver reined in the horses. Martel's men raised their arms in the air.

Advanced Classes

An advanced class represents a focus and calling for the experienced adventurer. It provides a specialization and a range of powers and abilities that give a character that something extra to set him or her apart from the herd. The advanced classes in *Sidewinder: Recoiled* are based on classic archetypes from Western movies and novels; however, you should keep in mind that even if your character has taken levels in an advanced class named after a particular Western archetype, it doesn't mean that you character must adhere to that archetype. For example, not all characters with levels in the Soldier advanced class have to be Blue Bellies. Instead, they may just as likely be Indian warriors or hired guns with martial talents.

Although most advanced classes naturally build from a single specific basic class, any advanced class is

Table 6.1: Advanced Class Prerequisites and Basic Class Associations

Advanced Class	Base Attack Bonus	Skill	Ranks	Feats	Basic Class(es)
Bounty Hunter	+2	Gather Information Survival	3 6	Track	Tough 3 or Dedicated 3
Brave	+2	Survival	6	Great Fortitude, Indian Lore	Tough 3 or Dedicated 3
Desperado	+2	Intimidate	6	Confident, Toughness	Tough 3
Grifter	-	Bluff Diplomacy	6 6	Deceptive	Charismatic 3
Gunslinger	+2	Sleight of Hand	6	Personal Firearms Proficiency, Quickdraw	Fast 3
Maverick	-	Gamble Sleight of Hand	6 3	Card Sharp	Dedicated/Fast combination
Mountain Man	+2	Survival	6	Improved Bull Rush, Power Attack	Tough 3 or Dedicated 3
Pony Soldier	+2	Ride	6	Defensive Riding Personal Firearms Proficiency	Fast 3 or Tough 3
Preacher [1]	-	Knowledge (theology and philosophy) Sense Motive	6 6	Trustworthy	Dedicated 3
Professor	-	Craft [2] Knowledge [3] Research	6 6 6	Educated	Smart 3
Pugilist	+3			Combat Martial Arts, Defensive Martial Arts	Strong 3
Rifleman	+2	Sleight of Hand	6	Far Shot, Gunplay, Personal Firearms Proficiency	Fast 3
Rustler	+2	Hide Move Silently	6 6	Dodge	Fast 3
Sawbones	-	Craft (pharmaceutical) Treat Injury	6 6	Surgery	Dedicated 3
Scout	+2	Spot Survival	6 6	Track	Tough 3 or Dedicated 3
Showman	-	Diplomacy Perform (any)	6 6	Renown	Charismatic 3
Soldier	+3	Knowledge (tactics)	3	Personal Firearms Proficiency	Strong 3
Tin Star	+3	Diplomacy Investigate Knowledge (civics)	3 3 3	Trustworthy	Strong 3
Wrangler	+2	Handle Animal Ride	3 6	Animal Affinity, Defensive Riding	Fast 3 or Tough 3

1 In addition to the feats and skills lists, the Preacher must swear allegiance to a religious faith.
2 The Professor must have one of the following Craft (chemical, electric, mechanical, or writing).
3 The Professor must have one of the following Knowledge (behavioral sciences, earth and life sciences, history, physical sciences, or technology).

available to any character that fulfills the prerequisites, regardless of the basic class or classes in which he or she has gained levels.

The Judge may add advanced classes specifically suited to his or her campaign. Conversely, the Judge can decide that certain advanced classes aren't available in the campaign. Check with your Judge before selecting an advanced class.

Qualifying for an Advanced Class

While Advanced classes are acquired like basic classes, they have prerequisites that a character must meet before attaining 1st level in the class. Using the multiclassing rules, a qualifying character can choose an advanced class as an additional class as he or she gains levels. Some combination of base attack bonus, feats, skill ranks, or special requirements determines whether a character may gain a level in an advanced class.

See Table 6.1: Advanced Class Prerequisites and Basic Class Associations for a summarized breakdown of prerequisites for each advanced class and the basic classes providing the quickest path into that class.

BOUNTY HUNTER

"You're a bounty hunter?"
"I am."
"You kill men for money?"
"You know a better reason?"

Hannie Caulder and Thomas Price
– *Hannie Caulder, 1971*

Tracking their quarry with relentless devotion and often with reckless abandon, Bounty Hunters are a breed apart from other hombres. While typically hunters of criminals, some unscrupulous Bounty Hunters will hunt anyone if the price is right. Even though their profession often forces Bounty Hunters to walk a lonely path, they find it a boon to possess at least some social graces.

A Bounty Hunter is someone who has dedicated his life to finding those folks who shirk their responsibilities and obligations and leave for parts unknown. One part investigator, one part alienist, and several parts big game hunter, the Bounty Hunter tracks and apprehends fugitives, runaways, scofflaws, and deadbeats–wherever they may roam. Usually this is done strictly for the money, but some Bounty Hunters do their jobs out of a sense of morality and the desire to see justice served. To them, the money is just a formality, a means to continue doing good work.

Select this advanced class if you want your character to be skilled at investigation but also have enough combat savvy to run dangerous targets to ground.

The earliest a character can enter the Bounty Hunter advanced class is at 4th level, via the Tough or Dedicated hero basic classes.

Requirements

To qualify as a Bounty Hunter, a character must fulfill the following criteria.

Base Attack Bonus: +2.
Skills: Gather Information 3 ranks, Survival 6 ranks.
Feat: Track.

Bounty Hunter Vitals

The following information pertains to the Bounty Hunter advanced class.

Grit Die: A Bounty Hunter gains 1d8 grit per level. The character's Constitution modifier applies.

Action Points: A Bounty Hunter gains a number of action points equal to 6 + one-half his character level, rounded down, every time he attains a new level in this class.

Class Skills: The Bounty Hunter's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are: Bluff (Cha), Gather Information (Cha), Hide (Dex), Intimidate (Cha), Investigate (Int), Knowledge (behavioral sciences, current events, popular culture, streetwise) (Int), Move Silently (Dex), Profession (Wis), Read/Write Language (none), Ride (Dex), Search (Int), Sense Motive (Wis), Speak Language (none), Survival (Wis), Treat Injury (Wis).

Skill Points at Each Level: 5 + Int modifier.

Table 6.2: The Bounty Hunter

Level	BAB	Fort	Ref	Will	Features	Defense	Reputation
1st	+0	+1	+1	+1	Nowhere to run	+1	+1
2nd	+1	+2	+2	+2	Hogtying	+1	+1
3rd	+2	+2	+2	+2	Bonus feat	+2	+1
4th	+3	+2	+2	+2	Nonlethal force	+2	+2
5th	+3	+3	+3	+3	Leave 'em empty handed	+3	+2
6th	+4	+3	+3	+3	Bonus feat	+3	+2
7th	+5	+4	+4	+4	Fast track	+4	+3
8th	+6	+4	+4	+4	Draw a bead	+4	+3
9th	+6	+4	+4	+4	Bonus feat	+5	+3
10th	+7	+5	+5	+5	Ranged disarm	+5	+4

Class Features

The following features pertain to the Bounty Hunter advanced class.

Nowhere to Run

The Bounty Hunter gains a competence bonus to all Gather Information, Intimidate, Investigate, Search, Spot, and Survival checks when using those skills to locate or track an individual. This competence bonus is equal to one-half the Bounty Hunter's class level, rounded down, with a minimum of +1.

Hogtying

At 2nd level the Bounty Hunter gains the ability to quickly tie up a helpless opponent as an attack action. The Bounty Hunter must already have a length of rope or cord in hand. Furthermore, the character knows how to tie up his quarry in a way that makes it extremely difficult to escape. If the Bounty Hunter spends at least 2 complete rounds hogtying an opponent, he receives a competence bonus to his Dexterity check that opposes Escape Artist attempts to escape. This bonus equals the Bounty Hunter's class level. (See the Escape Artist skill on page 75.)

Bonus Feats

At 3rd, 6th, and 9th level, the Bounty Hunter gains a bonus feat. The bonus feat must be selected from the following list, and the Bounty Hunter must meet all of the prerequisites of the feat to select it.

Alertness, Archaic Weapons Proficiency, Attentive, Brawl, Combat Expertise, Deceptive, Exotic Ranged Weapon Proficiency (bolo, lasso, net), Frightful Presence, Guide, Improved Disarm, Improved Knockout Punch, Improved Trip, Knockout Punch, Low Profile, Personal Firearms Proficiency, Renown, Trail Lore.

Nonlethal Force

At 4th level, a Bounty Hunter no longer suffers the standard -4 penalty to attack rolls when attempting to inflict nonlethal damage with a melee weapon (including unarmed strikes) that normally deals lethal damage.

Leave 'em Empty Handed

Beginning at 5th level, a Bounty Hunter receives a +2 bonus on all opposed attack rolls to disarm an opponent. Furthermore, when disarming an opponent wielding a ranged weapon, the Bounty Hunter gains a +2 bonus on the attack roll needed to strike the opponent's weapon.

Fast Track

At 7th level, the Bounty Hunter may move at normal speed while using the Track feat without incurring the –5 penalty. The Bounty Hunter may move at twice normal speed with a penalty of only –10 (instead of –20).

Draw a Bead

The Bounty Hunter is adept at honing in on a single target, blocking out all other distractions. Beginning at 8th level, by spending an action point and focusing all of his attacks on a single target the Bounty Hunter receives a bonus to hit against that target. For each successive round after the first that he attacks the same target (and only that target), the Bounty Hunter receives a cumulative +1 circumstance bonus to hit against that adversary. The maximum bonus using Draw a Bead is +4. In addition, the Bounty Hunter must maintain an unobstructed line of sight to his target the entire time or the bonus from Draw a Bead is lost. The character may re-start the bonus progression when the line of sight returns, but this requires the expenditure of another action point.

DRAW A BEAD EXAMPLE

Zeke is targeted by the notorious bounty hunter Garret Rasmin during the first round of combat; since this is his first attack against Zeke, Garret doesn't receive a bonus for using Draw a Bead. The next round Garret would receive a +1 to hit, if he continued exclusively attacking Zeke. In the third round, Garret would receive a +2 to hit, etc. up to a maximum of +4 for the fifth and following rounds. If Zeke were to duck into a building or behind some other suitable cover, Garret would lose line of sight and the bonus from Draw a Bead would fall to +0.

Ranged Disarm

At 10th level, a Bounty Hunter learns how to shoot the weapons out of opponents' hands. He or she can make disarm attempts using a ranged weapon. During such an attempt, the Bounty Hunter makes a ranged attack to strike the object in the opponent's hand (see Attack an Object, page 219). If the attack succeeds, the object takes the normal damage for being struck, and unless the wielder makes a successful Strength check against a DC equal to the damage done, the object is knocked from his or her hand and falls to the ground. If the opponent is holding the object in both hands, he or she gains a +4 bonus on the Strength check.

BRAVE

Whether stalking the Great Plains or bounding through the endless reaches of the Rocky Mountains, Braves are elite Indian tribal warriors. Embodying the fearlessness of their culture and fueled by the continued harassment of their people, Braves fight with fury as much as brawn. Harassed by settlers, some Indian warriors strive to reclaim the land taken from them, while others choose to find employment with the "white-man." Regardless of the road taken, Braves are formidable warriors.

The westward expansion of "civilized" man is a rough time for Indians. The settling of the Indians' best hunting grounds and the subsequent internment on reservations causes much discord. The sedentary way of life imposed by on the reservation conflicts with the Indians' traditional itinerant lifestyle as children of the land.

The earliest a character can enter the Brave advanced class is at 4th level, via the Tough or Dedicated hero basic classes.

Requirements

To qualify as a Brave, a character must fulfill the following criteria.

Base Attack Bonus: +2.
Skill: Survival 6 ranks.
Feats: Great Fortitude, Indian Lore.

Brave Vitals

The following information pertains to the Brave advanced class.

Grit Die: A Brave gains 1d10 grit per level. The character's Constitution modifier applies.

Action Points: A Brave gains a number of action points equal to 6 + one-half his character level, rounded down, every time he attains a new level in this class.

Class Skills: The Brave's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are: Climb (Str), Handle Animal (Cha), Hide (Dex), Intimidate (Cha), Jump (Str), Knowledge (tactics), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Navigate (Int), Profession (Wis), Ride (Dex), Spot (Wis), Survival (Wis), Swim (Str).

Skill Points at Each Level: 5 + Int modifier.

Class Features

The following features pertain to the Brave advanced class.

Tribal Chant

Braves learn a number of yells or chants that allow them to focus their physical and mental energies; outlined below are the various effects. Unless otherwise noted, the effect of each Tribal Chant lasts a number of rounds equal to the Brave's class level. To perform a Tribal Chant, the Brave must spend a full-round action. If this chanting is interrupted, the chant doesn't take effect unless the Brave makes a successful Concentration check with a DC appropriate to the level of distraction (see the Concentration skill, page 65).

Each Tribal Chant can be performed a number of times per day equal to 1+ the Brave's Wisdom modifier with a minimum of once per day.

Blessing: At 1st level, a Brave can focus his mind and senses, thereby gaining clarity of purpose in battle. This effect grants the Brave a +1 morale bonus on all attack and damage rolls for the duration of the Tribal Chant.

Battle Heart: At 7th level, a Brave learns to harness and focus his physical energies in combat. The Brave receives a +4 morale bonus to Strength and Dexterity for the duration of the Tribal Chant. After the effects of Battle Heart have worn off, the Brave becomes fatigued for 1d6+1 rounds.

Battle Cry: At 10th level, the Brave can release a frightening cry during battle that strikes fear into his adversaries. All opponents with a 20-foot radius that have a lower character level than the Brave must make a successful Will save (DC 15 + Charisma modifier) or become panicked for 1d4 rounds. See the Character Condition Summary on page 228 for details about panicked characters.

Table 6.3: The Brave

Level	BAB	Fort	Ref	Will	Features	Defense	Reputation
1st	+0	+1	+1	+0	Tribal chant (blessing)	+1	+0
2nd	+1	+2	+2	+1	Feral senses	+2	+0
3rd	+2	+2	+2	+1	Bonus feat	+2	+0
4th	+3	+3	+3	+1	Hardy	+3	+0
5th	+3	+3	+3	+2	Counting coup	+3	+1
6th	+4	+3	+3	+2	Bonus feat	+3	+1
7th	+5	+4	+4	+2	Tribal chant (battle heart)	+4	+1
8th	+6	+4	+4	+3	Storied bravery	+4	+1
9th	+6	+5	+5	+3	Bonus feat	+5	+2
10th	+7	+5	+5	+3	Tribal chant (battle cry)	+5	+2

Like most smart men of the Frontier, I had a healthy respect for Indian braves—we often claimed that Indians couldn't fight, shoot straight or be trusted, but in our hearts we knew better than to underestimate these superb warriors from the plains tribes. Red Cloud, Sitting Bull, and many others have names that still evoke respect. Perhaps the finest brave of them all, however, was Crazy Horse.

Crazy Horse was the son of an Oglala tribe's holy man and a Brulé Sioux. At an early age he watched a Sioux chief—Conquering Bear—attempt to make peace with the army of the white men over the issue of a dead cow, killed by an arrow when it wandered away from Fort Laramie.

Conquering Bear tried to make recompense, offering prized horses—far more valuable than the cow. But the young commander of the Army forces, Lieutenant John Grattan, got bad translations from the drunkard of an officer interpreting for him. Grattan opened fire, killing Conquering Bear, which led to the Indian braves completely slaughtering the army forces in reprisal. Crazy Horse, still a boy named Curly at the time, witnessed all of this. Shortly thereafter Curly went on a vision quest and earned his adult name. As Crazy Horse he went on to become, during the bloodiest and most horrifying years on the prairie, one of the greatest braves of any Indian tribe. His role in the defeat of Custer at Little Bighorn guarantees his place in history all by itself.

Those that fail their initial Will save can attempt another Will save every round the Battle Cry is in effect Those who successfully make the initial save are considered shaken; they suffer a –2 penalty on all attack rolls, saving throws, and skill checks for one round.

Feral Senses

The Brave's senses have become as sharp as an animal's. Beginning at 2nd level the Brave gains a competence bonus equal to one-half his Brave class level (rounded down) to all Listen and Spot skill checks.

Bonus Feats

At 3rd, 6th, and 9th level, the Brave gains a bonus feat. The bonus feat must be selected from the following list, and the Brave must meet all prerequisites of the feat to select it.

Alertness, Animal Affinity, Archaic Weapons Proficiency, Armor Proficiency (light), Athletic, Brawl, Combat Expertise, Combat Reflexes, Defensive Riding, Endurance, Far Shot, Frightful Presence, Guide, Improved Damage Threshold, Point Blank Shot, Power Attack, Run, Tribal Lore.

Hardy

Starting at 4th level, a Brave can sustain himself without water for 2 days plus a number of hours equal to his Constitution score. After this time, he must make a Constitution check each hour (DC 10, +1 for each previous check) or take 1d6 points of damage.

The Brave can go without food for 4 days, in growing discomfort. After this time, he must make a Constitution check each day (DC 10, +1 for each previous check) or sustain 1d6 points of damage.

Damage from thirst or starvation cannot be recovered until the Brave consumes water or food, as needed. Even medical attention that restores grit cannot heal this damage.

Counting Coup

At 5th level the Brave learns how to augment his combat prowess through the practice of "counting coup." When "counting coup," an Indian strikes an opponent with a ceremonial club called a coup stick. The intention isn't to injure the opponent, but to demonstrate the Indian's bravery and his contempt for the foe. However, it is not uncommon for an Indian to swing the coup stick more vigorously than what is necessary to deliver a light tap.

INDIAN ADVANCED CLASSES

While the Brave advanced class is designed with an Indian character in mind, it should be noted that the Brave advanced class isn't exclusive to Indian characters. Characters in the vein of John Dunbar from *Dances with Wolves* could easily be seen as having a few levels of Brave. Conversely, players with Indian characters should feel free to take levels in other advanced classes if they so desire. With a little creative back-story, it would be quite appropriate for an Indian character to have levels in virtually any advanced class presented here. While the names (Maverick, Sawbones, Wrangler, etc.) evoke the images of the White-man, the abilities and the concept of these advanced classes can easily apply to Indians.

While any Indian warrior can count coup, the Brave has learned to carry this battle ceremony one step further. The Brave can strike with the coup stick for nonlethal damage, without suffering the usual –4 penalty for inflicting nonlethal damage with a weapon that normally causes lethal damage. Furthermore, every successful strike with the coup stick grants the Brave a cumulative +1 morale bonus to damage when performing nonlethal attacks with the coup stick. If the Brave should ever miss with the coup stick, the accrued bonus drops back to +0 and the character must once again start building up the bonus through successful attack rolls.

Storied Bravery

At 8th level a Brave's intrepid deeds become well-known to both Indians and White-men. Whenever the Brave "counts coup" in a battle, the Brave gains a +2 circumstance bonus to his Reputation for a number of days equal to the total character levels of all opponents that he or she successfully strikes with the coup stick. If the Brave "counts coup" in a different battle, the circumstance bonuses don't stack, since they arise from the same circumstance.

DESPERADO

Self-centered and ruthless, Desperados have only one thing on their mind: profit, and plenty of it. Whether aiming to swindle some greenhorn at a card game, scheming to rob the local bank, or plotting to pull a heist on the transcontinental train, the Desperado will always take the quickest way to riches. While many ways of life in the Wild West are shades of gray, the way of the Desperado tends to lean a bit more towards black than white.

The earliest a character can enter the Desperado advanced class is at 4th level, via the Tough hero basic class.

Requirements

To qualify as a Desperado, a character must fulfill the following criteria.

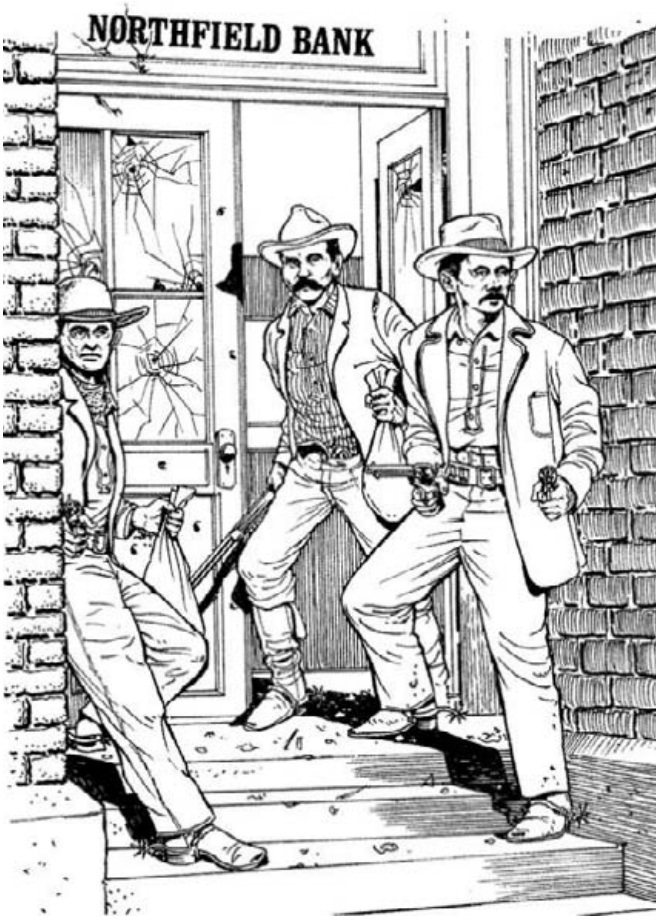
Base Attack Bonus: +2.
Skill: Intimidate 6 ranks.
Feats: Confident, Toughness.

Desperado Vitals

The following information pertains to the Desperado advanced class.

Grit Die: A Desperado gains 1d10 grit per level. The character's Constitution modifier applies.

Action Points: A Desperado gains a number of action points equal to 6 + one-half his character level, rounded down, every time he attains a new level in this class.



The true legends of crime and the greatest of outlaws, desperados numbered many in the Old West. There are some who gained fame and acclaim far and wide without being overly violent—such as Black Bart, who wrote terrible poems and returned a woman's purse because he was "robbing Wells Fargo." These men were the exceptions. All too common were the likes of Frank and Jesse James, Billy the Kid, Bill Doolin, the Younger Brothers and so many others—legendary Bad Men who would kill you as soon as look at you. Yet, they still captured the spirit and imagination of the people they preyed upon.

Of all these, one stands out—not as the most famous or successful of desperados, but as the deadliest. He was a man who disregarded the Code of the West as some men might disregard reports of rain, and who left a trail of bodies behind him, the thought of which chills one even today. His name was John Wesley Hardin, and he perhaps epitomized the darkness of a Desperado.

He killed a classmate with a knife at the early age of eleven years. When a freed slave (Hardin, having lived in Texas, passionately supported the South) accosted him, Hardin shot the unheeled man dead in the street. Going on the run, he bushwhacked the lawmen following him and killed them all as well. For the fun of it, he and a Klansman named Simp Dixon shot up a military camp and killed two more. By the time he was sixteen years of age, he had killed at least a dozen men, been jailed once, and gotten a hold of a gun and killed his jailers as dead as the rest. He even claimed to have once killed a man just for snoring.

While Hardin may have been the worst of the lot, he was just one of the many desperados making the lives of the law worse for their living.

Class Skills: The Desperado's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are: Bluff (Cha), Climb (Str), Concentration (Con), Demolitions (Int), Gamble (Wis), Intimidate (Cha), Jump (Str), Knowledge (current events, popular culture, streetwise) (Int), Profession (Wis), Read/Write Language (none), Ride (Dex), Speak Language (none), Survival (Wis).

Skill Points at Each Level: 5 + Int modifier.

Class Features

The following features pertain to the Desperado advanced class.

Fearless

Desperados are courageous hombres that stand tall when others flee. A Desperado gains a +4 morale bonus on Will saves to resist fear effects and on level checks to oppose Intimidate checks.

Ornery

Desperados are ornery cusses able to shrug off light damage. At 2nd level a Desperado ignores 1 point of damage from melee and ranged attacks. This damage reduction stacks with the talents available through the Tough hero's Damage Reduction Talent Tree.

Bonus Feats

At 3rd, 6th, and 9th level, the Desperado gains a bonus feat. The bonus feat must be selected from the following list, and the Desperado must meet all of the prerequisites of the feat to select it.

Alertness, Athletic, Brawl, Cautious, Defensive Riding, Dodge, Endurance, Frightful Presence, Great Fortitude, Improved Brawl, Improved Damage Threshold, Improved Knockout Punch, Knockout Punch, Personal Firearms Proficiency, Ride-By Attack, Streetfighting, True Grit.

Fearsome

Tales of malicious Desperados who ride the western ranges precede them and spread fear far and wide. At 4th level, a Desperado adds his Reputation bonus to all Intimidate checks.

Rowdy

Desperados have a high tolerance for pain. Beginning at 5th level they receive a +4 bonus to all Fortitude saves to avoid unconsciousness caused by nonlethal damage.

Frightful Reputation

A 7th level Desperado has become known (and feared) as one vicious and deadly hombre. Any

Table 6.4: The Desperado

Level	BAB	Fort	Ref	Will	Features	Defense	Reputation
1st	+0	+2	+0	+0	Fearless	+1	+0
2nd	+1	+3	+0	+0	Ornery DR 1	+2	+0
3rd	+2	+3	+1	+1	Bonus feat	+2	+1
4th	+3	+4	+1	+1	Fearsome	+3	+1
5th	+3	+4	+1	+1	Rowdy	+3	+1
6th	+4	+5	+2	+2	Bonus feat	+3	+2
7th	+5	+5	+2	+2	Frightful reputation	+4	+2
8th	+6	+6	+2	+2	Tough as nails	+4	+2
9th	+6	+6	+3	+3	Bonus feat	+5	+3
10th	+7	+7	+3	+3	No time to bleed	+5	+3

character that recognizes the Desperado (see Reputation, page 50) and attacks him or her in combat becomes shaken unless they succeed on a Will saving throw. The DC of this saving throw is DC 10 + the Desperado's Reputation bonus.

If the character fails the saving throw, the attacking character becomes shaken for a number of rounds equal to 1d6 + the Desperado's Charisma modifier. A shaken character incurs a –2 penalty on all attack rolls, saving throws, and skill checks. Once the shaken condition has expired, the character is immune to the Desperado's Frightful Reputation ability for the remainder of the combat. If the character succeeds on the Will save, he or she is immune to the Desperado's Frightful Reputation ability for 24 hours.

Tough as Nails

An 8th level Desperado increases his or her massive damage threshold by 3 points. This increase stacks with the increase provided by the Improved Damage Threshold feat. This class feature satisfies any prerequisites (i.e. for an advanced class or feat) that require the Improved Damage Threshold feat.

No Time to Bleed

Beginning at 10th level, a Desperado can spend an action point at any time to delay the damage dealt by a single attack or effect for a number of rounds equal to 3 + his or her Constitution modifier.

GRIFTER

Never work too hard to earn a living if you can get someone else to do it for you. Many a Grifter has lived by that motto. Grifters make their living by cheating others out of their hard earned silver and gold. That's not to say Grifters don't work hard for their money, they simply prefer to expend their energy figuring out new ways to run a successful scam instead of putting in the sweat and labor required to produce valuable goods or services. The Grifter is often a talented public speaker, accomplished liar or a good old-fashioned confidence trickster, honing skills that enable the fleecing of honest, hard-working folk. Grifters usually prefer to carry out their thieving ways with style, imagination and panache, rather than brute force.

The earliest a character can enter the Grifter advanced class is at 4th level, via the Charismatic hero basic class.

Requirements

To qualify as a Grifter, a character must fulfill the following criteria.

Skills: Bluff 6 ranks, Diplomacy 6 ranks.
Feat: Deceptive.

Heh, heh, I cannot help but laugh when I think of the most outlandish grifter I ever guarded my pockets against. His name was Jefferson Randolph Smith, but everyone knew him as Soapy Smith.

After paying his dues as a cowboy, Smith took up gambling. He preferred poker to an honest day's work and got darn good at it. But even making and calling bluffs was too much effort. He met Old Man Taylor in Colorado and took up the shell game, which proved quite prosperous.

Still, Smith was always looking for a better and easier way to make a buck. He learned the original "soap trick" from Taylor, which offered rubes a chance to win a $100 bill wrapped around a bar of soap—if only they would purchase one bar for $5. He picked one "at random," unwrapped it and showed them the prize. People lined up to get their chance for easy money and Smith made a killing.

Later he improved the soap swindle, offering multiple prizes and letting some people find one in the bar they bought. Of course, Smith hired all the winners, and finally someone cottoned to the fact it was a scam. Some local tin stars took Smith in after getting a complaint. As it so happened, the arresting officer couldn't remember Smith's first name, but knowing that the swindle involved soap, he wrote "Soapy Smith" in his log—and the name stuck—even after Smith "went clean" as the owner of a gambling house.

Grifter Vitals

The following information pertains to the Grifter advanced class.

Grit Die: A Grifter gains 1d6 grit per level. The character's Constitution modifier applies.

Action Points: A Grifter gains a number of action points equal to 6 + one-half his character level, rounded down, every time he attains a new level in this class.

Class Skills: The Grifter's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are: Bluff (Cha), Craft (visual art, writing) (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Disable Device (Dex), Disguise (Cha), Escape Artist (Dex), Forgery (Int), Gamble (Wis), Gather Information (Cha), Hide (Dex), Knowledge (art, behavioral sciences, business, civics, current events, popular culture, streetwise) (Int), Perform (act, stand-up)

(Cha), Profession (Wis), Read/Write Language (none), Sense Motive (Wis), Sleight of Hand (Dex), Speak Language (none), Spot (Wis).

Skill Points at Each Level: 7 + Int modifier.

Class Features

All of the following are features of the Grifter advanced class.

Work the Crowd

At 1st level, a Grifter gains a +2 bonus to all Charisma based skill checks that involve manipulating a crowd. This ability applies to Bluff, Diplomacy, Disguise, Gather Information, Intimidate, and Perform skill checks.

Silver Tongue

Getting out of tight spots has honed the Grifter's ability to bend the truth. A 2nd level Grifter gets to add a competence bonus equal to one-half his Grifter level (rounded down) on any Bluff or Diplomacy check.

Bonus Feats

At 3rd, 6th, and 9th level, the Grifter gains a bonus feat. The bonus feat must be selected from the following list, and the Grifter must meet all of the prerequisites of the feat to select it.

Alertness, Combat Expertise, Combat Reflexes, Confident, Creative, Defensive Martial Arts, Dodge, Elusive Target, Horse Tradin', Improved Disarm, Low Profile, Personal Firearms Proficiency, Point Blank Shot, Quick Reflexes, Run, Trustworthy, Windfall.

Cut and Run

Things don't always go as planned and a good Grifter learns when to cut his losses. A 4th level Grifter receives a competence bonus equal to one-half his Grifter level (rounded down) on all Hide checks. In addition, he also receives a +4 competence bonus on all Bluff checks to create diversions in order to hide. (See Creating a Diversion to Hide under the Bluff skill on page 64).

Bait and Switch

Whether it's the venerable shell game or some other scheme, a Grifter is a master at pulling a fast one. Beginning at 5th level, a Grifter may use the Sleight of Hand skill as a free action (instead of an attack action) when palming an object, picking a pocket, performing legerdemain, or concealing an object on his person.

Sow Distrust

A Grifter of 7th level or higher can turn one character against another. The Grifter must spend a full-round action and know the name of the character he or she is attempting to persuade as well as the name of the character toward whom the target's distrust will be directed. The target must be able to hear and understand the Grifter.

The target makes a Will save. The DC is equal to 10 + Grifter's class level + Grifter's Charisma bonus. If the target fails the save, his or her attitude toward the other designated character worsens by one step: helpful turns to friendly, friendly to indifferent, indifferent to unfriendly, unfriendly to hostile (see the Diplomacy skill, page 72). The target makes a Will save whenever subjected to the Grifter's use of this talent. As long as the target continues to fail the Will save, the Grifter can continue taking full-round actions to worsen the target's attitude toward the designated

Table 6.5: The Grifter

Level	BAB	Fort	Ref	Will	Features	Defense	Reputation
1st	+0	+0	+2	+1	Work the crowd	+1	+1
2nd	+1	+1	+3	+2	Silver tongue	+2	+1
3rd	+1	+1	+3	+2	Bonus feat	+2	+1
4th	+2	+1	+4	+3	Cut and run	+3	+2
5th	+2	+2	+4	+3	Bait and switch	+3	+2
6th	+3	+2	+5	+3	Bonus feat	+3	+2
7th	+3	+2	+5	+4	Sow distrust	+4	+3
8th	+4	+3	+6	+4	Slippery	+4	+3
9th	+4	+3	+6	+5	Bonus feat	+5	+3
10th	+5	+3	+7	+5	Elaborate scheme	+5	+4

character. When the target's attitude drops to hostile, he or she attacks the designated character.

A successful Will save doesn't restore previous attitude shifts, but it does render the target immune for 24 hours to further attempts by the Grifter to sow distrust.

Slippery

The Grifter is hard to pin down and adept at surviving. Whenever a Grifter of 8th level or higher is struck by an attack that is a critical threat, the Grifter gains a +4 dodge bonus to Defense for the purposes of the critical confirmation. This bonus doesn't apply to any other separate attacks that may occur.

Elaborate Scheme

Grifters are notorious for complicated plans and confusing schemes. A 10th level Grifter has honed his ability at crafting plans, to such a degree that his machinations can catch opponents unaware and stump them into inaction. Before combat begins, the Grifter must spend at least one minute planning and preparing his scheme. Once combat commences, the Grifter may spend an attack action to bring the scheme to fruition. The Grifter must make a DC 10 Intelligence check. If the check is successful, all opponents within 20 feet of the Grifter are forced to make Will saving throws. The DC of this saving throw is DC 15 + the Grifter's Intelligence modifier. Those opponents that fail the saving throw are dazed for 1d4 rounds. A dazed character is unable to act, but can defend normally (see Character Condition Summary, page 228).

GUNSLINGER

The law of the west comes in the form of a pistol more often than a badge. Those who know the proper way to use one typically rule the day. Because he holds the power of life and death in his hands, exercised with the slightest whim, the Gunslinger is one of the most feared individuals in the Wild West. Possessing lightning quickness and deadly accuracy with a six-shooter, a Gunslinger practices his craft and builds a deadly reputation that will precede him no matter where he may go.

The earliest a character can enter the Gunslinger advanced class is at 4th level, via the Fast hero basic class.

Requirements

To qualify as a Gunslinger, a character must fulfill the following criteria.

Base Attack Bonus: +2.
Skill: Sleight of Hand 6 ranks.
Feats: Personal Firearms Proficiency, Quickdraw.

Gunslinger Vitals

The following information pertains to the Gunslinger advanced class.

Grit Die: A Gunslinger gains 1d10 grit per level. The character's Constitution modifier applies.

Table 6.6: The Gunslinger

Level	BAB	Fort	Ref	Will	Features	Defense	Reputation
1st	+0	+0	+1	+1	Greased lightning	+1	+0
2nd	+1	+0	+2	+2	Weapon focus	+1	+0
3rd	+2	+1	+2	+2	Bonus feat	+2	+1
4th	+3	+1	+2	+2	Close combat shot	+2	+1
5th	+3	+1	+3	+3	Lightning shot	+3	+1
6th	+4	+2	+3	+3	Bonus feat	+3	+2
7th	+5	+2	+4	+4	Steel-eyed	+4	+2
8th	+6	+2	+4	+4	Greater weapon focus	+4	+2
9th	+6	+3	+4	+4	Bonus feat	+5	+3
10th	+7	+3	+5	+5	Bullseye	+5	+3

Action Points: A Gunslinger gains a number of action points equal to 6 + one-half his character level, rounded down, every time he attains a new level in this class.

Class Skills: The Gunslinger's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are: Balance (Dex), Escape Artist (Dex), Intimidate (Cha), Knowledge (current events, popular culture, streetwise) (Int), Move

Silently (Dex), Profession (Wis), Read/Write Language (none), Ride (Dex), Sleight of Hand (Dex), Speak Language (none), Spot (Wis), Tumble (Dex).

Skill Points at Each Level: 5 + Int modifier.

Class Features

The following features pertain to the Gunslinger advanced class.

Greased Lightning

Starting at 1st level, the Gunslinger becomes lightning quick in drawing his hoglegs. He or she gains a bonus to all initiative checks equal to one-half his Gunslinger level, rounded down, with a minimum of +1.

Weapon Focus

At 2nd level, a Gunslinger gains the Weapon Focus class feature, providing the benefit of the feat with the same name. The Gunslinger must choose a specific personal firearm that is Medium-size or smaller. If the character already possesses the Weapon Focus feat or class feature, she must choose a different weapon than the one already selected. The Gunslinger adds +1 to all attack rolls made using the selected personal firearm.

Bonus Feats

At 3rd, 6th, and 9th level, the Gunslinger gains a bonus feat. The bonus feat must be selected from the following list, and the Gunslinger must meet all of the prerequisites of the feat to select it.

Advanced Two-Weapon Fighting, Blaze of Glory, Combat Reloading, Dead Aim, Dodge, Double Tap, Far Shot, Gunplay, Hammer Down, Improved Initiative, Improved Two-Weapon Fighting, Precise Shot, Quick Reload, Shot on the Run, Sidewinder, Slip Hammer, Skip Shot, Two-Weapon Fighting.

Close Combat Shot

At 4th level, a Gunslinger gains the ability to make a ranged attack with a Medium-size or smaller firearm while in a threatened area without provoking an attack of opportunity.

Lightning Shot

Starting at 5th level, a Gunslinger can make a flurry of ranged attacks with a personal firearm at the expense of accuracy. With a lightning shot, the Gunslinger may make one additional ranged attack with a personal firearm in a round at his or her highest base attack bonus. This attack and every other attack made in the round incur a –2 penalty. Since attacking more than once in a round requires that a character use a full-attack action, using Lightning Shot is a full-round action. The Gunslinger cannot take more than a 5-foot step and use Lightning Shot in the same round.

While many men come to mind when I say gunslinger—not the least of which is myself—one has to mention Wild Bill Hickok as the first and perhaps the best. Most notably, he was involved in the very first Western showdown—a duel with a man named Dave Tutt, who was Hickok's rival for a woman named Susanna Moore. Their rivalry came to a head at a card game, where Tutt claimed Hickok was cheating, and Hickok, the former army scout, claimed that the other had stolen an expensive pocket watch from him. Tutt openly wore Hickok's watch and made rather outrageous claims, until the two met in the street, more than seventy-five yards apart from one another. Hickok warned Tutt not to approach. Tutt's response was to draw and fire, missing the mark. Hickok's return volley struck home squarely, through the heart, and killed the man dead in an instant. After retrieving his watch, Hickok stared down Tutt's allies, asking "Aren't you satisfied, gentlemen?" They were, and no more gunplay ensued. Hickok surrendered to the authorities, who cleared him of charges, and the legend of both Wild Bill Hickok and the gunslinger himself was born.

Wild Bill Hickok was hardly the only true gunslinger in the West, of course. His old friend (and some say secret wife) Calamity Jane Cannary certainly belonged in that company. The murderous gambler, dentist and maverick Doc Holliday might have made his trade with cards, but his skill and dead eye with his six-shooter was unquestionable, and he won many a violent confrontation despite his ill-health.

Perhaps vainly, I mention myself last among these numbers. While I don't claim I could have holed Wild Bill in a shootout, it has been said I wasted the least lead of any gunslinger or lawman across the West, and I'm considerably proud to be in their company.

Steel-Eyed

Any Gunslinger worth his salt has a certain aura surrounding him; people just know he's one bad hombre. At 7th level, the Gunslinger adds his Reputation bonus to Intimidate checks made during a showdown (see Showdowns, page 206).

Greater Weapon Focus

At 8th level, a Gunslinger receives a +1 competence

bonus on attack rolls made with a single firearm for which he possesses the Weapon Focus feat or class feature. The Gunslinger must apply the Greater Weapon Focus to a single firearm even if he has Weapon Focus with more than one firearm. This bonus stacks with the bonus gained from Weapon Focus.

Bullseye

At 10th level, a Gunslinger becomes so adept at using the firearm to which he or she has applied Greater Weapon Focus, that the Gunslinger's attacks with that firearm can deal extra damage. With a successful attack, before damage is rolled, the gunslinger can spend 1 action point to deal +3d6 points of damage.

MAVERICK

Mavericks rely on their cunning, wits, and above all pure luck, as they make their way across the western frontier. While most prefer to survive with their brains instead of brawn, Mavericks won't hesitate to draw a firearm whenever it can help their cause. While they wager freely at the poker table and faro house, Mavericks don't like to face poor odds in a fight, so don't discount their skill with a sidearm.

Mavericks tend to live on the edge, scraping up cash for a seat at a high stakes table, taking a piece of the action in a crooked back-alley dice game, or making one last bet without the money to cover it. Whatever the exploit, Mavericks like the thrill of the wager and the fame that comes with victory. Typically wandering from place to place with no set course, they are always looking out for themselves and for the next big hand. They may cross comrades or make new allies without hesitation, if it is in their best interest to do so. Whether a greenhorn, an old cowboy or a saloon girl, the Maverick's background varies—these risk-takers come in all stripes. They aren't limited to the poverty-stricken or the rich, to men or to women. But they all share a passion—no, more like a need—for the luck of the draw.

The earliest a character can enter the Maverick advanced class is at 4th level, via a multiclass combination of the Fast and Dedicated hero basic classes.

Requirements

To qualify as a Maverick, a character must fulfill the following criteria.

Skills: Gamble 6 ranks, Sleight of Hand 3 ranks.
Feat: Card Sharp.

Maverick Vitals

The following information pertains to the Maverick advanced class.

Grit Die: A Maverick gains 1d8 grit per level. The character's Constitution modifier applies.

Action Points: A Maverick gains a number of action points equal to 6 + one-half his character level, rounded down, every time he attains a new level in this class.

Class Skills: The Maverick's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are: Bluff (Cha), Diplomacy (Cha), Disguise (Cha), Escape Artist (Dex), Forgery (Int), Gamble (Wis), Gather Information (Cha), Knowledge (business, current events, popular culture, streetwise) (Int), Listen (Wis), Perform (stand-up) (Cha), Profession (Wis), Read/Write Language (none), Sense Motive (Wis), Sleight of Hand (Dex), Speak Language (none), Spot (Wis).

Skill Points at Each Level: 5 + Int modifier.

Class Features

The following features pertain to the Maverick advanced class.

Poker Face

You never know when a Maverick is telling the truth, bending it, or just flat-out lying. A Maverick gains a +2 competence bonus to any skill check opposed by an opponent's Sense Motive or Gamble skill check.

Ace in the Hole

A Maverick picks up a menagerie of minor talents and tricks during his travels around the western frontier. Beginning at 2nd level, whenever a Maverick spends an action point to augment a skill check, he adds an additional +2 to the result.

Bonus Feats

At 3rd, 6th, and 9th level, the Maverick gains a bonus feat. The bonus feat must be selected from the following list, and the Maverick must meet all prerequisites of the feat to select it.

Attentive, Combat Expertise, Combat Reflexes, Confident,

Table 6.7: The Maverick

Level	BAB	Fort	Ref	Will	Features	Defense	Reputation
1st	+0	+0	+2	+0	Poker face	+1	+1
2nd	+1	+0	+3	+0	Ace in the Hole	+2	+1
3rd	+2	+1	+3	+1	Bonus feat	+2	+1
4th	+3	+1	+4	+1	Wild Card	+3	+2
5th	+3	+1	+4	+1	Improved evasion	+4	+2
6th	+4	+2	+5	+2	Bonus feat	+4	+2
7th	+5	+2	+5	+2	Nothing up my sleeve	+5	+3
8th	+6	+2	+6	+2	Lady luck	+6	+3
9th	+6	+3	+6	+3	Bonus feat	+6	+3
10th	+7	+3	+7	+3	Hear the footsteps	+7	+4

Gamblers came and went like the seasons in the Old West. A player might be riding high on Friday, and then sneaking into barn for a place to sleep on Monday. Still, I knew men and women who made a mighty fine living at games of chance. One the most memorable was the stunning Lottie Deno, sometimes called "Lotta Dinero" by the men who hoped to conquer her.

No one really knew where Lottie hailed from. That was part of her mystery and allure. Her southern manners and lilting voice made people guess she was from fine stock in Georgia or elsewhere down south, but those were just rumors far as I know. She sure knew how to gamble, that I do know. That's what people talked about most, which was something in itself because Lottie was mighty easy on the eyes. She hooked up with the gambler/prizefighter John Shannsey in Fort Griffin, ran his faro house and later became his mistress.

Lottie's reputation grew fast and earned her fame and fortune. You couldn't go into any major gambling house without overhearing a story about Lottie's exploits. Her beauty matched her skill and her charm; the combination fed amazing tales throughout the west. People followed her from town to town, I'm told, whenever she traveled to a big game. Or at least they claimed to. Then one day, she up and left Shannsey and faded away, mysterious as ever.

Deceptive, Defensive Martial Arts, Dodge, Elusive Target, Hollow Leg, Improved Disarm, Low Profile, Nimble, Quick Draw, Renown, Sidewinder, Windfall.

Wild Card

A Maverick's way of life exposes him to a wide range of talents that he can learn. At 4th level a Maverick can select any single talent from a basic character class talent tree. The Maverick must still meet the prerequisites of the talent selected.

Improved Evasion

If a 5th level Maverick is exposed to any effect that normally allows a character to attempt a Reflex saving throw for one-half damage, the Maverick suffers no damage if he or she makes a successful saving throw and only half damage on a failed save. Improved Evasion can be used only when wearing light armor or less.

For a Maverick without evasion (see the Fast hero class description), Improved Evasion counts as evasion for the purpose of meeting the prerequisites on the Fast hero's defensive talent tree.

Nothing Up My Sleeve

A Maverick of 7th level has honed his craft in the gambling halls across the Wild West. Anytime the Maverick uses the Card Sharp feat he may elect to take a penalty of up to –10 on his Sleight of Hand check to gain up to a +10 bonus on his next Gamble check. Without this class feature a character with the Card Sharp feat is only able to take a bonus on this Gamble check up to +5 or up to the number of Sleight of Hand ranks the character possesses, whichever is less.

Lady Luck

For good or bad, Lady Luck has taken a personal interest in the Maverick. Once per day, an 8th level Maverick can re-roll any single roll. Regardless of the result, the second roll must be used.

Hear the Footsteps

Mavericks have an uncanny sense for when things are about to get ugly. Whenever, a 10th level Maverick is caught flat-footed or becomes flat-footed (including

LADY LUCK AND ACTION DICE

Even though higher level characters get to roll more than one d6 when spending an action point to augment a d20 roll, rolling action dice is still considered a single roll when Lady Luck is called upon.

during the fast-draw round), the Maverick can make a DC 15 Wisdom check. If the check is successful, the Maverick's preternatural instincts have alerted him or her and the Maverick is no longer considered flat-footed. The Wisdom check is performed at the very beginning of combat if the Maverick is caught flat-footed. If the Maverick becomes flat-footed after combat has already begun, the Maverick may make the Wisdom check immediately after becoming flat-footed.

MOUNTAIN MAN

"Just where is it I could find bear, beaver, and other critters worth cash money for the skins?"

"Ride due west to the sunset. Turn left at the Rocky Mountains."

Jeremiah Johnson and Robidoux
– Jeremiah Johnson, 1972

Grubby and unkempt, the Mountain Man strikes out into the lonely and dangerous wilds searching for the next great fur trapping opportunity or perhaps just to explore the unknown. Jedediah Smith, Jim Bridger and Kit Carson are great examples of Mountain Men operating in the Old West. Mountain Men can be found working as prospectors, trappers, and fur traders, or leading military patrols or pioneers through the dangerous mountain passes of the west.

Mountain Men are often rough and unsociable, as they tend to spend most of the lives in solitary endeavors. Having neither the opportunity nor the desire to hone their social skills, they spend just enough time in settlements to restock their supplies and sell their goods. A tough and hardy folk, Mountain Men endure months at a time in inhospitable environs, sharpening their senses and strengthening their bodies. Whether they choose the path of prospecting, hunting, or another avenue, they typically learn through trial and error. Some lucky few find an accomplished veteran willing to travel with them and teach them the ropes, but this is the exception, not the norm.

The earliest a character can enter the Mountain Man advanced class is at 4th level, via the Tough or Dedicated hero basic classes.

MOUNTAIN MAN CREED

"My mother was a badger, my father was a Griz . . . I can out shoot, out fight, out cuss and out drink any man. I have the fastest horse, the sharpest knife, and the finest rifle in the mountains. Hear my challenge echo in the valleys for any man of any nation to try to lift my top knot. I will fight to the death for my right to be a free man, to trap the beaver and to hunt the elk, to drink from cool streams, and to sleep under the stars. I have no road to follow, I make my own. I have no man to answer to except myself. I fear no creature on God's green earth, for I am a MOUNTAIN MAN"

– J.F. Ballard

Requirements

To qualify as a Mountain Man, a character must fulfill the following criteria.

Base Attack Bonus: +2.
Skill: Survival 6 ranks.
Feats: Improved Bull Rush, Power Attack.

Mountain Man Vitals

The following information pertains to the Mountain Man advanced class.

Grit Die: A Mountain Man gains 1d12 grit per level. The character's Constitution modifier applies.

Action Points: A Mountain Man gains a number of action points equal to 6 + one-half his character level, rounded down, every time he attains a new level in this class.

Class Skills: The Mountain Man's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are: Climb (Str), Craft (structural) (Int), Handle Animal (Cha), Hide (Dex), Intimidate (Cha), Jump (Str), Knowledge (current events, earth and life sciences) (Int), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Navigate (Int), Profession (Wis), Read/Write Language (none), Ride (Dex), Search (Int), Spot (Wis), Survival (Wis), Swim (Str), Treat Injury (Wis).

Skill Points at Each Level: 5 + Int modifier.

Class Features

The following features pertain to the Mountain Man advanced class.

Favored Prey

A Mountain Man often makes a name for himself hunting a certain type of animal. He may select a species of critter (beavers, buffaloes, coyotes etc.) as a favored prey. The Mountain Man gains a +2 bonus to all Bluff, Handle Animal, Intimidate, Listen, Sense Motive, Spot, and Survival skill checks, as well as a +1 bonus to all attack and damage rolls involving this prey.

Ram Charge

At 2nd level, a Mountain Man can channel all of his energy and rage into a charging attack. Whenever a Mountain Man successfully attacks an opponent while charging, he adds double his strength modifier to the melee attack damage. Even when wielding a two-handed weapon the Mountain Man doubles his strength modifier rather than adding the normal 1.5 times his strength modifier.

Bonus Feats

At 3rd, 6th, and 9th level, the Mountain Man gains a bonus feat. The bonus feat must be selected from the following list, and the Mountain Man must meet all prerequisites of the feat to select it.

Alertness, Animal Affinity, Archaic Weapons Proficiency, Brawl, Dead Aim, Defensive Martial Arts, Far Shot, Frightful Presence, Great Fortitude, Guide, Improved Brawl, Improved Damage Threshold, Knockout Punch, Run, Stealthy, Streetfighting, Toughness, Track.

Prey Sense

At 4th level, a Mountain Man may make a DC20 Survival check once per day to locate his favored prey within one mile of his current location. The Mountain Man must be in the correct habitat for the prey animal and must spend an hour looking for signs of the prey. If the Judge determines that there aren't any of the Mountain Man's favored prey within one mile (perhaps as the result of over hunting), the character will know this as well. Once successfully activated this ability allows the Mountain Man to know the direction to the prey's location for 1 hour per class level.

Hustle

At 5th level, a Mountain Man can sustain a rate of travel beyond the normal walking pace for longer periods of time. Often, speed is essential, and the distances to traverse are great. When using the Hustle movement pace (see page 231), the Mountain Man can avoid becoming fatigued by succeeding on a Constitution check (DC 15 + number of current hours at Hustle pace). The Mountain Man must make this check every time he takes damage from hustling. In addition, because of his endurance, the Mountain Man receives a +2 bonus to Constitution checks to avoid taking damage from a forced march (see page 232).

The Beast Within

At 7th level, a Mountain Man can harness his inner beast and temporarily increase one of his physical ability scores (Strength, Dexterity, or Constitution). He spends 1 action point to increase the selected ability score by 4 points. The increase lasts for a number of rounds equal to his class level. At the end of the duration, the Mountain Man is fatigued for 1d6+1 rounds.

Wild Heart

Mountain Men are more resilient than the average person. Any time an 8th level Mountain Man is forced to make a Fortitude save arising from massive damage, the Mountain Man receives a bonus equal to one-half of his class level rounded down.

Table 6.8: The Mountain Man

Level	BAB	Fort	Ref	Will	Features	Defense	Reputation
1st	+0	+2	+0	+0	Favored prey	+1	+0
2nd	+1	+3	+0	+0	Ram charge	+1	+0
3rd	+2	+3	+1	+1	Bonus feat	+2	+0
4th	+3	+4	+1	+1	Prey sense	+2	+0
5th	+3	+4	+1	+1	Hustle	+3	+1
6th	+4	+5	+2	+2	Bonus feat	+3	+1
7th	+5	+5	+2	+2	The beast within	+4	+1
8th	+5	+6	+2	+2	Wild heart	+4	+1
9th	+6	+6	+3	+3	Bonus feat	+5	+2
10th	+7	+7	+3	+3	Knock back	+5	+2

Knock Back

Mountain Men are exceptionally strong and forceful in melee combat. Whenever a 10th level Mountain Man scores a successful melee attack, in addition to normal damage, he can perform a Bull Rush maneuver if he so desires. Initiating a Bull Rush in this fashion doesn't require a move into the opponent's square, thus the action doesn't provoke attacks of opportunity. If the opponent is successfully moved, the Mountain Man doesn't have the option of moving with the opponent.

PONY SOLDIER

"So here they are: the dog-faced soldiers, the fifty-cents-a-day professionals . . . riding the outposts of the nation. From Fort Reno to Fort Apache, from Sheridan to Stark, they were all the same. Men in dirty-shirt blue, and only a gold page in the history books to mark their passage. But wherever they rode, and whatever they fought for, that place became the United States."

Narration – *She Wore a Yellow Ribbon, 1949*

Preferring life (and death) in the saddle to all else, the Pony Soldier is the quintessential cavalryman. Often having trained and served in the military, these characters have focused their riding talents on combat tactics. They are experts at exploiting the advantages of taking a mount into battle and they know how to compensate for any disadvantages the situation might present. They can apply their knowledge and experience to various combat situations, from large-scale military campaigns to small skirmishes in the hills. Of course, Pony Soldiers are also trained for combat on foot, but whenever it's possible to choose the saddle, they will. Knowing the value of a good fresh horse in battle, the Pony Soldier will often walk his horse when feasible, saving its strength for any unexpected engagement. Typically, the Pony Soldier will supplement his combat training with other horse-related skills, but he usually makes his living as a soldier or mercenary.

The earliest a character can enter the Pony Soldier advanced class is at 4th level, via the Fast or Tough hero basic classes.

Requirements

To qualify as a Pony Soldier, a character must fulfill the following criteria.

Base Attack Bonus: +2.
Skill: Ride 6 ranks.
Feats: Defensive Riding, Personal Firearms Proficiency.

Pony Soldier Vitals

The following information pertains to the Pony Soldier advanced class.

Grit Die: A Pony Soldier gains 1d10 grit per level. The character's Constitution modifier applies.

Action Points: A Pony Soldier gains a number of action points equal to 6 + one-half his character level, rounded down, every time he attains a new level in this class.

Class Skills: The Pony Soldier's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are: Balance (Dex), Concentration (Con), Demolitions (Int), Handle Animal (Cha), Intimidate (Cha), Knowledge (current events, history, popular culture, tactics), Listen (Wis), Navigate (Int), Profession (Wis), Read/Write Language (none), Ride (Dex), Search (Int), Speak Language (none), Spot (Wis).

Skill Points at Each Level: 5 + Int modifier.

Class Features

The following features pertain to the Pony Soldier advanced class.

Born in the Saddle

At 1st level the dodge bonus granted by the Defensive Riding feat increases to +2 for both the Pony Soldier and his mount.

At 8th level this bonus increases to +3.

Effortless Control

At 2nd level a Pony Soldier can control his mount in combat as a free action instead of a move action. Since the Pony Soldier no longer needs to expend a move action each round to control his mount, he or she is able to attack more than once per round using the full-attack action provided the Pony Soldier's base attack bonus allows multiple attacks. All of these attacks must be performed sequentially either before or after the Pony Soldier's mount moves. However, if the character possesses the Blazing Saddle feat and is executing ranged attacks, this restriction doesn't apply and the attacks may be taken at any number of points along the mount's trajectory.

Bonus Feats

At 3rd, 6th, and 9th level, the Pony Soldier gains a bonus feat. The bonus feat must be selected from the

Table 6.9: The Pony Soldier

Level	BAB	Fort	Ref	Will	Features	Defense	Reputation
1st	+0	+1	+1	+0	Born in the saddle +2	+1	+0
2nd	+1	+2	+2	+0	Effortless control	+1	+0
3rd	+2	+2	+2	+1	Bonus feat	+2	+0
4th	+3	+2	+2	+1	Cavalry charge	+2	+0
5th	+3	+3	+3	+1	Expert charge	+3	+1
6th	+4	+3	+3	+2	Bonus feat	+3	+1
7th	+5	+4	+4	+2	Battlefield savvy	+4	+1
8th	+6	+4	+4	+2	Born in the saddle +3	+4	+1
9th	+6	+4	+4	+3	Bonus feat	+5	+2
10th	+7	+5	+5	+3	Domino charge	+5	+2

following list, and the Pony Soldier must meet all prerequisites of the feat to select it.

Animal Affinity, Archaic Weapons Proficiency, Blazing Saddle, Cavalry Training, Combat Expertise, Dodge, Far Shot, Home Ground, Quick Reload, Ride-by Attack, Sidewinder, Spirited Charge, Trail Lore, Trample, Weapon Focus.

Cavalry Charge

The Pony Soldier is well versed in using a mount's speed and momentum to his advantage. Whenever a 4th level Pony Soldier makes a successful melee attack during a mounted charge, instead of using his or her Strength bonus, the character may use the Strength bonus of the mount when determining the damage inflicted.

Expert Charge

At 5th level, a mounted Pony Soldier can charge an opponent without suffering the usual Defense penalty of –2. All other modifiers for the charge apply as usual, including the –2 penalty to the mount's Defense.

Battlefield Savvy

When in mounted battle, a 7th level or higher Pony Soldier cannot be flanked by unmounted opponents.

Domino Charge

When a Pony Soldier reaches 10th level, he may elect to spend 1 action point to carry out an extraordinary mounted melee attack. The Pony Soldier can perform a full-attack action while executing a mounted charge, using only melee attacks, which may be executed anywhere along the mount's path. Domino Charge doesn't allow the character to perform more attacks than he can normally take in a round. While performing a Domino Charge, the Pony Soldier gains the +2 bonus to melee attack rolls that is normally obtained for charging, and suffers the standard penalties to Defense for charging.

PREACHER

"What kind of town you got here? You got preachers who pack iron!"

Canaan – *Blind Justice, 1994*

The Preacher hears a calling to spread the word of his or her faith far and wide. Having a deep faith and strong commitment to improving the lot of everyone they meet, Preachers strive to help others understand the world and their purpose in life. They are found everywhere in the West, in fledgling villages, thriving towns and out on the trail. Some Preachers prefer to travel, proselytizing and spreading the ideas of their faith to anyone willing to listen. Others prefer finding a niche in a local community, to help guide the populace toward salvation, prosperity or enlightenment. Regardless of whether they roam the plains or settle down in a mining town, Preachers always seek to broaden the scope of their faith by bringing new believers into the fold.

The earliest a character can enter the Preacher advanced class is at 4th level, via the Dedicated hero basic class.

Requirements

To qualify as a Preacher, a character must fulfill the following criteria.

Skills: Knowledge (theology and philosophy) 6 ranks, Sense Motive 6 ranks.
Feat: Trustworthy.
Special: An allegiance to a specific religious faith.

Preacher Vitals

The following information pertains to the Preacher advanced class.

Grit Die: A Preacher gains 1d6 grit per level. The character's Constitution modifier applies.

Action Points: A Preacher gains a number of action points equal to 6 + one-half his character level, rounded down, every time he attains a new level in this class.

Class Skills: The Preacher's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are: Concentrate (Con), Craft (visual art, writing) (Int), Decipher Script (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Gather Information (Cha), Handle Animal (Cha), Knowledge (arcane lore, behavioral sciences, civics, current events, history, popular culture, theology and philosophy) (Int), Perform (act, sing, stand-up) (Cha), Profession (Wis), Read/Write Language (none), Research (Int), Sense Motive (Wis), Speak Language (none), Treat Injury (Wis).

Skill Points at Each Level: 7 + Int modifier.

Class Features

The following features pertain to the Preacher advanced class.

Sermon

A Preacher holds great influence with those of the same allegiance. Beginning at 1st level, a Preacher gains a +4 bonus on all Charisma-based skill checks when dealing with members of his allegiance.

Righteous Fury

A 2nd level Preacher may launch into a Righteous Fury, where divine or spiritual inspiration lends him strength. For a number of rounds equal to the Preacher's class level, he may use his Charisma or Wisdom modifier (whichever is higher) instead of his Strength modifier when making melee attacks, ability checks, or skill checks. The Preacher may use the Righteous Fury ability a number of times per day equal to his Wisdom modifier (minimum of once).

Bonus Feats

At 3rd, 6th, and 9th level, the Preacher gains a bonus feat. The bonus feat must be selected from the following list, and the Preacher must meet all of the prerequisites of the feat to select it.

Attentive, Combat Expertise, Creative, Defensive Martial Arts, Educated, Heroic Surge, Horse Tradin', Improved Disarm, Iron Will, Medical Expert, Renown, Studious.

Talk Down

A Preacher of 4th level or higher can talk his or her way out of trouble. Either prior to the start of hostilities or during combat, the character can talk down a single opponent within 30 feet of his or her position. The target must be able to understand the Preacher. That opponent immediately stops fighting and reverts to an indifferent attitude regarding the Preacher and the situation in general. Any hostile action directed at the opponent by the Preacher or by an ally of the Preacher allows the opponent to act as he or she sees fit.

To initiate this talent, the Preacher must spend a full-round action talking to his or her opponent. The opponent must make a Will saving throw. The DC is equal to 10 + Preacher's class level + Preacher's Charisma bonus. If the save fails, the opponent stops fighting. If the save succeeds, the opponent continues as normal.

At 7th level, a Preacher can talk down a number of opponents equal to 1 + his or her Charisma bonus. The opponents must still be within 30 feet of his or her position.

At 10th level, the range extends to 60 feet and covers all opponents who can hear and understand the Preacher's voice.

Divine Favor

Starting at 5th level, whenever a Preacher spends 1 action point to improve the result of a die roll, he rolls one more action die than his level would normally allow (see Action Points, page 49). The Preacher selects the highest die roll to add to his d20 roll.

Motivate the Flock

Through an inspirational prayer, the Preacher can urge the faithful to great deeds. If an 8th level Preacher spends one minute speaking and exhorting fellow members of his allegiance, all of those members within 60 feet of the Preacher gain a +2 morale bonus to all skill checks, ability checks, and saving throws for a number of rounds equal to the Preacher's class level. In order to receive this bonus, a character must be able to both see and hear the Preacher during the entire minute of his motivational speech. The Preacher may use this ability a number of times per day equal to his Charisma modifier with a minimum of once per day.

Table 6.10: The Preacher

Level	BAB	Fort	Ref	Will	Features	Defense	Reputation
1st	+0	+1	+1	+2	Sermon	+0	+1
2nd	+1	+2	+2	+3	Righteous fury	+1	+1
3rd	+1	+2	+2	+3	Bonus feat	+1	+1
4th	+2	+2	+2	+4	Talk down (one target)	+1	+2
5th	+2	+3	+3	+4	Divine favor	+2	+2
6th	+3	+3	+3	+5	Bonus feat	+2	+2
7th	+3	+4	+4	+5	Talk down (several targets)	+2	+3
8th	+4	+4	+4	+6	Motivate the flock	+3	+3
9th	+4	+4	+4	+6	Bonus feat	+3	+3
10th	+5	+5	+5	+7	Talk down (all targets)	+3	+4

PROFESSOR

"From what you say about this fella, Savin, he must be some man to reckon with."

"He's not only bad, he's smart . . . and that's a dangerous combination."

Bob and Lucky – *Saddles and Sagebrush, 1943*

A gleaming sidearm isn't the only powerful weapon in the Wild West of *Sidewinder: Recoiled.* A superior mind can be just as potent, even more reliable and equally dangerous to your enemies. A character who chooses the advanced class of the Professor realizes that a sharp intellect can make the sharpest knife seem like a child's toy. Such a hero prefers to outthink his or her opponents, rather than trying to outmuscle or outshoot them. Relying on knowledge, ingenuity and a knack for designing a downright cunning plan, the Professor never ceases to amaze friends and enemies alike. The Professor might be found holed up in a town working on a mighty invention, or traveling with a party of riders searching for an ancient artifact, but you can bet he'll be thinking up impressive ways to advance his goals.

The earliest a character can enter the Professor advanced class is at 4th level, via the Smart hero basic class.

Requirements

To qualify as a Professor, a character must fulfill the following criteria.

Skills: 6 ranks in either Craft (chemical), or Craft (electric), Craft (mechanical) or Craft (writing), plus 6 ranks in Knowledge (behavioral sciences), Knowledge (earth and life sciences), Knowledge (history), Knowledge (physical sciences), or Knowledge (technology), plus 6 ranks in Research.
Feat: Educated.

Professor Vitals

The following information pertains to the Professor advanced class.

Grit Die: A Professor gains 1d6 grit per level. The character's Constitution modifier applies.

Action Points: A Professor gains a number of action points equal to 6 + one-half his character level, rounded down, every time he attains a new level in this class.

Class Skills: The Professor's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are: Craft (chemical, electric, mechanical, pharmaceutical, writing) (Int), Decipher Script (Int), Demolitions (Int), Disable Device (Int), Investigate (Int), Knowledge (arcane lore, art, behavioral sciences, current events, earth and life sciences, history, physical sciences, technology. theology and philosophy) (Int), Navigate (Int), Operate Vehicle (aircraft, ground vehicles, watercraft) (Dex), Profession (Wis), Read/Write Language (none),

Repair (Int), Research (Int), Search (Int), Speak Language (none).

Skill Points at Each Level: 9 + Int modifier.

Class Features

The following features pertain to the Professor advanced class.

Smart Defense

Beginning at 1st level, a Professor applies his Intelligence bonus as well as his Dexterity bonus to Defense. Any situation that would deny the Professor his Dexterity bonus to Defense also denies the Intelligence bonus.

Quick Wits

A Professor's vast intellect allows him to adapt quickly to most situations. A 2nd level Professor may add his Intelligence bonus instead of his Dexterity modifier to all Initiative checks.

Bonus Feats

At 3rd, 6th, and 9th level, the Professor gains a bonus feat. The bonus feat must be selected from the following list, and the Professor must meet all of the prerequisites of the feat to select it.

Archaic Weapons Proficiency, Attentive, Builder, Cautious, Combat Expertise, Educated, Iron Will, Mechanical, Medical Expert, Personal Firearms Proficiency, Point Blank Shot, Master Craftsman, Renown, Studious, Surgery, Vehicle Proficiency.

Table 6.11: The Professor

Level	BAB	Fort	Ref	Will	Features	Defense	Reputation
1st	+0	+1	+1	+1	Smart defense	+0	+0
2nd	+1	+2	+2	+2	Quick wits	+1	+0
3rd	+1	+2	+2	+2	Bonus feat	+1	+1
4th	+2	+2	+2	+2	Skill mastery	+1	+1
5th	+2	+3	+3	+3	Book learnin'	+2	+1
6th	+3	+3	+3	+3	Bonus feat	+2	+2
7th	+3	+4	+4	+4	Academic breakthrough	+2	+2
8th	+4	+4	+4	+4	Smart weapon	+3	+2
9th	+4	+4	+4	+4	Bonus feat	+3	+3
10th	+5	+5	+5	+5	Real-world applications	+3	+3

Skill Mastery

At 4th level, a Professor selects a number of skills from the Professor class list equal to 3 + his Intelligence modifier. When making a skill check using one of these skills, the Professor may take 10 even if stress or distractions would normally prevent him from doing so.

Book Learnin'

Professors are well-educated, well-read, and way too smart for their own britches. A Professor of 5th level or higher gains a +4 competence bonus on any Knowledge skill check.

Academic Breakthrough

Upon attaining 7th level, a Professor receives credit for an intellectual breakthrough that earns him the recognition of his peers. The Professor selects one of the following Knowledge skills: behavioral sciences, earth and life sciences, history, physical sciences, or technology. When the Professor deals with any individual with at least 1 rank in the same Knowledge skill, that character gains a +4 bonus on Reputation checks to recognize the Professor. Furthermore, characters with at least 1 rank in any of the listed Knowledge skills other than the chosen skill gain a +2 bonus on Reputation checks to recognize the Professor.

Finally, this breakthrough also provides the Professor with a +3 Wealth bonus increase. If using the Cold Hard Cash system, the Professor receives a +2 competence bonus on all Profession checks.

Smart Weapon

At 8th level, the Professor selects one weapon with which he is already proficient and that he can use in one hand. With the selected weapon, the Professor can use his Intelligence modifier instead of Strength or Dexterity modifier on attack rolls.

Real World Applications

At 10th level, the Professor gains an ability based on the Knowledge skill selected for the Academic Breakthrough class feature.

Behavioral Sciences: The Professor's knowledge of psychology and behavior allows him to detect subtle clues that indicate an opponent's next move. Once per round as a free-action, the Professor may size-up an opponent by making a DC 15 Sense Motive check. If the check is successful, the character receives a +2 dodge bonus to Defense against all attacks made by that opponent.

Earth and Life Sciences: The Professor's knowledge of biology and anatomy allows him to hit where it hurts. When the Professor uses the weapon selected with the Smart Weapon class feature, the critical threat range is improved by 1 (e.g. "20" becomes "19-20").

History: The Professor's vast understanding of history allows him to avoid the errors of the past. The Professor adds his class levels as well as any levels in Smart hero when using the Smart hero Plan talent. If he doesn't already have the Plan talent, this ability grants it to him.

Physical Sciences: Through the study of scientific applications, the Professor understands the physics and chemistry of explosions. When the Professor detonates any placed explosive, the attack does one more die of damage than normal. For example, a stick of dynamite does 3d6 damage instead of 2d6.

Technology: The Professor's up to date knowledge of technology allows him to build objects of exceptional quality; he or she gains the Master Craftsman feat. Furthermore, the Professor may craft mastercraft objects with only one-half the normal expenditure of experience points. (See the Master Craftsman feat on page 116 for further details.)

PUGILIST

Some folks always prefer to work with their hands. In the Wild West of a *Sidewinder: Recoiled* campaign, the Pugilist takes that preference to the extreme. By training fervently in the art of boxing, this character hones his or her fist-fighting ability above all else. While the Pugilist doesn't necessarily shun the use of firearms or other weapons, he or she relishes the chance to challenge enemies in a bare-handed battle. The thrill of fisticuffs motivates this hero to prove that flesh and blood are just as capable as cap and ball—and even more vital in close quarters.

The earliest a character can enter the Pugilist advanced class is at 4th level, via the Strong hero basic class.

Requirements

To qualify as a Pugilist, a character must fulfill the following criteria.

Base Attack Bonus: +3.
Feats: Combat Martial Arts, Defensive Martial Arts.

Table 6.12: The Pugilist

Level	BAB	Fort	Ref	Will	Features	Defense	Reputation
1st	+1	+0	+1	+0	Bruiser 1d6	+1	+0
2nd	+2	+0	+2	+0	Dukes up	+2	+0
3rd	+3	+1	+2	+1	Bonus feat	+2	+0
4th	+4	+1	+3	+1	Bruiser 1d8	+3	+0
5th	+5	+1	+3	+1	Knuckle buster (one attack)	+4	+1
6th	+6	+2	+3	+2	Bonus feat	+4	+1
7th	+7	+2	+4	+2	Combination	+5	+1
8th	+8	+2	+4	+2	Bruiser 1d10	+6	+1
9th	+9	+3	+5	+3	Bonus feat	+6	+2
10th	+10	+3	+5	+3	Knuckle buster (all attacks)	+7	+2

Prize-fighters might have been the toughest men on the frontier. From John Shannsey to John L. Sullivan, these bare-handed battlers earned their money at the expense of their own body—or more preferably, their opponents' bodies!

My favorite fighter was Professor Mike Donovan. A powerful, merciless man in the ring, he also advocated the science of boxing and helped to define the sport that grew and evolved after his day. He fought everyone and beat many, contending for the middleweight title on various occasions. Donovan also was known for facing off against opponents up to 30 pounds heavier than himself. His dedication to the science of boxing enabled him to compete, and succeed, against much larger men.

If fact, Mike beat Shannsey like a dog that stole his dinner, causing John to retire from the game and focus on his gambling enterprise. During his long career, Donovan actually fought both John L. Sullivan and Jack Dempsey. Later, he sparred with Teddy Roosevelt and became a good friend of the President, who, like me, was known as a boxing enthusiast.

Pugilists Vitals

The following information pertains to the Pugilist advanced class.

Grit Die: A Pugilist gains 1d10 grit per level. The character's Constitution modifier applies.

Action Points: A Pugilist gains a number of action points equal to 6 + one-half his character level, rounded down, every time he attains a new level in this class.

Class Skills: The Pugilist's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are: Balance (Dex), Bluff (Dex), Escape Artist (Dex), Intimidate (Cha), Jump (Str), Knowledge (current events, popular culture, streetwise) (Int), Perform (dance) (Cha), Profession (Wis), Read/Write Language (none), Sense Motive (Wis), Sleight of Hand (Dex), Speak Language (none), Tumble (Dex).

Skill Points at Each Level: 3 + Int modifier.

Class Features

The following features pertain to the Pugilist advanced class.

Bruiser

The Pugilist attacks with either fist interchangeably. This means that there is no such thing as an off-hand attack for a Pugilist striking unarmed, and the character adds his full strength bonus to attacks with both hands.

The Pugilist also deals more damage with unarmed strikes and can choose to make any unarmed attack deal either lethal or nonlethal damage. At 1st level, the pugilist deals 1d6 points of damage with an unarmed strike. At 4th level and 8th level, the damage increases to 1d8 and 1d10 respectively.

Dukes Up

Starting at 2nd level, a Pugilist can adopt a defensive posture that protects his head and gut from punches and other melee attacks. The dodge bonus to Defense that the Pugilist receives from the Defensive Martial Arts feat increases to +2.

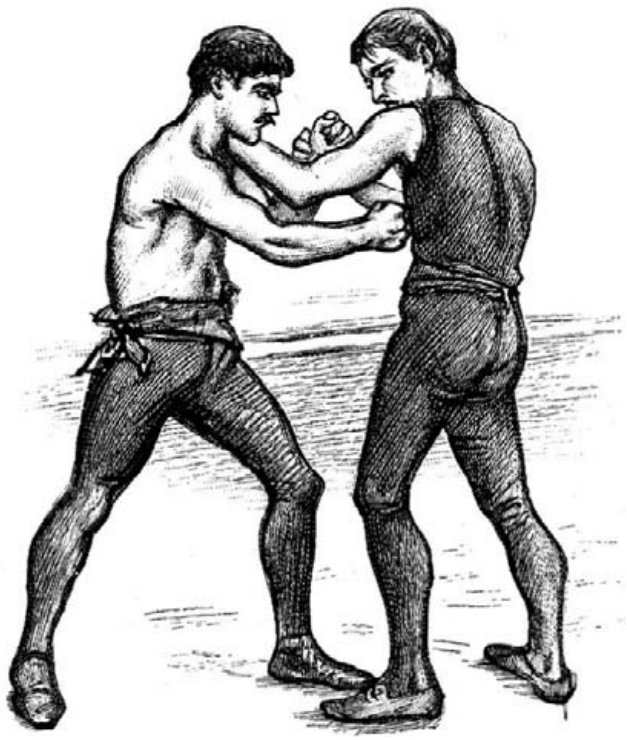
Bonus Feats

At 3rd, 6th, and 9th level, the Pugilist gains a bonus feat. The bonus feat must be selected from the following list, and the Pugilist must meet all of the prerequisites of the feat to select it.

Acrobatic, Advanced Combat Martial Arts, Brawl, Combat Reflexes, Combat Throw, Dodge, Elusive Target, Improved Brawl, Improved Combat Martial Arts, Improved Combat Throw, Improved Knockout Punch, Knockout Punch, Unbalance Opponent.

Knuckle Buster

At 5th level, a Pugilist gains the ability to spend 1 action point to increase the damage he deals to a single opponent with a single unarmed strike. The Pugilist declares the use of the action point after making a successful unarmed strike. The result of the action point roll is added to the damage roll for that attack. At 10th level, the Pugilist now adds the result of the action point roll to all successful attacks he makes in a single round.



Combination

At 7th level, a Pugilist gains the ability to strike with a flurry of blows, but at the expense of accuracy. The Pugilist must be unarmored to use this talent, and he must make unarmed strikes to gain the benefit. With Combination, the character may make one extra attack in a round at his highest base attack bonus. This attack and every other attack made in the round incur a –2 penalty. Since Combination allows a Pugilist to make multiple attacks in a single combat round, using this ability requires a full-round action.

RIFLEMAN

The sniper and the buffalo hunter may be satisfied with sitting still and taking a deliberate shot at an unsuspecting target from long range, but not the Rifleman. Having experienced the vagaries of war (such as the sudden wild charge of cavalry or the nighttime sneak attack of bushwhackers), the Rifleman knows that what once was a battle of distance can suddenly be up close and personal, and the weapon good for dealing death from afar can quickly become a hindrance spelling the wielder's doom.

Rather than give up the weapon he loves, by necessity the Rifleman has learned how to use his longarm to pump lead quickly and accurately into any enemy, whether close up or far away. Becoming so skilled at wielding his favorite longarm, the Rifleman makes every move with such flair and flamboyance that it elicits awe and wonder from onlookers, and more than a little trepidation from enemies.

The marksman who wants to become famous as a great Rifleman knows that his reputation must extend as far as the eye can shoot. Therefore, he practices night and day with his chosen longarm, until he can fire it with style and elan at any target, at any range. The combination of rapid-fire speed, pinpoint accuracy, and the ability to wield his normally long-range weapon with equal skill at close quarters, is the unique brand of the Rifleman.

The earliest a character can enter the Rifleman advanced class is at 4th level, via the Fast hero basic class.

Requirements

To qualify as a Rifleman, a character must fulfill the following criteria.

Base Attack Bonus: +2.
Skill: Sleight of Hand 6 ranks.
Feats: Far Shot, Gunplay, Personal Firearms Proficiency.

Rifleman Vitals

The following information pertains to the Rifleman advanced class.

Grit Die: A Rifleman gains 1d10 grit per level. The character's Constitution modifier applies.

Action Points: A Rifleman gains a number of action points equal to 6 + one-half his character level, rounded down, every time he attains a new level in this class.

Class Skills: The Rifleman's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are: Climb (Str), Concentration (Con), Hide (Dex), Intimidate (Cha), Jump (Str), Knowledge (current events, popular culture, tactics) (Int), Listen (Wis), Profession (Wis), Read/Write Language (none), Ride (Dex), Sleight of Hand (Dex), Speak Language (none), Spot (Wis).

Table 6.13: The Rifleman

Level	BAB	Fort	Ref	Will	Features	Defense	Reputation
1st	+0	+1	+1	+0	Powder burns	+1	+0
2nd	+1	+2	+2	+0	Weapon focus	+1	+0
3rd	+2	+2	+2	+1	Bonus feat	+2	+0
4th	+3	+2	+2	+1	Steel grip	+2	+0
5th	+3	+3	+3	+1	Clear line	+3	+1
6th	+4	+3	+3	+2	Bonus feat	+3	+1
7th	+5	+4	+4	+2	Rifle spin	+4	+1
8th	+6	+4	+4	+2	Dead eye	+4	+1
9th	+6	+4	+4	+3	Bonus feat	+5	+2
10th	+7	+5	+5	+3	Improved steel grip	+5	+2

I'll never forget that day. These two soldiers from back east—Pennsylvania to be exact—came into a Black Hills saloon and showed everyone what a trained sharpshooter could do. They didn't look like mountain men or buffalo hunters, despite the fact that they carried two Henry repeaters each. The bigger of the two had both of his strung across his back; while the other, a little squinty-eyed fellow, always kept one of them repeaters in his right hand and a shortened one on his back. They looked like they might feel right naked without their rifles.

Someone said these two riflemen were called the Bucktail Brothers. They didn't look like brothers. I always figured they were more like partners in crime, so to speak. Speaking of speaking, these men didn't say much, but the squinty-eyed one always seemed to make people nervous, no matter where those two stopped for rest and vittles. The way he tended to hold the butt of that Henry against his hip as he sat and drank whiskey with his free hand just made people like to hate him or fear him.

Well, sure enough, that day in the Black Hills a young fool—who came into town while guarding the stage—got a little edgy sitting near the Bucktails. He took the little Bucktail's posture a bit personal. That is, the young man said, in a whisper that would have made a New York actor proud, that he didn't like being stared at by another man, especially one holding a gun. The Bucktail kept right on staring. Seeing as that didn't get a rise out of them, that darned fool, with more whisky-courage than common sense, marched right up to the riflemen's table, leaning over close to an arm's length.

"You must be stupid anyway," he said, "thinking you can use that rifle in a little hole in the wall like this."

That Bucktail swiveled, aimed and fired his right hand rifle from under the table before anyone even breathed. The young man grabbed his leg and then evacuated himself as the barrel of the second rifle, in the now standing Bucktail's left hand, pressed against his temple. The fool fell to the floor, gasping and holding his bleeding thigh. As the brothers calmly backed out of the saloon, the bigger one tossed a double eagle onto the bar and yelled, "Some of that money's for the Doc who has to treat that idiot."

Skill Points at Each Level: 5 + Int modifier.

Class Features

The following features pertain to the Rifleman advanced class.

Powder Burns

At 1st level a Rifleman becomes quite adept at firing a longarm in close combat. The Rifleman doesn't provoke attacks of opportunity for firing a longarm in melee, nor does the character suffer the –4 penalty to attack rolls against adjacent opponents when firing a longarm.

Weapon Focus

At 2nd level, a Rifleman gains the Weapon Focus class feature, providing the benefit of the feat with the same name. The Rifleman chooses a specific longarm, such as a Henry Rifle or a Winchester '73; the chosen weapon must be one that hasn't already been selected through the Weapon Focus feat or class feature. He or she adds +1 to all attack rolls made using the selected weapon.

Bonus Feats

At 3rd, 6th, and 9th level, the Rifleman gains a bonus feat. The bonus feat must be selected from the following list, and the Rifleman must meet all prerequisites of the feat to select it.

Advanced Two-Weapon Fighting, Blind-Fight, Dead Aim, Dodge, Improved Dead Aim, Improved Initiative, Improved Two-Weapon Fighting, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Quick Reload, Shot on the Run, Sidewinder, Sniping, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Focus.

Steel Grip

Because the Rifleman has a strong grip, he can wield in one hand a weapon larger than the normal man can manage. A Rifleman of 4th level can wield any longarm with which he possesses Weapon Focus (either through the class feature or feat) in one hand as if it was a Medium-size weapon; however, when doing so the Rifleman suffers a –2 penalty to all attack rolls. If he or she fights with a weapon in each hand, the weapon in the off hand must be size Small or smaller and all normal penalties and restrictions for fighting with two weapons apply.

Clear Line

Riflemen are masterful at placing their shots. At 5th level, if a Rifleman uses a longarm to attack a target protected by one-quarter or better cover, the cover bonus to his target's Defense is reduced by 2.

Rifle Spin

At 7th level the Rifleman has become so accomplished at performing the Rifle Spin maneuver (see the Gunplay feat on page 111) that he can always take 10 on the required Sleight of Hand skill check.

Dead Eye

Anytime the Rifleman inflicts a critical hit with a longarm with which he has Weapon Focus (either through the feat or class feature), he can spend 1 action point to do an additional die of damage in addition to the extra damage caused by the critical hit.

DEAD EYE EXAMPLE

Suppose a Rifleman using a Spencer Carbine achieves a critical hit and activates her Dead Eye class feature. Moreover, the Rifleman has levels in the Soldier advanced class (see page 194) and has acquired the Weapon Specialization class feature and applied it to the Spencer. In this somewhat complicated example, the Rifleman would inflict 5d12 + 4 damage with the critical hit. Four of the d12's are from the critical hit (2d12 + 2d12), as is the +4 (+2 from Weapon Specialization twice). The final d12 arises from the Dead Eye class feature. And pardner, if the opponent is still up after this hit, the Rifleman should seriously think about runnin'.

Improved Steel Grip

A Rifleman of 10th level has perfected firing his longarm in one hand to such a degree that he can now wield a longarm in each hand as if they were Medium-size weapons. Moreover, the Rifleman can wield a longarm in one hand and any Medium-size weapon in the other. This ability may be used only with longarms that the Rifleman has selected with Weapon Focus (either through the feat or class ability). When using Improved Steel Grip, in addition to the normal penalties for fighting with two weapons the Rifleman incurs a –2 penalty on all attack rolls.

RUSTLER

"Who are those tough looking men?"

"The big one leaning against the post is Luke Johnson. They say he is an outlaw."

"Well, why isn't he in prison?"

"This isn't Maryland, honey. This is the frontier. The last two marshals that went after Johnson are dead."

Ann Langhorne and Brett Langhorne
– Frontier Pony Express, 1939

Rustlers might be some of the most cantankerous hombres found on the open range. They might end up as drifters, outlaws or bandits—or even regular ol' hard working stiffs on a family ranch. While neither expert riders nor gunfighters, they are usually adept at both. When they're not stealing someone's herd or borrowing another man's horse in the still of night, Rustlers may take the jobs nobody else wants, serving as guards on a doomed stage run or enforcing the will of a disreputable

Table 6.14: The Rustler

Level	BAB	Fort	Ref	Will	Features	Defense	Reputation
1st	+0	+0	+2	+0	Sweep	+1	+1
2nd	+1	+0	+3	+0	High-tail it	+2	+1
3rd	+1	+1	+3	+1	Bonus feat	+2	+1
4th	+2	+1	+4	+1	Low blow	+3	+2
5th	+2	+1	+4	+1	Sneaky varmint	+4	+2
6th	+3	+2	+5	+2	Bonus feat	+4	+2
7th	+3	+2	+5	+2	Shifty	+5	+3
8th	+4	+2	+6	+2	Improved sweep	+6	+3
9th	+4	+3	+6	+3	Bonus feat	+6	+3
10th	+5	+3	+7	+3	Without a trace	+7	+4

local businessman. Most Rustlers choose a path that takes them into danger and adventure, regardless of whether it's working for a crooked cattle baron, joining a band of outlaws, or leading their own ring of low-down horse thieves.

Like their more gentle counterparts, Mavericks and Grifters, Rustlers are usually looking out for only themselves. They tend to be an ornery bunch, rough to the core and often as mean as a hellhound. This isn't to say that Rustlers are all evil misfits; they know how to enjoy a friendly drink and the idle chatter of a campfire as well as anyone. But odds are, while you're twanging a song about the range, they're probably sizing you up.

The earliest a character can enter the Rustler advanced class is at 4th level, via the Fast hero basic class.

Requirements

To qualify as a Rustler, a character must fulfill the following criteria.

Base Attack Bonus: +2.
Skills: Hide 6 ranks, Move Silently 6 ranks.
Feat: Dodge.

Rustler Vitals

The following information pertains to the Rustler advanced class.

Grit Die: A Rustler gains 1d8 grit per level. The character's Constitution modifier applies.

Action Points: A Rustler gains a number of action points equal to 6 + one-half his character level, rounded down, every time he attains a new level in this class.

Class Skills: The Rustler's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are: Balance (Dex), Bluff (Cha), Climb (Str), Disable Device (Int), Escape Artist (Dex), Handle Animal, (Cha), Hide (Dex), Intimidate (Cha), Jump (Str), Knowledge (current events, popular culture, streetwise) (Int), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Profession (Wis), Read/Write Language (none), Ride (Dex), Sleight of Hand (Dex), Speak Language (none), Spot (Wis), Tumble (Dex).

Skill Points at Each Level: 7 + Int modifier.

Class Features

The following features pertain to the Rustler advanced class.

Sweep

A Rustler knows how to size up an area and get the lay of the land with a single sweep of his eyes. This sweep provides a +4 circumstance bonus on Spot checks and covers an area out to 30 feet away from the Rustler. He or she can use this bonus at the start of an encounter.

Anything not concealed can be located and recognized in a sweep with a successful Spot check (DC 10). The DC for concealed or less obvious threats is equal to its Hide check result (see the Hide skill, page 81).

High Tail It

Beginning at 2nd level a Rustler no longer loses his Dexterity bonus to Defense when running.

Bonus Feats

At 3rd, 6th, and 9th level, the Rustler gains a bonus feat. The bonus feat must be selected from the following list, and the Rustler must meet all of the prerequisites of the feat to select it.

Acrobatic, Alertness, Athletic, Attentive, Blazing Saddle, Brawl, Combat Expertise, Deceptive, Defensive Martial Arts, Defensive Riding, Elusive Target, Improved Knockout Punch, Knockout Punch, Low Profile, Mobility, Nimble, Personal Firearms Proficiency, Run, Sidewinder, Stealthy, Streetfighting.

Low Blow

Rustlers know how to hit where it hurts. Whenever his target is caught flat-footed or denied his Dexterity bonus to Defense, a 4th level Rustler does one extra die of damage on a successful attack.

Sneaky Varmint

At 5th level, when making a Disguise, Hide, Move Silently, or Sleight of Hand skill check, the Rustler may take 10 even if stress or distractions would normally prevent him from doing so.

Shifty

Rustlers are notoriously hard to pin down and adept at presenting as little to shoot at as possible. At 7th level, he or she may spend 1 action point to increase Defense for one round. This ability may be used only on the Rustler's turn. The Rustler rolls a number of action dice appropriate for his level (see Action Points, page 49) and adds the highest die roll to his Defense.

Improved Sweep

At 8th level, a Rustler's ability to get the lay of the land improves. Now the Rustler not only spots potential perils with a successful check, he or she can determine the relative strength of those dangers. A successful Spot check relates the danger's strength compared to the Rustler: stronger (higher level or Grit Dice), on par (same level or Grit Dice), or weaker (lower level or Grit Dice).

Without a Trace

At 10th level, the Rustler gains the ability to counteract attempts to detect the results of specific activities he undertakes. This applies to the Rustler's use of the following skills: Balance, Climb, Disable Device, Escape Artist, Hide, Move Silently, and Sleight of Hand. Thus, when opponents use Investigate, Listen, Search or Spot to detect these activities, they suffer a –4 penalty.

SAWBONES

"How is he, Doc?"

"Well, he suffered lacerations, contusions, and concussion. His jugular vein was severed in three places. I counted four broken ribs, and a compound fracture of the skull. To put it briefly, he's real dead."

Sheriff Bullock and Doctor – *Rancho Notorious, 1952*

Hippocrates never held a six-gun, but he sure understood what it meant to care for those who might find themselves on the wrong end of a loaded barrel. The Sawbones character in the Wild West of *Sidewinder: Recoiled* understands the Hippocratic oath and does his or her best to help those who are in pain or suffering, no matter how they got that way. Usually, the Sawbones prefers a peaceful solution. But it's just plain sensible that you cannot help others if you cannot help yourself, so the Sawbones might well carry a sidearm and know how to use it when necessary. And just as likely, the Sawbones might be found saving a man he or she just shot in self-defense.

The earliest a character can enter the Sawbones advanced class is at 4th level, via the Dedicated hero basic class.

Requirements

To qualify as a Sawbones, a character must fulfill the following criteria.

Skills: Craft (pharmaceutical) 6 ranks, Treat Injury 6 ranks.
Feat: Surgery.

Sawbones Vitals

The following information pertains to the Sawbones advanced class.

Grit Die: A Sawbones gains 1d6 grit per level. The character's Constitution modifier applies.

Action Points: A Sawbones gains a number of action points equal to 6 + one-half his character level, rounded down, every time he attains a new level in this class.

Class Skills: The Sawbones' class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are: Concentrate (Con), Craft (pharmaceutical) (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Handle Animal (Cha), Knowledge (behavioral sciences, current events, earth and life sciences, popular culture, technology) (Int), Listen (Wis), Profession (Wis), Read/Write Language (none), Research (Int), Ride (Dex), Search (Int), Speak Language (none), Treat Injury (Wis).

Skill Points at Each Level: 7 + Int modifier.

Table 6.15: The Sawbones

Level	BAB	Fort	Ref	Will	Features	Defense	Reputation
1st	+0	+2	+0	+1	Patch 'em up	+1	+1
2nd	+1	+3	+0	+2	Expert healer	+1	+1
3rd	+1	+3	+1	+2	Bonus feat	+2	+1
4th	+2	+4	+1	+2	Medical mastery	+2	+2
5th	+2	+4	+1	+3	Expert druggist	+3	+2
6th	+3	+5	+2	+3	Bonus feat	+3	+2
7th	+3	+5	+2	+4	Minor medical miracle	+4	+3
8th	+4	+6	+2	+4	Whisky kills anything	+4	+3
9th	+4	+6	+3	+4	Bonus feat	+5	+3
10th	+5	+7	+3	+5	Medical miracle	+5	+4

Class Features

The following features pertain to the Sawbones advanced class.

Patch 'em Up

The Sawbones gains a competence bonus on Treat Injury checks equal to one-half of his or her class level (rounded down with a minimum of +1).

Expert Healer

At 2nd level and higher, the Sawbones' ability to restore grit with a medical kit or surgery kit and a successful use of the Treat Injury skill improves. In addition to the normal grit recovery rate (1d4 for a medical kit, 1d6 per patient's character level for surgery), the Sawbones restores one grit for every Sawbones level he or she possesses.

Bonus Feats

At 3rd, 6th, and 9th level, the Sawbones gains a bonus feat. The bonus feat must be selected from the following list, and the Sawbones must meet all of the prerequisites of the feat to select it.

Animal Affinity, Attentive, Cautious, Combat Expertise, Defensive Martial Arts, Dodge, Educated, Improved Initiative, Medical Expert, Meticulous, Personal Firearms Proficiency, Point Blank Shot, Vehicle Proficiency.

Medical Mastery

When making a Treat Injury skill check, a Sawbones of 4th level or higher may take 10 even if stress or distractions would normally prevent him or her from doing so.

Expert Druggist

A Sawbones of 5th level is an expert pharmacist. All pharmaceuticals crafted by the Sawbones grant a +4 circumstance bonus on Fortitude saves to resist the effects of disease. Normally, without this ability, a pharmaceutical grants only a +2 bonus.

Minor Medical Miracle

At 7th level or higher, a Sawbones can save a character reduced to –10 grit or lower. If the Sawbones is able to administer aid within 3 rounds of the character's death, he or she can make a Treat Injury check. The DC for this check is 30, and the Sawbones cannot take 10 or 20. If the check succeeds, the dead character can make a Fortitude save (DC 15) to stabilize and be restored to 0 grit. If the Sawbones fails the skill check or the patient fails the save, the dead character is, well, dead.

Whisky Kills Anything

An 8th level Sawbones can improvise when forced to doctor without a first aid, medical, or surgery kit. Given everyday common supplies (liquor, thread, sewing needles, etc.), the Sawbones may perform any function of the Treat Injury skill without penalty, even if the appropriate kit is unavailable.

Medical Miracle

At 10th level, a Sawbones can revive a character reduced to –10 grit or lower. If the Sawbones is able to administer aid within 3 minutes (30 rounds) of the patient's death, he or she can make a Treat Injury check. The DC for this check is 40, and the Sawbones cannot take 10 or 20. If the check succeeds, the dead character can make a Fortitude save (DC 20) to stabilize and be restored to 1d6 grit. If the Sawbones fails the skill check or the patient fails the Fortitude save, the dead character is (yep you guessed it) dead.

SCOUT

Whether leading the way for pioneers traveling west, hunting renegade Indians for the U.S. Cavalry or stalking buffalo on the open prairie, Scouts are highly valued for their skills and talents. A Scout is most comfortable when in the wild serving as a guide for a traveling party, or a trailblazer for a military regiment. While a Scout sometimes operates on his own behalf, he often has an employer who is paying him for a particular task.

Adventurous and often-times loners by nature, Scouts dare to tread where nobody else will set foot, blazing the way into uncharted territory. Scouts must be brave, clever and steadfast, as they typically operate in

hostile territory with little or no backup. Many Scouts are trained by military forces and work for them as trailblazers, pathfinders and advanced scouts.

The earliest a character can enter the Scout advanced class is at 4th level, via the Tough or Dedicated hero basic classes.

A number of good men made their names as scouts in the Wild West, from Billy Comstock to Jack Stillwell. The government needed them, settlers needed them, and traders needed them. And amongst them all lived a man who never got the recognition he deserved, William Mathewson.

Some folks say he was the original "Buffalo Bill," known for bringing in buffalo meat for starving settlers as early as 1860. Well known as an honest white trader among the tribes in the Rockies, he began serving as a government scout in 1864.

The Medicine Lodge peace council might have been a pipe dream without Mathewson. Even though the Indians were often hostile to approaching whites and he risked getting a gut full of shot before he managed to say "howdy," Mathewson went from tribe to tribe, entreating the chiefs to attend. Using his wits, his sneakiness, and his good reputation with the Indians, he executed a plan to beat all. Mathewson crept and crawled belly-down when approaching an Indian camp, sneaking so close he could smell them. He wagered that if he could get right near he'd be instantly recognized when he showed his face—before any brave could pull a trigger or release a bowstring.

His unsung career as a Scout also included saving many innocent settlers from captivity among the tribes. I heard that his efforts led to the release of at least 54 women and children over the years.

Requirements

To qualify as a Scout, a character must fulfill the following criteria.

Base Attack Bonus: +2.
Skills: Spot 6 ranks, Survival 6 ranks.
Feat: Track.

Scout Vitals

The following information pertains to the Scout advanced class.

Grit Die: A Scout gains 1d10 grit per level. The character's Constitution modifier applies.

Action Points: A Scout gains a number of action points equal to 6 + one-half his character level, rounded down, every time he attains a new level in this class.

Class Skills: The Scout's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are: Climb (Str), Concentration (Con), Diplomacy (Cha), Handle Animal (Cha), Hide (Dex), Jump (Str), Knowledge (current events, earth and life sciences, popular culture) (Int), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Navigate (Int), Profession (Wis), Read/Write Language (none), Ride (Dex), Speak Language (none), Spot (Wis), Survival (Wis), Swim (Str).

Skill Points at Each Level: 5 + Int modifier.

Class Features

The following features pertain to the Scout advanced class.

Terrain Specialization

Scouts become highly trained at operating in one specific environment and gain bonuses to certain skill checks when they are in this terrain. Choose one terrain from the following list: chaparral, desert, grassland, forest, mountains, or swamp. When operating in the chosen terrain, all Climb, Hide, Knowledge (earth and life sciences), Listen, Move Silently, Navigate, Search, Spot, and Survival checks receive a +2 competence bonus. Furthermore, the Scout automatically recognizes the native plant and animal life of the region.

At 7th level the Scout may select an additional terrain in which to specialize.

Hard to Follow

At 2nd level, a Scout learns how to disguise his passage while traveling at his normal pace. When traveling through a terrain chosen with the Terrain Specialization class feature (mounted or afoot), the Scout

Table 6.16: The Scout

Level	BAB	Fort	Ref	Will	Features	Defense	Reputation
1st	+0	+2	+0	+0	Terrain specialization	+1	+0
2nd	+1	+3	+0	+0	Hard to Follow	+1	+0
3rd	+2	+3	+1	+1	Bonus feat	+2	+1
4th	+3	+4	+1	+1	Terrain awareness	+2	+1
5th	+3	+4	+1	+1	Fast track	+3	+1
6th	+4	+5	+2	+2	Bonus feat	+3	+2
7th	+5	+5	+2	+2	Terrain specialization	+4	+2
8th	+6	+6	+2	+2	Snake in the grass	+4	+2
9th	+6	+6	+3	+3	Bonus feat	+5	+3
10th	+7	+7	+3	+3	Ear to the ground	+5	+3

can move at full speed (instead of one-half speed) while hiding his trail (see the Track feat, page 121).

Bonus Feats

At 3rd, 6th, and 9th level, the Scout gains a bonus feat. The bonus feat must be selected from the following list, and the Scout must meet all prerequisites of the feat to select it.

Alertness, Archaic Weapons Proficiency, Athletic, Dead Aim, Defensive Riding, Dodge, Endurance, Far Shot, Great Fortitude, Guide, Mobility, Personal Firearms Proficiency, Point Blank Shot, Ride-By Attack, Run, Stealthy, Toughness, True Grit.

Terrain Awareness

At 4th level Scouts can no longer be caught flat-footed due to surprise while in any of the terrain chosen for their Terrain Specialization class feature.

Fast Track

At 5th level, the Scout may move at his or her normal speed while using the Track feat without suffering the –5 penalty. A Scout may move at twice normal speed at a penalty of –10 instead of the standard –20.

Snake in the Grass

Hiding in the wild can sometimes mean the difference between life and death. When concealed in wilderness cover (brush, undergrowth, etc.), an 8th level Scout may add one-half of his or her Scout class level to his Hide check as a competence bonus. Furthermore, the Scout can hide in natural terrain even if the terrain doesn't grant one-half or more cover or concealment.

Ear to the Ground

At 10th level, the Scout may detect movement in the distance by stopping and listening to the earth. By making a Listen check, the Scout can "hear" movement up to 1 mile away. The DC of this listen check depends on number of targets, their size, their distance, and the conditions of the ground. The base DC is 25 and modifiers are supplied in Table 6.17: Ear to the Ground DC Modifiers.

Table 6.17: Ear to the Ground DC Modifiers

Condition	DC Modifier
Every three targets in the group being detected	–1
Size of targets being detected: [1]	
Fine	+8
Diminutive	+4
Tiny	+2
Small	+1
Medium-size	+0
Large	–1
Huge	–2
Gargantuan	–4
Colossal	–8
Ground Conditions: [2]	
Swampy ground	Cannot detect [3]
Soft Soil	+5
Hard Soil	+0
Stone	+2
Metal Rails (as in railroad tracks)	+5
Distance to Target	
Quarter mile	+0
Half mile	+5
Three-quarters mile	+10
One mile	+15

1 For a group of mixed sizes, apply only the modifier for the largest size category represented.
2 Apply only the largest modifier from this category.
3 Targets cannot be detected in swampy terrain.

SHOWMAN

"Do you understand what Bronco Billy and the Wild West show are all about? You can be anything you want. All you have to do is go out and become it."

Running Water – *Bronco Billy, 1980*

Shakespeare didn't know it, but when he said all the world's a stage, he was speaking on behalf of all the Showmen in the Wild West. Never was there a grander stage than the great expanse of the plains, deserts and foothills of the western frontier. Opportunities abounded for an experienced, talented Showman, whether it meant traveling the wagon-train circuit to every isolated one-horse town between the Mississippi River and the Pacific Ocean, or putting down roots in a sizable town like Tombstone. People living a rough life on the frontier needed a pleasant diversion every now and then. The Showman understands this need and exploits it at every step, building a famous reputation and a set of skills that make for exciting adventures and a handsome income.

The earliest a character can enter the Showman advanced class is at 4th level, via the Charismatic hero basic class.

Requirements

To qualify as a Showman, a character must fulfill the following criteria.

Skills: Diplomacy 6 ranks, Perform (select one) 6 ranks.
Feat: Renown.

Showman Vitals

The following information pertains to the Showman advanced class.

Grit Die: A Showman gains 1d6 grit per level. The character's Constitution modifier applies.

Action Points: A Showman gains a number of action

Table 6.18: The Showman

Level	BAB	Fort	Ref	Will	Features	Defense	Reputation
1st	+0	+1	+2	+1	Notoriety	+0	+2
2nd	+1	+2	+3	+2	Bonus class skills	+1	+2
3rd	+1	+2	+3	+2	Bonus feat	+1	+2
4th	+2	+2	+4	+3	The greatest show on earth	+1	+3
5th	+2	+3	+4	+3	Winning smile	+2	+3
6th	+3	+3	+5	+3	Bonus feat	+2	+3
7th	+3	+4	+5	+4	Compelling performance	+2	+4
8th	+4	+4	+6	+4	Winning smile (multiple targets)	+3	+4
9th	+4	+4	+6	+5	Bonus feat	+3	+4
10th	+5	+5	+7	+5	Compelling performance (multiple targets)	+3	+5

points equal to 6 + one-half his character level, rounded down, every time he attains a new level in this class.

Class Skills: The Showman's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are: Bluff (Cha), Craft (visual arts, writing) (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Disguise (Cha), Gather Information (Cha), Knowledge (art, behavioral sciences, business, civics, current events, popular culture, streetwise) (Int), Perform (act, dance, keyboards, percussion instruments, sing, stand-up, stringed instrument, wind instrument) (Cha), Profession (Wis), Read/Write Language (none), Speak Language (none).

Skill Points at Each Level: 7 + Int modifier.

Class Features

The following features pertain to the Showman advanced class.

Notoriety

The Showman cuts a well-known figure and this fame can often be used as an advantage when dealing with members of the public. When first meeting a Judge-controlled character, that character will have an initial attitude towards the Showman that is one level friendlier than he or she generally would have (see Table 3.21: Attitudes, page 72). This shift in attitude only occurs if the Judge-controlled character recognizes the Showman via a Reputation check (see Reputation, page 50).

Bonus Class Skills

At 2nd level, the Showman designates three cross-class skills as class skills. Once designated, the skills are considered class skills every time the character adds a new level of Showman.

Bonus Feats

At 3rd, 6th, and 9th level, the Showman gains a bonus feat. The bonus feat must be selected from the following list, and the Showman must meet all of the prerequisites of the feat to select it.

Alertness, Acrobatic, Animal Affinity, Archaic Weapons Proficiency, Combat Expertise, Confident, Creative, Deceptive, Defensive Martial Arts, Educated, Gunplay, Personal Firearms Proficiency, Nimble, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Skip Shot, Trustworthy, Windfall.

The Greatest Show on Earth

Showmen have a winning way that others naturally enjoy watching. A 4th level Showman receives a competence bonus on Diplomacy, Gather Information, and Perform skill checks equal to one-half the Showman's class level rounded down.

Winning Smile

At 5th level, a Showman develops such a force of personal magnetism that he or she can convince a single target to regard him or her as a trusted friend. (If the target is currently being threatened or attacked by the Showman or his or her allies, this ability won't work.)

The target must make a Will saving throw to avoid being persuaded by the Showman's words and actions. The DC is 10 + Showman's class level + Showman's Charisma bonus.

This ability doesn't enable the Showman to control the target, but the target perceives the character's words and actions in the most favorable way. The Showman can

try to give the target orders, but he or she must win an opposed Charisma check to convince the target to perform any actions the target wouldn't normally undertake. The target never obeys suicidal or obviously harmful orders, and any act by the Showman (or his or her allies) that threatens the target will break the mood and clear the target's head. Otherwise, a target remains "won over" for one minute per Showman level.

After the duration expires, the Judge determines the reaction and attitude of the target based on what the Showman compelled the target to do.

At 8th level the Showman may use his Winning Smile class feature simultaneously against a number of targets equal to 1 + the Showman's Charisma Modifier.

Compelling Performance

At 7th level, a Showman's force of personal magnetism increases to the point that he or she can arouse a single emotion of his or her choice—despair, hope, or rage—in a target. To use this ability, the Showman must spend 1 action point. The emotion he or she arouses affects one target within 15 feet of the Showman. The performance requires a full-round action, and its effects on the target last for 1d4+1 rounds.

The target must make a Will saving throw. The DC is 10 + Showman's class level + Showman's Charisma bonus. If the target succeeds at the saving throw, he or she is immune to the compulsion of this performance. If the target fails, he or she reacts to the emotion as described below.

Despair: The target suffers a –2 morale penalty on saving throws, attack rolls, ability checks, skill checks, and weapon damage rolls.

Hope: The target gains a +2 morale bonus on saving throws, attack rolls, ability checks, skill checks, and weapon damage rolls.

Rage: The target gains a +2 morale bonus to Strength and Constitution, a +1 morale bonus on Will saves, and a –1 penalty to Defense. In a dramatic situation, the target is compelled to fight, regardless of the danger.

At 10th level, the Showman can affect a number of targets equal to 1 plus his or her Charisma modifier.

SOLDIER

"But put out of your mind any romantic ideas that it's a way of glory. It's a life of suffering and hardship, an uncompromising devotion to your oath and duty."

Lt. Colonel Kirby York – *Rio Grande, 1950*

A hero who achieves the advanced class of Soldier devotes him or herself to the art of war. This devotion may take a variety of forms, from a focus on improving one's proficiency in a particular weapon to the study and mastery of tactical combat expertise. No matter what approach the Soldier takes, it is the desire to succeed in combat situations that motivates this hero's actions. If you're ever in a grave situation—with bullets flying overhead, cannons blasting all around, or arrows raining down unmercifully—you'll be downright lucky to have an accomplished Soldier on your side of the battle.

The earliest a character can enter the Soldier advanced class is at 4th level, via the Strong hero basic class.

Requirements

To qualify as a Soldier, a character must fulfill the following criteria.

CUSTOMS OF SERVICE

Excerpt from "The 1865 Customs of Service for Non-Commissioned Officers and Soldiers as Derived from Law and Regulations and Practised (sic) in the Army of the United States," 2nd Edition, by August V. Kautz, Capt. Sixth U.S. Cavalry, Brig.-Gen. U.S. Volunteers.

1. The soldier commands respect in proportion to his capacity and length of service. A youth of military pride and bearing, who wears his uniform with neatness and grace, and does his duty faithfully and with energy and determination, deserves admiration, and generally receives it; but the veteran whose scars and wounds are the reminders of many battles, and whose numerous service-chevrons and gray hairs mark a life devoted to the service of his country, chains the listening ear of the citizen to the story of his heroic life, and the greatest chieftain will raise his hat with respect to return his punctilious salute.

2. The decisive events of a soldier's life are few and far between, and the intervals are devoted to waiting for these turning-points. If the time he spends in waiting is usually occupied in preparing himself for the critical moments, he will thereby enhance his chances of success, and add lustre to the promotion which his achievements are sure to obtain for him.

3. The military profession involves a knowledge of almost every art, and information accumulated and held in store for the fortunate moment is suddenly demanded and called for, and he who can come forward and say, "I possess it," is the victor. A soldier can, therefore, never be placed in any situation in which his leisure moments may not be devoted to something that may some time win him a grade.

Base Attack Bonus: +3.
Skill: Knowledge (tactics) 3 ranks.
Feat: Personal Firearms Proficiency.

Soldier Vitals

The following information pertains to the Soldier advanced class.

Grit Die: A Soldier gains 1d10 grit per level. The character's Constitution modifier applies.

Action Points: A Soldier gains a number of action points equal to 6 + one-half his character level, rounded down, every time he attains a new level in this class.

Class Skills: The Soldier's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are: Demolitions (Int), Handle Animal (Cha), Intimidate (Cha), Jump (Str), Knowledge (current events, history, popular culture, tactics) (Int), Listen (Wis), Navigate (Int), Profession (Wis), Read/Write Language (none), Ride (Dex), Speak Language (none), Spot (Wis), Survival (Wis), Swim (Str).

Skill Points at Each Level: 5 + Int modifier.

Class Features

The following features pertain to the Soldier advanced class.

Weapon Focus

At 1st level, a Soldier gains the Weapon Focus class feature, providing the benefit of the feat with the same name. The Soldier chooses a specific weapon with which he is already proficient. The character can choose unarmed strike or grapple as the weapon. If the Soldier already possesses the Weapon Focus feat or class feature, he must choose a different weapon than the one already selected. The Soldier adds +1 to all attack rolls made using the selected weapon.

Weapon Specialization

At 2nd level, a Soldier chooses a specific weapon which he or she has already selected with the Weapon Focus feat or class feature. The Soldier gains Weapon Specialization with the chosen weapon, receiving a +2 bonus on damage rolls with the weapon.

Bonus Feats

At 3rd, 6th, and 9th level, the Soldier gains a bonus feat. The bonus feat must be selected from the following list, and the Soldier must meet all of the prerequisites of the feat to select it.

Advanced Firearms Proficiency, Archaic Weapons Proficiency, Brawl, Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Exotic Firearms Proficiency, Exotic Melee Weapon Proficiency, Far Shot, Great Cleave, Home Ground, Improved Brawl, Improved Knockout Punch, Knockout Punch, Power Attack, Quick Reload.

Formation Fighting

At 4th level, a Soldier gains the ability to fight more effectively when in formation. Whenever the Soldier is within 5 feet of one or more allies, he and those allies each gain a +1 dodge bonus to Defense against melee attacks. At 7th level this dodge bonus increases to +2. Only one instance of the Defense bonus granted by this ability can be in effect at a given time, no matter how many allies to which the Soldier is adjacent or how many soldiers to which an ally is adjacent.

Table 6.19: The Soldier

Level	BAB	Fort	Ref	Will	Features	Defense	Reputation
1st	+0	+1	+1	+0	Weapon focus	+1	+0
2nd	+1	+2	+2	+0	Weapon specialization	+1	+0
3rd	+2	+2	+2	+1	Bonus feat	+2	+0
4th	+3	+2	+2	+1	Formation fighting	+2	+0
5th	+3	+3	+3	+1	Improved critical	+3	+1
6th	+4	+3	+3	+2	Bonus feat	+3	+1
7th	+5	+4	+4	+2	Tactical aid	+4	+1
8th	+6	+4	+4	+2	Greater weapon specialization	+4	+1
9th	+6	+4	+4	+3	Bonus feat	+5	+2
10th	+7	+5	+5	+3	Critical strike	+5	+2

Improved Critical

At 5th level, a Soldier's marksmanship improves. When attacking with the weapon chosen for the Weapon Specialization ability, the Soldier's critical threat range improves by one (e.g. "20" becomes "19-20").

Tactical Aid

As an attack action, a 7th level Soldier may provide tactical aid to any single ally (but not himself) within sight and voice range of the Soldier's position. Alternately, as a full-round action, the Soldier can spend 1 action point to provide tactical aid to all of his allies (including himself) within sight and voice range of the Soldier's position.

This aid provides a +1 competence bonus on attack rolls. The bonus lasts for a number of rounds equal to one-half of the Soldier's level in the advanced class, rounded down.

Greater Weapon Specialization

At 8th level, a Soldier gains Greater Weapon Specialization with the weapon he or she selected at 2nd level. This ability increases the bonus on damage rolls to +4 when using the selected weapon.

Critical Strike

At 10th level, a Soldier gains the ability to automatically confirm a critical threat as a critical hit when attacking with the weapon to which he or she has applied Weapon Specialization, eliminating the need to make a roll to confirm the critical hit.

TIN STAR

Whether a Territorial Marshal, a town sheriff or a local deputy, the Tin Star is the devoted defender of the everyday man and the defenseless. These local lawmen are often the only guiding force for civility in frontier settlements. Anyone can put on a badge and call himself a town sheriff, but simply having that badge doesn't make you a Tin Star. It takes a special breed to excel at enforcing the law. Courage, perseverance and integrity are the trademarks of the successful Tin Star character. The ever-present ideas of maintaining order, keeping ordinary people safe from harm and defending the rights of all citizens drives a Tin Star's everyday actions. Of course, a steady and accurate aim to back up those traits will make a huge difference in any lawman's longevity.

The earliest a character can enter the Tin Star advanced class is at 4th level, via the Strong hero basic class.

Requirements

To qualify as a Tin Star, a character must fulfill the following criteria.

Base Attack Bonus: +3.
Skills: Diplomacy 3 ranks, Investigate 3 ranks, Knowledge (civics) 3 ranks.
Feat: Trustworthy

Tin Star Vitals

The following information pertains to the Tin Star advanced class.

Grit Die: A Tin Star gains 1d10 grit per level. The character's Constitution modifier applies.

Action Points: A Tin Star gains a number of action points equal to 6 + one-half his character level, rounded down, every time he attains a new level in this class.

Class Skills: The Tin Star's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are: Bluff (Cha), Concentration (Con), Diplomacy (Cha), Gather Information (Cha), Intimidate (Cha), Investigate (Int), Knowledge (behavioral sciences, civics, current events, popular culture,

You have read my opinions of the gallant men who pin on tin badges and stand between the innocent and the dastardly, but they bear repeating. In a land where skill with a gun too often decided whose rules would prevail over another's, the sheriffs, marshals, Pinkertons and deputies who take up arms to defend their fellow men became the Law in fact as well as name. Men such as Tilghman, Thompson, Short, Hickok, and—yes indeed—Masterson have gone down in history walking shoulder-to-shoulder as lawmen.

However, for my money, one man stands above all the rest. Wyatt Earp—Marshal of Dodge City, Deputy Town Marshal (under his brother Virgil) of Tombstone, and United States Marshal—is a name that evokes the very essence of the lawman. One can picture him in black coat and hat, dressed almost like an undertaker, his tin star glinting in the sunlight, a shotgun swinging in his hand almost without effort. Wyatt Earp's name was enough to quell men who had never paid heed to any lawman in their lives, and his word was always his bond.

Wyatt Earp remained the very model of a lawman even during the vengeance he took on Curly Bill and his gang after the murder of his brother Morgan and the maiming of his brother Virgil. Though accusations of murder dogged Earp, he secured an appointment as United States Marshal, and pursued his revenge in the name not only of the slain Morgan, but of the law.

streetwise, tactics) (Int), Profession (Wis), Read/Write Language (none) Ride (Dex), Search (Int), Sense Motive (Wis), Sleight of Hand (Dex), Speak Language (none), Spot (Wis), Treat Injury (Wis).

Skill Points at Each Level: 5 + Int modifier.

Class Features

The following features pertain to the Tin Star advanced class.

Flash the Badge

A Tin Star and his deeds are often well-known inside and outside of his jurisdiction. Therefore, the citizenry across the west is usually more inclined to aid the Tin Star when he requests help. The character gains a circumstance bonus to all Diplomacy and Gather Information checks equal to the Tin Star's Reputation bonus.

Posse

Tin Stars have the power and clout to quickly form posses. Beginning at 2nd level, by spending an action point they can immediately have armed men at their disposal within 1d4 hours, ready to track down wanted criminals, (as shown on Table 6.21: Posse Members by Level). The Tin Star must be within a populated area to use this ability. Unless the Judge has a list of townsfolk from which to draw the members of the posse, all posse members should be Tough ordinaries (see Ordinaries, page 271).

A posse will stay formed for 1d4 days plus the Tin Star's class level plus his Reputation bonus before it begins to dissolve. The members of the posse may all ride off at the same time or gradually dissipate depending upon the situation (Judge's discretion).

Table 6.21: Posse Members by Level

Tin Star	Posse Members by Level			
Level	1st	2nd	3rd	4th
2	3	-	-	-
3	4	1	-	-
4	4	2	-	-
5	4	2	1	-
6	5	3	1	-
7	5	3	2	-
8	6	3	2	-
9	6	4	2	-
10	6	4	2	1

Bonus Feats

At 3rd, 6th, and 9th level, the Tin Star gains a bonus feat. The bonus feat must be selected from the following list, and the Tin Star must meet all prerequisites of the feat to select it.

Brawl, Combat Expertise, Confident, Defensive Riding, Dodge, Endurance, Gunplay, Home Ground, Improved Knockout Punch, Knockout Punch, Frightful Presence, Heroic Surge, Low Profile, Personal Firearms Proficiency, Renown, Sidewinder, Track, Trail Lore.

Nonlethal Force

At 4th level, a Tin Star becomes adept at using nonlethal force to subdue an opponent. From this point on, he can deal nonlethal damage with a weapon that normally deals lethal damage (if he so chooses) without taking the normal –4 penalty on the attack roll.

Deputy

At 5th level, a Tin Star gains a loyal assistant in enforcing the law. This assistant may be an official deputized law enforcement agent or he may be an informal associate such as the Lone Ranger's Indian

Table 6.20: The Tin Star

Level	BAB	Fort	Ref	Will	Features	Defense	Reputation
1st	+0	+1	+0	+1	Flash the badge	+1	+1
2nd	+1	+2	+0	+2	Posse	+1	+1
3rd	+2	+2	+1	+2	Bonus feat	+2	+1
4th	+3	+2	+1	+2	Nonlethal force	+2	+2
5th	+3	+3	+1	+3	Deputy	+3	+2
6th	+4	+3	+2	+3	Bonus feat	+3	+2
7th	+5	+4	+2	+4	Discern lie	+4	+3
8th	+6	+4	+2	+4	Watchful eye	+4	+3
9th	+6	+4	+3	+4	Bonus feat	+5	+3
10th	+7	+5	+3	+5	Inspire posse	+5	+4

companion, Tonto. The deputy is a heroic character that is always 2 levels lower than the Tin Star's class level (see Heroic Judge Characters, page 273).

The deputy may have levels in any combination of basic and advanced classes and should be generated as if he was a new player character. As with all newly generated characters, the Judge may place any restrictions he or she deems appropriate on that character's development. Every time the Tin Star gains a class level, so does the deputy. Since the deputy does not actually earn experience points, he cannot spend them for any class abilities or feats that require them (such as the Master Craftsman feat).

As long as the deputy is treated fairly by the Tin Star, he will continue to serve faithfully. If the deputy is killed or leaves (perhaps due to poor treatment), the deputy may be replaced in 4d4 weeks. The replacement deputy will begin play at the Tin Star's class level minus two. If the Tin Star develops a reputation for treating his deputies poorly or for risking their lives unnecessarily, the Judge may require that the character spend a longer period of time seeking out a new deputy. Furthermore, the Judge may apply a penalty to the replacement deputy's starting level that is equal to the previous number of deputies that the Tin Star has lost under inauspicious circumstances.

Discern Lie

At 7th level, a Tin Star develops the ability to gauge whether another character is telling the truth by reading facial expressions and interpreting body language. The Tin Star must be able to see and hear (but not necessarily understand) the individual under scrutiny.

With a successful Sense Motive check opposed by the subject's Bluff check result or against DC 10 (whichever is greater), the Tin Star can tell whether the subject is deliberately and knowingly speaking a lie. This ability doesn't reveal the truth, uncover unintentional inaccuracies, or necessarily reveal omissions in information.

Watchful Eye

Beginning at 8th level, the Tin Star gains the ability to recognize known or potential criminals when surveying crowds or meeting individuals. This provides a +2 bonus to all Spot, Sense Motive and Reputation checks to recognize a known criminal or to identify someone in the process of committing a crime.

Inspire Posse

At 10th level, a Tin Star gains the ability to push his posse to the edge. By spending a full-round action exhorting his posse, the Tin Star inspires all members of his posse, granting each a +1 morale bonus to attack rolls, damage rolls, saving throws, skill checks, and ability checks for a duration of 10 minutes.

WRANGLER

"There ain't a man that can't be thrown...and there ain't a horse that can't be rode."

Johnny Portugal – *The Unforgiven, 1960*

Hard-nosed hombres at home in the saddle—that's the best way to describe Wranglers. Their abilities while on horseback are unsurpassed by any other character class. Wranglers are often found leading the saddle horses during the great cattle drives of the west or serving as a ranch hand or in any other occupation that requires great skill with a horse.

Weeks on end in the saddle can make many Wranglers gruff and terse at times, but most tend to have an affable social side as well. Many Wranglers bond with their mounts more than they relate to their human traveling companions. In their eyes, a strong horse is worth two or three times as many sidekicks. Wranglers come from a variety of backgrounds ranging from the eastern greenhorn seeking adventure in the west to the youth who grew up on a ranch as a groom or stableboy.

The earliest a character can enter the Wrangler advanced class is at 4th level, via the Fast or Tough hero basic classes.

Requirements

To qualify as a Wrangler, a character must fulfill the following criteria.

Base Attack Bonus: +2.
Skills: Handle Animal 3 ranks, Ride 6 ranks.
Feats: Animal Affinity, Defensive Riding.

Wrangler Vitals

The following information pertains to the Wrangler advanced class.

Grit Die: A Wrangler gains 1d8 grit per level. The character's Constitution modifier applies.

Action Points: A Wrangler gains a number of action points equal to 6 + one-half his character level, rounded down, every time he attains a new level in this class.

Table 6.22: The Wrangler

Level	BAB	Fort	Ref	Will	Features	Defense	Reputation
1st	+0	+1	+2	+0	Bronco bustin'	+1	+0
2nd	+1	+2	+3	+0	Bareback riding	+1	+0
3rd	+2	+2	+3	+1	Bonus feat	+2	+0
4th	+3	+2	+4	+1	Cool in the saddle	+2	+0
5th	+3	+3	+4	+1	Quick turn	+3	+1
6th	+4	+3	+5	+2	Bonus feat	+3	+1
7th	+5	+4	+5	+2	Ride like the wind	+4	+1
8th	+6	+4	+6	+2	Horse whisperer	+4	+1
9th	+6	+4	+6	+3	Bonus feat	+5	+2
10th	+7	+5	+7	+3	Saddle sweep	+5	+2

Class Skills: The Wrangler's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are: Craft (structural) (Int), Handle Animal (Cha), Jump (Str), Knowledge (current events, popular culture) (Int), Listen (Wis), Perform (sing, stringed instrument, wind instrument) (Cha), Profession (Wis), Read/Write Language (none), Ride (Dex), Speak Language (none), Spot (Wis), Survival (Wis), Swim (Str).

Skill Points at Each Level: 5 + Int modifier.

Class Features

The following features pertain to the Wrangler advanced class.

Bronco Bustin'

Wranglers receive a competence bonus equal to one-half their class level (rounded down with a minimum of +1) on all Handle Animal and Ride skill checks when dealing with horses.

Bareback Riding

Wranglers are experts at riding a horse, with or without tack. When riding a horse without a saddle, a 2nd level Wrangler no longer suffers the standard –5 penalty.

Bonus Feats

At 3rd, 6th, and 9th level, the Wrangler gains a bonus feat. The bonus feat must be selected from the following list, and the Wrangler must meet all prerequisites of the feat to select it.

Blazing Saddle, Brawl, Cavalry Training, Endurance, Exotic Ranged Weapon Proficiency (bolo or lasso), Guide, Horse Tradin', Point Blank Shot, Ride-by Attack, Spirited Charge, Trail Lore, Trample.

Cool in the Saddle

At 4th level a Wrangler is so at ease while on horseback that he can take 10 on any Ride skill checks required, even when normally it wouldn't be allowed because of stress.

Quick Turn

A skilled Wrangler can often convince a horse to perform beyond the level that the horse would achieve even without a rider. A 5th level Wrangler can force a charging horse to make one quick turn (up to 90 degree in angle), during the course of a charge.

Ride Like the Wind

At 7th level a Wrangler can urge his mount to greater speeds. A number of times per day equal to the Constitution modifier of his horse, the Wrangler can increase the base speed of his mount by 10 feet for a number of minutes equal to his class level plus his Wisdom modifier without ill effects to the mount. If the Wrangler mounts a new horse, any previous uses of this ability applied to different horses don't count against the maximum number of uses per day. Ride Like the Wind cannot be used simultaneously with the Spur Mount task of the Ride skill (see page 92).

Horse Whisperer

An 8th level Wrangler can improve the attitude of a horse. This ability functions just like a Diplomacy check made to improve the attitude of a person. However, instead of making a Diplomacy check the Wrangler makes a Handle Animal check. The typical domestic horse has a starting attitude of indifferent, while mustangs are usually unfriendly. To use this class feature, the wrangler and the horse must be able to study each other, which means that they must be within 30 feet of one another under normal conditions. Generally, influencing a horse in this way takes 1 minute, but as with influencing people, it might take more or less time (Judge's discretion).

Saddle Sweep

Wranglers are adept at hitting their opponents in order to dismount them. Before attacking, a 10th level Wrangler may choose to attempt to dismount a foe with their attack. When doing so, the Wrangler suffers a -4 attack penalty; if the attack is successful, his opponent must make a successful Riding skill check (DC15 plus the damage inflicted) or fall from his mount.

CHAPTER SEVEN : COMBAT

"In any combat between a rogue and a fool the sympathy of mankind is always with the rogue."

H.L. Mencken

Zeke smiled as wide as the Mississippi. "Melody, take a peek inside the stage, while we relieve these varmints of their shootin' irons." Melody dismounted, followed by Fate.

Still in their saddles, Sam and Hildi kept their guns trained on the drivers while Zeke continued. "All right, fellahs, nice and easy now," he said. Slowly, the two men reached for their rifles and held them aloft. "That's right. Toss 'em on down . . . and don't get brave . . . "

Melody's piercing scream cut off Zeke. He turned, finding her struggling against the grip of a masked scoundrel. The big man was half out of the stage, holding Melody before him like a shield, her feet dangling over the stage step. Fate had both of his Colts aimed, but he didn't dare shoot. Too much of a risk to hit his friend.

Sam and Hildi regained their wits after the momentary diversion, again sighting the drivers. But now, those two men had their own rifle stocks secure against their shoulders, pointed right back at Sam and Hildi.

The man holding Melody yelled through the cover of his flour-sack mask. "All of ya, drop 'em right quick, unless you want to make a mess of this here pretty lil' Gunter sister."

For several heartbeats, nobody moved. "I said drop 'em!" the masked man repeated.

Someone else spoke from inside the stage—someone whose squeaky voice penetrated the momentary stillness in stark contrast to the masked man's gruff tones.

"Don't worry, Meese, these boys wouldn't do anything that might hurt sweet Mel." The squeaky man peeked over the scoundrel's shoulder, meeting Fate's gaze. "I'm sure that *Lafayette* will do the right thing."

"Fate, who the hell is in there?" Hildi asked, never once taking her eye off the driver in her Spencer's sight.

Combat

While the title of this chapter might seem to indicate a narrow scope, in actuality the term Combat refers to a wide range of game rules governing the interaction of characters and critters during combat situations in gameplay. For example, the Gunter Gang's encounter with the stagecoach can be explained in terms of the game rules that follow in this chapter—their moves, the factor of surprise, the order in which events occur and so forth. This chapter covers all the elements of combat that you will need to account for in your game play, including movement, initiative, free-actions and more.

Combat Sequence

Combat is played out in rounds, and in each round everybody acts in turn in a regular cycle. Combat usually runs in the following sequence.

1. Each combatant starts the battle flat-footed (see Character Condition Summary, page 228). Once a combatant acts, he or she is no longer flat-footed.
2. Every combat begins with a fast-draw round. The Judge determines which combatants start the battle aware of their opponents. The combatants who are aware of their opponents can act in the fast-draw round, so they roll for initiative. In initiative order (highest to lowest), combatants who started the battle aware of their opponents each take one move or attack action. Combatants who were unaware don't get to act in the fast-draw round.
3. Once the fast-draw round has concluded, combatants who have not yet rolled initiative do so. All combatants are now ready to begin their first regular round.
4. Combatants act in initiative order.
5. When everyone has had a turn, the round ends. The combatant with the highest initiative acts again, and steps 4 and 5 repeat until combat ends.

Combat Statistics

This section summarizes the fundamental combat statistics used in *Sidewinder: Recoiled* game play.

Attack Roll

An attack roll represents a character's attempts to strike an opponent. When a character makes an attack, roll 1d20 and add his or her attack bonus (see below). If the result equals or exceeds the target's Defense, the character scores a hit and deals damage. Many modifiers can affect the attack roll (see Combat Modifiers, page 214).

A natural 1 (the d20 comes up 1) on the attack roll is always a miss. A natural 20 (the d20 comes up 20) is always a hit. A natural 20 is also a critical threat—that is, a possible critical hit.

If the character is non-proficient with the weapon he or she is using for the attack, that character suffers a –4 penalty on the attack roll. As noted in Chapter 4, the possession of a specific weapon proficiency feat is required to avoid this penalty.

Attack Bonus

As with all d20 compliant combat systems, *Sidewinder: Recoiled* uses two basic methods of attacking an opponent: melee attacks (which includes armed and unarmed attacks) and ranged attacks (throwing or shooting a weapon). The following two formulas represent the normal calculation of attack bonuses for combat.

A character's attack bonus with a melee weapon (or an unarmed melee attack) is:

melee attack bonus = base attack bonus + Strength modifier + size modifier .

With a ranged weapon, a character's attack bonus is:

ranged attack bonus = base attack bonus + Dexterity modifier + range penalty + size modifier .

Strength Modifier

Strength helps a character swing a weapon harder and faster, so a character's Strength modifier applies to melee attack rolls. Some feats or class abilities may allow other ability modifiers to be used on melee attacks, such as the Weapon Finesse feat (which allows a character to use his or her Dexterity modifier instead of the Strength modifier).

Size Modifier

The attacker's size category provides a bonus or penalty to his or her attack roll as shown in Table 7.1: Size Modifiers. Creature size categories are defined differently from the size categories for weapons and other objects. Since this size modifier applies to Defense as well as to melee attacks or ranged attacks, two creatures of the same size will end up striking each other normally, because the attack modifier and defense modifier arising from size will negate each other.

Table 7.1: Size Modifiers

Size	Example	Size Modifier
Colossal	blue whale [90 ft. long]	–8
Gargantuan	gray whale [40 ft. long]	–4
Huge	elephant	–2
Large	lion	–1
Medium-size	human	+0
Small	German shepherd	+1
Tiny	housecat	+2
Diminutive	rat	+4
Fine	horsefly	+8

Dexterity Modifier

Dexterity measures coordination, deftness and steadiness, so a character's Dexterity modifier applies when attacking with a ranged weapon.

Range Penalty

The range penalty for a ranged weapon depends on the weapon the character is using and the distance to the target. All ranged weapons and thrown weapons have a range increment (see Table 5.8: Ranged Weapons, Table 5.12: Explosives and Splash Weapons, and Table 5.13: Melee Weapons). Any attack from a distance of less than one range increment isn't penalized for range. However, each full range increment causes a cumulative –2 penalty on the attack roll. A thrown weapon has a maximum range of five range increments. Ranged weapons that fire projectiles can shoot up to ten increments.

For example, a Colt Walker Dragoon has a range increment of 40 feet. If a character is shooting a Dragoon at a target within 40 feet, he or she doesn't suffer a penalty for range. For a distance from 40 to 79 feet, the range penalty would be –2, from 80 to 119 feet –4, and so on. The Colt Walker Dragoon's maximum range is 400 feet, at which the range penalty would be –18 (–2 x 9 for 9 range increments beyond the first).

Damage

When a character scores a hit using a weapon, he or she deals damage according to the type of weapon. For example, a saber deals 1d6 damage, while a Colt Walker Dragoon deals 2d6 damage. Effects that modify weapon damage also apply to unarmed strikes and the natural physical attack forms of creatures. Damage is deducted from the target's current grit.

Strength Bonus

When a character hits with a melee weapon (including an unarmed melee attack) or thrown weapon, add his or her Strength modifier to the damage. There are two common exceptions that change the damage bonus arising from a high Strength score. Neither of these exceptions apply if the character has a low Strength score (less than 10) resulting in a Strength modifier that is a penalty instead of a bonus.

Off-Hand Weapon: When a character deals damage with a melee weapon used in his or her off hand, add only one-half of the character's Strength bonus (rounded down).

Wielding a Weapon Two-Handed: When a character deals damage with a melee weapon that he or she is wielding two-handed, add 1.5 times the character's Strength bonus (rounded down). However, the character doesn't get this higher Strength bonus when using a light weapon two-handed; in such a case, only the character's normal Strength bonus applies to the damage roll.

NOTE ON HANDEDNESS

As noted in Chapter 4: Feats (see Off-Hand Penalties, page 112), the Judge may determine that a character's "handedness" must be declared. The rules for Strength bonuses, attack bonuses and other related combat statistics in the d20 Modern Roleplaying Game already take into account the effect of an off hand. When attacking with two weapons a character's off hand is less accurate and has a lower effective Strength bonus. Yet, in the standard rules, whether a character is right or left handed is never specified. Thus, the off hand can potentially be changed as desired. When using the optional Handedness rule, a player must decide whether his character is dextral or sinistral during character generation.

Minimum Weapon Damage

If penalties to damage bring the damage result below 1, a hit still deals 1 point of damage.

Critical Threats and Critical Hits

When a character makes an attack roll and the result is a natural 20 (the d20 shows 20), the character hits regardless of the target's Defense, and the character has scored a threat of a critical hit. To confirm that it is actually a critical hit, immediately make another attack roll with all the same modifiers as the original attack roll that scored the threat. If the second roll also results in a hit against the target's Defense, the attack is a critical hit. (The second roll just needs to hit to confirm a critical hit; it doesn't need to be a second 20.) If the second roll is a miss, then the attack deals only the damage of a regular hit.

A critical hit multiplies the damage. Unless otherwise specified, the multiplier is x2. (It is possible for some weapons to have higher multipliers, doing more damage

on a critical hit.) Some weapons have expanded threat ranges, making a critical hit more likely; however, with these weapons, only a 20 is an automatic hit. The Critical column on Table 5.8: Ranged Weapons, Table 5.12: Explosives and Splash Weapons, and Table 5.13: Melee Weapons indicates the threat range for each weapon. Additionally, some feats, such as Advanced Combat Martial Arts, can change the critical hit damage calculation.

As noted in Multiplying Damage (see below), bonus damage represented as extra dice isn't multiplied when a character scores a critical hit. In other words, the extra dice are rolled after the multiplication then added to the total.

Multiplying Damage

Sometimes damage is multiplied by some factor. When this occurs, the method in which damage is determined is different depending on whether the multiplier is an integer multiplier that increases damage (such as double or x2 damage) or if the multiplier is a fractional multiplier that decreases damage (such as one-half, or x1/2 damage).

If the multiplier is an integer (such as occurs with critical hits), roll the damage (with all modifiers) a number of times appropriate for the multiplier and total the results. The exception to this is bonus damage represented as extra dice, such as that granted by the Rustler's Low Blow ability. Don't multiply bonus damage dice when a character scores a critical hit.

For example, Sam bears down on his opponent with his Colt revolver and decides to use the Slip Hammer feat. As luck would have it, he scores a critical hit. When using the Slip Hammer feat, Sam deals one extra die of damage, or in this case 3d6 points of grit instead of the normal 2d6. With the critical hit, he deals 5d6 and not 6d6 points of grit damage as the +1d6 of damage granted by Slip Hammer is not multiplied (i.e. [2d6 x 2] + 1d6 = 5d6). If instead, Sam scored a critical hit with a punch, he would inflict his normal damage twice, or 2d3 + 4 (1d3 + 2 twice).

If more than one integer multiplier applies, each multiplier is applied separately to the base damage. For instance, in the example above, if for some reason Sam received a x2 multiplier to damage and rolled a critical hit with his Colt revolver (x2 damage as well), he would inflict 7d6 (2d6 for a standard hit, +2d6 for a critical hit, +2d6 for the additional x2 multiplier, and +1d6 for using the Slip Hammer feat).

If the multiplier is fractional, roll damage once (with all the standard modifiers) then multiply the result by the fraction. If both fractional and integer multipliers apply, first roll damage as if only the integer modifiers exist then multiply the total by each of the fractional multipliers.

For example, Sam uses the Slip Hammer feat while firing his Colt revolver at a Fast hero with the Defensive Roll talent (see Defensive Roll, page 32). The attack results in a critical hit that inflicts x2 damage. The Fast hero uses the Defensive Roll talent, succeeds on the Reflex save, and takes only one-half damage. In this case, the player that controls Sam rolls 5d6 damage (4d6 for the critical +1d6 for the Slip Hammer feat), obtaining 20 points of damage. Subsequently, because of the successful Defensive Roll, this damage is then reduced to 10 (10 = 1/2 x 20) before being subtracted from the Fast hero's current grit.

WHAT'S DIFFERENT?

To make gunfights and other Old West combat situations more cinematic and dangerous, *Sidewinder: Recoiled* includes several differences from the d20 Modern Roleplaying Game combat rules. Some existing rules were changed; optional rules are offered; and a few new elements have also been introduced. For instance: any successful hit on a flat-footed character is now an automatic critical threat (confirmation rules still apply); optional rules for massive damage are introduced as a way to make saves more difficult; and new Showdown rules have been installed to help simulate the classic preamble to the high noon duel. Additionally, all combats begin with a fast-draw round which is functionally identical to a surprise round, while an optional nonlethal damage rule is offered to make low level characters easier to knockout. Finally, Mounted Combat rules are provided—rules designed to more closely resemble the d20 Modern vehicle rules rather than a direct import of the existing d20 rules.

Defense

A character's Defense represents how hard it is for opponents to score a solid, damaging blow to the character. It's the minimum attack roll result needed by an opponent to score a hit on the character. The average, unarmored cowpoke has a Defense of 10, which is modified by Dexterity, character class, equipment and size. A character's Defense is determined by the following formula:

Defense = 10 + Dexterity modifier + class bonus + equipment bonus + size modifier .

Dexterity Modifier

If a character's Dexterity is high, he or she is particularly adept at dodging blows or gunfire. If a character's Dexterity is low, he or she is particularly inept at it. Characters apply their Dexterity modifier to Defense.

Sometimes the Dexterity bonus isn't applicable. If for any reason a character cannot react to an opponent's attack, that character cannot use his or her Dexterity bonus to Defense. For example, a character who is unconscious has no way of using the advantages of a high Dexterity to help defend against an attack.

Class Bonus

A character's class and level grant the character a bonus to Defense. This bonus applies in most situations, even when the character is flat-footed or when the character would lose his or her Dexterity bonus for some other reason. The exception is when the character is helpless (see Helpless Defenders, page 216); no class bonus applies in this case.

Equipment Bonus

Armor and other protective equipment can provide a bonus to a character's Defense. This bonus represents the armor's ability to protect the character from blows. Armor provides a minimum bonus to anyone wearing it, but a character proficient in the use of a certain type of armor receives a larger bonus to Defense when wearing that type of armor. Characters gain armor proficiency by selecting specific feats.

Sometimes a character cannot use his or her equipment bonus to Defense. If an attack will damage the character just by touching him or her (such as an electrical shock) that character cannot add his or her equipment bonus (see Touch Attacks below).

Size Modifier

The bigger the opponent is, the easier he or she is to hit. Conversely, a smaller opponent is harder to hit. The size of the target modifies its Defense as shown on Table 7.1: Size Modifiers. Because the size of the attacker modifies his or her attack rolls, creatures of the same size attack each other as if the modifiers didn't apply (the modifier to attack bonus and Defense negate each other).

Creature sizes are compatible with vehicle sizes; thus, when attacking a vehicle these same size modifiers to Defense apply.

Other Modifiers

Other factors can add to a character's Defense, including selected feats, critters' natural defenses, and a special category called dodge bonuses.

Feats: Some feats, such as Dodge, Agile Riposte and Sidewinder, give a bonus to a character's Defense.

Natural Armor: Some creatures have natural armor, which usually consists of scales, fur, or layers of thick fat or muscle.

Dodge Bonuses: Some other Defense bonuses represent actively avoiding blows. These bonuses are called dodge bonuses. Any situation that denies a character his or her Dexterity bonus also denies dodge bonuses. Unlike most sorts of bonuses, dodge bonuses do stack with each other.

Touch Attacks

Some attacks disregard armor. In these cases, the attacker makes a touch attack roll (either a ranged touch attack roll or a melee touch attack roll). The attacker makes his or her attack roll as normal, but a character's Defense does not include any equipment bonus or armor bonus. All other modifiers, such as class bonus, Dexterity modifier, and size modifier, apply normally.

Grit

A character's total grit determines how much punishment he or she can take before becoming incapacitated. Grit is determined by the character's class, level, and Constitution modifier. Whenever a character is damaged by an attack, his or her grit is reduced by the amount of damage inflicted.

When a character's current grit drops to 0, he or she is disabled. When it drops to –1, he or she is dying. When it drops to –10, the character is dead. See Effects of Grit Damage on page 225 for further details.

Speed

A character's speed indicates how far he or she can move during a move action. Normally, humans move at a speed of 30 feet, but some characters and creatures may move faster or slower. Wearing armor can slow a character down (see Armor, page 153), as can carrying a load (see Carrying Capacity, page 131).

Normally, a character moves using a move action, leaving an attack action to attack; however, the character can use his or her attack action as a second move action. This enables the character to move again, for a total movement of up to double his or her normal speed. Another option is to run "all-out" (a full-round action). This allows the character to move up to four times his or her normal speed, but a character can run "all-out" in a straight line only—and doing so affects the character's Defense (see Run, page 211).

Saving Throws

Generally, when a character is subject to an unusual attack, he or she is allowed a saving throw to avoid, or reduce, the attack's effect. A saving throw is a 1d20 roll plus a bonus based on the character's class and level (namely, the character's base save bonus) and an ability modifier.

A natural 1 (the d20 comes up 1) on a saving throw is always a failure. A natural 20 (the d20 comes up 20) is always a success.

A character's saving throw bonus is calculated by the following equation,

saving throw bonus = base save bonus + ability modifier .

The attack itself determines the Difficulty Class for the save.

Saving Throw Types

For game play, saving throws are divided into three different categories, as follows:

Fortitude: These saves measure a character's ability to stand up to massive physical punishment or attacks against his or her vitality and health, such as poison and paralysis. Apply a character's Constitution modifier to his or her Fortitude saving throws.

Reflex: These saves test a character's ability to dodge massive attacks such as an explosion or a train wreck. (Often, when damage is inevitable, a character is allowed to make a Reflex save to take only one-half damage.) Apply the character's Dexterity modifier to his or her Reflex saving throws.

Will: These saves reflect a character's resistance to mental influence, fear, duress and domination. Apply the character's Wisdom modifier to his or her Will saving throws.

Initiative

Every round, each combatant may perform an activity. The combatants' initiative checks, from highest to lowest, determine the order in which they act, from first to last. In other words, the individual with the highest initiative result goes first while the person with the lowest initiative result goes last. *(Ed. Note: As one who inevitably ends up last in the initiative order, I prefer to think of it as going first in the next round.)*

Initiative Checks

At the start of a battle, each combatant makes a single initiative check. An initiative check is a Dexterity check, and as such, each character applies his or her Dexterity modifier to the roll. Any character with the Improved Initiative feat gets an additional +4 bonus on the check. This determines what order characters are acting in, counting down from highest result to lowest, and each character then acts in turn. On all following rounds, the characters act in the same order (unless a character takes an action that results in a change to his or her initiative; see Special Initiative Actions, page 212). If two or more combatants have the same initiative check result, the tying combatants act in order of total initiative modifier (including Dexterity modifier and Improved Initiative bonus, if applicable). If there is still a tie, roll a die to determine the order, rolling until all ties are broken.

Flat-Footed: At the start of a battle, before the character has had a chance to act (specifically, before the character's first turn in the initiative order), the character is flat-footed. A character cannot apply his or her Dexterity bonus to Defense while flat-footed. Furthermore, whenever a flat-footed character is struck by a successful attack, that attack is an automatic critical threat—regardless of the die roll or the weapon's critical threat range. The critical must still be confirmed as usual.

Joining a Battle

If characters enter a battle after it has begun, they roll initiative at that time. They can then act whenever their turn comes up in the existing order.

Surprise

When a combat starts, if a character was unaware of his or her enemies, that character is surprised. Likewise, a character can surprise his or her enemies if the character knows about them before they're aware of the character. Combatants who are unaware at the start of battle do not get to act in the fast-draw round. Unaware combatants are still flat-footed because they have not acted yet. Because of this, they lose any Dexterity bonus to Defense and any attacks against them are automatic critical threats.

Fast-Draw Round

Every combat begins with a fast-draw round, which occurs before regular rounds. Combatants who are aware of their opponents can act in the fast-draw round, so they must roll for initiative. Initiative rolled during a fast-draw round can be modified by a number of circumstances, as listed in Table 7.2: Fast-Draw Round Initiative Modifiers. In initiative order (highest to lowest), combatants starting the battle aware of their opponents each take either an attack action or move action during the fast-draw round (see Action Types, page 207). Remember, that unless a character possesses the Quick Draw feat, drawing a weapon is a move action.

Table 7.2: Fast-Draw Round Initiative Modifiers

Circumstance	Initiative Modifier
Losing a Showdown	-2
Losing a Showdown badly	-4
Draws first	+2
Draws a longarm	-8
Weapon already drawn	+4
Weapon drawn and aimed	+6
Double action revolver	+1

Losing a Showdown: As explained in Showdowns (see below), a character who loses the opposed check suffers a –2 penalty to his or her initiative check.

Losing a Showdown Badly: As explained in Showdowns (see below), a character who loses the opposed check by five or more suffers a –4 penalty to his or her initiative check.

Draws First: If combat is initiated by one opponent declaring that he is going for his gun, the combatant who decided to draw first receives a +2 circumstance bonus on his or her initiative check.

Draws a Longarm: Due to a longarm's size and bulk, any combatant who draws one during a fast-draw round incurs a –8 penalty on his or her initiative check. This penalty should be applied when drawing any weapon requiring two hands to wield (crossbows, claymores, etc.).

Weapon Already Drawn: If a gunfighter already has his hogleg drawn at the onset of hostilities, he or she receives a +4 circumstance bonus to the initiative check.

Weapon Drawn and Aimed: If a gunfighter not only has a weapon drawn, but is already aiming that weapon at an opponent, he or she receives a +6 circumstance bonus to the initiative check. This bonus should be applied only if the gunfighter intends to fire at the opponent on whom he or she has a bead.

Double-Action Revolver: A fighter drawing a double-action revolver receives a +1 equipment bonus on the initiative check.

Showdowns

Two steely-eyed hombres staring each other down at 60 paces on Main Street at high noon … the classic Western showdown. A showdown is more than simply drawing a sidearm and firing; your gunfighter's courage must also be taken into account.

No showdown starts without a test of wills. The gunfighters stand and stare at each other, trying to frighten, distract, or otherwise unnerve their opponent. This attempt to impress and size-up the opponent is simulated by an opposed Intimidate check occurring before the fast-draw round that initiates combat. Each participant makes an Intimidate check, and once the bullets start flying, the loser suffers a –2 penalty to the upcoming initiative check. If a participant loses by five or more, the penalty is increased to –4. Remember that an Intimidate check can be performed untrained; thus, any

SHOWDOWN AND FAST-DRAW ROUND EXAMPLE

Fate leans against the hitchin' post outside of the Dry Gullet Saloon, ignoring the surreptitious glances of the townsfolk. *That coward Willy Miller won't show,* he thinks. But soon enough there Willy is, skulking along the street, along with two of Martel's other henchmen.

Fate steps out into the street and the onlookers scatter to porches, doorways and windows. For a moment, Fate wonders if Willy will accept the challenge like a man, or if the three curs plan to gang up on him. Just then, the two others split off and saunter up to the porch of Betty Lou's Bordello.

The two gunfighters square-off, some twenty paces apart. A cloud passes in front of the noonday sun, casting a veil over the street. The gunfighters stare and the crowd hushes. Fate turns to stone, but he sees a shake in Willy's gun hand and a twitch in his shoulders.

In gameplay, Fate and Willy make opposed Intimidate checks at this point. Fate rolls an 8 and adds his Intimidate skill modifier of +13 (10 Intimidate skill ranks, +1 Charisma modifier, and +2 for Fate's Empathy talent) for a total of 21. Willy rolls a 6 and after adding his modifiers gets a 14 (7 skill ranks, +1 Charisma modifier). Since Willy's result is 7 less than Fate's, he suffers a –4 penalty to his upcoming initiative check.

As Fate grins, Willy goes for his gun. It's no use; Fate's Colt has already cleared leather. He squeezes the trigger before the flat-footed fool even finishes the draw. His aim proves true. The bullet strikes Willy just above his heart.

As the gunfighters begin the fast-draw round, they make initiative checks. Fate rolls a 15, adds +2 for his Dexterity modifier, adds +1 for his Greased Lightning class feature (see the Gunslinger advanced class, page 173), and gets a total of 18. Willy rolls a 17, adds his Dexterity modifier of +1, adds +2 for "drawing first" (see Table 7.2: Fast-Draw Round Initiative Modifiers), and subtracts –4 for badly losing the showdown, getting a total of 16. Fate wins initiative, and because he possesses the Quick Draw feat, he can draw and fire during the fast-draw round.

Continued on page 227, Massive Damage Example

cowpoke can participate in a showdown.

If more than two gunfighters face off, all participants must make Intimidate checks. Each gunfighter compares his or her check with the Intimidate checks of all opponents. If a gunfighter's check is less than any opponent's Intimidate check, then the gunfighter receives a –2 penalty to Initiative. If the gunfighter's Intimidate check loses to any opposing check by five or more, the penalty increases to –4.

Combatants in a showdown are prepared for combat and aware of their opponents. Each gunfighter is considered to have a readied action that triggers on either a mutually agreed event (e.g. the ringing of the mission bell) or perhaps on an implicitly understood occurrence (e.g. whenever someone draws). As with all readied actions, the player must fully describe to the Judge what that action will be. For example, in a shootout involving multiple cowpokes on both sides, each fighter must specify at whom he will fire once the fight begins.

Actions in Combat

The fundamental actions of moving and attacking cover most of what a character wants to do in a battle. These fundamentals are described in this section. Other, more specialized options are introduced in Table 7.3: Actions in Combat. If an event arises which isn't covered by these rules, the following section should provide enough information for the Judge to improvise and adjudicate such uncommon activities.

The Combat Round

Each round represents 6 seconds in the game world. Each character involved in a combat is provided the opportunity to take action at least once per round. Anything a person could reasonably do in 6 seconds, a character can do in 1 round.

As explained previously in the Initiative section, each round of activity begins with the character with the highest initiative result and then proceeds, in order, from there. When a character's turn comes up in the initiative sequence, that character performs his or her entire round's worth of actions. (For exceptions, see Attacks of Opportunity on page 213 and Special Initiative Actions on page 212).

For most purposes, there is no significance to the end of a round or the beginning of a round. A round can be a segment of game time that starts with the first character's actions and ends with the last character's actions, but it usually means the span of time from a certain initiative number to the same initiative number in the next round. Effects that last a certain number of rounds end just before the same initiative count on which they began.

Action Types

Combat actions are divided into four types: attack actions, move actions, full-round actions, and free actions. During a normal combat round a character can take an attack action plus a move action, two move actions, or a full-round action. In some situations (such as in the fast-draw round) a character may be limited to taking only a single attack or move action. In conjunction with these attack, move and full-round actions, a character can also perform as many free actions as the Judge decides to allow.

Attack Action

An attack action allows a character to accomplish something other than moving. A character can make an attack, use a skill or a feat (unless the skill or feat requires a full-round action to carry out), or perform other similar actions (see Table 7.3: Actions in Combat). A character can take an attack action before or after performing a move action. During a fast-draw round a character may perform either an attack action or a move action, but not both.

Move Action

A move action allows a character to move his or her speed or perform an action that takes a similar amount of time. A character can move his or her speed, climb one-quarter of his or her speed, draw or stow a weapon or other object, stand up, pick up an object, or perform some equivalent action (see Table 7.3: Actions in Combat).

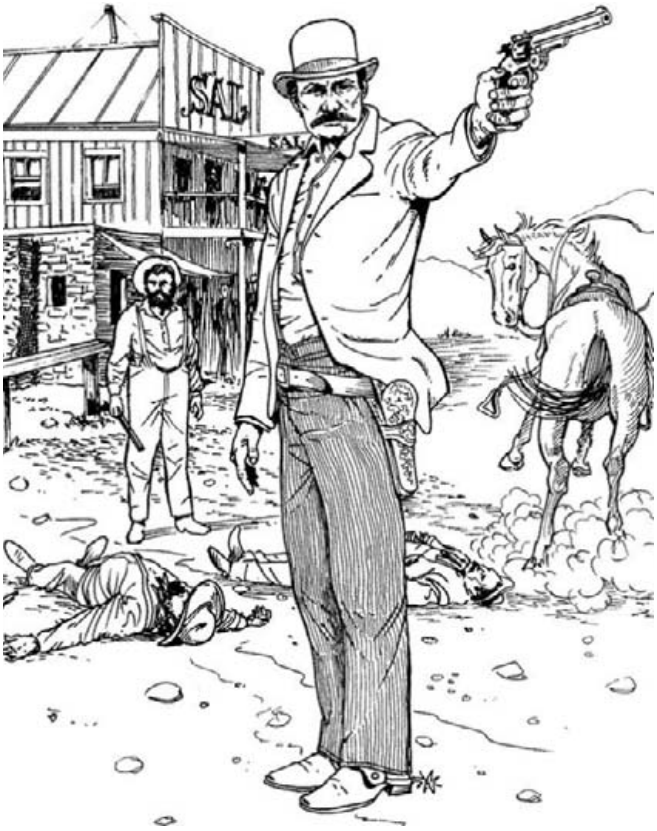


Table 7.3: Actions in Combat

Attack Actions	Attack of Opportunity [1]
Attack (melee weapon)	No
Attack (ranged)	Yes
Attack (unarmed)	Yes
Attack (aid another)	No
Bull rush (attack)	No
Escape a grapple	No
Feint (see the Bluff skill)	No
Ready (triggers an attack action)	No
Stabilize a dying character	Yes
Attack a weapon	Yes
Attack an object	Maybe [2]
Total defense	No
Use a skill that takes an attack action	Usually
Start/complete full-round action	Varies

Move Actions	Attack of Opportunity [1]
Move your speed	Yes
Use a piece of equipment	No
Climb (one-quarter speed)	No
Climb, accelerated (one-half speed)	No
Control a mount in combat	No
Crawl	No
Draw a weapon [3]	No
Holster a weapon	Yes
Move a heavy object	Yes
Open a door	No
Mount or Dismount a horse	No
Pick up an object	Yes
Reload a firearm with a already filled box magazine	Yes
Retrieve a stored object	Yes
Stand up from prone, sitting, or kneeling	Yes
Swim	No
Use a skill that takes a move action	Usually

Full-Round Actions	Attack of Opportunity [1]
Bull rush (charge)	No
Charge	No
Coup de grace	Yes
Full attack	No
Knockout Blow	Yes
Overrun (charge)	No
Run	Yes
Withdraw	No
Extinguish flames	No
Use a skill that takes a full round	Usually
Reload a firearm with an internal magazine	Yes

Free Actions	Attack of Opportunity [1]
Drop an object	No
Drop to prone, sitting, or kneeling	No
Speak	No

Action Type Varies	Attack of Opportunity [1]
Disarm [4]	Yes
Grapple [4]	Yes
Load a weapon	Yes
Trip an opponent [4]	No
Use a feat [5]	Varies

No Action	Attack of Opportunity [1]
Delay	No
5-foot step	No
Ready an action	No

1 Regardless of the action, if a character moves out of a threatened square, the character usually provokes an attack of opportunity. This column indicates whether the action itself, not moving, provokes an attack of opportunity.
2 If the object is being held, carried, or worn by a creature, yes. If not, no.
3 If the character has a base attack bonus of +1 or higher, he or she can combine this action with a regular move. If the character has the Two-Weapon Fighting feat, he or she can draw two light or one-handed weapons in the time it would normally take to draw one.
4 These attack forms substitute for a melee attack, not an action. As melee attacks, they can be used once in an attack or charge action, one or more times in a full-attack action, or even as an attack of opportunity.
5 The description of a feat defines its effect.

If a character moves no actual distance in a round, that character can take one 5-foot step before, during, or after the action.

Full-Round Action

A full-round action consumes all of a character's effort during a round. The only movement the character can take during a full-round action is a 5-foot step before, during, or after the action. Some full-round actions don't allow a character to take a 5-foot step; these are noted in the explanations for full-round actions. A character can also perform free actions as the Judge allows.

Free Action

Free actions consume a very small amount of time and effort, and over the span of the round, their impact is so minor that they are considered free. A character can perform one or more free actions while taking another action normally; however, the Judge may put reasonable limits on what a character can really do for free. For instance, dropping an object, dropping to a prone position, and speaking a sentence or two are all free actions, but a Judge may rule that doing all three in the same round, while also firing a weapon, is too much action for a six-second period.

Common Actions

Most common actions performed in combat are presented on Table 7.3: Actions in Combat and described in detail in the sections that follow. Some actions are dangerous to execute when enemies are nearby. Such actions are said to "provoke an attack of opportunity" in which nearby foes are allowed to take a free melee attack against the character performing the perilous action. (See Attacks of Opportunity on page 213 for more details.) Whether a particular action provokes attacks of opportunity is indicated in the right-hand column of Table 7.3: Actions in Combat.

Attack Actions

The following section describes common actions that can be performed using a single attack action. More specialized attack actions are mentioned in Table 7.3: Actions in Combat, and covered more completely in Special Attacks (see page 217).

Melee Attacks

A melee attack can be made with or without a weapon. Without a weapon, the attack is an unarmed melee attack. When the attack is made with a weapon, the attack is called an armed melee attack. In either case, a character can execute a melee attack against any enemy within 5 feet and such enemies are considered adjacent to the character. All melee attack rolls use the character's melee attack modifier.

A character capable of making more than one melee attack per round must use the full-attack action (see Full-Round Actions, page 210) in order to make more than one attack.

Armed Melee Attacks: Any attack made with a weapon is considered an armed melee attack. Whether the weapon is a pencil, a claymore, or a rifle butt is unimportant. On a successful strike, the character inflicts damage appropriate to the weapon used and the character's Strength bonus (see Effects of Grit Damage, page 225).

Unarmed Melee Attacks: Striking for damage with punches, kicks, and head butts is handled much like attacking with a melee weapon, except that an unarmed attack deals nonlethal damage. For purposes of two-weapon attack penalties, unarmed strikes count as light melee weapons. The following differences between unarmed and armed attacks apply.

Attacks of Opportunity: Making an unarmed attack against an armed opponent provokes an attack of opportunity from the opponent. The attack of opportunity comes before the character's unarmed attack. An unarmed attack doesn't provoke attacks of opportunity from foes other than the target, nor does it provoke an attack of opportunity from an unarmed foe.

"Armed" Unarmed Attacks: Sometimes a character or creature attacks without a melee weapon but the attack still counts as an armed attack. A creature with claws, fangs, and similar natural physical weapons, for example, is considered armed. This consideration counts for both offense and defense—that is, a creature using natural weapons doesn't provoke an attack of opportunity when attacking an armed foe, but a character who attempts an unarmed attack against such a creature does provoke an attack of opportunity from that creature. The Combat Martial Arts feat makes a character's unarmed attacks count as armed.

Unarmed Strike Damage: An unarmed strike from a Medium-size character deals 1d3 points (plus the character's Strength modifier, as normal) of nonlethal damage (see Nonlethal Damage, page 226). A character can specify that his or her unarmed strike will deal lethal damage before the character makes his or her attack roll, but the character incurs a –4 penalty on the attack roll because he or she has to strike a particularly vulnerable spot to deal lethal damage.

Fighting Defensively: A character can choose to fight defensively while making an armed or unarmed melee attack. If the character does so, he or she takes a –4 penalty on the attack roll to gain a +2 dodge bonus to Defense during that same round. Fighting defensively doesn't change any other action options.

Ranged Attacks

With a ranged weapon, a character can shoot or throw at any target that is within the ranged weapon's maximum range and in line of sight. A target is in line of sight if there are no solid obstructions between the character and the target. The maximum range for a thrown weapon is five range increments. For weapons that fire projectiles, it is ten range increments.

A character capable of making more than one ranged attack per round must use the full-attack action (see Full-Round Actions, page 210) in order to do so.

Shooting or Throwing into a Melee: If a character shoots or throws a ranged weapon at a target that is engaged in melee, the character takes a –4 penalty on his or her attack roll because the character has to aim carefully to hit the intended target. Two characters are engaged in melee if they are enemies and they are adjacent to one another. (An unconscious or otherwise

immobilized character is not considered engaged unless he or she is actually being attacked.)

If the target is so big that part of it is 10 feet or farther from its nearest opponent, the character can avoid the –4 penalty, even if the target is engaged in melee with one or more opponents.

An attacker using a longarm incurs a –4 penalty on attacks against adjacent opponents, because of the weapon's unwieldy shape and size.

Fighting Defensively: A character can choose to fight defensively while making a ranged attack. If the character does so, he or she takes a –4 penalty on his or her attack in the current round to gain a +2 dodge bonus to Defense in the same round.

Total Defense

Instead of attacking, a character can use his or her attack action solely to defend. This is called a total-defense action. The character doesn't get to attack or perform any other activity, but does gain a +4 dodge bonus to his or her Defense for one round. The character's Defense improves at the start of this action, so it helps against any attacks of opportunity the character is subject to while performing his or her remaining move action.

Start/Complete Full-Round Action

The "start/complete full-round action" allows a character to split the components of a full-round action over two consecutive rounds. That is, the character may start undertaking a full-round action (such as those listed on Table 7.3: Actions in Combat) at the end of his or her turn and complete a full-round action by using a move action at the beginning of his or her turn in the following round. Certain full-round actions cannot be split such that they span two combat rounds. The run, full-attack, withdraw, and charge actions are a non-exclusive list of such actions; it is the Judge's responsibility to determine whether other full-round actions can be split based on the circumstances.

Move Actions

With the exception of specific movement-related skills, most move actions don't require a check. In some cases, ability checks might be required. Three common move actions are described here.

Movement

The simplest move action is moving the character's normal speed. If a character takes this kind of move action during his or her turn, the character cannot also take a 5-foot step.

Many nonstandard modes of movement are also covered under this category, including climbing and swimming (up to one-quarter the character's speed), crawling (up to 5 feet), balancing (up to one-half the character's speed), and entering a vehicle.

Manipulating Objects

In most cases, moving or manipulating an object is a move action. This includes, but isn't limited to, drawing or holstering a weapon, retrieving or putting away a stored object, picking up an object, moving a heavy object, and opening a door. See Table 7.3: Actions in Combat on page 208 for details.

If the character has a base attack bonus of +1 or higher, he or she can draw a weapon as part of his or her normal movement (i.e. the character can draw while moving, rather than drawing the weapon instead of moving).

Standing Up

Standing up from a prone position requires a move action. It provokes an attack of opportunity from opponents who threaten the character.

Full-Round Actions

A full-round action requires an entire round to complete. If it doesn't involve moving any distance, a character can combine it with a 5-foot step.

Charge

Charging is a special full-round action that allows a character to move more than his or her speed and attack during the action. However, there are tight restrictions on how and when a character can charge.

Movement during a Charge: The character must move before his or her attack, not after. The character must move at least 10 feet and may move up to twice his or her speed. All movement must be in a straight line, with no backing up allowed. The character must stop as soon as he or she is within striking range of his or her target (the character cannot run past the target and attack from another direction). A character cannot take a 5-foot step during the same round as a full charge.

Any time a character is limited to no more than a single attack action on his or her turn (such as during the fast-draw round), the character can still use the charge action, but his or her movement is limited to the character's normal speed (instead of up to twice his or her normal speed). In all other circumstances in which the character has a normal round's worth of action available, he or she must charge as normal (i.e. as a full-round action).

Attacking after a Charge: After moving, the character may make a single melee attack. The character gains a +2 bonus on the attack roll. The character also suffers a –2 penalty to his or her Defense for 1 round (until the beginning of the character's turn in the following round).

Even if the character has extra attacks, such as those granted by having a high enough base attack bonus or by using multiple weapons, a character may make only one attack after a charge.

Instead of attacking the target at the end of the charge movement, a character can attempt to push the target back (see Bull Rush, page 220).

Full Attack

If a character gets more than one attack per round the character must use the full-attack action to gain these additional attacks. This could apply because his or her base attack bonus is high enough, because he or she fights with two weapons, because he or she is using a double weapon, or for some special reason determined by the Judge. The character doesn't need to declare the targets of his or her attacks ahead of time. The character can see the results of earlier attacks before designating the later ones.

Full attack is a full-round action. Because of this, the only movement a character can take during a full attack is a 5-foot step. The character may take the step before, after, or between the attacks that that make up the full-attack.

If a character receives multiple attacks because of his or her base attack bonus, the character must make the attacks in order from highest bonus to lowest. If the character is using two weapons, the character can strike with either weapon first. If the character is using a double weapon, the character can strike with either part of the weapon first.

Committing to a Full-Attack Action: A character doesn't have to commit to a full attack until after the first attack. The character can then decide whether to make his or her remaining attacks or to take a move action. Of course, if the character has already taken a 5-foot step, he or she cannot use his or her move action to move any distance, but the character could still draw or put away a weapon, for example (see Move Actions, page 210).

Fighting Defensively: A character can choose to fight defensively when taking a full-attack action. If the character does so, he or she takes a –4 penalty on all attacks in a round to gain a +2 dodge bonus to Defense in the same round.

Attacking with Two Weapons: If the character wields a second weapon in his or her off hand, the character can get one extra attack per round with that weapon. Fighting in this way is very difficult; the character suffers a –6 penalty on the regular attack or attacks with his or her primary hand and a –10 penalty on the attack with his or her off hand. A character can reduce these penalties in two ways.

1. If the off-hand weapon is light, the penalties are reduced by 2 each. (An unarmed strike is always considered light.)

2. The Two-Weapon Fighting feat lessens the primary hand penalty by 2, and the off-hand penalty by 6.

Table 7.4: Two-Weapon Fighting Penalties summarizes the interaction of all these factors.

Double Weapons: A character can use a double weapon to make an extra attack as if he or she were fighting with two weapons. The penalties apply as if the off-hand weapon were light.

Table 7.4: Two-Weapon Fighting Penalties

Circumstances	Primary Hand	Off Hand
Normal penalties	–6	–10
Off-hand weapon is light	–4	–8
Two-Weapon Fighting feat	–4	–4
Off-hand weapon is light and Two-Weapon Fighting feat	–2	–2

Run

A character can run in a full sprint as a full-round action. When a character runs, he or she can move up to four times his or her speed in a straight line. (The character cannot take a 5-foot step in addition to running.) The character loses any Dexterity bonus to Defense since he or she cannot avoid attacks; however, the character gains a +2 bonus to Defense against ranged attacks while running.

A character can run for a number of rounds equal to his or her Constitution score, but after that the character must succeed at a Constitution check (DC 10) to continue running. The character must check again each round in which he or she continues to run, and the DC of this check increases by 1 for each check the character makes. When the character fails this check, he or she must stop running. A character who has run to his or her limit must rest for 1 minute (10 rounds) before running again. During a rest period, a character can move normally, but cannot run.

A run represents a speed of about 14 miles per hour for an unencumbered human.

Withdraw

Withdrawing from melee combat is a full-round action. When a character withdraws, he or she can move up to twice his or her speed. (The character cannot take a 5-foot step in addition to the withdraw move.) The square the character starts from isn't considered threatened for purposes of withdrawing, and therefore enemies don't get attacks of opportunity against the character when he or she moves from that square.

While withdrawing, if the character moves through another threatened square (other than the one started in) without stopping, enemies can make attacks of opportunity as normal.

Some forms of movement (such as balancing, climbing and swimming) require skill checks from most creatures. A character may not withdraw using a form of movement for which that character must make a skill check.

Miscellaneous Actions

Some actions don't fit neatly into the aforementioned categories. Some of the options described here are actions that take the place of, or are variations on, the actions described in those categories. For actions not covered in any of these rules, the Judge determines how long such an action takes to perform and whether doing so provokes attacks of opportunity from threatening enemies.

Use Feat, Skill, or Talent

Certain feats let a character take special actions in combat. Other feats aren't actions in themselves, but they give a character a bonus when attempting something he or she can already do. Some feats aren't meant to be used within the framework of combat. The individual feat descriptions provide information as needed in this regard.

Most uses of skills or talents in a combat situation are attack actions, but some might be move actions or full-round actions. When appropriate, the description of a talent or a skill provides the time required to use it.

5-foot Steps

A 5-foot step is a small move adjustment that represents the dodging back and forth that occurs in combat. A character is only allowed to take one 5-foot step in a round. Furthermore, a character may take a 5-foot step only if he or she hasn't already moved previously in the round. This doesn't preclude taking a move action prior to a 5-foot step, but the character must not have moved any actual distance during that move action. Finally, after taking a 5-foot step, the character may not move later in the round.

While taking a 5-foot step, the character moves 5 feet into an adjacent unoccupied square. The character doesn't provoke any attacks of opportunity for this movement.

Special Initiative Actions

Usually a character acts as soon as he or she can in combat, but sometimes a character wants to act later, at a better time, or in response to the actions of someone, or something, else. The following actions allow a character to coordinate actions with those of his or her comrades or, perhaps, enemies.

Delay

By choosing to delay, the character takes no action on his or her regular initiative count, then acts normally at whatever point in the count the character chooses. When a character delays, he or she voluntarily reduces his or her own initiative result for the rest of the combat. When the character's new, lower initiative count comes up later in the same round, the character can act normally. The character can specify this new initiative result or just wait until some time later in the round and act then, thus fixing the character's new initiative count at that point.

A character cannot interrupt anyone's action with a delayed action (as a character can with a readied action; see Ready, below).

Multiple Characters Delaying: If multiple characters are delaying, the one with the highest initiative modifier (or highest Dexterity, in case of a tie) has the advantage. If two or more delaying characters both want to act on the same initiative count, the one with the highest initiative modifier gets to go first. If two or more delaying characters are trying to go after one another, the one with the highest initiative modifier gets to go last; the others must go first or lose their action for the round.

Delaying to the Next Round: If the character's initiative result is already the lowest amongst all combatants, the character may forgo acting in the present round, effectively choosing to act first in the subsequent round. Once the new round has begun, the character may delay once again, to insert himself or herself where desired into the initiative sequence.

Ready

The ready action lets a character prepare to take an action later to interrupt another character. Essentially, the character splits his or her action, taking the move action on the character's initiative count and the attack action at a later point. On the character's turn, he or she prepares an action for use later in the round, if a specific trigger is met. Then, if the readied action is indeed triggered, the character takes it, interrupting the triggering action.

Attacks of Opportunity: Readying itself doesn't provoke an attack of opportunity; however, the move action or the attack action that a character readies, may both provoke attacks of opportunity normally.

Readying an Action: A character can ready an attack action or a move action. To do so, the character specifies the action he or she will take and the conditions under which the character will take it. Then, any time before the character's next action, the character may take the readied action in response to those conditions. The

readied action occurs just before the event that triggers it. If the trigger is part of another character's actions, the readied action interrupts the other character. The other character continues his or her actions once the readied action is completed.

When a readied action is triggered, the character's initiative count changes. For the rest of the encounter, his or her action occurs on the count that the character took the readied action, and the character acts immediately ahead of the character whose action triggered the readied action.

A character can take a 5-foot step as part of his or her readied action, but only if the character didn't otherwise move any distance during the round.

If the character comes to his or her next action and hasn't yet performed the readied action, the character doesn't get to take the readied action (though the character can ready the same action again). If the character takes his or her readied action in the next round, before his or her regular turn comes up, the character's initiative count changes to that new point in the order of battle, and he or she doesn't get another regular action that round. In other words, the character doesn't get a readied action and a new action in the same round.

Attacks of Opportunity

The melee combat rules assume that combatants are actively avoiding attacks. A player doesn't have to declare anything special for his or her character to be on the defensive. Nevertheless, a combatant in a melee sometimes lets his or her guard down and doesn't maintain a defensive posture as usual. In this case, nearby combatants can take advantage of this lapse in defense to attack for free. These attacks are called attacks of opportunity.

Weapon Type

A character can use a melee weapon to make attacks of opportunity whenever the conditions for such an attack are met (see Provoking an Attack of Opportunity, below). In addition, a character can make attacks of opportunity with unarmed attacks if the character's unarmed attacks are considered armed (see "Armed" Unarmed Attacks, page 209). A character can make attacks of opportunity only with melee weapons, never with ranged weapons.

Threatened Squares

A character threatens the squares into which he or she can make a melee attack, even when it isn't the character's action. Generally, that covers all squares adjacent to the character's position. An enemy that takes certain actions while in a threatened square provokes an attack of opportunity from the character.

Provoking an Attack of Opportunity

Two actions can provoke attacks of opportunity: moving out of a threatened square, and performing an action within a threatened square that requires a character to let down his or her guard or otherwise distracts from defending.

Moving out of a Threatened Square: When a character moves out of a threatened square, that character generally provokes an attack of opportunity. There are two important exceptions. A character doesn't provoke an attack of opportunity by taking a 5-foot step, or if the character withdraws (see the Withdraw action, page 212).

If the character doesn't start in a threatened square, but moves into one, the character has to stop there, or else he or she provokes an attack of opportunity as he or she leaves that square. In other words, moving through a threatened square will provoke an attack of opportunity.

Performing an Action that Distracts the Character: Some actions, when performed in a threatened square, provoke attacks of opportunity because they make a character divert his or her attention from the fight at hand. Using a ranged weapon, in particular, provokes attacks of opportunity, as does loading a firearm. Table 7.3: Actions in Combat notes many such actions that provoke attacks of opportunity.

Making an Attack of Opportunity

An attack of opportunity is a single melee attack, and a character can make only one per round. If a character doesn't wish to make an attack of opportunity when it is provoked, he or she isn't required to do so.

An experienced character with a sufficiently high base

attack bonus may make multiple attacks in a round with successively lower attack bonuses. Such characters make attacks of opportunity using their normal attack bonus (the highest bonus) — even if the character has already attacked in this round.

Movement and Position

When using a grid to represent character movement, the standard scale equates 1 inch (or a 1-inch square) to 5 feet in the game world. Table 7.5: Standard Scale provides scale information for game play.

Table 7.5: Standard Scale

Measurement	Map Scale	Real Scale
One square	1 inch	5 feet
"Next to" or "adjacent" square	1 inch	5 feet
Miniature size for a human-size creature	30-mm figure	6 feet
Area occupied by a human-size creature	1 inch by 1 inch	5 feet by 5 feet
One combat round	–	6 seconds

Tactical Movement

Where can a character move, how long it takes to get there, and whether he or she is vulnerable to attacks of opportunity while moving are key questions in combat. This section addresses these questions as they pertain to game play.

How Far Can a Character Move?

Humans normally move 30 feet per move action although armor can slow a character down and some talents allow a character to move faster (see the Increased Speed talent tree, page 32). Some creatures move faster or slower. A character's speed when unarmored is sometimes called his or her base or normal speed.

Encumbrance: A character encumbered by carrying a large amount of gear or a fallen comrade may move slower than normal. Encumbrance rules and effects on character speed are addressed in Table 5.6: Carrying Capacity on page 131.

Movement in Combat: Generally, a character can move his or her speed as a move action. If a character uses two move actions in a round (and forgoes an attack action), the character can move twice for a total movement of up to twice the character's normal speed. If the character spends the entire round to run all-out, he or she can move up to four times his or her normal speed. If a character performs a task that requires a full round, he or she can take a 5-foot step.

Movement in Darkness: If a character moves when he or she cannot see, such as in total darkness, his or her speed is limited to one-half normal. The Blind-Fight feat reduces this penalty.

Climbing, Swimming, or Balancing: A character that climbs, swims or balances is not only required to make a skill check, but his or her movement rate is reduced. Swimming and climbing reduces the character's speed to one-quarter normal speed. Balancing reduces speed by one-half.

Passing Through

Sometimes a character can pass through an area occupied by another character or creature. The following rules govern circumstances where this is possible.

Friendly Character: A character can move through a square occupied by a friendly character.

Unfriendly Character: There are two ways to move through a square occupied by a resisting enemy. The character can attempt an overrun, or the character can attempt to tumble through a square occupied by an enemy (assuming the character has ranks in the Tumble skill; see the skill description, page 98).

A character can move through a square occupied by an unfriendly opponent, provided the unfriendly character doesn't resist. In this case, treat the situation as if the opponent were friendly.

Square Occupied by Creature Three Sizes Larger or Smaller: Any creature can move through a square occupied by a creature three size categories larger or three categories smaller than it is. For example a horse can pass freely through a square occupied by a mouse.

Flanking

If a character is making a melee attack against an opponent, and an ally directly opposite the character is threatening the opponent, the character and his or her ally flank the opponent. Both allies gain a +2 bonus on their attack rolls against the common opponent. The ally must be on the other side of the opponent so that the opponent is directly between the character and the ally.

A character doesn't gain a bonus for flanking when making a ranged attack.

Combat Modifiers

This section covers a variety of offensive and defensive combat modifiers provided by the relative position and conditions during battle.

Favorable and Unfavorable Conditions

Generally speaking, any situational modifier created by the attacker's position or tactics applies to the attack roll, while any situational modifier created by the defender's position, state, or tactics applies to the defender's Defense. The Judge determines what bonuses and penalties apply, using Table 7.6: Defense Modifiers and Table 7.7: Attack Roll Modifiers as guides.

Table 7.6: Defense Modifiers

Circumstance	Melee	Ranged
Defender sitting or kneeling	–2	+2 [1]
Defender prone	–4	+4 [1]
Defender stunned or cowering	–2 [2]	–2 [2]
Defender climbing	–2 [2]	–2 [2]
Defender flat-footed	+0 [2]	+0 [2]
Defender running	+0 [2]	+2 [2]
Defender grappling (attacker not)	+0 [2]	+0 [3]
Defender pinned	–4 [2]	+0 [3]
Defender helpless (such as paralyzed, sleeping, or bound)	+0 [4]	+0 [4]
Defender has cover	— See Cover —	
Defender concealed or unseen	– See Concealment –	

[1] Doesn't apply if target is adjacent to attacker. This circumstance may instead improve the bonus to Defense granted by cover. See Cover below.
[2] The defender loses any Dexterity bonus to Defense.
[3] Roll randomly to see which grappling combatant the character strikes. That defender loses any Dexterity bonus to Defense.
[4] Treat the defender's Dexterity as 0 (–5 modifier).

Table 7.7: Attack Roll Modifiers

Circumstance	Melee	Ranged
Attacker flanking defender [1]	+2	—
Attacker on higher ground	+1	+0
Attacker prone [2]	–4	–2
Attacker invisible	+2 [3]	+2 [3]
Attacker is suffering vigorous motion (bouncy stagecoach ride, small boat in rough water, below decks in a storm-tossed ship, riding a horse)	—	–4
Attacker is suffering violent motion (very rough stagecoach ride, small boat in rapids, on deck of a storm-tossed ship, galloping horse)	–2	–8
Attacker is suffering extraordinarily violent motion (earthquake, landslide)	–4	–12

[1] A character flanks a defender when he or she has an ally on the opposite side of the defender threatening the defender.
[2] Some ranged weapons cannot be used while the attacker is prone.
[3] The defender loses any Dexterity bonus to Defense.

Cover

Cover provides a bonus to Defense. The more cover a character has, the bigger the bonus. In a melee, if a character has cover against an opponent, that opponent probably has cover against the character. With ranged weapons, however, it's always possible to have better or worse cover than the opponent.

The Judge may impose other penalties or restrictions on attacks depending on the details of the cover.

Degree of Cover

Cover is assessed in subjective measurements of how much protection it offers. The Judge determines the relative value of cover based on positioning of combatants. This measure isn't a strict mathematical calculation, because a character gains more value from covering the parts of his or her body that are more likely to be struck. If the bottom half of a character's body is covered, that only gives one-quarter cover, because most vital areas are still fully exposed. If one side or the other of a character's body is covered, the character gets one-half cover.

Cover Defense Bonus

Table 7.8: Cover gives the Defense bonuses for different degrees of cover. Add the relevant number to the character's Defense. This bonus to Defense has the cover modifier type (i.e. it's a cover bonus), and as such, doesn't stack (doesn't add for cumulative effect) with other cover bonuses. Therefore, if your cowpoke is hiding behind a hitching post that lies behind a water barrel the cover bonuses for both obstacles don't apply. Instead, only the largest cover bonus is used.

Cover Reflex Save Bonus

When an object (or creature) provides cover for a character, that character is shielded from hazards that provoke a Reflex save. For instance, a stone wall provides good protection against the explosive blast of a stick of dynamite. Therefore, the wall provides a cover bonus to the Reflex saves of all characters behind the wall. Table 7.8: Cover provides the Reflex save bonuses for different degrees of cover. Add this bonus to Reflex saves against attacks that affect an area. This bonus only applies to attacks that originate or burst out from a point on the other side of the cover.

Striking the Cover Instead of a Missed Target

If it ever becomes important to know whether the cover was actually struck by an incoming attack that misses the intended target, the Judge should determine if the attack roll would have hit the protected target without the cover. If the attack roll falls within a range low enough to miss the target with cover but high enough to strike the target if there had been no cover, the object used for cover was struck.

This can be particularly important to know in cases when a character uses another character as cover. In such a case, if the cover is struck and the attack roll exceeds the Defense of the covering character, the covering character takes the damage intended for the target. If the covering character has a Dexterity bonus to Defense or a dodge bonus, and this bonus keeps the covering character from being hit, then the original target is hit instead. In effect, the covering character has dodged out of the way and didn't provide cover after all. A

covering character can choose not to apply his or her Dexterity or dodge bonuses to Defense, if the character so desires.

If the cover struck is an inanimate object, that object takes damage normally (see Strike an Object, page 219). If the object is destroyed, it no longer provides cover.

Table 7.8: Cover

Degree of Cover (Example)	Cover Bonus to Defense	Reflex Saves
One-quarter (standing behind a 3-ft. high wall)	+2	+1
One-half (fighting from around a corner or a tree; standing at an open window; behind a creature of same size)	+4	+2
Three-quarters (peering around a corner or a big tree)	+7	+3
Nine-tenths (standing at an arrow slit; behind a door that's slightly ajar)	+10	+4 [1]
Total (on the other side of a solid wall)	— [2]	— [2]

[1] Half damage if save is failed; no damage if successful.

[2] Without a line of sight, the character can not be attacked or damaged.

Concealment

Concealment includes all circumstances in which nothing physically blocks a blow or shot, but something interferes with an attacker's accuracy. Darkness, fog, smoke, and foliage can all provide concealment.

Degree of Concealment

Like Cover, concealment is measured subjectively and is determined by the Judge. Examples of what might qualify as concealment of various degrees are given in Table 7.9: Concealment. Concealment always depends on the point of view of the attacker.

Concealment Miss Chance

Concealment gives the subject of a successful attack a chance that the attacker missed because of the concealment. If the attacker hits, the defender must make a "miss chance" percentile roll to avoid being struck. Actually, it doesn't matter who makes the roll or whether it's rolled before or after the attack roll. When multiple concealment conditions apply to a defender, use the one that would produce the highest miss chance. Don't add the miss chances together.

Table 7.9: Concealment

Concealment (Example)	Miss Chance
One-quarter (light fog or smoke; light foliage)	10%
One-half (shadows; dense fog or smoke at 5 ft.)	20%
Three-quarters (dense foliage)	30%
Nine-tenths (near total darkness)	40%
Total (attacker blind; total darkness; dense fog or smoke at 10 ft.)	50% [1]

[1] The attacker must guess the target's location before attacking. If the attack succeeds, there is still a 50% miss chance.

Helpless Defenders

A helpless foe—one that is bound, sleeping, unconscious, or otherwise at the attacker's mercy—is an easy target. A character can sometimes approach a target that is unaware of his or her presence, move adjacent to the target, and treat him or her as helpless. If the target is in combat or some other tense situation, and therefore in a state of acute awareness and readiness, or if the target can use his or her Dexterity bonus to Defense, then that target cannot be considered unaware. Furthermore, any reasonable precaution taken by a target, including stationing bodyguards, placing his or her back to a wall, or being able to make Spot checks, also precludes catching that target unaware and helpless.

Regular Attack

A helpless defender has an effective Defense of 5 + his or her size modifier. If a character is attacking with a ranged weapon and isn't adjacent to the target, the character can use a full-round action to make the attack, and gain a +5 bonus on the attack roll against a helpless opponent. Any attack that hits a helpless foe is an automatic critical threat. If the character is attacking with a melee weapon, or with a ranged weapon from an adjacent square, the character can use a full-round action to deliver a coup de grace.

Coup de Grace

As a full-round action, a character can use a melee weapon to deliver a coup de grace to a helpless foe. A character can also use a ranged weapon, provided the character is adjacent to the target. The character automatically scores a critical hit and neither an attack roll or confirmation roll are necessary. If the defender survives the damage, he or she still must make a Fortitude save (DC 10 + damage dealt) or die.

Delivering a coup de grace provokes attacks of opportunity from threatening foes because it involves focused concentration and methodical action.

A character cannot deliver a coup de grace against a creature that is immune to critical hits.

Knockout Blow

As a full-round action, a character can make an unarmed attack or use a melee weapon that deals nonlethal damage to deliver a knockout blow to a helpless foe. A character can also use a melee weapon that deals lethal damage, but the character takes a –4 penalty on any attempt to deal nonlethal damage with the weapon. The target has an effective Defense of 5 + his or her size modifier. If the character hits, he or she automatically scores a critical hit (see Nonlethal Damage, page 226).

Delivering a knockout blow provokes attacks of opportunity from threatening foes because it involves focused concentration and methodical action.

A character cannot deliver a knockout blow against a creature that is immune to critical hits.

Special Attacks

This section covers firearms, grappling, explosives, attacks against objects, and an assortment of other special attacks.

Aid Another

In combat, a character can help a friend attack or defend by distracting or interfering with an opponent. If the character is in position to attack an opponent who is engaged with the character's ally, that character can attempt to aid the friend as an attack action. The character makes an attack roll against Defense 10. If the character succeeds, he or she doesn't actually damage the opponent—but the character's friend gains either a +2 circumstance bonus to attack that opponent or a +2 circumstance bonus to Defense against that opponent on the friend's next turn. Note that the aiding character chooses whether the +2 bonus is for the friend's attack or Defense.

Firearms

The most basic form of attack with a firearm is a single shot. One attack is defined as one pull of the trigger, which fires one bullet at one target.

The Personal Firearms Proficiency feat allows a character to make this sort of attack without penalty. If a character isn't proficient in personal firearms, he or she suffers a –4 penalty on attacks with that type of weapon.

A number of other feats (such as Double Tap, Slip Hammer, and Hammer Down) allow a character to deal extra damage by firing more than one bullet as part of a single attack at a single target. (If a character doesn't have those feats, he or she can still fire more than one bullet—but the extra bullets don't have any effect, and are just wasted ammunition.)

As with all forms of ranged weapons, attacking with a firearm while within a threatened square provokes an attack of opportunity.

An attacker using a longarm suffers a –4 penalty on attacks against adjacent opponents, because of the weapon's unwieldy shape and size. Furthermore, a character that fires a longarm other than a carbine from horseback suffers a –2 penalty on attack rolls because of the length, weight, and bulk of the firearm.

Autofire

If a ranged weapon has an automatic rate of fire, that weapon affects an area and everyone in it, not a specific creature. The character targets a 10 by 10 foot area and makes an attack roll; the targeted area has an effective Defense of 10. (If the character doesn't have the Advanced Firearms Proficiency feat, he or she suffers a –4 penalty on the attack roll.) If the attack succeeds, every creature within the affected area must make a Reflex save (DC 15) or take the weapon's damage. Autofire shoots 10 bullets, and can be used only if the weapon has 10 bullets in it.

Some firearms—particularly Gatling Guns—have only autofire settings and cannot normally fire single shots.

Grenades and Explosives

An explosive is a weapon that, when detonated, affects all creatures and objects within its burst radius by means of shrapnel, heat, or massive concussion. Its effect is broad enough that it can hurt characters just by going off close to them.

Some explosives, such as grenades, can be thrown, and they explode when they land. Others are planted, with fuses or timers, and detonate after a preset amount of time elapses.

Thrown Explosives

An attack with a thrown explosive is a ranged attack made against a specific 5-foot square. (A character can target a square occupied by a creature.) Throwing the explosive is an attack action. If the square is within one range increment, an attack roll isn't required. Roll 1d4 and consult Table 7.10: Successfully Thrown Explosive Scatter to determine which corner of the square the explosive bounces to.

Table 7.10: Successfully Thrown Explosive Scatter

Roll on d4	Corner of targeted square
1	upper left
2	upper right
3	lower right
4	lower left

If the target square is more than one range increment away, make an attack roll. The square has an effective Defense of 10. Thrown weapons don't require a weapon proficiency, so a character doesn't incur the –4 non-proficiency penalty. If the attack succeeds, the grenade or explosive lands in the targeted square. Roll 1d4 and consult the Table 7.10: Successfully Thrown Explosive Scatter to see which corner of the square the explosive bounces to.

If the character misses the target, the explosive lands at a corner of a square nearby in a random direction. Consult the Table 7.11 or Table 7.12 to determine where the explosive lands. If the weapon was thrown two to three range increments, roll 1d8 and consult Table 7.11: Unsuccessfully Thrown Explosive Scatter (Near).

Table 7.11: Unsuccessfully Thrown Explosive Scatter (Near)

Roll on d8	Location Struck
1	upper left corner, one square beyond target
2	upper right corner, one square beyond target
3	upper right corner, one square right of target
4	lower right corner, one square right of target
5	lower right corner, one square short of target
6	lower left corner, one square short of target
7	lower left corner, one square left of target
8	upper left corner, one square left of target

For ranges of four or five range increments, roll 1d12 and consult Table 7.12: Unsuccessfully Thrown Explosive Scatter (Far).

Table 7.12: Unsuccessfully Thrown Explosive Scatter (Far)

Roll on d12	Location Struck
1	upper left corner, two squares beyond target
2	upper right corner, two squares beyond target
3	upper right corner, one square beyond and right of target
4	upper right corner, two squares right of target
5	lower right corner, two squares right of target
6	lower right corner, one square short and right of target
7	lower right corner, two squares short of target
8	lower left corner, two squares short of target
9	lower left corner, one square short and left of target
10	lower left corner, two squares left of target
11	upper left corner, two squares left of target
12	upper left corner, one square beyond and left of target

After determining where the explosive lands, it deals its damage to all targets within the burst radius of the weapon. The targets may make Reflex saves (DC varies according to the explosive type) for one-half damage.

Planted Explosives

A planted explosive is set in place, with a timer or fuse determining when it explodes. No attack roll is necessary to plant an explosive; the explosive sits where it is placed until it detonates.

When a planted explosive detonates, it deals its damage to all targets within the burst radius of the weapon. The targets may make Reflex saves (DC varies according to the explosive type) for one-half damage.

Splash Weapons

A splash weapon is a ranged weapon that breaks apart on impact, splashing or scattering its contents over its target and nearby creatures or objects. Most splash weapons consist of liquids in breakable containers.

To attack with a splash weapon, make a ranged touch attack against the target. Thrown weapons don't require a weapon proficiency, so characters don't incur the –4 non-proficiency penalty. A hit deals direct hit damage to the target and splash damage to all other creatures within 5 feet of the target.

A character can instead target a specific 5-foot square, including a square occupied by a creature. Use the rules for thrown explosives (see above). However, if a

character targets a square, creatures within 5 feet are dealt the splash damage, and the direct hit damage isn't dealt to any creature.

If the character misses the target (whether aiming at a creature or a square), check to see where the weapon lands, using the rules for thrown explosives. After determining where the object lands, it deals splash damage to all creatures within 5 feet.

Attack an Object

Sometimes a character needs to attack or break an object; the rules in this section govern such circumstances. This could apply to chopping down a door, shooting off a rival's hat or trying to break an opponent's melee weapon.

Strike an Object

Objects are easier to hit than characters because they usually don't move, but many are tough enough to shrug off some damage from each blow. Several considerations affect the chance to hit and the amount of damage done when attacking objects, as detailed here.

Object Defense and Bonuses to Attack: Objects are harder or easier to hit depending on their size and whether they are immobile or being held, carried, or worn by opponents. The base Defense of objects is shown on Table 7.13: Size and Defense of Objects.

Table 7.13: Size and Defense of Objects

Size (Example)	Defense
Colossal (tall ship)	–3
Gargantuan (train car)	1
Huge (stagecoach)	3
Large (big door)	4
Medium-size (bicycle)	5
Small (chair)	6
Tiny (hat)	7
Diminutive (paperback book)	9
Fine (pencil)	13

If a character uses a full-round action to make an attack against an inanimate, immobile object, the character gets an automatic hit with a melee weapon or a +5 bonus on his or her attack roll with a ranged weapon.

An object being held, carried, or worn has a Defense equal to the figure listed on Table 7.13 + 5 + the opponent's Dexterity modifier + the opponent's class bonus to Defense. Striking a held, carried, or worn object provokes an attack of opportunity from the character that holds it. (If a character has the Sunder feat, he or she doesn't incur an attack of opportunity for making the attempt.)

Hardness: Each object has a hardness—a number that represents how well it resists damage. Whenever an object takes damage, subtract its hardness from the damage. Only damage in excess of its hardness is deducted from the object's grit (see Table 7.14: Substance Hardness and Grit and Table 7.15: Object Hardness and Grit).

Grit: An object's total grit depends on the materials from which it is constructed as well as the object's size (see Table 7.14: Substance Hardness and Grit and Table 7.15: Object Hardness and Grit).

Table 7.14: Substance Hardness and Grit

Substance	Hardness	Grit
Paper	0	2/inch of thickness
Rope	0	2/inch of thickness
Glass	1	1/inch of thickness
Ceramic	1	2/inch of thickness
Ice	0	3/inch of thickness
Wood	5	10/inch of thickness
Aluminum	6	10/inch of thickness
Concrete	8	15/inch of thickness
Steel	10	30/inch of thickness

Table 7.15: Object Hardness and Grit

Object	Hardness	Grit	Break DC
Lock			
Cheap	0	1	10
Average	3	5	15
High quality	5	10	20
High security	10	120	35
Ultrahigh security	20	150	40
Manufactured objects [1]			
Fine	0	1	10
Diminutive	0	1	10
Tiny	1	2	10
Small	3	3	12
Medium-size	5	5	15
Large	5	10	15
Huge	8	10	20
Gargantuan	8	20	30
Colossal	10	30	50
Firearm, Medium-size	5	7	17
Rope	0	2	23
Simple wooden door	5	10	13
Strong wooden door	5	20	23
Steel door	10	120	35
Masonry wall	8	90	35
Chain	10	5	26
Handcuffs	10	10	30
Metal bars	10	15	30

[1] Figures for manufactured objects are minimum values. The Judge may adjust these upward to account for objects with more strength and durability.

Energy Attacks: Acid and sonic attacks deal normal damage to most objects. Apply hardness to the damage from such attacks normally. Electricity and fire attacks

deal one-half damage to most objects; divide the damage by 2 (rounded down) before applying the hardness. Cold attacks deal one-quarter damage to most objects; divide the damage by 4 (rounded down) before applying the hardness.

Ineffective Weapons: The Judge may determine that certain weapons cannot deal damage effectively to certain objects. For example, using an arrow to chop down a door probably wouldn't be allowed.

Immunities: Objects are immune to nonlethal damage and to critical hits.

Saving Throws: Unattended objects never make saving throws. They are considered to have failed their saving throws. An object attended by a character (being grasped, touched, or worn) receives a saving throw just as if the character were making the saving throw against an attack on his or her person.

Breaking Objects

When a character tries to break something with sudden force rather than by dealing damage, use a Strength check to see whether he or she succeeds. The DC depends more on the construction of the object than on the material (see Table 7.15: Object Hardness and Grit).

If an object has lost one-half or more of its grit, the DC to break it decreases by 2.

Repairing Objects

Repairing damage to an object takes a full hour of work and appropriate tools to do the job efficiently. Without the tools, a character suffers a –4 penalty on his or her Repair check. At the end of the hour, make a Repair check (DC 20). Success restores 2d6 grit. If damage remains, the character may continue to make repairs for as many hours as it takes to restore all the object's grit. A character may continue to attempt repairs even after a failed check.

Bull Rush

A character can attempt a bull rush as an attack action made during his or her move action, or as part of a charge. (In general, a character cannot make an attack action during a move action; this is an exception.) In either case, the character cannot take a 5-foot step before, during, or after the bull rush attempt. When the character bull rushes, he or she attempts to push an opponent straight back instead of attacking the opponent. A character can bull rush only those opponents who are one size category larger than the character, the same size, or smaller.

Initiating a Bull Rush

First, the character moves into the target's square. Moving in this way provokes an attack of opportunity from each foe that threatens the character, which likely includes the target of the bull rush.

Second, the character and the target make opposed Strength checks. If the character and the target are different sizes, the larger combatant receives a bonus on the Strength check of +4 per difference in size category. The character gains a +2 bonus if he or she was charging. The target gains a +4 circumstance bonus if he or she has more than two legs or is otherwise exceptionally stable.

Bull Rush Results

If the character beats the target's Strength check, the character pushes the opponent back 5 feet. The character can push the target back an additional 5 feet for every 5 points by which the character exceeded the target's check result, provided the character moves with the target. Regardless, a character cannot exceed his or her normal movement for that action. The target provokes attacks of opportunity if moved. So does the character, if he or she moves with the target. The target and the character don't provoke attacks of opportunity from each other as a result of this movement.

If the character fails to beat the target's Strength check, the character moves 5 feet straight backward, in the direction from which he or she initiated the Bull Rush. If that square is occupied, the character falls prone in that square.

Overrun

A character can attempt an overrun as an attack action made during his or her move action, or as part of a charge. (In general, a character cannot make an attack action during a move action; this is an exception.) In either case, the character cannot take a 5-foot step before, during, or after the overrun attempt. With an overrun, the character attempts to move through an opponent's area, going past or over the opponent. A character can overrun only those opponents who are one size category larger than the character, the same size, or smaller. A character can make only one overrun attempt per action.

First, the character must move at least 10 feet in a straight line into the target's square (provoking attacks of opportunity normally).

Then the target chooses either to avoid or block the character attempting the overrun. If the opponent avoids the character, the character keeps moving. (A character can always move through a square occupied by someone who lets the character by.) If the opponent tries to block the character attempting the overrun, the character makes a trip attack against the opponent (see Trip, page 221). If the character succeeds in tripping his or her opponent, the character can continue his or her movement as normal.

If the character fails and is tripped in turn, the character falls prone in the target's square. If the character fails but isn't tripped, the character has to move 5 feet back the way he or she came, ending his or her movement there. If that square is occupied, the character falls prone in that square.

Trip

A character can try to trip an opponent, or otherwise knock him or her down, as an unarmed melee attack. A character can trip only those opponents who are one size category larger than the character, the same size, or smaller.

Making a Trip Attack

Make an unarmed melee touch attack against the target. Doing this incurs an attack of opportunity from the target as normal for unarmed attacks.

If the attack succeeds, make a Strength check opposed by the target's Dexterity check or Strength check (using whichever ability score has the higher modifier). If the character and the target are different sizes, the larger combatant receives a bonus on the Strength check of +4 per difference in size category. The target gains a +4 circumstance bonus on his or her check if he or she has more than two legs or is otherwise exceptionally stable. If the character wins, he or she trips the target. If the character loses, the target may immediately react and make a Strength check opposed by the character's Dexterity check or Strength check to try to trip the character.

Being Tripped (Prone)

A tripped character is prone (see Table 7.6: Defense Modifiers). Standing up from a prone position is a move action that provokes an attack of opportunity.

Tripping with a Weapon

Some weapons, such as the chain and the whip, can be used to make trip attacks. A character doesn't incur an attack of opportunity when doing so. If the character is tripped during his or her own trip attempt, the character can drop the weapon to avoid being tripped.

Tripping a Mounted Opponent

A character may make a trip attack against a mounted opponent. The defender may make a Ride skill check in place of his Dexterity or Strength check. If the attacker succeeds, the rider is pulled from his mount and falls prone to the ground.

Disarm

As a melee attack, a character may attempt to disarm his or her opponent. If the character succeeds with a disarm attempt while using a weapon, he or she knocks the opponent's weapon out of his or her hands and to the ground. If the character succeeds at the disarm while unarmed, the character ends up with the weapon in his or her hand.

Melee Weapons

If a character is attempting to disarm the wielder of a melee weapon, follow the steps outlined here. Disarming the wielder of a ranged weapon is slightly different; rules for such an attempt are described under Ranged Weapons in this section.

Step One: The character provokes an attack of opportunity from the target he or she is trying to disarm.

Step Two: The character and the target make opposed attack rolls with their respective weapons. If the weapons are different sizes, the combatant with the larger weapon receives a bonus on the attack roll of +4 per difference in size category. If the target is using a weapon in two hands, he or she gains an additional +4 bonus. An unarmed disarm is treated as if using a Tiny weapon. Combatants that are other than Medium-size treat their unarmed attacks as two size categories smaller than their size. Also, if the combatants are different sizes, the larger combatant gains a bonus on the attack roll of +4 per difference in size category.

Step Three: If the character beats the target's attack roll, the target is disarmed. If the character attempted the disarm action unarmed, he or she now has the weapon. If the character was armed, the target's weapon is on the ground at the target's feet.

If the character fails the disarm attempt, the target may immediately react and attempt to disarm the character with the same sort of opposed melee attack roll. The opponent's attempt doesn't provoke an attack of opportunity from the character. If the opponent fails to disarm, the character doesn't get another free disarm attempt against the opponent; the process ends at that point.

Ranged Weapons

To disarm an opponent wielding a ranged weapon, the character makes a melee attack or unarmed attack to strike the weapon in the opponent's hand (see Attack an Object, page 219). If the weapon is held in two hands, it receives a +2 bonus to its Defense. If the character's attack succeeds, the ranged weapon falls to the ground or winds up in the character's hands (if the character made the attack unarmed). This kind of disarm attempt provokes an attack of opportunity, but if the character fails, the target doesn't get to make a disarm attempt against the character attempting the disarm.

Grabbing Objects

A character can also use disarm to snatch away an object worn by a target. Doing this works the same as a disarm attempt (see page 221), except for the following.

Attack of Opportunity: If the target's attack of opportunity inflicts any damage, the attempt to grab the object automatically fails.

Modifiers: If the object is well secured or otherwise difficult to grab from the target, the target gains a +4 bonus. On the other hand, if the object is poorly secured or otherwise easy to snatch or cut away, the attacker receives a +4 bonus.

Failed Attempts: Failing an attempt to grab an object doesn't allow the target to attempt to disarm the character.

Grapple

Grappling means wrestling and struggling hand-to-hand. There are three stages to grappling: grabbing, holding, and pinning.

Grabbing

Normally, a grab is just the first step to starting a grapple. If the character grabs an opponent, but fails to go on to hold him or her, the character doesn't actually start a grapple. Sometimes all a character wants to do is grab the target.

Holding

Once a character has established a hold, he or she is involved in a grapple. From a hold, a character can attempt a number of actions, including damaging the opponent or pinning the opponent. A character cannot achieve a hold on any creature more than two size categories larger than the character; however, such a creature can get a hold on the character—so while a character cannot initiate a grapple with a creature more than two size categories larger, a character can still end up in one.

Pinning

Getting the opponent in a pin is often the goal of a grapple. A pinned character is held immobile.

Grapple Checks

When a character is involved in a grapple, he or she will need to make opposed grapple checks against an opponent—often repeatedly. A grapple check is something like a melee attack roll. A character's attack bonus on a grapple check is:

grapple check = 1d20 + base attack bonus + Strength modifier + grapple modifier .

Grapple Modifier

A creature's size works in its favor when grappling, if that creature is Large or larger in size. Conversely, a creature of Small or smaller size is at a disadvantage because of its size when grappling. Instead of using a creature's size modifier on a grapple check (as would be done for a melee or ranged attack roll), use the appropriate grapple modifier from Table 7.16: Grapple Modifiers.

Table 7.16: Grapple Modifiers

Size	Example	Grapple Modifier
Colossal	blue whale [90 ft. long]	+16
Gargantuan	gray whale [40 ft. long]	+12
Huge	elephant	+8
Large	lion	+4
Medium-size	human	+0
Small	German shepherd	–4
Tiny	housecat	–8
Diminutive	rat	–12
Fine	horsefly	–16

Starting a Grapple

To start a grapple, a character first needs to grab and hold his or her target. Attempting to start a grapple is the equivalent of making a melee attack. If the character gets multiple attacks in a round, he or she can attempt to start a grapple multiple times (at successively lower base attack bonuses). Follow these steps.

1. Attack of Opportunity: A character provokes an attack of opportunity from the target he or she is trying to grapple. If the attack of opportunity deals the character damage, the character fails to start the grapple. If the attack of opportunity misses or otherwise fails to deal damage, proceed to step 2.

2. Grab: The character makes a melee touch attack to grab the target. If the character fails to score a hit on the target, the character fails to start the grapple. If the character succeeds, proceed to step 3 (or stop here if the grab was the character's intended goal).

3. Hold: Make an opposed grapple check. (This is a free action.) If the character succeeds, the character has started the grapple, and deals damage to the target as if attacking with an unarmed strike.

If the character loses, he or she fails to start the

grapple. The character automatically loses an attempt to hold if the target is two or more size categories larger than the character (but the character can still make an attempt to grab such a target, if that's all he or she wants to do).

4. Maintain the Grapple: To maintain the grapple for later rounds, the character must move into the target's square. (This movement is free and doesn't count as part of the character's movement for the round.) Moving, as normal, provokes attacks of opportunity from threatening enemies, but not from the target. The character and the target are now grappling.

If the character cannot move into the target's square, the character cannot maintain the grapple and must immediately let go of the target. To grapple again, the character must begin at step 1.

Grappling Consequences

While a character is grappling, his or her ability to attack others and defend him or herself is limited.

No Threatened Squares: A character doesn't threaten any squares while grappling.

No Dexterity Bonus: A character loses his or her Dexterity bonus to Defense (if the character has one) against opponents the character isn't grappling. (The character can still use it against opponents he or she is grappling.)

No Movement: A character cannot move while held in a grapple.

If the Character is Grappling

When a character is grappling (regardless of who started the grapple), he or she can attempt any of several actions on his or her turn. Unless otherwise noted, each of these options is equivalent to an attack that is performed as part of an attack or full-attack action. (If the character normally gets more than one attack per round, he or she can attempt as many of these options as he or she has attacks available, using his or her successively lower attack bonus for each roll.) The character is limited to these options only; he or she cannot take any other actions while grappling.

Damage the Opponent: Make an opposed grapple check; if the character succeeds, he or she deals damage as if attacking with an unarmed strike.

Pin: Make an opposed grapple check; if the character succeeds, he or she holds the opponent immobile for 1 round. The opponent suffers a –4 penalty to Defense against all attacks from other people (but not from the character); however, the opponent isn't considered helpless.

A character cannot use a weapon on a pinned opponent or attempt to damage or pin a second opponent while holding a pin on the first.

A pinned character cannot take any action except to attempt to escape from the pin.

Escape from Grapple: Make an opposed grapple check. If the character succeeds, he or she can escape the grapple. If more than one opponent is grappling the character, the grapple check result has to beat all opposing check results to escape. (Opponents don't have to try to hold a character if they don't want to.)

Alternatively, the character can make an Escape Artist check opposed by the opponent's grapple check to escape from the grapple. This is an attack action that the character may attempt only once per round, even if the character gets multiple attacks.

If the character didn't use a full-attack action to escape, the character may use a move action after escaping the grapple.

Escape from Pin: Make an opposed grapple check. If the character succeeds, he or she can escape from being pinned. (Opponents don't have to try to keep the character pinned if they don't want to.)

Alternatively, a character can make an Escape Artist check opposed by the opponent's grapple check to escape from the pin. This is an attack action that the character may attempt only once per round, even if the character gets multiple attacks.

Even if the character escapes the pin by winning an opposed grapple check or succeeding at an Escape Artist check, the character is still grappling.

Break Another's Pin: A character may help an ally to break an opponent's pin. Make an opposed grapple check; if the character succeeds, he or she can break the pin that an opponent has on an ally.

Draw a Light Weapon: A character can draw a light weapon as a move action, during a grapple, but not when pinned.

Attack with a Light Weapon: A character can attack with a light weapon while grappling (but not while pinned or pinning). A character cannot attack with two weapons while grappling.

If the Character is Pinned

When an opponent has pinned the character, he or she is held immobile (but not helpless) for one round. On the character's turn, he or she can attempt to escape from the pin, but cannot attempt any other action. If the character succeeds, he or she has escaped the pin, but is still grappling.

Joining a Grapple

A character may use an attack to start a grapple with a target who is already grappling someone else as above, except that the target cannot take an attack of opportunity against the character, and the character's grab automatically succeeds. The character still has to make a successful opposed grapple check and move in to be part of the grapple.

If multiple enemies are already involved in the grapple, the character picks one against whom to make the opposed grapple check.

Multiple Grapplers

Several combatants can be involved in a single grapple. Up to four combatants can grapple a single

opponent in a given round. For the purposes of multiple grapplers, creatures that are one size category smaller than the character count as one-half opponent each; creatures that are one size category larger than the character count as two opponents; and creatures two or more size categories larger than the character count as four opponents.

When involved in a grapple with multiple opponents, the character chooses one opponent to make an opposed check against. The exception is an attempt to escape from the grapple; to escape, a character's grapple check must beat the check results of all opponents.

Mounted Combat

Mounted combatants gain many advantages in combat beyond the obvious increase in speed. Riders gain bonuses to attack opponents on foot and may use the mount's usually superior strength and mass to perform special attacks such as bull rushes and overruns (see page 220).

Controlling a Mount: The steps necessary to control a mount in combat differ depending on whether the mount is trained for combat (see the Handle Animal skill, page 78).

Trained Mounts: Directing a trained mount to move or perform any other action in combat requires a move action by the rider. If the mount doesn't act or move (other than a 5-foot step) the rider doesn't need to spend an action. The move action may occur before or after the rider's remaining move or attack action. A Ride skill check isn't required to control a trained mount.

Untrained Mounts: For mounts that are easily frightened and haven't been trained to tolerate the noise and chaos of battle, a Ride skill check is required at the beginning of any round. The DC of this skill check is 20. (See the Ride skill on page 92 for modifiers and complications to this skill check.) If the skill check succeeds, the rider spends only a move action controlling the mount. If the check fails, the rider must spend the entire round controlling the panicked mount and no other actions are possible until the next round.

Mounts in Combat: The mount moves and acts on the rider's initiative count as directed by the rider. As with any creature, the mount is able to take a move and an attack action, two move actions, or a full-round action. All of the mount's actions are resolved during the controlling action performed by the rider.

Combat while Mounted: With a DC 5 Ride check, a rider can guide the mount with his or her knees so as to use both hands to attack or defend. This is a free action.

Melee Attacks: If the mount charges, both the rider and mount suffer a -2 penalty to their Defense. If either the rider or the mount makes a melee attack at the end of the charge, a +2 bonus to the attack roll is gained. In all respects, the rider is considered as charging.

If the mount runs, withdraws, or makes a double move, the rider isn't allowed to perform a melee attack either before or after the mount moves. The mount spends the entire round moving and there is insufficient time for the rider to make a melee attack.

Ranged Attacks: When firing a longarm from the back of a mount, a character suffers a –2 penalty to all attack rolls unless the longarm is a carbine.

Attacking with a ranged weapon while mounted results in penalties for attacking from a moving platform (see Table 7.7: Attack Roll Modifiers, page 215). If the mount makes only a single move action, the character doesn't suffer a penalty because the motion is gentle enough to attack normally. If the mount moves twice, withdraws, or charges, all ranged attacks are made at a –4 penalty (appropriate for vigorous motion). If the mount runs, the penalty is –8, as this is considered violent motion. These penalties can be reduced by possessing either the Blazing Saddle feat (page 106) or the Cavalry Training feat (page 107).

Withdraw: As usual, if the mount withdraws it doesn't provoke attacks of opportunity for moving from its initial square. The rider, however, will provoke attacks of opportunity for moving unless the only actions the rider takes during the round are move actions.

Riding Defensively: A rider can direct his mount to move in such a way as to make both the rider and mount difficult to hit in combat. Each gains a +2 dodge bonus to Defense at the expense of the mount and rider suffering a –4 penalty to all attack rolls. Additional passengers receive the same bonus and penalty as the rider.

Total Defense: A rider can completely abandon all possibility of attack to gain a large bonus to Defense. By surfeiting all attacks by rider and mount during a round,

both gain a +4 dodge bonus to Defense. Additional passengers receive a -8 penalty on attack rolls. These modifiers last until the rider's next round of actions. Total defense requires an attack action from both the rider and the mount.

Full-Attack Action: A rider cannot normally make a full attack, because controlling the mount requires a move action; however, passengers can take full-attack actions, because they don't have to use a move action to direct the mount.

There is one exception to this rule prohibiting riders from taking full-attack actions. Characters with at least two levels in the Pony Soldier advanced class (see page 179) only need to spend a free action to control a trained mount. This free action can be taken before or after all other actions in the round. Since the Pony Soldier doesn't need to expend a move action to control the mount, he or she is able to take full-round actions (and thus full-attack actions).

Even though a Pony Soldier is able to control his or her mount and make a full attack in the same round, he or she cannot make melee attacks if the mount runs, withdraws, or performs a double move. This restriction doesn't apply to ranged attacks. Furthermore, as usual, the Pony Soldier is unable to make more than one melee attack after a charge.

If a Mount Falls in Battle: If a rider's mount falls, the rider must succeed on a DC 15 Ride check to make a soft fall and suffer no damage. If the check fails, and the mount's last movement consisted of a single move or remaining stationary, the rider takes 1d6 points of damage. If the mount's last movement was two move actions, the rider takes 2d6 damage. If the movement was a run, the damage is 3d6.

If a Rider is Dropped: If a rider is knocked unconscious, he or she has a 50% chance to stay in the saddle. Otherwise the character falls and takes the same damage as if the mount was killed or knocked unconscious. Without anyone to guide it, the mount normally avoids combat, unless the mount has been trained in the Guard trick (see page 79).

Being Struck while Mounted: Any rider that takes damage from an attack must succeed on a DC 5 Ride check or be knocked off of the mount. A rider that falls, must succeed at a subsequent DC 15 Ride check or take damage (1d6, 2d6, or 3d6 depending on the mount's movement; see If a Mount Falls in Battle, above).

When an opponent attempts to trip a rider, instead of making a Dexterity or Strength check to avoid the trip, the rider may oppose the trip attempt with a Ride check. If the trip attack succeeds, the rider is unhorsed and falls prone to the ground, taking damage appropriate for the mount's movement (see above).

Being Dragged Behind a Mount: As with the classic staple of lynch mobs throughout time, when a character is attached to a mount by a rope or chain and is dragged along the ground, he or she takes damage each round according to the mount's speed and the terrain. A mount that takes a single move, a double move, or a run inflicts 1d6, 2d6, or 3d6 respectively. If the ground is relatively

smooth and slippery (a dusty road for example), the damage is halved. If the ground is rocky, sharp, rough, or heavy with brush the damage is doubled. Each round a character is allowed to make a DC 15 Reflex save. If the save succeeds, only one-half damage is taken.

Injury and Death

In *Sidewinder: Recoiled*, grit measures how hard a character is to kill. Grit means two things in the game world: the ability to take physical punishment and keep going, and the ability to turn a serious blow into a less serious one.

Effects of Grit Damage

Every time a character is successfully struck in combat, the damage inflicted by the attack is subtracted from his or her current grit. A character whose current grit is 1 or higher functions normally without impairment. Once a character's grit drops to 0 or below, the character becomes disabled with injury or worse. The following sections (Disabled, Dying, and Dead) describe the sequence from health, to injury, to death.

Disabled (0 Grit)

When a character's current grit drops to exactly 0, the character is disabled. The character isn't unconscious, but he or she is close to it. The character can take only a

single move or attack action each turn (but not both, nor can the character take full-round actions). The character can take non-strenuous move actions without further injuring him or herself, but if the character attacks or perform any other action the Judge deems as strenuous, the character takes 1 point of damage after completing the act. Unless the activity increased the character's grit, the character is now at –1 grit, and is dying.

Healing that raises the character above 0 grit restores him or her to full functionality again, just as if the character had never been reduced to 0 or lower. A character can also become disabled when recovering from dying. In this case, it's a step up along the road to recovery, and the character's current grit can be less than 0 (see Stable Characters and Recovery, page 227).

Dying (-1 to -9 Grit)

When a character's current grit drops below 0, the character is dying. A dying character has a current grit total between –1 and –9 inclusively. A dying character immediately falls unconscious and can take no actions.

A dying character loses 1 grit every round. This continues until the character dies, becomes stable naturally, or stabilizes with assistance, as explained in Stable Characters and Recovery (see page 227).

Dead (-10 Grit or lower)

When a character's current grit drops to –10 or lower, he or she is dead. A character can also die if his or her Constitution is reduced to 0.

Massive Damage

Any time a character takes damage from a single hit that exceeds the character's massive damage threshold, that damage is considered massive damage. A character's massive damage threshold is equal to the character's current Constitution score; it can be increased by taking the Improved Damage Threshold feat.

When a character takes massive damage that doesn't reduce his or her grit to 0 or lower, the character must make a Fortitude save (DC 15). If the character fails the save, the character's current grit is immediately reduced to –1. If the save succeeds, the character suffers no ill effect beyond the loss of grit. Creatures immune to critical hits are also immune to the effects of massive damage.

Nonlethal Damage

Sometimes a character gets roughed up or weakened. This sort of stress won't kill a character, but it can knock a character out or make a character faint. If a character takes sufficient nonlethal damage, the character falls unconscious, but the character doesn't die.

Dealing Nonlethal Damage

Certain attacks deal nonlethal damage. Other stresses, such as heat or exhaustion, also deal nonlethal

MORE DANGEROUS MASSIVE DAMAGE

Judges who want combat to be deadlier can implement the following optional rule. Whenever a character takes massive damage that doesn't reduce his or her current grit to less than 0, the character must make a Fortitude save or have his grit immediately fall to –1. The DC of this Fortitude save is equal to 15 plus the damage that forced the save minus the character's massive damage threshold.

massive damage DC = 15 + damage – massive damage threshold

For example, a character with a massive damage threshold of 14 who takes 24 points of damage in a single attack must make a DC 25 (15 + 24 – 14) Fortitude save.

EVEN MORE DANGEROUS MASSIVE DAMAGE

This optional rule is for those Judges who would prefer that cowpokes are shot dead where they stand. It provides the possibility for a massive damage check to result in a cowpoke's immediate demise. Therefore, this rule should be used only if the Judge wants gunfights to be truly lethal affairs.

Whenever a cowpoke fails a massive damage save, instead of dropping to –1 grit, his or her grit falls to a level proportional to how badly the massive damage saving throw was failed. For each point by which the save fails, the character drops that many grit below zero. For instance, if the save failed by 4, the character's grit would drop to –4. If the save fails by 10 or more the character instantly dies.

MASSIVE DAMAGE EXAMPLE

Story continued from page 206, Showdown and Fast-Draw Round Example

Willy staggers. Feebly, he pulls his Starr out of the holster, but he can't even hold it up, much less aim. Fate sights the man again, but sees no need to shoot. Falling to one knee, Willy loses his grip on the Starr and it dangles from his index finger. The cur tries to stand, but collapses in a heap and lays motionless in the street, a small pool of blood collecting in the dirt near his left shoulder.

In gameplay, after Fate beat Willy in the fast-draw round, he fired while his opponent remained flat-footed. That spelled doom for Willy, because Fate's attack roll scored a hit, making it a critical threat regardless of the actual die roll. Fate's roll to confirm the critical hit succeeds and his damage roll amounts to 16 points. Willy's Constitution is only 12 (which also equals his massive damage threshold), so Fate's shot causes enough damage to force a massive damage saving throw. Willy must succeed at a Fortitude save or drop immediately, dying in the street unless someone comes to his aid. The DC of this saving throw depends on which massive damage rule the Judge is using. If he is using the standard rule, the DC is always 15 independent of the damage inflicted. If the More Dangerous Massive Damage rule is being used (see page 226), then the DC is 19 (15 + the damage inflicted – Willy's massive damage threshold = 15 + 16 – 12).

Poor Willy. His Fortitude save results in a 12. That is too low to make the save regardless of which massive damage system the Judge uses. His grit falls to –1 (or –7 if using the optional rule for Even More Massive Damage on page 226), he collapses in the street and starts to bleed to death.

Now, Fate eyes the duo on Betty Lou's porch. One of them is shaking like a leaf; he looks like he's just a boy. No one else moves until the two men go down into the street, keeping their hands clear of their weapons. Fate eases over to Ill Wind, mounts the steed, and rides slowly down the dirt street without looking back.

damage. Nonlethal damage is dealt by unarmed attackers and some weapons. Melee weapons that deal lethal damage can be wielded so as to deal nonlethal damage, but the attacker takes a –4 penalty on attack rolls. A ranged weapon that deals lethal damage cannot be made to deal nonlethal damage (unless it is used as an improvised melee weapon, such as a pistol whip).

Nonlethal damage doesn't affect the target's grit. Instead, compare the amount of nonlethal damage from an attack to the target's Constitution score. If the amount is less than the target's Constitution score, the target is unaffected by the attack. If the damage equals or exceeds the target's Constitution score, the target must make a Fortitude save (DC 15). If the target succeeds on the save, the target is dazed for 1 round. If the target fails, he or she is knocked unconscious for 1d4+1 rounds.

TOWNSFOLK HAVE GLASS JAWS

In the movies, the average shopkeep or stage guard has a glass jaw. One punch from the hero, and they collapse like a sack of potatoes. The nonlethal damage rules don't model this particularly well. Instead they more closely parallel reality where a fist fight can often continue for a long while. This optional rule is designed for those Judges who feel that your average Joe should be easier to knockout.

Whenever a character is dealt nonlethal damage, that damage is compared to both the character's Constitution score and to the character's current grit. If the damage exceeds either of these, the character must succeed at a DC 15 Fortitude save or lapse into unconsciousness for 1d4+1 rounds.

Stable Characters and Recovery

A dying character (one with –1 to –9 grit) is unconscious and loses 1 grit every round until he or she becomes stable or dies.

Recovering without Help

Each round, a dying character must make a Fortitude saving throw (DC 20). If the save fails, the character loses 1 grit and must make another save on his or her turn the next round. If the save succeeds, the character becomes stable. A stable character stops losing grit every round, but remains unconscious.

If no one tends to the stable character (see page 228), he or she remains unconscious for 1 hour, at which point he or she makes a Fortitude save (DC 20). If the save

succeeds, the stable character regains consciousness, becoming disabled (see page 225). The character's current grit remains where it is, even though it's negative. If the save fails, the character remains unconscious, making a DC 20 Fortitude save every hour to regain consciousness.

An unaided stable, conscious character that has negative grit (and is disabled) doesn't heal naturally. Instead, each day the character makes a Fortitude save (DC 20) to start recovering grit naturally that day; if the save fails, he or she loses 1 grit. Once an unaided character starts recovering grit naturally, the character is no longer in danger of losing additional grit (even if his or her current grit is still negative).

Recovering with Help

A dying character can be made stable by the use of the Treat Injury skill (DC 15). One hour after a tended, dying character becomes stable, he or she makes a Fortitude save (DC 20) to regain consciousness. If successful, the character becomes disabled (see page 225). If the character remains unconscious, he or she makes the same Fortitude save every hour until he or she becomes conscious. Even while unconscious, the character recovers grit naturally, and he or she can return to normal activity when his or her grit rises to 1 or higher.

Healing

After taking damage, a character can recover grit through natural healing (over the course of days) or through medical attention (somewhat faster). In any case, a character cannot regain grit past his or her full normal total.

Natural Healing

A character recovers 1 point of grit per character level per evening of rest (8 hours of sleep). Characters that undergo complete bed rest (doing nothing for an entire day) recover two times their character level in grit. For example, a 5th-level cowpoke recovers 10 grit per day of complete bed rest.

Healing Ability Damage

Ability damage returns at the rate of 1 point per evening of rest (8 hours of sleep). Complete bed rest (24 hours) restores 2 points per day.

Temporary Grit

Certain effects can grant a character temporary grit. When a character gains temporary grit, make a note of his or her current grit before adding the temporary grit. When the temporary grit goes away, the character's grit drops to that score. If the character's grit is already below that score at that time, all the temporary grit has already been lost, and the character's current grit doesn't change.

When temporary grit is lost, the points cannot be restored as real grit can be, even with medical treatment.

Changes in Constitution

An increase in a character's Constitution score—even a temporary one—can give the character more grit (an effective grit increase), but this isn't temporary grit. Such points can be restored through normal healing. When a character's Constitution drops back down to its previous score after a temporary increase, the character's total grit decreases accordingly.

Character Condition Summary

A number of adverse conditions can affect the way a character operates, as defined here. If more than one condition affects a character, apply all if possible. If the Judge rules that multiple conditions aren't possible, apply only the most severe condition.

Ability Damaged

The character has lost 1 or more ability score points. The loss is temporary, and these points return at a rate of 1 per evening of rest or 2 per day of complete bed rest. This differs from "effective" ability loss, which is an effect that goes away when the condition causing it goes away.

Ability Drained

The character has lost 1 or more ability score points. The loss is permanent.

Blinded

The hero cannot see at all, and thus everything has total concealment to him or her. The character has a 50% chance to miss in combat. Furthermore, the blinded character has an effective Dexterity of 3, along with a –4 penalty on the use of Strength-based and Dexterity-based skills. This –4 penalty also applies to Search checks and any other skill checks for which the Judge deems sight to be important. The character cannot make Spot checks or perform any other activity (such as reading) that requires vision. Cowpokes who are blind long-term (from birth or early in life) grow accustomed to these drawbacks and can overcome some of them (at the Judge's discretion).

Cowering

The hero is frozen in fear, loses his or her Dexterity bonus, and can take no actions. In addition, the character incurs a –2 penalty to his or her Defense. This condition typically lasts 10 rounds.

Dazed

Unable to act, a dazed character cannot take any actions, but still receives the benefit of his or her normal Defense. This condition typically lasts 1 round.

Dead

A character dies when his or her current grit drop to –10 or lower, or when his or her Constitution drops to 0.

Deafened

The hero cannot hear and thus suffers a –4 penalty on initiative checks. The character cannot make Listen checks. Cowpokes who are deafened long-term (from birth or early in life) grow accustomed to these drawbacks and can overcome some of them (at the Judge's discretion).

Disabled

The character's current grit is 0. The character can take only a single move action or attack action per round, and takes 1 point of damage after any strenuous action.

Dying

The character is near death and unconscious, with –1 to –9 current grit. The character can take no actions, and each round a dying character loses 1 grit until he or she dies or becomes stable.

Entangled

An entangled character suffers a –2 penalty on attack rolls in addition to a –4 penalty to Dexterity. If the entangling bonds are anchored to an immobile object, the entangled hero cannot move. Otherwise, the character can move at one-half speed, but cannot run or charge.

Exhausted

Heroes who are exhausted move at one-half speed and cannot run or charge. Furthermore, they take a –6 penalty to Strength and Dexterity. After 1 hour of complete, uninterrupted rest, an exhausted character becomes fatigued.

Fatigued

Characters who are fatigued cannot run or charge and suffer a penalty of –2 to Strength and Dexterity. After 8 hours of complete, uninterrupted rest, a fatigued character is no longer fatigued.

Flat-Footed

A character who has not yet acted during a combat is flat-footed, not reacting normally to the situation. A flat-footed character loses his or her Dexterity bonus to Defense. Furthermore, any attack that successfully strikes a flat-footed character is automatically a critical threat, regardless of whether the raw d20 attack roll falls within the critical threat range. The critical must still be confirmed as usual.

Grappled

When grappled, a hero cannot undertake any action other than attacking with his or her bare hands, attacking with a light weapon, or attempting to break free from his or her opponent. The character loses his or her Dexterity bonus to Defense, except on attacks from characters with whom he or she is grappling.

Helpless

Paralyzed, sleeping, or unconscious characters are helpless. A helpless character has an effective Defense of 5 + size modifier. An attacker can attempt a coup de grace against a helpless character.

Nauseated

Characters who are nauseated are unable to attack or do anything else requiring attention or concentration. The only action such a character can take is a single move action per turn.

Panicked

A panicked character flees as fast as possible and cowers (see Cowering, page 228) if unable to get away. The character defends normally but cannot attack.

Paralyzed

Heroes who are paralyzed fall to the ground, unable to move (they have an effective, but not actual, Dexterity and Strength of 0). They are helpless.

Pinned

A pinned character is held immobile (but not helpless) in a grapple. The character suffers a –4 penalty to Defense against melee attacks and loses his or her Dexterity bonus to Defense.

Prone

An attacker who is prone (lying on the ground) incurs a –4 penalty on melee attack rolls and cannot use bows or thrown ranged weapons. The character gains a +4 bonus to Defense against ranged attacks, but suffers a –4 penalty to Defense against melee attacks.

Shaken

A shaken character incurs a –2 penalty on attack rolls, saving throws, and skill checks.

Stable

A stable character is no longer dying, but is still unconscious.

Stunned

A character who becomes stunned loses his or her Dexterity bonus, drops what he or she is holding, and can take no attack or move actions. In addition, the character suffers a –2 penalty to Defense. The condition typically lasts 1 round.

Unconscious

An unconscious character is unable to defend him or herself. The character is helpless and typically falls prone.

CHAPTER EIGHT: THE TRAIL

"I got places to go and country to put behind me."

Quirt Evans – *Angel and the Badman, 1947*

"Why, Miss Hildi," answered Fate, "I do believe it's Martel's weasel-of-a-son, Zed."

"How nice of you to remember," Zed said, squeezing past the Gunter sister still struggling, unsuccessfully, to free herself from the masked man, Meese. Zed had his own Colt drawn, and before he came into full view he made sure that Fate and Zeke could see the barrel pressed against Melody's neck.

"Come on now Fate, hand 'em over. Her life's in your hands." Zed's voice cracked and squeaked without warning, like he was battling a case of the hiccups. "We all know that Zeke can't hit nothin' smaller'n a horse. Soon as you give up those Colts, we'll all be breathin' easy."

Fate paused. He pretended to think it over. Inhaling slowly and scowling, he did his best to look resigned, beaten. Taking two careful steps forward, he presented both Colts butt-first to Martel's kid.

Melody didn't need prompting. As soon as Zed reached out, she turned her head and bit deep into the masked man's hand. Fate spun both Colts and fired the moment the butts pressed into his palms. Young Zed seemed confused, his eyes shifted rapidly back and forth from Melody and Meese—now thrashing against each other inside the stage—to Fate. Martel's son collapsed beneath Melody's kicking feet.

"I warned you back in Kansas, boy," snarled Fate. "You wouldn't escape me the next time we met!"

Sam leapt off his big bay gelding, Uncle, and charged in front of Zeke and over Zed, diving into the stage with one fist cocked. Meanwhile, Hildi fired her Spencer and plugged one of the drivers right in the chest. He slumped against his trail mate, who squeezed off a round at the unsuspecting Zeke, now that Sam had cleared out.

Momentarily startled by Fate's gunplay, Zeke had turned his head away from the stage drivers and now, like Zed, his eyes showed amazement as he slid from the saddle, clutching his belly. Somehow, he got off a wild shot before falling to the ground.

The Trail

Well Pardner, if you made it this far, you have a character replete with skills, feats, and gear. You know what can lie ahead in his or her future, and how to fight to make that future a reality. So now comes the time to saddle-up and hit the trail.

Travel

The west is one broad expanse after another, from miles and miles of short grass prairie on the high plains to the great vistas of the Rocky Mountains. While it might be beautiful, the Old West was a difficult and dangerous place to travel. The distance between sizable settlements was vast, while the Indians could be friendly or hostile and banditry was a common occurrence. Often the best defense was getting to your destination as quickly as possible.

Travel Rates

The rate at which a character travels depends on three factors: the character's speed, the pace, and the difficulty of the terrain. To determine the distance a character travels in a given duration of time, consult Table 8.1: Movement and Distance then apply the terrain multiplier from Table 8.2: Terrain and Overland Movement. The table provides distances traveled over the course of one combat round, one minute, one hour, and one day. One day of travel doesn't mean that the character is traveling continuously over 24 hours. Instead, it assumes that the character spends 8 hours traveling and the rest of the day sleeping, eating, performing chores, and just resting in general.

Speed

Most characters have a speed of 30 feet, meaning that they can move 30 feet with a single move action. Many critters, and some characters (particularly Fast heroes), have a speed greater than 30 feet. Others carrying a heavy load or wearing armor may move slower. A character's speed is directly proportional to his or her overland movement rate.

Pace

The pace specifies how quickly the character moves and how much energy he or she expends while doing so. Three different paces are available to the character.

Walk: *(Ed. Note: also known as a "mosey")* A character can walk 8 hours in a day of travel without difficulty. Walking for longer than that duration can tire the character (see Forced March, page 232). During combat, walking equates with moving the character's speed during a combat round.

Hustle: A hustle represents a slow jog. In combat, hustling is equivalent to the character moving twice his or her speed during a round. A character can hustle for 1 continuous hour without a problem. A character must rest at least 4 hours for each hour of hustling. Hustling for a second continuous hour without resting deals 1 point of damage, and each additional hour deals twice the damage taken during the previous hour of hustling. A character taking any damage from hustling becomes

Table 8.1: Movement and Distance

	Speed						
	15 feet	20 feet	25 feet	30 feet	35 feet	40 feet	45 feet
One Round							
Walk	15 ft.	20 ft.	25 ft.	30 ft.	35 ft.	40 ft.	45 ft.
Hustle	30 ft.	40 ft.	50 ft.	60 ft.	70 ft.	80 ft.	90 ft.
Run (x3)	45 ft.	60 ft.	75 ft.	90 ft.	105 ft.	120 ft.	135 ft.
Run (x4)	60 ft.	80 ft.	100 ft.	120 ft.	140 ft.	160 ft.	180 ft.
One Minute							
Walk	150 ft.	200 ft.	250 ft.	300 ft.	350 ft.	400 ft.	450 ft.
Hustle	300 ft.	400 ft.	500 ft.	600 ft.	700 ft.	800 ft.	900 ft.
Run (x3)	450 ft.	600 ft.	750 ft.	900 ft.	1,050 ft.	1,200 ft.	1,350 ft.
Run (x4)	600 ft.	800 ft.	1,000 ft.	1,200 ft.	1,400 ft.	1,600 ft.	1,800 ft.
One Hour							
Walk	1.5 miles	2 miles	2.5 miles	3 miles	3.5 miles	4 miles	4.5 miles
Hustle	3 miles	4 miles	5 miles	6 miles	7 miles	8 miles	9 miles
Run [1]	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
One Day							
Walk	12 miles	16 miles	20 miles	24 miles	28 miles	32 miles	36 miles
Hustle [1]	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Run [1]	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

[1] This pace cannot be maintained for the duration of time in question.

fatigued; a fatigued character cannot run or charge and suffers a penalty of –2 to both Strength and Dexterity.

Run: A run is an all out sprint. In combat, a running character moves either three or four times his or her speed during a round. Characters who are encumbered or wearing heavy armor move three times their speed when running. All others move four times their speed. A character can run a number of rounds equal to his or her Constitution score. Every round thereafter, the character must succeed on a Constitution check to continue running. The DC of this check is equal to 10 + the number of previous checks. A character who fails the check must rest 1 minute before he or she is able to run again. While resting the character may move in any manner except a run.

A character cannot run for an extended period of time. Attempts to run and rest in cycles effectively work out to a hustle.

Terrain

Terrain can affect how much distance a character can cover in an hour or day. Table 8.2: Terrain and Overland Movement provides a distance multiplier for each type of terrain and the quality of any roads or trails that may be available. Road quality descriptions follow. The multiplier provided on the table is applied to the distance obtained from Table 8.1: Movement and Distance.

Highway: A highway is a straight, major, paved road. In the Old West this would be a graded and bedded gravel road.

Road: A road is typically a rutted, loose dirt track.

Trail: A trail is a path that allows only single-file travel and doesn't benefit a party traveling with vehicles.

Trackless: Trackless terrain is a wild area with no paths.

Table 8.2: Terrain and Overland Movement

Terrain	Highway	Road or Trail	Trackless
Chaparral	x1	x1/2	x1/2
Desert	x1	x1/2	x1/2
Grassland	x1	x1	x3/4
Forest	x1	x1	x1/2
Mountain	x3/4	x3/4	x1/2
Swamp	x1	x3/4	x1/2

Hampered Movement

Some circumstances other than the standard terrain conditions appearing in Table 8.2: Terrain and Overland Movement can make travel more difficult. Table 8.3: Hampered Movement provides additional multipliers for several standard conditions.

Table 8.3: Hampered Movement

Condition	Movement Multiplier
Difficult terrain	x1/2
Obstacle [1]	x1/2
Poor visibility	x1/2

[1] May require a skill check.

Difficult Terrain: This condition may apply when traveling through extremely dense foliage or particularly broken ground, such as the lava flows of southern Idaho or even a road or trail after a particularly violent rain.

Obstacle: An obstacle is a cliff, river, or other hindrance that must be either surmounted or circumvented. If the obstacle is to be overcome directly (e.g. by climbing over or swimming across), a skill check (i.e. a Climb or Swim check) may be required.

Poor Visibility: This condition is usually applied when traveling at night; however, it can also apply in the presence of heavy smoke (perhaps from a forest fire) or heavy fog.

Forced March

In a day of normal walking, a character walks for 8 hours. The rest of the daylight time is spent making and breaking camp, resting, and eating.

A character can walk for more than 8 hours in a day by making a forced march. After 8 hours of marching, each additional hour of marching requires a Constitution check (DC 10, +2 per extra hour). If the check fails, the character suffers 1d6 points of damage. A character taking any damage from a forced march becomes fatigued. It's possible for a character to march into unconsciousness by pushing too hard.

Mounted Movement

A mount bearing a rider can move at a hustle. The critter can also be ridden in a forced march, but its Constitution checks automatically fail. Since a failed Constitution check results in the mount suffering damage, a mount automatically becomes fatigued from forced marches. See Table 8.4: Mounts and Vehicles for mounted speeds and speeds for vehicles.

Table 8.4: Mounts and Vehicles

Mount/Vehicle	Per Hour	Per Day
Mount (load carried) [1]		
Camel	5 miles	40 miles
Camel (301–600 lb.)	3.5 miles	28 miles
Camel (601–900 lb.)	2.5 miles	20 miles
Donkey	3 miles	24 miles
Donkey (51–100 lb.)	2 miles	16 miles
Donkey (101–150 lb.)	1.5 miles	12 miles
Horse	6 miles	48 miles
Horse (151–300 lb.)	4 miles	32 miles
Horse (301–450 lb.)	3 miles	24 miles
Horse, Draft	5 miles	40 miles
Horse, Draft (301–600 lb.)	3.5 miles	28 miles
Horse, Draft (601–900 lb.)	2.5 miles	20 miles
Mule	3 miles	24 miles
Mule (201–400 lb.)	2 miles	16 miles
Mule (401–600 lb.)	1.5 miles	12 miles
Ox	3 miles	24 miles
Ox (301–600 lb.)	2 miles	16 miles
Ox (601–900 lb.)	1.5 miles	12 miles
Cart or wagon	2 miles	16 miles
Stagecoach	4 miles	32 miles
Locomotive	8 miles	64 miles
Ship [2]		
Raft or barge (poled or towed) [3]	1/2 mile	5 miles
Keelboat (rowed) [3]	1 mile	10 miles
Rowboat (rowed) [3]	1-1/2 miles	15 miles
Sailing ship (sailed)	2 miles	48 miles
Sternwheeler (steam engine)	2-1/2 miles	60 miles

1 Quadrupeds, such as horses, can carry heavier loads than characters can. See Carrying Capacity on page 131 for more information.

2 If going downstream, add the speed of the current (typically 3 miles per hour) to the speed of the vehicle. In addition to 10 hours of being rowed, the vehicle can also float an additional 14 hours, if someone can guide it, so add an additional 42 miles to the daily distance traveled. These vehicles can't be rowed against any significant current, but they can be pulled upstream by draft animals on the shores.

3 Rafts, barges, keelboats, and rowboats are used on lakes and rivers.

Hazards of the Trail

Not all of the hazards of the Wild West come from the barrel of a gun. The weather, a hangman's noose, or just a man's vices can all lead to a shortened life span.

Darkness and Light

On a moonless night, the open range is a mighty dark place. If you want to catch those rustlers who have been pruning the herd, you might want a source of light. Table 8.5: Light Sources provides the radius of illumination for several standard light sources.

Bright: The area within this radius is brightly lit; all characters can see clearly. A character or critter can't hide in an area of bright light unless it has cover.

Shadows: In an area of shadowy illumination, a character can see dimly. Critters and characters within this area have one-half concealment (see page 216). A critter in an area of shadowy illumination can make a Hide check to conceal itself.

Darkness: In areas of darkness, characters are effectively blinded. In addition to the obvious effects, a blinded character has a 50% miss chance in combat (all opponents are considered to have total concealment), loses any Dexterity bonus to Defense, suffers a –2 penalty to Defense, moves at half speed, and incurs a –4 penalty on Search checks and most Strength and Dexterity-based skill checks.

Duration: The standard length of time that a source lasts without replacement or refueling.

Table 8.5: Light Sources

Item	Bright	Shadows	Darkness	Duration
Candle	–	0 – 5 feet	> 5 feet	12 hours
Torch	0 – 20 feet	21 – 40 feet	> 40 feet	2 hours
Campfire	0 – 30 feet	31 – 60 feet	> 60 feet	1 hour
Kerosene lantern	0 – 40 feet	41 – 80 feet	> 80 feet	6 hours

Characters with low-light vision (mostly critters; see page 242) can see objects twice as far away as the given radius. Double the effective radius of bright light and shadowy illumination for such creatures.

Heat and Cold

Heat and cold deal damage that cannot be recovered until the character counteracts or escapes the inclement temperature. As soon as a character suffers any damage from heat or cold, he or she is considered fatigued.

A character not properly equipped to counteract the heat (above 85 degrees Fahrenheit) or cold (below 40 degrees Fahrenheit) must attempt a Fortitude saving throw each hour (DC 15, +1 for each previous check). Failure means that the character loses 1d4 grit. Heavy clothing and armor causes a –4 penalty on saves against heat but grants a +4 equipment bonus on saves against cold. A character succeeding at a Survival check (DC 15) gains a +4 competence bonus on the save (see the Survival skill, page 95).

Extreme temperatures (searing heat over 100 degrees Fahrenheit or bitter cold below 0 degrees Fahrenheit) force a character to make a Fortitude save every 10 minutes. Failure means that the character loses 1d6 grit. As noted above, appropriate clothing and the successful use of the Survival skill can modify the save.

Catching on Fire

Cowpokes exposed to open flames might find their clothes, hair, and even equipment on fire. Those at risk of catching fire are allowed a Reflex saving throw (DC 15) to avoid this fate. If a character's clothes or hair catch fire, he or she takes 1d6 points of damage immediately. In each subsequent round, the burning cowpoke must make another Reflex saving throw. Failure means he or she takes another 1d6 points of damage that round. Success means that the fire has gone out. (That is, once the character succeeds at the saving throw, he or she is no longer on fire.)

A character on fire may automatically extinguish the flames by jumping into enough water to douse him or herself. If a sufficiently large amount of water isn't at hand, rolling on the ground or smothering the fire with blankets and the like permits the cowpoke another save with a +4 bonus.

Smoke

Characters breathing heavy smoke or similar toxic gases must make a Constitution check (DC 10, +1 for each previous check) each round or spend that round choking and coughing. Characters who choke for 2 consecutive rounds take 1d6 points of damage.

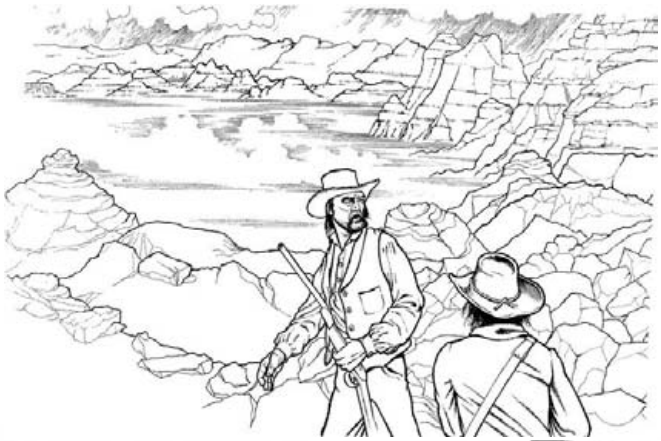
Smoke also obscures vision, giving one-half concealment (20% miss chance) to characters within it.

BLACK POWDER AND SMOKE

Before the advent of smokeless powder in the 1890's, gunfights were smoky affairs. Black powder releases a billowing cloud of smoke when ignited. Battlefields in the 19th century became filled with smoke, obscuring both friend and foe alike. For those Judges who want to add a little realism to western shootouts at the expense of additional combat bookkeeping, we offer this optional rule.

Whenever a firearm is fired outdoors, the square from which it was fired fills with smoke. This smoke is considered light smoke and provides one-quarter concealment (see Concealment, page 216). Any additional firing of firearms in the affected square has no further effect. In still air, the cloud of smoke persists for five rounds. In a light breeze, the smoke dissipates in two rounds. In a strong wind, the cloud diffuses immediately.

If a gunfight breaks out indoors, or in any other poorly ventilated and confined area, the initial firing of a firearm generates a cloud of light smoke and any subsequent firing in the same square transforms the cloud to dense smoke (see Table 7.9: Concealment, page 216).



Electricity

Electrical hazards come in many forms: chemical batteries, Leyden jars, electric generators, and lightning strikes. Table 8.6: Electricity Damage gives damage values for various electrical hazards based on relative voltage. A character can make a Fortitude saving throw to reduce the damage by one-half. If that character is insulated from the current, a successful save indicates that zero damage is suffered.

Table 8.6: Electricity Damage

Type	Examples	Damage	Fort DC
Jolt	Chemical battery	1d3	10
Low voltage	Large charge capacitor	2d6	15
Medium voltage	Electric generator	4d6	15
High voltage	Lightning	8d6	20

Falling

A character takes 1d6 points of damage for every 10 feet of a fall, to a maximum of 20d6 points. If the character succeeds on a Reflex saving throw (DC 10, +1 for each 10 feet fallen), this damage is reduced by one-half. If the saving throw fails, full damage is applied.

A character can make a Tumble check (DC 15) to treat a fall as if it were 10 feet shorter. This reduction in distance applies when determining the damage inflicted by the fall and when calculating the DC of the required Reflex save.

Falling Objects

Objects that fall upon characters, critters, or vehicles deal damage based on the falling object's size and the distance fallen, as noted on Table 8.7: Damage from Falling Objects.

Objects deal the initial damage given in Table 8.7: Damage from Falling Objects for the first 10 feet of the fall. An object deals an additional 1d6 points of damage for every 10-foot increment beyond the first that it falls (to a maximum of 20d6 points of damage). Objects of Fine size are too small to deal damage, regardless of the distance fallen.

A successful Reflex save indicates that the target takes one-half damage. The size of the falling object determines the save DC.

If the save fails by 10 or more, and the object is at least three size categories larger than the target, the target is pinned under the fallen object. Although a pinned character cannot move, he or she isn't helpless. The character can make a Strength check to lift the object off him or herself or attempt an Escape Artist check (DC 20) to get out from underneath. Based on the circumstances, the Judge can modify the DCs for these checks.

Table 8.7: Damage from Falling Objects

Object Size	Examples	Initial Damage	Reflex Save DC	Strength Check DC
Fine	Penny	0	n/a	n/a
Diminutive	Paperweight	1	0	n/a
Tiny	Wrench	1d3	5	n/a
Small	Vase	1d4	10	5
Medium-size	Saddlebag	1d6	15	10
Large	Powder keg	2d6	20	20
Huge	Water barrel	4d6	25	30
Gargantuan	Piano	8d6	30	40
Colossal	Vehicle	10d6	35	50

Starvation and Thirst

Sometimes cowpokes might find themselves without food and water. In normal climates, characters need at least one-half gallon of fluids and about one-quarter pound of decent food per day to avoid the threat of starvation. In very hot climates, a cowpoke needs two or three times as much water to avoid dehydration.

A character can go without water for one day plus a number of hours equal to his or her Constitution score. After this, the character must make a Constitution check each hour (DC 10, +1 for each previous check) or suffer 1d6 points of damage.

A character can go without food for three days, in growing discomfort. After this, the character must make a Constitution check each day (DC 10, +1 for each previous check) or sustain 1d6 points of damage.

Damage from thirst or starvation cannot be recovered until the cowpoke gets water or food, as needed.

Suffocation and Drowning

A character who is underwater or otherwise unable to breath (i.e. being suffocated with a pillow) can hold his or her breath for a number of rounds equal to his or her Constitution score. After this, the character must make a Constitution check (DC 10) every round to continue holding his or her breath. Each round, the DC of the Constitution check increases by 1.

When the character fails one of these Constitution checks, he or she begins to suffocate or drown. In the next round, the character falls unconscious with 0 grit. In the following round, the character drops to –1 grit and is dying. In the third round after failing the check, the character dies of suffocation or drowning.

Hanging

"Well, hell boys, I'd a damn sight rather be hung by my friends than by a bunch of strangers."
Jake Spoon – *Lonesome Dove, 1989*

A character who is hanged faces two threats: a broken neck and strangulation. If the character is

dropped during the hanging, there is a chance that his or her neck breaks, killing the character instantly. To avoid this ignoble end, the character must make a Fortitude check with a DC of 15 + 1 for each foot of the drop. In any case the character suffers 2d6 damage per 10 feet of drop.

Sometimes the cowpoke is tougher than the rope. Whenever a character is hanged, the rope has a chance of breaking. Roll an effective Strength check to burst the rope (see Breaking Objects, page 220). The DC is 23 and there is bonus to the check equal to +1 per foot of drop. If the rope breaks, the character must still check to see if he or she survives the drop. If the character does survive he or she still suffers damage, but no longer faces strangulation.

If the hung character manages to survive the drop and the rope doesn't break, he or she starts strangling. The character can hold his or her breath for a number of rounds equal to his or her Constitution score. After this period of time, the target must make a Constitution check (DC 10, +1 for each previous check) every round to continue holding his or her breath. The target begins to suffocate on a failed check (see Suffocation and Drowning, page 235).

Strangulation

When a character is strangled (whether by instrument or by attacker) the following rules apply.

A character can strangle or choke a target of the same size category or one size category larger or smaller. The strangling attempt incurs an attack of opportunity.

To begin the choke, the attacker must succeed at an opposed grapple check. If the grapple succeeds, the attacker can choose to deal normal unarmed damage as well as choke the target. The target can hold his of her breath for a number of rounds equal to his or her Constitution score. After this period of time, the target must make a Constitution check (DC 10, +1 for each previous check) every round to continue holding his or her breath. The target begins to suffocate on a failed check (see Suffocation and Drowning, page 235).

If at any time the target breaks free or slips free of the grapple, the stranglehold is broken (although any damage that was dealt remains). Note that a grappled target who is not pinned can use his or her attack action to strangle his or her attacker.

Acids and Bases

Corrosive acids and bases deal damage on each round of exposure. The amount of damage varies depending on the strength of the acid or base, as noted on Table 8.8: Corrosive Damage.

Table 8.8: Corrosive Damage

Acid or Base Strength	Splash Attack [1]	Total Immersion [1]
Mild	1d6	1d10
Potent	2d6	2d10
Concentrated	3d6	3d10

[1] Damage per round of exposure.

Corrosive damage reduces grit. A character fully immersed in a caustic substance suffers more damage per round of exposure than a character that has been splashed.

The fumes from most corrosives are inhaled poisons. Those who venture within 5 feet of a large body of acid or base must make a Fortitude save (DC 15) or suffer 1 point of temporary Constitution damage. A second save must succeed 1 minute later to avoid suffering another 1d4 points of Constitution damage (see Poison, page 239).

Alcohol Consumption

Washing down the trail dust in the local saloon is darn near a necessity; however, swilling down the local rotgut isn't without its consequences. For every drink consumed, there is a chance that a character becomes impaired from inebriation. In order to avoid such an effect, a cowpoke must succeed on a Fortitude saving throw with a DC provided by Table 8.9: Inebriation DC. Each glass of wine, bottle (or mug) of beer, or shot of hard alcohol counts as a single drink.

For every check that the character fails, he or she suffers a cumulative –1 penalty to all attack rolls, ability checks, skill checks and Defense. Furthermore, the character suffers a cumulative –1 penalty to his or her Dexterity, Intelligence, and Wisdom. If any one of Dexterity, Intelligence, or Wisdom falls to 0 the character

Table 8.9: Inebriation DC

Number of Drinks	DC	Number of Drinks	DC
1	10	6	25
2	12	7	30
3	14	8	35
4	16	9	40
5	20	10	45

passes out from drunkenness. If at any time a character's total inebriation penalty reaches –10, he or she must make a Fortitude save or risk death from alcohol poisoning. Treat alcohol poisoning as a DC 13 poison that inflicts 1d6 initial Constitution damage and 1d6 secondary Constitution damage (see Poison, page 239). For each hour that the character abstains from drinking, the aforementioned penalties are reduced by 1 and the number of drinks that the character is considered to have drunk is reduced by 1.

The Hangover

As anyone who has imbibed a bit too much can tell you, the morning after can be a terrible time. After the effects of inebriation wear off a character must make a Constitution check (DC 10 +1 for each drink consumed) or suffer 1d4 points of damage from dehydration and a –1 penalty to all attack rolls, ability checks, skill checks and Defense for 1d4 hours.

Disease

When a character is exposed to a contagious disease, the character must make an immediate Fortitude saving throw. The character makes this roll when he or she comes into contact with an infectious carrier, touches an item smeared with diseased matter, consumes food or drink tainted with a disease, or suffers damage from a contaminated attack. If the cowpoke succeeds, the disease doesn't affect him or her—the character's immune system fights off the infection. If the character fails the save, he or she takes damage after an incubation period. Once per day thereafter, the character must succeed at a Fortitude saving throw to avoid secondary damage. Two successful saving throws in a row indicate that the character has fought off the disease and recovers, no longer taking damage.

The characteristics of some infectious diseases are summarized on Table 8.10: Diseases.

Transmission: The disease's method of delivery: contact, ingested, inhaled, or via an injury. Some injury diseases can be transmitted through a wound as small as an insect bite. Most inhaled diseases can also be ingested (and vice versa).

DC: The Fortitude saving throw DC needed to fight off the effects of the disease.

Incubation Period: The amount of time before initial damage takes effect (if the victim fails his or her Fortitude save).

Initial Damage: The damage the victim takes after the incubation period.

Secondary Damage: The amount of damage the hero takes one day after taking initial damage, if he or she fails a second saving throw. This damage is taken each day the saving throw fails.

Anthrax

Caused by the spore-forming bacterium *Bacillus anthracis*, anthrax is an acute infectious disease. Anthrax most commonly occurs in wild and domestic cattle, sheep, goats, camels, antelopes, and other herbivores. Infection in humans can occur in three forms: cutaneous (skin), inhalation, and gastrointestinal. Anthrax spores can live in the soil for many years, and humans can become infected by handling products from infected animals or by inhaling anthrax spores from contaminated animal products. Eating undercooked meat from infected animals can also spread anthrax. Cutaneous anthrax infection occurs when the bacterium enters a cut or abrasion on the skin, such as when handling contaminated wool, hides and leather from infected animals. Inhalation infection may resemble a common cold at first. After several days, the symptoms may progress to severe breathing problems and shock. Inhalation anthrax is usually fatal, and has a correspondingly higher DC of 16. Gastrointestinal infection may follow the consumption of contaminated meat. Initial signs include nausea, loss of appetite, vomiting and fever, followed by abdominal pain, vomiting of blood, and severe diarrhea.

Table 8.10: Diseases

Disease	Transmission Method	DC	Incubation Period	Initial Damage	Secondary Damage
Anthrax	Injury/Inhaled/ Ingested	14	1d2 days	1 Con	1d4 Con [1]
Cholera	Ingested/Contact	15	10+2d4 hours	2d6 Grit and 1 Con	2d6 Grit and 1d2 Con
Gangrene	Injury	12	1d4 days	1 Dex and 1 Con	1d2 Dex and 1d2 Con [1]
Pneumonia	Inhaled	12	1d4 days	1 Str	1d3 Str and 1d3 Con
Salmonellosis	Ingested	13	(1d6x12) hours	1 Str and 1 Dex	1 Str and 1d3 Dex
Smallpox	Inhaled/Contact	15	11+1d3 days	1 Str and 1 Con	1d2 Str and 1d2 Con
Yellow Fever	Injury	14	1 day	1d3 Con	1d3 Str and 1d3 Con [1]

[1] If damage is sustained, make a second saving throw to avoid 1 point being permanently drained (instead of damaged).

Cholera

Commonly acquired by eating food or drinking water contaminated with the bacteria *Vibria cholerae*, cholera infects the intestines, causing diarrhea, vomiting and leg cramps. Cholera can be mild or even asymptomatic, but a severe case can lead to death. The diarrhea and vomiting quickly cause dehydration and shock that can kill a person within hours. Stunning in its rapidity, the extreme diarrhea, sharp muscular cramps, vomiting, fever and then death can all transpire within 12–48 hours. Cholera epidemics would sweep through early frontier settlements and military camps, where poor hygienic practices lead to the contamination of the drinking water supply.

Gangrene

Gangrene may occur in the toes, feet, or legs after an injury that causes blood flow to the extremity to stop suddenly. Without blood flow and the protection of the body's immune system, bacteria, including *Streptococcus* and *Staphylococcus*, begin to invade the muscles and thrive, multiplying quickly.

Pneumonia

Pneumonia is not a specific disease; there are more than fifty kinds of pneumonia – ranging in seriousness from mild to life threatening. In infectious pneumonia, bacteria, viruses, fungi or other organisms attack the lungs, leading to inflammation making it hard to breathe.

Pneumonia can affect one or both lungs. Infection of both lungs is sometimes popularly referred to as double pneumonia.

Salmonellosis

Caused by bacteria called Salmonella, most victims of salmonellosis develop diarrhea, fever, and abdominal cramps 12–72 hours after infection. The illness usually lasts 4–7 days, and most persons recover without treatment; however, in some cases, the Salmonella infection may spread from the intestines to the blood stream and then to other body sites, and can cause death.

Smallpox

Eradicated in the late 20th century, smallpox was a real danger in the Old West. Caused by the virus called variola (a member of the poxvirus family), smallpox is strictly an infection of human beings. While inhalation is the most common means of acquiring the variola virus, infections can be caused by contact with someone who has already developed the characteristic skin lesions (pox) of the disease, or even by handling objects used by a smallpox victim (books, blankets, utensils). Smallpox has a 12–14 day incubation period, during which symptoms will not appear. After incubation, symptoms (including fever and chills, muscle aches, and a flat, reddish purple rash on the chest, abdomen, and back) appear abruptly. After 3 days, these initial symptoms disappear, only to reappear 1 or 2 days later along with a bumpy rash starting on the feet, hands, and face. The rash ultimately progresses to the chest, abdomen, and back. Initially filled with clear fluid, the individual bumps (poxes) eventually become pus-filled over the course of 10-12 days. These poxes will eventually scab over, each leaving a permanently scarred pock or pit when the scab drops off. One of the great tragedies of history (and earliest, crudest forms of germ warfare) was the "gift" of smallpox contaminated blankets to Indians. Smallpox survivors are immune to subsequent smallpox infections.

Yellow Fever

A viral disease passed to humans through the bite of a mosquito (*Aedes aegypti*), yellow fever attacks the major organs of the body with a general infection, causing fatty degeneration of the liver, kidneys and heart. Symptoms include headache and backache, high fever, dizziness, nausea and vomiting. The deep jaundice that occurs during the latter stages of the disease causes the victim's skin to take on an intense yellow hue, thus the name Yellow Fever. The final stage of yellow fever is characterized by a "black vomit" caused by hemorrhaging from the mucous membranes. In severe cases, death may occur 4–8 days after onset of the disease. Many mild cases are often mistaken for other fevers. Once a character recovers from yellow fever, he or she is immune to any further infections of the disease. Yellow fever outbreaks usually occur in warm coastal and swampy regions that provide a breeding ground for the carrier

mosquito, such as the Gulf Coast and the bayous of Louisiana and East Texas; but any place where enough standing water exist to provide a breeding ground for the mosquito is susceptible to a yellow fever outbreak.

Poison

When a character suffers damage from an attack made with a poisoned weapon, touches an item smeared with contact poison, consumes a poisonous substance, inhales a poisonous gas, or is otherwise poisoned, the character must make a Fortitude saving throw. If the character fails, he or she takes the poison's initial damage (usually ability damage). Even if the character succeeds, he or she typically faces secondary damage 1 minute (10 rounds) later. This secondary damage also requires a Fortitude saving throw to avoid.

Poisons are detailed in the Craft (chemical) skill description on page 67.

Poisonous liquids are usually administered through injection or by application to a weapon. Poisonous gases must be inhaled to be effective. Poisonous solids are usually ingested with food or drink.

Perils of Using Poison: A character has a 5% chance (roll of 1 on 1d20) to expose him or herself to a poison whenever the character applies it to a weapon or otherwise readies it for use. Additionally, a character rolling a 1 on an attack roll with a poisoned weapon must succeed at a Reflex saving throw (DC 15) or accidentally poison him or herself with the weapon.

Poison Immunity: Critters with natural poison attacks are immune to their own poison.

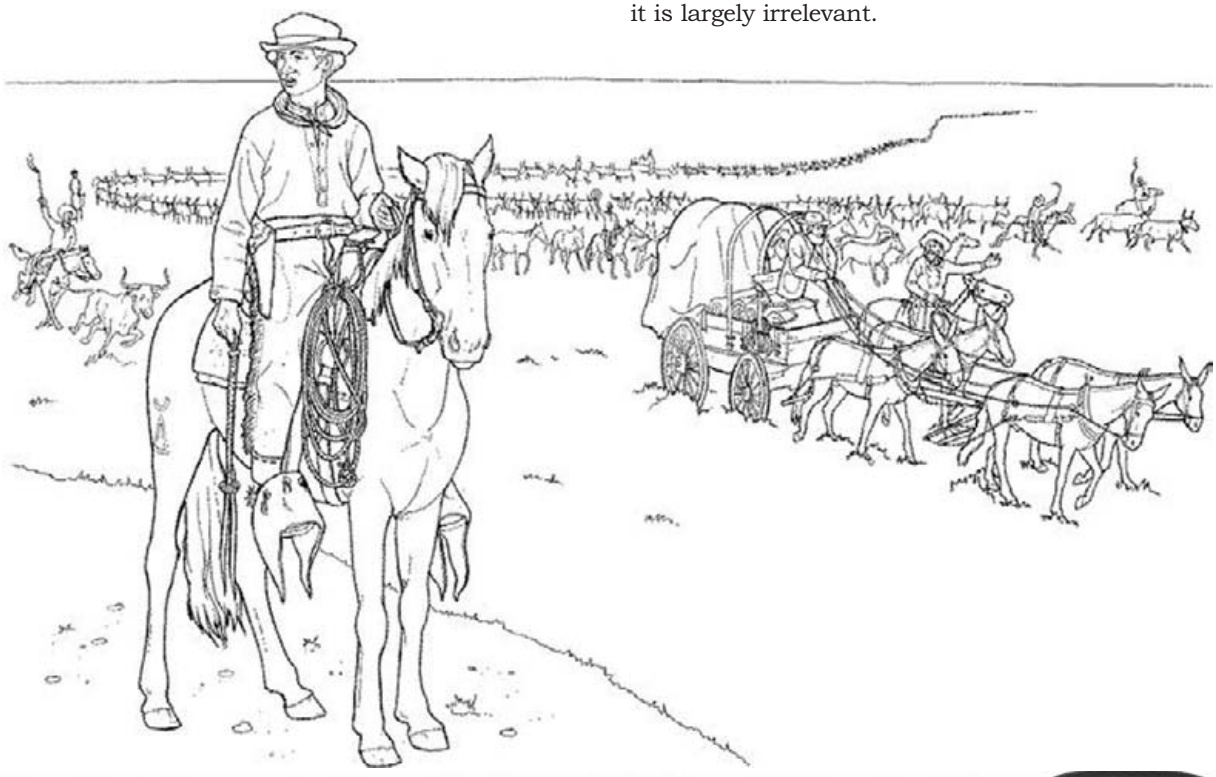
Modifier Stacking

A modifier provides either a bonus or a penalty to a die roll, ability score, DC, or other game statistic. Modifiers are ubiquitous in *Sidewinder: Recoiled,* and oftentimes multiple modifiers can potentially apply to the same statistic. How can a Judge or player determine if certain modifiers are consistent with each other? Should all of the modifiers apply? Should only one apply, or do some supercede others? These questions are answered by the following rules.

All modifiers possess a "type" describing the origin of the modifier. The allowed types are as follows: circumstance, competence, cover, dodge, equipment, morale, natural armor, size, and synergy. Those modifiers that aren't specified by "type" are considered "nameless."

Bonuses (i.e. positive modifiers) of different types can be applied freely to the same statistic or die roll and are said to "stack." Bonuses with the same type generally cannot be applied to the same statistic or die roll simultaneously. In circumstances where two or more bonuses of the same type are available, only the largest bonus applies. The exceptions to this are circumstance, dodge, and synergy bonuses. Dodge bonuses always stack with each other, as do synergy bonuses. Circumstance bonuses stack if the bonuses arise from different circumstances. Finally, all "nameless" bonuses stack with all other bonuses, even other "nameless" bonuses.

Penalties (i.e. negative modifiers) stack differently than bonuses. In particular, any penalty, regardless of type, stacks with any other penalties. For this reason, when describing a penalty the type is often not given as it is largely irrelevant.



CHAPTER NINE : THE CORRAL

"I thoroughly disapprove of duels. If a man should challenge me, I would take him kindly and forgivingly by the hand and lead him to a quiet place and kill him."

Mark Twain

Fate was already advancing through the gun smoke toward the stage, stepping over Zed's body. Another shot rang out, this time from within. Melody was kicking and screaming and grabbing at the masked man's hair, while Sam pummeled him with a frenzy of compact punches.

Hildi exchanged fire with the remaining driver. He grazed her and it gave her a start, but she hit him twice—good, solid shots—and the two dead drivers leaned together like a couple of bookends on an empty shelf. She looked over to see Zeke wobbling on one feeble knee, looking like he was holding in all his guts. Hildi jumped off Pacer, dropped her Spencer and fumbled in her saddlebags for the medical kit. When she found it, she ran to Zeke.

Just when Fate thrust one of his still smoking Colts into the crowded stage, trying to find a clear shot, he saw Sam land a vicious jab to Meese's chin. The big masked man went limp. Fate had to stop Sam from going plumb loco on Meese's unconscious head. Sam nearly landed a blow to Fate's gut; which finally helped to snap him out of the rage. Once Fate had his friend under control, he helped the exhausted Melody out of the stage. She gave both of the men a big hug and the three of them rushed over to where Hildi knelt beside Zeke.

Hildi ordered everyone away while she tended to Zeke. He was bleeding, but he would live, she assured them. "Go make sure the others are dead or tied up. Then look for Martel's payroll."

But there was no payroll. Fate and Melody searched every last inch of that stage, almost tearing it apart while Sam tied up the now un-masked Meese, the only survivor, using enough rope for two men and cursing up a storm. The stage had nothing of value.

Melody spat on Zed's body, twice. "That's for pa, and that's just for principle." She looked over at her sister and Zeke, choking back a tear.

The Corral

Not all foes or allies in the Old West walk on two legs. Some shamble on four paws and some even slither across the ground; double-crossing hombres aren't the only snakes. Critters include all the fauna of the natural world (excluding humans). From the smallest worm to the largest bear, critters are a common sight on the uncivilized frontier. Many of the interactions that a player character will have with critters will be nonviolent. The cowboy's horse, the settler's ox, and the trailboss' dog all have a symbiotic and friendly relationship with humans. Nevertheless, most animals on the western frontier aren't domesticated, and some are downright dangerous. Thus, it's just as likely a cowpoke will come into conflict with beasts as with men.

Critter Types

The d20 Modern Roleplaying game includes many fantastic critters of every shape and size. This cornucopia of beasts is classified by a finite set of critter types. Each type defines the common attributes of all critters belonging in that group; however, in *Sidewinder: Recoiled* critters of myth and fancy don't exist. Thus, only two critter types are presented in these rules: animals and vermin.

A critter's type determines many of its characteristics and abilities: physical ability scores, Grit Die type, base attack bonus, saving throw bonuses, skill points, feats, and special qualities. Mental ability scores (Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma) can vary widely among critters of a type; unless a type description specifies a particular score for one of these abilities, the Judge will assign values as he or she deems appropriate.

Table 9.1: Critter Saves and Base Attack Bonus provides the modifiers to a critter's saving throws and attack rolls based on its type and Grit Dice. The saving throw bonus is a function of Grit Dice and can either be high (a good save bonus) or low (poor save bonus). The table provides Grit Dice progressions for each. Whether the individual saving throws (fortitude, reflex, or will) for a specific critter uses the poor progression or good progression depends on the critter's type. For example, animals generally possess good fortitude and reflex saves and poor will saves. Individual species can vary.

Table 9.1: Critter Saves and Base Attack Bonus

Critter's Grit Dice	Good Save Bonus	Poor Save Bonus	Base Attack Bonus
1 or less	+2	+0	+0
2	+3	+0	+1
3	+3	+1	+2
4	+4	+1	+3
5	+4	+1	+3
6	+5	+2	+4
7	+5	+2	+5
8	+6	+2	+6/+1
9	+6	+3	+6/+1
10	+7	+3	+7/+2
11	+7	+3	+8/+3
12	+8	+4	+9/+4
13	+8	+4	+9/+4
14	+9	+4	+10/+5
15	+9	+5	+11/+6/+1
16	+10	+5	+12/+7/+2
17	+10	+5	+12/+7/+2
18	+11	+6	+13/+8/+3
19	+11	+6	+14/+9/+4
20	+12	+6	+15/+10/+5

Animal

While not taxonomically correct, in *Sidewinder: Recoiled* an animal is considered to be any non-human critter, usually a vertebrate, without an innate capacity for sophisticated language or culture. This category includes mammals, reptiles, marsupials, birds, and fish. Animals generally possess the following traits. In addition, see Table 9.2: Animals for physical ability scores, recommended minimum Grit Dice, and damage based on size.

Grit Die Type: d8.
Base Attack Bonus: 3/4 of total Grit Dice (see Table 9.1: Critter Saves and Base Attack Bonus).
Good Saving Throws: Fortitude and Reflex (some animals have different good saves).
Skill Points: 10–15.
Feats: Weapon Finesse (some animals may lack this feat).
Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Animals are proficient with their natural weapons only. They aren't proficient with armor.
Ability Scores: Animals have Intelligence scores of 1 or 2 (predatory animals tend to have Intelligence scores of 2). No critter with an Intelligence score of 3 or higher can be an animal.
Low-Light Vision: Most animals have low-light vision, which allows them to see up to twice as far in poor lighting (see Darkness and Light, page 233).

Vermin

This type includes insects, arachnids, other arthropods, worms, and similar invertebrates. Vermin generally possess the following traits. In addition, see Table 9.3: Vermin for physical ability scores, recommended minimum Grit Dice, and damage based on size.

Grit Die: d8.
Base Attack Bonus: 3/4 of total Grit Dice (see Table 9.1: Critter Saves and Base Attack Bonus).
Good Saving Throws: Fortitude.
Skill Points: 10–15.
Feats: None.
Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Vermin are proficient with their natural weapons only. They aren't proficient with armor.
Ability Scores: Vermin have no Intelligence score.
Potent Venom: Medium-size or larger poisonous vermin receive a bonus to the save DC of their poison based on their size, as follows: Medium-size +2, Large +4, Huge +6, Gargantuan +8, Colossal +10.
Darkvision: Most vermin with visual sensory organs have darkvision with a range of 60 feet.
Blindsight: Most vermin without visual sensory organs have blindsight with a range of 60 feet.
Immunities: Vermin are immune to mind-affecting effects.
Resistance to Massive Damage: Vermin gain a +5 species bonus on Fortitude saves to negate the effects of massive damage.

Sample Critters

The following section provides statistics and details of many of the critters found on the American western frontier. Some were common, such as the bison, while others were extremely rare, such as the jaguar of Arizona. Furthermore, domestic animals brought to the frontier have also been included. Obviously, the cow, sheep, and domestic cat fall into this category, but so do several more exotic animals such as the camel (see Camels in the Old West, page 243).

Table 9.2: Animals

Size	Str	Dex	Con	Minimum GD	Slam	Bite	Claw	Gore
Colossal	42–43	10–11	28–29	32d8	2d6	4d6	2d8	4d6
Gargantuan	34–35	10–11	24–25	16d8	1d8	2d8	2d6	2d8
Huge	26–27	10–11	20–21	4d8	1d6	2d6	2d4	2d6
Large	18–19	12–13	16–17	2d8	1d4	1d8	1d6	1d8
Medium-size	10–11	14–15	12–13	1d8	1d3	1d6	1d4	1d6
Small	6–7	16–17	10–11	1/2 d8	1d2	1d4	1d3	1d4
Tiny	2–3	18–19	10–11	1/4 d8	1	1d3	1d2	1d3
Diminutive	1	20–21	10–11	1/8 d8	—	1d2	1	1d2
Fine	1	22–23	10–11	1/16 d8	—	1	—	1

Table 9.3: Vermin

Size	Str	Dex	Con	Minimum GD	Slam	Bite	Claw	Gore
Colossal	42–43	6–7	26–27	32d8	2d6	4d6	2d8	4d6
Gargantuan	34–35	6–7	22–23	16d8	1d8	2d8	2d6	2d8
Huge	26–27	6–7	18–19	8d8	1d6	2d6	2d4	2d6
Large	18–19	8–9	14–15	2d8	1d4	1d8	1d6	1d8
Medium-size	10–11	10–11	10–11	1d8	1d3	1d6	1d4	1d6
Small	6–7	12–13	8–9	1/2 d8	1d2	1d4	1d3	1d4
Tiny	2–3	14–15	8–9	1/4 d8	1	1d3	1d2	1d3
Diminutive	1	16–17	8–9	1/8 d8	—	1d2	1	1d2
Fine	1	18–19	8–9	1/16 d8	—	1	—	1

CAMELS IN THE OLD WEST

"Napoleon when in Egypt used with marked success the dromedary . . . in subduing the Arabs, whose habits and country were very similar to those of the mounted Indians of our western plains . . ..

For like military purposes, for expresses, and for reconnaissances, it is believed, the dromedary would supply a want now seriously felt in our service; and for transportation with troops rapidly moving across the country, the camel, it is believed, would remove an obstacle which now serves greatly to diminish the value and efficiency of our troops on the western frontier." — Report of the Secretary of War, WAR DEPARTMENT, Washington, December 1, 1853

Before the United States acquired California and the southwest from Mexico, even before Texas became a state, there were proposals for using camels to tame the west. Major Henry C. Wayne pushed a hotly debated proposal, finally convincing Mississippi Senator Jefferson Davis that the Army should give camels a trial. When Davis became Secretary of War, he made an official recommendation, and on March 3, 1855, the U.S. Camel Corps was born

Based 60 miles west of San Antonio out of Camp Verde, in June of 1857, the Camel Corps was assigned to survey the unexplored territory between El Paso and the Colorado River. Led by Edward Fitzgerald Beale, the party consisted of 44 soldiers, 25 camels and numerous horses and mules. Accompanying the herd was a Syrian caretaker named Hadji Ali, whose name, and gregarious nature promptly earned him the nickname "Hi Jolly." At first, the camels, loaded with 600 to 800 pounds each, would arrive in camp hours later than the horses and mules. Nevertheless, eventually the camels became accustomed to their task, and soon outstripped the other animals. The camels really proved their mettle after the expedition became lost and water supplies began to dwindle. With horses and mules dropping right and left, the camels pushed on, eventually leading the expedition to a river only 20 miles from camp. While men, mules, and horses desperately gulped water, the camels observed with complete indifference. After triumphantly reaching California, the expedition returned to Texas, leaving the camels behind. Beale would later report.

"The harder the test they (the camels) are put to, the more fully they seem to justify all that can be said of them. They pack water for days under a hot sun and never get a drop; they pack heavy burdens of corn and oats for months and never get a grain; and on the bitter greasewood and other worthless shrubs, not only subsist, but keep fat . . .. I look forward to the day when every mail route across the continent will be conducted and worked altogether with this economical and noble brute."

Although the camels had proved their worth, they remained unpopular with the majority of soldiers because of their habit of kicking and spitting at those who ill-treated them. In addition, the men found the camels odd-look and overwhelming odor frightened horses, burros and mules – which would often panic and stampede at the first sight and smell of these strange immigrants.

Given enough time, the Camel Corps may have become a useful addition to the U.S. Army, but all hope died at Ft. Sumter. The Confederacy, finding even less use for the beasts, allowed many to escape into the desert. Those that remained under U.S. control were sold-off or willfully released into the wild. Both Edward Beale and "Hi Jolly" purchased a few. While Beale's camels lived out their lives on his ranch, Hi Jolly used his to start a freighting business between ports on the Colorado River and the new mining camps springing up to the east. Eventually though, the business failed and Jolly released his last camel into the desert near Gila Bend, Arizona. Between the escapees and those willfully released into the wilds, camels roamed at will across the Old West for many a year.

Critter Description

Each critter's description is organized in the same general format, as described in this section. Much of the information on a critter is condensed into table entries, which are divided into the following headings.

Challenge Rating

A critter's Challenge Rating provides a rough measure of the critter's toughness in a combat situation. As a general rule, four characters of a level equal to the critter's Challenge Rating should exhaust roughly one-quarter of their resources battling it. Situations may arise where a critter's Challenge Rating doesn't accurately reflect the difficulty of the challenge.

Size

A critter falls into one of nine size categories. The size categories are described briefly in Table 9.4: Critter Size

Table 9.4: Critter Size Categories

Size Category	Physical Size	Weight	Size Mod	Grapple Mod	Hide Mod	Fight Space	Reach
Colossal	greater than 64 ft.	greater than 250,000 lb.	–8	+16	–16	30 ft.	15 ft.
Gargantuan	32 ft. – 64 ft.	32,000 lb. – 250,000 lb.	–4	+12	–12	20 ft.	15 ft.
Huge	16 ft. – 32 ft.	4,000 lb. – 32,000 lb.	–2	+8	–8	15 ft.	10 ft.
Large	8 ft. – 16 ft.	500 lb. – 4,000 lb.	–1	+4	–4	10 ft.	10 ft.
Medium-size	4 ft. – 8 ft.	60 lb. – 500 lb.	+0	+0	+0	5 ft.	5 ft.
Small	2 ft. – 4 ft.	8 lb. – 60 lb.	+1	–4	+4	5 ft.	5 ft.
Tiny	1 ft. – 2 ft.	1 lb. – 8 lb.	+2	–8	+8	2.5 ft.	0 ft.
Diminutive	6 in. – 1 ft.	2 oz. – 1 lb.	+4	–12	+12	1 ft.	0 ft.
Fine	less than 6 in.	less than 2 oz.	+8	–16	+16	6 in.	0 ft.

Categories. Each size category includes a size modifier that applies to the critter's Defense and attack rolls; a modifier that applies to grapple checks; and a modifier that applies to Hide checks. These modifiers have been applied to the statistics for the critters described here.

Type

This heading provides the critter's type (either animal or vermin). The critter possesses the statistics appropriate for the listed type unless otherwise contradicted (see Critter Types, page 241).

Grit Dice and Grit

A critter's Grit Dice (GD) is similar to a cowpoke's level. It specifies the number of dice that are rolled and totaled to determine the critter's total grit. A critter's type and size determine the number of Grit Dice the critter receives and the die type that is rolled for grit (i.e. d8s, d10s, etc.). The critter's Constitution modifier is added to every die roll. After the Grit Dice, the total grit for an average specimen of the critter is indicated in parentheses.

A critter's Grit Dice value is equivalent to its level for determining how various class features and feats affect the critter, its rate of natural healing, and its maximum ranks in a skill.

Massive Damage Threshold (MDT)

When a critter takes damage from a single attack equal to or greater than its current Constitution, it must succeed on a Fortitude save (DC 15) or immediately drop to –1 grit. If the damage would reduce the critter to –1 grit or fewer anyway, the massive damage threshold doesn't apply, and the critter doesn't need to make a Fortitude save. See Massive Damage on page 226 for further details, including two optional massive damage rules.

Vermin gain a +5 species bonus on their Fortitude saves to avoid falling to –1 grit.

Initiative

The critter's modifier on initiative checks is usually equal to its Dexterity modifier, although the Improved Initiative feat provides an additional +4 bonus.

Speed

A critter's tactical speed on land is the amount of distance it can cover in one move action. If the critter has other modes of movement, these are given after the main entry. The different movement modes are as follows.

Burrow: The critter can tunnel through dirt, but not through rock unless the descriptive text says otherwise. Critters cannot run while burrowing.

Climb: A critter with a climb speed has the Climb skill at no cost and gains a +8 species bonus on Climb checks. The critter must make a Climb check to climb any wall or slope with a DC greater than 0, but it can always choose to take 10, even if rushed or threatened while climbing. The critter climbs at the given speed while climbing. If it attempts an accelerated climb, it moves at double the given climb speed (or its normal land speed, whichever is less) and makes a single Climb check at a –5 penalty. Critters cannot use the run action while climbing. The critter retains its Dexterity bonus to Defense (if any) while climbing, and opponents don't receive any special bonus to their attack rolls against the climbing critter.

Fly: The critter can fly at the given speed if carrying a medium load or less. All fly speeds include a parenthetical note indicating maneuverability as defined by the following terms:

Perfect: The critter can perform almost any aerial maneuver it wishes.

Good: The critter is agile in the air, but cannot change direction as readily as one with perfect maneuverability.

Average: The critter can fly as adroitly as a finch or sparrow.

Poor: The critter flies as well as a very large bird, such as a vulture or condor.

Clumsy: The critter can barely fly at all.

Critters that fly can make dive attacks. A dive attack functions identically to a charge, but the diving critter must move a minimum of 30 feet. It can make only claw attacks, but these deal double damage. Critters can use the run action while flying, provided they fly in a straight line.

Swim: A critter with a swim speed can move through water at the given speed without making Swim checks. It gains a +8 species bonus on any Swim check to perform any special actions or avoid hazards. The critter can always choose to take 10 when swimming, even if

distracted or endangered. Critters can use the run action while swimming, provided they swim in a straight line.

Defense

A critter's Defense includes a parenthetical mention of the modifiers contributing to it. The critter's "touch" Defense (discounting natural armor and other armor modifiers) and "flat-footed" Defense (discounting any Dexterity bonus) are also provided under this heading.

Base Attack Bonus

A critter's base attack bonus doesn't include any modifiers. It is used to calculate a critter's grapple modifier as well as the maximum bonus on damage rolls for a critter using the Power Attack feat. A critter's base attack bonus is derived by cross-referencing the critter's Grit Dice and type on Table 9.1: Critter Saves and Base Attack Bonus.

Grapple Modifier

Whenever a critter makes an opposed grapple check, apply this modifier to its d20 roll. The total modifier on grapple checks is determined as follows: base attack bonus + Strength modifier + grapple modifier. The grapple modifiers for critters of various sizes are given in Table 9.4: Critter Size Categories.

Primary Attack

Critters attack using natural weapons, including teeth, claws, horns, and the like. The number of attacks, along with the weapon, attack bonus, and damage, are provided in each critter's entry. Unless otherwise noted, natural weapons are considered melee attacks and threaten critical hits on a natural attack roll of 20.

If an attack can also cause some special effect other than damage, that information is provided along with the amount of damage inflicted. Unless otherwise noted, critters deal double damage on critical hits.

Natural weapons have types just as other weapons do. The most common types are summarized as follows.

Bite: The critter attacks with its mouth, dealing piercing damage.

Claw or Rake: The critter rips with a sharp appendage, dealing slashing damage.

Gore: The critter spears the opponent with an antler, horn, or similar appendage, dealing piercing damage.

Slap or Slam: The critter batters opponents with an appendage, dealing bludgeoning damage.

Sting: The critter stabs with a stinger, dealing piercing damage. Stingers are usually poisoned.

If a critter moves more than 5 feet in the same round it attacks, it can make only a single attack using its primary attack bonus. This bonus includes modifications for size and Strength (for melee attacks) or Dexterity (for ranged attacks). A critter with the Weapon Finesse feat can use its Dexterity modifier on its primary attack. The damage and primary weapon type are noted in parentheses. A critter's primary attack damage includes its full Strength modifier (1.5 times its Strength bonus if it is the critter's sole attack).

Use the critter's primary attack bonus whenever the critter makes an attack of opportunity.

Full Attack

A critter whose only movement during its turn is a 5-foot step can make a full attack, using all of its natural weapons. A critter's full attack includes both its primary attack and its secondary attacks (if any). The primary attack bonus includes modifications for size and Strength (for melee attacks) or Dexterity (for ranged attacks). A critter with the Weapon Finesse feat can use its Dexterity modifier on melee attacks. A critter's primary attack damage includes its full Strength modifier (1.5 times its Strength bonus if it is the critter's sole attack or if the critter is wielding a two-handed melee weapon).

The remaining attack forms are secondary attacks and receive a –5 penalty on the attack rolls. Critters with the Multiattack feat (see Feats, page 247) incur only a –2 penalty on secondary attacks. Only one-half of the critter's Strength bonus to damage is added to secondary attacks.

Fighting Space

Fighting space approximates the amount of space a critter needs to move and fight effectively, and how much space it occupies on a grid of 5-foot-by-5-foot squares. Table 9.4: Critter Size Categories gives the fighting space as single number for critters of any given size, although variations and exceptions are possible. A critter's fighting space is a square and the number supplied in the table provides the dimension of one side of this square.

Reach

A critter's reach is the distance at which it can strike targets with its natural weapons without needing to adjust its position on the grid. A critter using its natural weapons threatens all squares within its reach. When measuring diagonally, every second square counts as two squares. Table 9.4: Critter Size Categories provides the typical reach for critters of any given size. The Judge may adjust the values in the table by –5 feet or +5 feet for critters that have less than normal or greater than normal reach. Unlike the wielder of a reach weapon, a critter with greater than normal reach (more than 5 feet) can still strike critters next to it. A critter with greater than normal reach can usually make an attack of opportunity against a character approaching it, because the character enters a square it threatens before he or she can attack it. (This doesn't apply if the character takes a 5-foot step.)

A critter with a 0-foot reach must move into the fighting space of its target to attack it, provoking an attack of opportunity from the target as the critter enters the target's fighting space and threatened area. Also,

critters with 0-foot reach don't threaten the squares around them.

Special Qualities

Many critters have unusual abilities. This entry describes those abilities and addresses how they are used in combat (if they are a combat ability). Unless otherwise noted, using an ability requires only a free action. A list of recurring special qualities follows:

Blindsight: Using non-visual senses, such as sensitivity to vibrations, scent, acute hearing, or echolocation, the critter maneuvers and fights as well as a sighted critter. Darkness and concealment are irrelevant. The ability's range is specified in the critter's descriptive text. Usually, a critter with blindsight doesn't need to make Spot or Listen checks to notice critters within range of its blindsight ability.

Constrict: After making a successful grapple check, the critter crushes the opponent, dealing bludgeoning damage. The amount of damage is given in the critter's entry. If the critter also has the improved grab ability, it deals constriction damage in addition to damage dealt by the attack used to grab.

Darkvision: Using nonvisual senses, or perhaps infrared or ultraviolet senses, the critter can effectively see in total darkness, out to the specified range (usually 60 feet). Darkvision doesn't allow the differentiation of colors, but for game considerations is otherwise similar to normal sight.

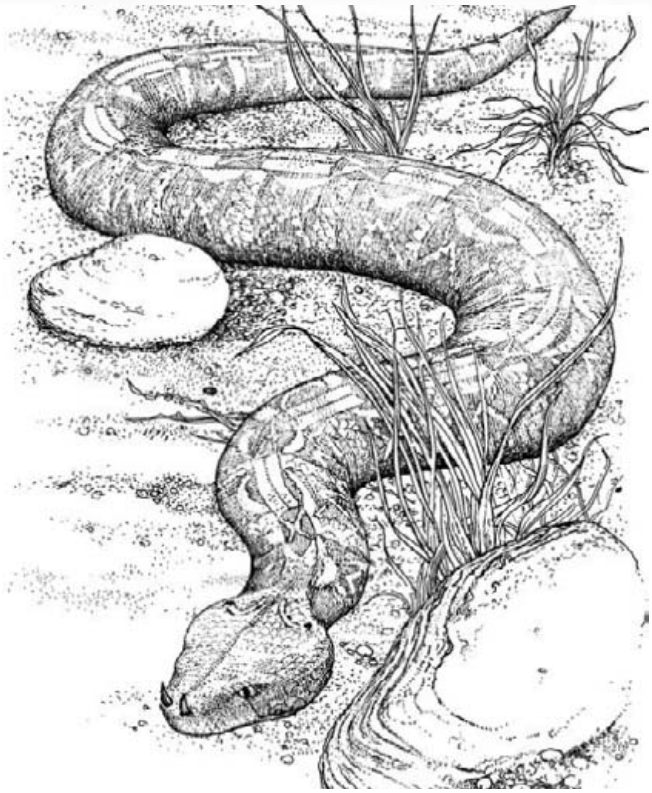
Improved Grab: If the critter hits with a melee attack it deals normal damage and, as a free action, attempts to start a grapple without provoking attacks of opportunity. An initial touch attack isn't required. Unless stated otherwise, improved grab works only against opponents at least one size category smaller than the critter. A Small or smaller critter using improved grab doesn't apply its grapple modifier to its grapple check.

The critter has the option to conduct the grapple normally, or simply use the part of its body it used in the improved grab to hold the opponent. If it chooses to do the latter, it suffers a –20 penalty on grapple checks but isn't considered grappled itself. In other words, the critter doesn't lose its Dexterity bonus to Defense, still threatens an area, and can use its remaining attacks against other opponents.

A successful hold doesn't deal additional damage unless the critter also has the constrict ability. If the critter doesn't constrict, each successful grapple check it makes during successive rounds automatically deals the damage given for the attack that established the hold.

When a critter acquires a hold after an improved grab attack, it pulls the opponent into its space. This act doesn't provoke attacks of opportunity. The critter isn't considered grappled while it holds the opponent, so it still threatens adjacent squares and retains its Dexterity bonus. It can even move, provided it can drag, or carry, the opponent's weight.

Low-Light Vision: A critter with low-light vision can see twice as far as normal in poor lighting conditions. The critter can still distinguish colors, even in dim lighting.



Poison: Poison attacks deal initial damage, such as temporary ability damage or some other effect, to the opponent if the opponent fails a Fortitude save. Unless otherwise noted, another saving throw is required 1 minute later (regardless of the result of the first save) to avoid secondary damage.

The Fortitude save against poison has a DC equal to 10 + one-half of the poisoning critter's GD + the poisoning critter's Constitution modifier (the exact DC is given in the critter's Species Traits). A successful save negates the damage.

Rage: If the critter takes damage in combat, it flies into a berserk rage on its next turn, clawing and biting madly until either it or its opponent is dead. It gains +4 to Strength, +4 to Constitution, and suffers –2 to Defense. The critter cannot end its rage voluntarily.

Scent: This ability allows the critter to detect approaching enemies, sniff out hidden foes, and track by sense of smell. Critters with the scent ability can identify familiar odors just as humans do familiar sights.

The critter can detect opponents within 30 feet by sense of smell. If the opponent is upwind, the range increases to 60 feet; if downwind, it drops to 15 feet. Strong scents can be detected at twice the ranges noted above. Overpowering scents can be detected at triple normal range.

When a critter detects a scent, the exact location isn't revealed—only its presence somewhere within range. The critter can take a move or attack action to note the direction of the scent. If it moves within 5 feet of the source, the critter can pinpoint that source.

A critter with the scent ability can follow tracks by smell, making a Wisdom check to find or follow a track.

The typical DC for a fresh trail is 10 (no matter what kind of surface holds the scent). This DC increases or decreases depending on the strength of the quarry's odor, the number of critters being tracked, and the age of the trail. For each hour that the trail is cold, the DC increases by + 2. The ability otherwise follows the rules for the Track feat. Critters tracking by scent ignore the effects of surface conditions and poor visibility.

Allegiances

Since critters have extremely low intelligence, they usually don't have any allegiances. Nevertheless, any well-treated trained domestic critter may be considered to have an allegiance towards its owner.

"When you give a lesson in meanness to a critter or a person don't be surprised if they learn their lesson."
Will Rogers

Saves

A critter's Fortitude, Reflex, and Will saving throw modifiers take into account the critter's type, ability score modifiers, feats, and any special qualities.

Action Points

Critters lack action points. Thus, this entry will usually list 0 as a reminder of this fact.

Reputation

A critter generally has a Reputation bonus of +0. Although in some cases, at the discretion of the Judge, a particular critter's deeds may warrant the possession of a Reputation bonus. For instance, "Old Three Toes" the bear may be famous throughout Colorado as a vicious man-killer.

Abilities

Critters have the same six ability scores as characters: Strength (Str), Dexterity (Dex), Constitution (Con), Intelligence (Int), Wisdom (Wis), and Charisma (Cha).

Skills

This section lists alphabetically by name all of the critter's skills, along with skill modifiers including adjustments for ability scores and any bonuses from feats or species abilities (unless otherwise noted in the descriptive text). All listed skills were purchased as class skills.

Feats

This section lists alphabetically all of the critter's feats. Most critters use the same feats that are available to characters, but some have access to the Multiattack feat (see the Multiattack sidebar).

MULTIATTACK

The critter is adept at using all its natural weapons at once.

Prerequisite: Three or more natural weapons.

Benefit: The critter's secondary attacks with natural weapons take only a –2 penalty.

Normal: Without this feat, the critter's secondary natural attacks take a –5 penalty.

Advancement

The Judge can improve a critter by increasing its Grit Dice. The Advancement entry indicates the increased Grit Dice (and often size) of the critter.

Increasing Grit Dice

As a critter gains Grit Dice, many of its game statistics change.

Size: Adding Grit Dice to a critter can also increase its size. An increase in size affects a critter's Defense, attack rolls, and grapple checks, as shown on Table 9.4: Critter Size Categories, as well as physical ability scores and damage, as shown in the descriptions of the critter types.

Defense: An increase in size affects a critter's Defense, as shown on Table 9.4: Critter Size Categories. An increase in size might also improve a critter's natural armor bonus to Defense, as shown on Table 9.5:

Table 9.5: Adjustment to Physical Abilities and Natural Armor

Old Size [1]	New Size	Str	Dex	Con	Natural Armor Improvement
Fine	Diminutive	—	–2	—	—
Diminutive	Tiny	+2	–2	—	—
Tiny	Small	+4	–2	—	—
Small	Medium-size	+4	–2	+2	—
Medium-size	Large	+8	–2	+4	+2
Large	Huge	+8	–2	+4	+3
Huge	Gargantuan	+8	—	+4	+4

[1] Repeat the adjustment if the critter moves up more than one size category.

Adjustment to Physical Abilities and Natural Armor. Note that a natural armor bonus stacks with an equipment bonus from armor.

Attack Bonus: Table 9.1: Critter Saves and Base Attack Bonus shows how a critter's base attack bonus improves as it gains Grit Dice. A change in the critter's size also modifies its attack rolls, as shown on Table 9.4: Critter Size Categories. Both values must be counted when recalculating a critter's attack bonus.

Grapple Modifier: An increase in size affects a critter's grapple modifier, as shown on Table 9.4: Critter Size Categories.

Damage: An increase in size also increases the amount of damage a critter deals with its natural weapons.

Saving Throws: Table 9.1: Critter Saves and Base Attack Bonus shows how a critter's saving throw bonuses improve as it gains Grit Dice.

Ability Scores: An increase in size affects a critter's Strength, Dexterity, and Constitution, as shown on Table 9.5: Adjustment to Physical Abilities and Natural Armor.

Skills and Feats: Critters don't gain skill points or feats as they increase in Grit Dice or size.

Critter Listings

Alligator *(Alligator mississippiensis)*

This large, lizard-like carnivorous reptile prowls the edges of the large waterways of the southeastern United States—including Old Man River, for which it earned its Latin name. Known for its long, powerful tail and broad snapping snout and jaws, the "gator" tends to avoid human contact unless threatened (or if a female's eggs are threatened). Often hunted for its valuable hide, a gator feeds on large and small animals, even preying on cattle or deer when the opportunity arises. Cowpokes should remember to keep an eye peeled for floating logs at the edges of rivers and lakes—there just might be a pair of eyes staring back from one of those logs.

Species Traits

Aquatic: Alligators can move in water without making Swim checks and can stay underwater for up to an hour before they need to make Constitution checks to avoid drowning. The first check requires a DC 10 Constitution check. Instead of making a check every round, an alligator needs to make a check only once a minute. Each minute, the saving throw becomes progressively harder by +1. If the alligator fails its saving throw, it begins to drown (see Suffocation and Drowning, page 235).

Improved Grab: To use this ability, an alligator must hit an opponent of its size or smaller with its bite attack. If it gets a hold, the alligator grabs the opponent with its mouth and drags it into deep water, attempting to pin it to the bottom.

Skill Bonus: Alligators gain a +12 species bonus on Hide checks when submerged.

Armadillo *(Dasypus novemcinctus)*

The nine-banded armadillo *(Ed. Note: also known as the Texas speed bump)* is famous for its bony-plate carapace and is usually found in the open grasslands of the south and southwest. Sometimes, these small armored critters are found in forests. In either case, they live in burrows with multiple entrances and tunnels. When threatened, an armadillo will flee for its tunnels and press its carapace against an entryway to defend against an attack. If unable to reach the burrow, this critter can withdraw its feet for additional protection. The armadillo's tail and feet are also armored.

Species Traits

Defensive Ball: When threatened, an armadillo can curl up into a ball to protect its vitals, gaining damage reduction 2/– against ranged and melee attacks (all physical attacks). Curling up in such a fashion can be accomplished with a move action, and while in a defensive ball, the armadillo may not move or attack.

Badger *(Taxidea taxus)*

The badger is a furry animal with a squat, powerful body. Its strong forelimbs are armed with long claws for digging—in fact, a badger can outdig a burly man with a shovel any day. An adult badger is 2 to 3 feet long and weighs 25 to 35 pounds. Often hunted for their pelts, badgers are typically solitary creatures that become savage fighters when cornered. They prefer the open, dry country of the Old West, digging underground homes that usually contain a number of escape routes. They

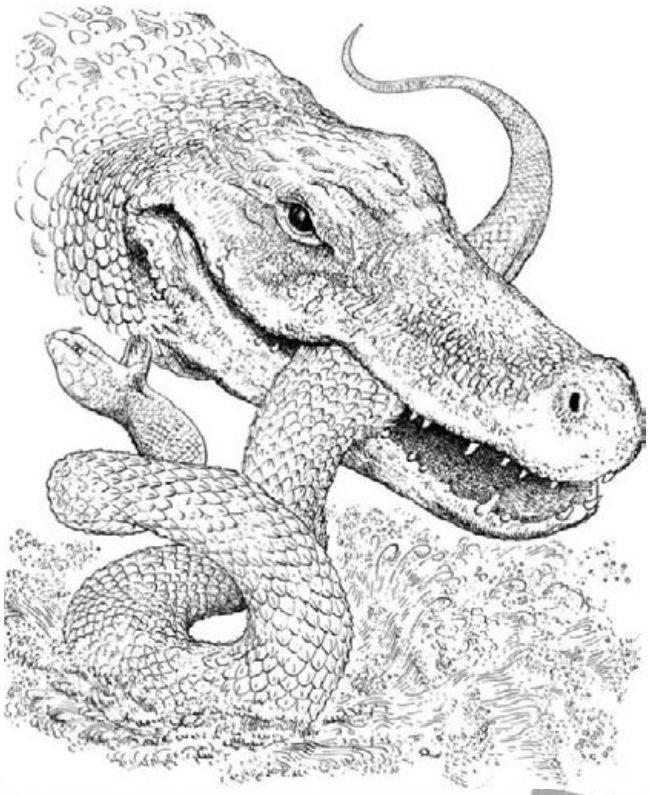


Table 9.6: Critters 1

	Alligator	Armadillo	Badger	Bat
Challenge Rating	2	1/4	1/2	1/10
Type	Animal	Animal	Animal	Animal
Size	Medium-size	Tiny	Small	Diminutive
Grit Die	3d8+9 (22)	1/2 d8 (2)	1d8+2 (6)	1/4 d8 (1)
MDT	17	11	15	10
Initiative	+1	+1	+3	+2
Speed	20 ft., swim 30 ft.	30 ft.	30 ft., burrow 5 ft.	5 ft., fly 40 ft. (good)
Defense	15 (+1 Dex, +4 natural), touch 11, flat-footed 14	19 (+2 size, +1 Dex, +6 natural), touch 13, flat-footed 18	15 (+1 size, +3 Dex, +1 natural) touch 14, flat-footed 12	16 (+4 size, +2 Dex), touch 16, flat-footed 14
Base Attack Bonus	+2	+0	+0	+0
Grapple Modifier	+6	–12	–5	–17
Primary Attack	Bite +6 (1d8+6) or Tail Slap +6 (1d12+6)	Claw +3 (1d2–4)	Claw +4 (1d3–1)	None
Full Attack	Bite +6 (1d8+6) or Tail Slap +6 (1d12+6)	2 Claws +3 (1d2–4)	2 Claws +4 (1d3–1) Bite –1 (1d4–1)	None
Fighting Space	5 x 5 ft.	2.5 x 2.5 ft.	5 x 5 ft.	1 x 1 ft.
Reach	5 ft.	0 ft.	5 ft.	0 ft.
Special Qualities	Aquatic, improved grab, low-light vision	Defensive ball, low-light vision, scent	Low-light vision, rage, scent	Blindsight 30 ft.
Allegiances	None	None	None	None
Saves	Fort +6, Ref +4, Will +2	Fort +2, Ref +1, Will +0	Fort +4, Ref +5, Will +1	Fort +2, Ref +4, Will +2
Action Points	0	0	0	0
Reputation	+0	+0	+0	+0
Abilities	Str 19, Dex 12, Con 17, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 2	Str 2, Dex 12, Con 11, Int 2, Wis 10, Cha 6	Str 8, Dex 17, Con 15, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 6	Str 1, Dex 15, Con 10, Int 2, Wis 14, Cha 4
Skills	Hide +7 [1], Listen +5, Spot +5	Hide +10, Listen +3, Move Silently +4, Spot +3	Escape Artist +7, Listen +3, Spot +3	Listen +9, Move Silently +6, Spot +9
Feats	None	Weapon Finesse	Weapon Finesse	None
Advancement	4–5 GD (Medium-size), 6–7 GD (Large)	None	2 GD (Small)	None

[1] Alligators have a total bonus of +19 to Hide checks when submerged.

feed on rodents and hibernate in their tunnels during winter months.

Species Traits

Skill Bonus: A badger has a +4 species bonus on Escape Artist checks.

Bat *(various)*

Bats are nocturnal flying mammals that, depending on the species, eat insects, fruit, or pollen and nectar. They navigate by means of echolocation, sometimes called "bat sonar." They often roost in large colonies in caves, barns, or other enclosed structures during the day, venturing out after sundown to look for food. The statistics provided here are for the 34 species of small bats that live in North America, such as the big brown bat *(Eptesicus fuscus)*. Other parts of the world, particularly Australia, can have much larger bats with wingspans up to 5 or 6 feet.

Species Traits

Blindsight: Bats can "see" by emitting high-frequency sounds that are inaudible to most other critters. By listening for the echo of these sounds, the bat is able to locate objects and critters within 30 feet. Ultrasonic noise forces the bat to rely on its weak vision, which has a maximum range of 5 feet.

Skill Bonuses: Bats receive a +4 species bonus on Listen and Spot checks. These bonuses are lost if the bat's blindsight is negated.

Table 9.7: Critters II

	Bear, Black	Bear, Grizzly	Beaver	Bison
Challenge Rating	2	4	1/6	2
Type	Animal	Animal	Animal	Animal
Size	Medium-size	Large	Small	Large
Grit Die	3d8+6 (19)	6d8 +24 (51)	1d8+1 (5)	5d8+15 (37)
MDT	15	19	12	16
Initiative	+1	+1	+3	+0
Speed	40 ft.	40 ft.	30 ft., swim 20 ft.	40 ft.
Defense	13 (+1 Dex, +2 natural), touch 11, flat-footed 12	15 (–1 size, +1 Dex, +5 natural), touch 10, flat-footed 14	15 (+1 size, +3 Dex, +1 natural) touch 14, flat-footed 12	13 (–1 size, +4 natural), touch 9, flat-footed 13
Base Attack Bonus	+2	+4	+0	+3
Grapple Modifier	+6	+16	–6	+13
Primary Attack	Claw +6 (1d4+4)	Claw +11 (1d8+8)	Bite –1 (1d4–2)	Gore +8 (1d8+9)
Full Attack	2 Claws +6 (1d4+4), Bite +1 (1d6+2)	2 Claws +11 (1d8+8), Bite +6 (2d8+4)	Bite –1 (1d4–2)	Gore +8 (1d8+9)
Fighting Space	5 x 5 ft.	10 x 10 ft.	5 x 5 ft.	10 x 10 ft.
Reach	5 ft.	10 ft.	5 ft.	5 ft.
Special Qualities	Low-light vision, scent	Improved grab, low-light vision, scent	Diver, low-light vision	Low-light vision, scent, stampede
Allegiances	None	None	None	None
Saves	Fort +5, Ref +4, Will +2	Fort +9, Ref +6, Will +3	Fort +3, Ref +5, Will +1	Fort +7, Ref +4, Will +1
Action Points	0	0	0	0
Reputation	+0	+0	+0	+0
Abilities	Str 19, Dex 13, Con 15, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 6	Str 27, Dex 13, Con 19, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 6	Str 6, Dex 17, Con 12, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 6	Str 22, Dex 10, Con 16, Int 2, Wis 11, Cha 4
Skills	Climb +4, Listen +4, Spot +4, Swim +8	Listen +6, Spot +6, Swim +10	Craft (structural) –3 [1], Listen +3, Spot +3, Swim +10	Listen +7, Spot +5
Feats	None	None	None	None
Advancement	4–5 GD (Medium-size)	7–10 GD (Large)	None	6–7 GD (Large)

[1] Beavers possess a total bonus of +1 to Craft (strcutural) checks when building wooden dams and lodges.

Bear, Black *(Ursus americanus)*

The black bear is a forest-dwelling omnivore that isn't usually dangerous unless an interloper threatens its cubs or food supply. Black bears have been known to invade campsites seeking anything that might be edible, especially when other food sources are limited. Black bears can be pure black, blond, or cinnamon in color and are rarely more than 5 feet long. Regardless of their coat color, it's possible to recognize a black bear by its dark brown face or distinguishing patch of white fur on its chest.

Species Traits

Skill Bonus: A black bear has a +4 species bonus on Swim checks.

Bear, Grizzly *(Ursus arctos)*

Much larger than black bears, adult grizzlies (also known as brown bears) can grow to 8 feet long and weigh up to 900 pounds. The "Kodiak" can be even more massive, reaching 1800 pounds. Bad-tempered and territorial, grizzlies have been known to attack homesteaders and travelers without provocation. They often dig shallow holes to stock a cache of food or to root out tasty rodents. Grizzly bears don't climb well, but they possess an agility belied by their bulk and can move as fast as a young lover fleeing the wrath of a protective pappy. They get their name from their silver- or pale-tipped hair that gives their fur a "grizzled" effect.

Species Traits

Improved Grab: To use this ability, the bear must hit with a claw attack.

Beaver *(Castor canadensis)*

Known for building small lodges out of sticks and mud, beavers prefer to live around streams and small

rivers, thus they are commonly found in the Old West. These small, low-to-the-ground critters are prized for their dense fur and their flat, scaly tail makes them unmistakable in the wild. Beavers live in small colonies of several lodges rivaling some of the one-horse towns created by human settlers. Beavers tend to stay to themselves, seeking the refuge of the water when threatened. The statistics listed here could also be used for the muskrat *(Neofiber alleni, Ondatra zibethicus).*

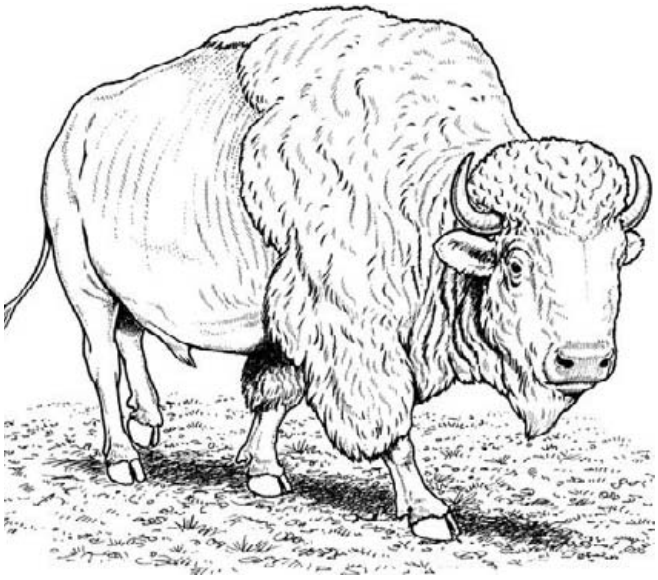
Species Traits

Diver: Beavers can hold their breath much longer than most animals. They do not need to start making Constitution checks to avoid drowning for a number of minutes equal to their Constitution score. Furthermore, they receive a +4 species bonus to all checks to avoid drowning.

Skill Bonus: A beaver has a +8 species bonus on Swim checks. Furthermore, beavers possess a +4 species bonus on Craft (structural) checks when building log dams and lodges.

Bison *(Bison bison)*

Differing from domestic cattle or oxen, the bison, or American buffalo, has a large hump above its shoulders and a broad head that hangs below shoulder level. Usually, the bison has shaggy dark hair, but a rare buffalo is born completely white and many Indian tribes revere these few. More powerful than cattle, bison bulls stand nearly six and one-half feet, weighing up to 2400 pounds. Buffalo herds roam the frontier, stopping wherever there is greenery to support them. They can be unpredictable when approached by humans, especially when protecting their young and during the mating season, but they prefer flight and are capable of speeds up to 40 miles per hour. A significant portion of the Plains Indian way of life depends on the bison—it is used for clothing, tools, food and shelter.



Species Traits

Stampede: A frightened herd of bison flees as a group in a random direction (but always away from the perceived source of danger). They literally run over anything of Large size or smaller that gets in their way, dealing 1d12 points of damage for each five bison in the herd. Characters and critters caught in a stampede that succeed on a DC 18 Reflex save take only one-half of the damage.

Camel *(Camelus dromedarius, C. bactrianus)*

Camels are known for their ability to travel long distances with little food or water. The statistics presented here are for the dromedary, or one-humped camel, which thrives in warm deserts. A dromedary stands about 7 feet tall at the shoulder, with its hump rising 1 foot higher. The two-humped, or Bactrian, camel is suited to cooler, rocky areas. It is stockier, slower (speed 40 feet), and has a higher Constitution score (16). By the time of a *Sidewinder: Recoiled* campaign, wild camels were extinct in North and South America. Nevertheless, camels were imported from Asia and Africa for use in the deserts of New World (see Camels in the Old West, page 243).

Species Traits

Carrying Capacity: A light load for a camel is up to 300 pounds; a medium load, 301–600 pounds; and a heavy load, 601–900 pounds. A camel can drag 4,500 pounds.

Desert Adapted: Camels are well adapted to dry climates and gain +4 on all Constitution checks to avoid the ill effects of dehydration.

Cat *(Felis catus)*

The barnyard cat is welcome out on the range. These sleek, agile critters keep away many of the vermin trying to invade the barn or the homestead. While domesticated, cats still have the urge to hunt and easily become self-reliant around humans. One of the quickest and smartest of the small mammals, cats have the astounding ability to land on their feet when falling from heights. Cats come in various sizes and colors—ranging from a norm of 6-10 pounds up to 28 pounds.

Species Traits

Skill Bonuses: Cats receive a +8 species bonus on Balance checks and a +4 species bonus on Hide and Move Silently checks. In areas of tall grass or heavy undergrowth, the cat's Hide bonus rises to +8. Cats use their Dexterity modifier for Climb checks.

Table 9.8: Critters III

	Camel	Cat	Cattle	Condor, California
Challenge Rating	1	1/4	2	1
Type	Animal	Animal	Animal	Animal
Size	Large	Tiny	Large	Small
Grit Die	3d8+6 (19)	1/2 d8 (2)	4d8+12 (30)	2d8 (9)
MDT	14	10	16	10
Initiative	+3	+2	+0	+1
Speed	50 ft.	30 ft.	30 ft.	10 ft., fly 50 ft. (poor)
Defense	12 (–1 size, +1 Dex, +2 natural) touch 10, flat-footed 11	14 (+2 size, +2 Dex), touch 14, flat-footed 12	13 (–1 size, +4 natural), touch 9, flat-footed 13	13 (+1 size, +1 Dex, +1 natural), touch 12, flat-footed 12
Base Attack Bonus	+2	+0	+3	+1
Grapple Modifier	+10	–12	+11	–4
Primary Attack	Bite +3 (1d4+2)	Claw +4 (1d2–4)	Gore +7 (1d8+6)	Bite +2 (1d4–1)
Full Attack	Bite +3 (1d4+2)	2 Claws +4 (1d2–4), Bite –1 (1d3–4)	Gore +7 (1d8+6)	Bite +2 (1d4–1), 2 Claws –3 (1d3–1)
Fighting Space	10 x 10 ft.	2.5 x 2.5 ft.	10 x10 ft.	5 x 5 ft.
Reach	5 ft.	0 ft.	5 ft.	5 ft.
Special Qualities	Desert adapted, low-light vision, scent	Low-light vision	Low-light vision, stampede	Low-light vision
Allegiances	None or owner	None or owner	None or owner	None
Saves	Fort +5, Ref +4, Will +1	Fort +2, Ref +4, Will +1	Fort +7, Ref +4, Will +1	Fort +3, Ref +4, Will +1
Action Points	0	0	0	0
Reputation	+0	+0	+0	+0
Abilities	Str 18, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 2, Wis 11, Cha 6	Str 3, Dex 18, Con 10, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 7	Str 18, Dex 10, Con 16, Int 2, Wis 11, Cha 4	Str 8, Dex 13, Con 10, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 5
Skills	Listen +5, Spot +5	Balance +10, Climb +5, Hide +17 [1], Jump +6, Listen +4, Move Silently +9, Spot +4	Listen +4, Spot +3	Listen +2, Spot +6 [2]
Feats	None	Weapon Finesse	None	Weapon Finesse
Advancement	None	None	5–6 GD (Large)	None

1 In tall grass cats possess a total bonus of +21 bonus Hide checks.
2 Condors have a total bonus of +12 to Spot checks during daylight.

Cattle *(Bos taurus, Bos indica)*

"There's no prettier sight in the world than 10,000 head of cattle . . . unless it's 50,000."

Major Terrill – *The Big Country, 1958*

Cattle trails stretched throughout the land, from Texas to Wyoming. Millions of feral cattle were driven to slaughter along these trails late in the 19th century. Far fewer were used for milk production, although they were valued for this as well. While fattened by cattlemen, cows of this period were smaller than today but could still range from 800 – 2000 pounds depending on the breed. Mature bulls are much larger, from 1000 – 4000 pounds. Steers are castrated juvenile males. Those lucky enough to escape the slaughterhouse grow into oxen, which are used for farm work and pulling wagons.

Species Traits

Carrying Capacity: A light load for an ox is up to 300 pounds; a medium load, 301–600 pounds; and a heavy load, 601–900 pounds. An ox can drag 4,500 pounds.

Stampede: A frightened herd of cattle flees as a group in a random direction (but always away from the perceived source of danger). They literally run over anything of Large size or smaller that gets in their way, dealing 1d10 points of damage for each five cattle in the herd. Characters and critters caught in a stampede that succeed on a DC 18 Reflex save take only one-half of the damage.

Condor, California *(Gymnogyps californianus)*

One of the largest birds, the California condor can reach 22 pounds with up to an 8-9 ft wingspan. A relative

Table 9.9: Critters IV

	Coyote	Deer	Dog, Small	Dog, Medium-size
Challenge Rating	1/3	1	1/3	1
Type	Animal	Animal	Animal	Animal
Size	Small	Medium-size	Small	Medium-size
Grit Die	1d8+2 (6)	2d8+2 (11)	1d8+2 (6)	2d8+4 (13)
MDT	15	12	15	15
Initiative	+3	+2	+3	+2
Speed	40 ft.	60 ft.	40 ft.	40 ft.
Defense	14 (+1 size, +3 Dex), touch 12, flat-footed 11	13 (+2 Dex, +1 natural), touch 12, flat-footed 11	14 (+1 size, +3 Dex), touch 14, flat-footed 11	13 (+2 Dex, +1 natural), touch 12, flat-footed 11
Base Attack Bonus	+0	+1	+0	+1
Grapple Modifier	–3	+1	–3	+3
Primary Attack	Bite +4 (1d4+1)	Gore +3 (1d6) [1]	Bite +2 (1d4+1)	Bite +3 (1d6+3)
Full Attack	Bite +4 (1d4+1)	Gore +3 (1d6) [1]	Bite +2 (1d4+1)	Bite +3 (1d6+3)
Fighting Space	5 x 5 ft.	5 x 5 ft.	5 x5 ft.	5 x 5 ft.
Reach	5 ft.	5 ft.	5 ft.	5 ft.
Special Qualities	Low-light vision, scent	Low-light vision	Scent	Scent
Allegiances	None	None	None or owner	None or owner
Saves	Fort +4, Ref +5, Will +2	Fort +2, Ref +5, Will +1	Fort +4, Ref +5, Will +1	Fort +5, Ref +5, Will +1
Action Points	0	0	0	0
Reputation	+0	+0	+0	+0
Abilities	Str 12, Dex 17, Con 15, Int 2, Wis 14, Cha 8	Str 10, Dex 15, Con 12, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 6	Str 13, Dex 17, Con 15, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 6	Str 15, Dex 15, Con 15, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 6
Skills	Hide +12, Listen +2, Move Silently +5, Spot +5	Hide +4 [2], Listen +8, Spot +5	Jump +3, Listen +5, Spot +5, Survival +1 [3], Swim +5	Jump +4, Listen +5, Spot +5, Survival +1 [3], Swim +5
Feats	Weapon Finesse	Weapon Finesse	None	None
Advancement	None	3–4 GD (Medium-size)	None	None

1 Only the male has an attack form and only during that period of the year when they have antlers (fall and winter).
2 Deer have a total bonus of +12 on Hide checks when standing still.
3 Dogs have a total bonus of +5 on Survival checks when tracking by scent.

of the vulture, this condor has deep black feathers, except for white under the wings. It also bears a distinctive yellow head and red neck. These birds prefer to forage in open areas along the Pacific coast, searching for carrion.

Species Traits

Skill Bonus: Condors gain a +6 species bonus on Spot checks in daylight.

Coyote *(Canis latrans)*

Slightly smaller than a wolf, this critter's bushy, black-tipped tail and long grizzled fur make it instantly recognizable. Coyotes are abundant in the Old West where they are known as cunning, swift critters. Their nocturnal yaps and howls can be heard for miles on the open range, seemingly as warnings or laments to travelers. Coyotes eat just about anything, living in burrows and venturing out for carrion, vegetable matter or small rodents.

Species Traits

Skill Bonuses: Coyotes gain a +4 species bonus on Hide and Move Silently checks.

Deer
(Odocoileus hemionus, O. virginianus)

Living in small groups or, sometimes, large herds during winter, deer can be found in mountainous, grassy or rough terrain alike. Valued for their hide, meat and antlers, these herbivorous critters migrate freely across the West, avoiding trouble whenever possible. Nevertheless, the males are unpredictable, especially during the rutting season, so it's advisable to approach with caution when a buck is out collecting his harem. These statistics describe both the mule deer and white-

Table 9.10: Critters V

	Donkey	Duck	Eagle	Elk
Challenge Rating	1/2	1/10	1	2
Type	Animal	Animal	Animal	Animal
Size	Medium-size	Tiny	Small	Large
Grit Die	2d8+2 (11)	1/4 d8 (1)	1d8+1 (5)	4d8+8 (26)
MDT	12	10	12	14
Initiative	+1	+1	+2	+2
Speed	30 ft.	10 ft., fly 60 ft., swim 20 ft.	10 ft., fly 80 ft (average)	50 ft.
Defense	13 (+1 Dex, +2 natural), touch 11, flat-footed 12	14 (+2 size, +1 Dex, +1 natural), touch 13, flat-footed 13	14 (+1 size, +2 Dex, +1 natural), touch 13, flat-footed 12	13 (–1 size, +2 Dex, +2 natural), touch 11, flat-footed 11
Base Attack Bonus	+1	+0	+0	+3
Grapple Modifier	+1	–13	–4	+9
Primary Attack	Kick +1 (1d4)	Bite –3 (1d2–5)	Claw +3 (1d4)	Gore +4 (1d8+3) [2]
Full Attack	Kick +1 (1d4)	Bite –3 (1d2–5)	2 Claws +3 (1d4), Bite –2 (1d4)	Gore +4 (1d8+3) [2]
Fighting Space	5 x 5 ft.	2.5 x 2.5 ft.	5 x5 ft.	10 x 10 ft.
Reach	5 ft.	0 ft.	5 ft.	5 ft.
Special Qualities	Low-light vision, scent	Low-light vision	Low-light vision	Low-light vision
Allegiances	None or owner	None or owner	None	None
Saves	Fort +4, Ref +4, Will +0	Fort +2, Ref +3, Will +1	Fort +3, Ref +4, Will +2	Fort +6, Ref +6, Will +2
Action Points	0	0	0	0
Reputation	+0	+0	+0	+0
Abilities	Str 10, Dex 13, Con 12, Int 2, Wis 11, Cha 4	Str 1, Dex 13, Con 10, Int 1, Wis 12, Cha 4	Str 10, Dex 15, Con 12, Int 2, Wis 14, Cha 6	Str 14, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 6
Skills	Balance +3, Listen +3, Spot +2	Listen +5, Spot +5, Swim +2	Listen +2, Spot +6 [1]	Listen +8, Spot +5
Feats	None	None	Weapon Finesse	None
Advancement	None	None	2–3 GD (Small)	5–6 GD (Large)

[1] Eagles have a total +14 bonus to Spot checks during daylight.
[2] Only the male has an attack form and only during that period of the year when they have antlers (fall and winter).

tail deer; however, they can also be applied to the pronghorn antelope *(Antilocapra american)* or the caribou *(Rangifer tarandus)*.

Species Traits

Skill Bonuses: Deer receive a +8 species bonus to Hide checks when not moving.

Dog *(Canis familiaris)*

"If you pick up a starving dog and make him prosperous, he will not bite you. This is the principal difference between a dog and a man."

Mark Twain

Domestic dogs are commonly found on ranches and homesteads, living as companions and trusted guardians. Dogs come in various shapes and sizes, serving as hunting allies, bodyguards and livestock herders. Their acute hearing and keen sense of smell make them invaluable as sentries, trackers or searchers. Clichés aside, a large dog's bite is nothing to underestimate.

Species Traits

Skill Bonuses: Dogs gain a +2 species bonus on Jump checks. Dogs also gain a +4 species bonus on Survival checks when tracking by scent.

Donkey *(Equus asinus asinus)*

These long-eared, sure-footed critters are part of the horse family. Populations of feral burros can be found across the southwest while domesticated donkeys are often traded and sold as beasts of burden. Although they are much slower than their horse cousins, they can carry significant loads over rough terrain and thus are valuable commodities out West. While donkeys come in various colors, most have a dark stripe from their mane to their tail, as well as a stripe across their shoulders. They stand about 40 inches on average. The male donkey is commonly known as a "jack" and the female as a "jenny."

Species Traits

Carrying Capacity: A light load for a donkey is up to 50 pounds; a medium load, 51–100 pounds; and a heavy load, 101–150 pounds. A donkey can drag 750 pounds.

Skill Bonus: Donkeys have a +2 species bonus on Balance checks.

Duck *(various)*

Migrating ducks are found throughout the northern hemisphere. The mallard (*Anas platyrhyncos)* is perhaps the best-known and well-traveled duck. Both the drake and the hen have a yellow bill, with a blue-purple edge to their wings. Additionally, the drake has an easily recognizable metallic green head. All ducks make for good hunting and good eating. These statistics are for any variety of duck; however, they could also apply to any similarly sized waterfowl, such as coots, grebes, and mergansers.

Species Traits

Skill Bonus: Ducks receive a +5 species bonus on Swim checks.

Eagle *(Haliaeetus leucocephalus, Aquila chrysaetos)*

These birds of prey inhabit nearly every terrain and climate, though all prefer high, secluded nesting spots, such as cliff caves or lone trees. A typical eagle is about 3 feet long and has a wingspan of about 7 feet. Eagles subsist on live prey, using their superior vision to identify critters on the ground, then surprising and overwhelming them with a powerful swoop. The statistics presented here apply to the bald eagle and golden eagle, but can describe any similar-sized, diurnal bird of prey.

Species Traits

Skill Bonus: Eagles gain a +8 species bonus on Spot checks in daylight.

Elk *(Cervus canadensis)*

A North American deer exceeded in size only by the moose, the Elk stands about 5 feet at the shoulder and weighs up to 1100 pounds. This critter is recognized by its distinctive pale rump patch, which stands out against its light to dark-brown coat. Elk (or wapiti) require large amounts of grass, leaves and other vegetation, and when supplies are low, they will often resort to cultivated crops or orchards to get their fill. They tend to live together in small bands, joining into larger herds during the winter. While normally avoiding conflict, bull elk have long antlers that can skewer any cowpoke fool enough to provoke a herd.

Ferret *(Mustela nigripes, Mustela putorius furo)*

This black-footed little fella can be found throughout the plains. It has a little black mask around its eyes, giving it a sort of desperado look. Its sleek, low-profile body makes it a good hunter, able to dig and climb effectively, rooting out rodents (particularly prairie dogs) and other unwanted vermin from underground crevices or barnyard lofts. As such, the ferret is valued among settlers in the same way as a domestic cat—and its diet is similar, too. These statistics apply to either the domestic ferret *(Mustela putorius furo)* or the wild black-footed ferret *(Mustela nigripes);* however, these statistics could also be used for the slightly larger American mink *(Mustela vison),* fisher *(Martes pennanti)*, or pine marten *(Martes americana).*

Species Traits

Attach: If a ferret hits with a bite attack, it uses its powerful jaws to latch onto the opponent's body and automatically deals bite damage each round it remains attached. An attached ferret loses its Dexterity bonus to Defense and has a Defense of 12.

Skill Bonuses: A ferret receives a +8 species bonus on Balance checks and a +4 species bonus on Move Silently checks. It uses its Dexterity modifier for Climb checks.

Fox *(Urocyon cinereoargenteus, Vulpes vulpes, etc.)*

About the size of a medium-sized dog, the fox comes in a few varieties; while most have the traditional red hair

Table 9.1 1: Critters VI

	Ferret	Fox	Hawk	Horse
Challenge Rating	1/4	1/2	1	1
Type	Animal	Animal	Animal	Animal
Size	Tiny	Small	Tiny	Large
Grit Die	1/2 d8 (2)	1d8+1 (5)	1d8 (4)	3d8+6 (19)
MDT	10	13	10	15
Initiative	+2	+4	+3	+1
Speed	20 ft., climb 20 ft.	40 ft.	10 ft., fly 60 ft (average)	60 ft.
Defense	14 (+2 size, +2 Dex), touch 14, flat-footed 12	15 (+1 size, +4 Dex), touch 15, flat-footed 11	17 (+2 size, +3 Dex, +2 natural), touch 15, flat-footed 14	13 (–1 size, +1 Dex, +3 natural), touch 14, flat-footed 12
Base Attack Bonus	+0	+0	+0	+2
Grapple Modifier	–12	–5	–10	+7
Primary Attack	Bite +4 (1d3–4)	Bite +5 (1d4–2)	Claw +5 (1d4–2)	Hoof +2 (1d4+1)
Full Attack	Bite +4 (1d3–4)	Bite +5 (1d4–2)	2 Claws +5 (1d4–2)	2 Hooves +2 (1d4+1)
Fighting Space	2.5 x 2.5 ft.	5 x 5 ft.	2.5 x 2.5 ft.	10 x 10 ft.
Reach	0 ft.	5 ft.	0 ft.	5 ft.
Special Qualities	Attach, low-light vision, scent	Low-light vision, scent	None	Low-light vision, scent
Allegiances	None or owner	None	None or owner	None or owner
Saves	Fort +2, Ref +4, Will +1	Fort +3, Ref +6, Will +2	Fort +2, Ref +5, Will +2	Fort +5, Ref +4, Will +2
Action Points	0	0	0	0
Reputation	+0	+0	+0	+0
Abilities	Str 3, Dex 15, Con 10, Int 2, Wis 11, Cha 5	Str 7, Dex 18, Con 13, Int 2, Wis 14, Cha 8	Str 6, Dex 17, Con 10, Int 2, Wis 14, Cha 6	Str 13, Dex 13, Con 15, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 6
Skills	Balance +10, Climb +11, Hide +13, Move Silently +9, Spot +4	Hide +14, Listen +5, Move Silently +13, Spot +5	Listen +6, Spot +6 [1]	Listen +6, Spot +6
Feats	Weapon Finesse	Weapon Finesse	Weapon Finesse	None
Advancement	None	None	None	4–5 GD (Large)

[1] Hawks have a total bonus of +14 to Spot during daylight.

and bushy tails that make them easy to identify, others have coats ranging from silver to black. These critters like to eat small animals such as mice and rabbits, but they also have a fondness for eggs and farm fowl and thus often become an uninvited pest on farmlands near their preferred woodland homes. This penchant for raiding the henhouse and their prized fur tends to make man their primary enemy.

Species Traits

Skill Bonuses: Foxes gain a +6 species bonus on Hide and Move Silently checks.

Hawk *(Buteo jamaicensis)*

Sometimes called Buteos or buzzard hawks, red-tailed hawks are a broad-winged, soaring raptors commonly found in North America. These birds have keen eyesight and can locate prey on the ground or in the air, before swooping in to seize the target in their powerful claws. Their quickness and speed enable them to catch a variety of prey, from other birds to small mammals and even rattlesnakes and other reptiles. Most are brownish, while some have distinctive light-reddish tailfeathers. The statistics shown are explicitly for the red-tailed hawk; nevertheless, they can apply to any falcon, hawk, kestrel, or osprey.

Species Traits

Skill Bonus: Hawks gain a +8 species bonus on Spot checks in daylight.

Horse *(Equus caballus)*

"Boy, it's getting bad when you have to con your own horse for a ride."

Bret Maverick – *Bret Maverick: The Lazy Ace, 1981*

In the Old West, everyone knows what a horse looks like, even though they come in many colors. This entry

Table 9.1 2: Critters VII

	Horse, Draft	Javelina	Lizard	Lizard, Gila Monster
Challenge Rating	2	1	1/6	1/2
Type	Animal	Animal	Animal	Animal
Size	Large	Small	Tiny	Tiny
Grit Die	4d8+12 (30)	2d8+8 (17)	1/2 d8 (2)	1/2 d8 (2)
MDT	17	17	10	10
Initiative	+1	+1	+2	+1
Speed	50 ft.	40 ft.	20 ft., climb 20 ft.	20 ft., climb 20 ft.
Defense	13 (–1 size, +1 Dex, +3 natural), touch 10, flat-footed 12	17 (+1 size, +1 Dex, +5 natural), touch 12, flat-footed 16	15 (+2 size, +2 Dex, +1 natural), touch 14, flat-footed 13	14 (+2 size, +1 Dex, +1 natural), touch 13, flat-footed 13
Base Attack Bonus	+3	+1	+0	+0
Grapple Modifier	+11	–2	–12	–12
Primary Attack	Hoof +6 (1d6+4)	Gore +3 (1d4+1)	Bite +4 (1d3–4)	Bite +3 (1d3–4, poison)
Full Attack	Hoof +6 (1d6+4)	Gore +3 (1d4+1)	Bite +4 (1d3–4)	Bite +3 (1d3–4, poison)
Fighting Space	10 x 10 ft.	5 x 5 ft.	2.5 x 2.5 ft.	2.5 x 2.5 ft.
Reach	5 ft.	5 ft.	0 ft.	0 ft.
Special Qualities	Low-light vision, scent	Ferocity, low-light vision, scent	Low-light vision	Low-light vision, poison
Allegiances	None or owner	None	None	None
Saves	Fort +7, Ref +5, Will +2	Fort +6, Ref +4, Will +1	Fort +2, Ref +4, Will +1	Fort +2, Ref +4, Will +1
Action Points	0	0	0	0
Reputation	+0	+0	+0	+0
Abilities	Str 18, Dex 13, Con 17, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 6	Str 12, Dex 13, Con 17, Int 2, Wis 13, Cha 5	Str 3, Dex 15, Con 10, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 2	Str 3, Dex 13, Con 10, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 2
Skills	Listen +6, Spot +6	Hide, +3, Listen +7, Spot +5	Balance +10, Climb +12, Hide +10, Listen +3, Spot +3	Balance +10, Climb +12, Hide +10, Listen +3, Spot +3
Feats	None	None	Weapon Finesse	Weapon Finesse
Advancement	5–6 GD (Large)	3–4 GD (Medium-size)	None	None

describes the domestic horses that are often ridden in battle or for personal transportation. While the chief mode of defense for a horse is flight, their hooves serve as effective weapons, although a horse cannot fight while carrying a rider. Herds of feral horses, usually called Mustangs, are found across the West and are protected by a single dominant stallion. While he might like to think he leads the herd, in actuality the lead mare determines when and where the herd travels.

Species Traits

Carrying Capacity: A light load for a horse is up to 150 pounds; a medium load, 151–300 pounds; and a heavy load, 301–450 pounds. A horse can drag 2,250 pounds.

Horse, Draft *(Equus caballus)*

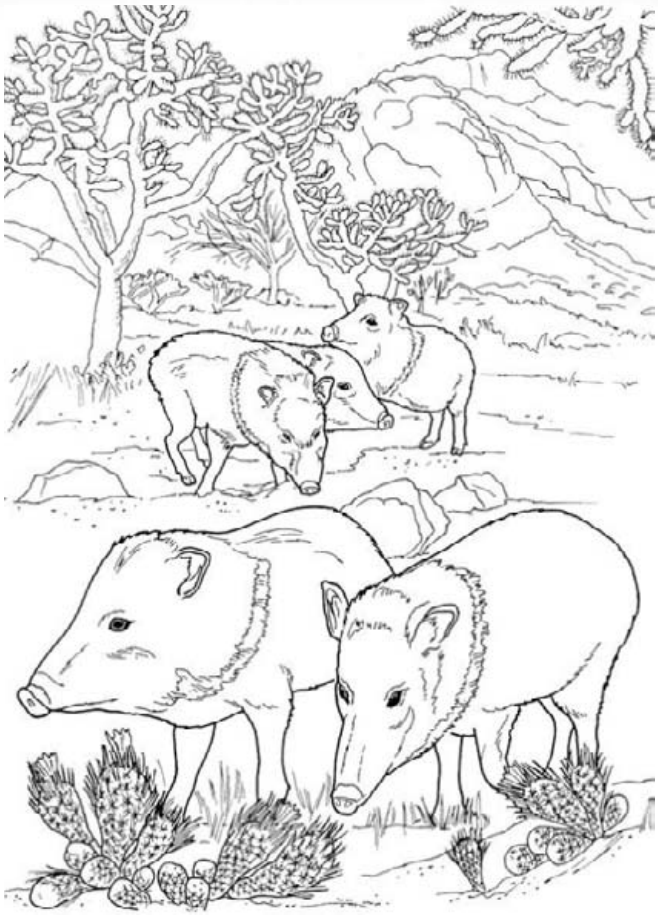
Like other horses, a draft horse has powerful hooves, but it cannot fight while carrying a rider. Typically, the draft horse is larger and slower than its ridden counterparts, as they are used to pull heavy loads such as wagons, stagecoaches or even plowshares.

Species Traits

Carrying Capacity: A light load for a draft horse is up to 300 pounds; a medium load, 301–600 pounds; and a heavy load, 601–900 pounds. A draft horse can drag 4,500 pounds.

Javelina *(Pecari tajacu)*

Also called the peccary (which is just a fancy word for a good old wild pig), this critter has a big head with a round snout and spear-like teeth. Though not carnivores (they prefer prickly-pear cactus), these wild swine fight ferociously when threatened, or even bothered. The javelina is covered in coarse, grayish-black fur. Adult males are about 4 feet long and 3 feet high at the shoulder.



Species Traits

Ferocity: A javelina is such a tenacious combatant that it continues to fight without penalty even while disabled or dying.

Lizard *(various)*

The lizard represents many sorts of reptilian critters found out on the range. These scaly-skinned critters are akin to snakes, except that they have legs, movable eyelids and external ear openings. They prefer warm regions and when exposed to danger, they will dart quickly into crevices or puff themselves up to avoid being swallowed by predators. The statistics presented here describe small, non-venomous lizards perhaps up to a foot in length, such as the Texas horned lizard (*Phrynosoma cornutum,* or more commonly, the "horny toad").

Species Traits

Skill Bonuses: Lizards have a +8 species bonus on Balance checks. They also have a +8 species bonus on Climb checks and can always choose to take 10 on Climb checks, even if rushed or threatened. Lizards use their Dexterity modifier instead of their Strength modifier for Climb checks.

Lizard, Gila Monster *(Heloderma suspectum)*

Growing up to 20 inches long, this lizard was named for the Gila River Basin and it can be found across the southwest and Mexico. While sluggish, these critters hunt on warm nights for small mammals that they kill with a venomous bite. The Gila monster's body stores food for the winter months; its scales are dark with pink blotches. Don't let these seemingly lethargic critters fool you; while the Gila monster's poison rarely causes death in humans, it can be more painful than a trip to the town dentist.

Species Traits

Poison: A Gila monster injects venom with a successful bite. The victim must succeed on a DC 10 Fortitude save or take 1d3 points of temporary Constitution damage and 1d3 points of temporary Dexterity damage; a second Fortitude save must be made 1 minute later to negate the venom's secondary damage (same as the initial damage).

Lynx *(Lynx lynx)*

A nocturnal cat, this critter hunts small birds and mammals, occasionally going after deer as well. The lynx weighs between 22 and 44 pounds, with its long legs, wide paws and tufted black ears distinguishing it from other felines. In winter, the lynx grows a thick fur that is prized by trappers and hunters for its value in lining clothing. Usually solitary, these critters are competent swimmers and climbers. These statistics can be used for any wildcat of similar size, such as the bobcat *(Lynx rufus)*.

Species Traits

Improved Grab: To use this ability, a lynx must hit with its bite attack. It can then attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity. If it wins the grapple check, it establishes a hold and can rake.

Skill Bonuses: Lynx have a +8 species bonus on Balance, Climb and Jump checks and a +4 species bonus on Hide and Move Silently checks. A lynx can always choose to take 10 on a Climb check, even if rushed or threatened.

Moose *(Alces alces)*

The largest member of the deer family, at up to five feet in height and weighing in at close to 1800 pounds, the moose towers over its cousins. One of their most distinguishing characteristics is the fleshy dewlap that hangs from their throats. Additionally, their long legs and short necks are distinctive features, and the males have enormous antlers capable of dealing significant damage in battle with other critters. Moose inhabit the northern areas of the continent, preferring to make their homes near water. They usually shy away from human contact,

Table 9.1 3: Critters VIII

	Lynx	Moose	Mountain Lion	Mule
Challenge Rating	1	3	2	1
Type	Animal	Animal	Animal	Animal
Size	Small	Large	Medium-size	Large
Grit Die	2d8+4 (13)	5d8+10 (32)	3d8+6 (19)	3d8+9 (22)
MDT	15	15	15	17
Initiative	+4	+1	+4	+1
Speed	40 ft., climb 20 ft.	50 ft.	40 ft., climb 20 ft.	30 ft.
Defense	16 (+1 size, +4 Dex, +1 natural), touch 15, flat-footed 12	12 (–1 size, +1 Dex, +2 natural), touch 10, flat-footed 11	15 (+4 Dex, +1 natural), touch 14, flat-footed 11	13 (–1 size, +1 Dex, +3 natural)
Base Attack Bonus	+1	+3	+2	+2
Grapple Modifier	–1	+10	+5	+8
Primary Attack	Bite +6 (1d4+2)	Gore +5 (1d8+4) [1], or Slam +5 (1d6+4)	Bite +6 (1d6+3)	Kick +4 (1d4+2)
Full Attack	Bite +6 (1d4+2), 2 Claws +0 (1d3+1)	Gore +5 (1d8+4) [1], or Slam +5 (1d6+4)	Bite +6 (1d6+3), 2 Claws +1 (1d3+1)	2 Kicks +4 (1d4+2)
Fighting Space	5 x 5 ft.	10 x 10 ft.	5 x 5 ft.	10 x 10 ft.
Reach	5 ft.	5 ft.	5 ft.	5 ft.
Special Qualities	Improved grab, low-light vision, pounce, rake, scent	Low-light vision	Improved grab, low-light vision, pounce, rake, scent	Low-light vision, scent, sure-footed
Allegiances	None	None	None	None or owner
Saves	Fort +5, Ref +7, Will +1	Fort +6, Ref +5, Will +2	Fort +5, Ref +7, Will +2	Fort +6, Ref +4 [2], Will +1
Action Points	0	0	0	0
Reputation	+0	+0	+0	+0
Abilities	Str 14, Dex 19, Con 15, Int 2, Wis 13, Cha 6	Str 16, Dex 13, Con 15, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 6	Str 16, Dex 19, Con 15, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 6	Str 15, Dex 13, Con 17, Int 2, Wis 11, Cha 6
Skills	Balance +12, Climb +10, Hide +12, Jump +10, Listen +6, Move Silently +8, Spot +6, Swim +3	Listen +8, Spot +5, Swim +5	Balance +12, Climb +11, Hide +8, Jump +11, Listen +6, Move Silently +8, Spot +6	Balance +2 [2], Listen +6, Spot +6
Feats	Weapon Finesse	None	Weapon Finesse	None
Advancement	3–4 GD (Medium-size)	6–7 GD (Large)	4–5 GD (Medium-size)	None

1 Only the male has a gore attack form and only during that period of the year when they have antlers (fall and winter).
2 Mules have a total bonus of +8 on Reflex saves to avoid falling or slipping. Under similar circumstances they possess a total bonus of +6 on Balance checks.

but can be quite unpredictable and even belligerent when provoked by a meddling cowpoke.

Mountain Lion *(Felis concolor)*

"After eating an entire bull, a mountain lion felt so good he started roarin'. He kept it up until a hunter came along and shot him...The moral: When you know you're full of bull, keep your mouth shut."

Will Rogers

No matter what a cowpoke calls these large cats, they are critters that demand the attention of travelers and ranchers alike. Mountain lions actually thrive in numerous environments, from scrub hills to forests and even deserts. Adult males range from 75 to 220 pounds; the females are smaller. While these critters come in different colors depending on the region, they usually have dark-tipped ears and tails, with a white underbelly. They seem to prefer deer, but mountain lions are known to venture into human settlements in search of livestock. The mountain lion is also known as the catamount, cougar, panther, or puma. The statistics presented here can describe any feline of similar size, such as the jaguar *(Panthera onca)*.

Species Traits

Improved Grab: To use this ability, a mountain lion must hit with its bite attack. It can then attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of

Table 9.14: Critters IX

	Ocelot	Otter	Owl	Pheasant
Challenge Rating	1	1/2	1/4	1/10
Type	Animal	Animal	Animal	Animal
Size	Small	Small	Tiny	Small
Grit Die	1d8+2 (6)	1d8+1 (5)	1/2 d8 (2)	1/2 d8 (2)
MDT	15	13	10	10
Initiative	+4	+4	+3	+2
Speed	40 ft., climb 20 ft.	20 ft., swim 40 ft.	10 ft., fly 40 ft (average)	20 ft., fly 30 ft. (poor)
Defense	16 (+1 size, +4 Dex, +1 natural), touch 15, flat-footed 12	16 (+1 size, +4 Dex, +1 natural), touch 15, flat-footed 12	17 (+2 size, +3 Dex, +2 natural), touch 15, flat-footed 14	15 (+2 size, +1 Dex, +2 natural), touch 13, flat-footed 13
Base Attack Bonus	+0	+0	+0	+0
Grapple Modifier	–5	–6	–10	–7
Primary Attack	Bite +5 (1d4–1)	Bite +5 (1d4–2)	Claw +5 (1d2–2)	Bite –2 (1d3–3)
Full Attack	Bite +5 (1d4–1), 2 Claws –1 (1d3–1)	Bite +5 (1d4–2)	2 Claws +5 (1d2–2)	Bite –2 (1d3–3)
Fighting Space	5 x 5 ft.	5 x 5 ft.	2.5 x 2.5 ft.	5 x 5 ft.
Reach	5 ft.	5 ft.	0 ft.	5 ft.
Special Qualities	Improved grab, low-light vision, pounce, rake, scent	Diver, low-light vision, scent	Low-light vision	Low-light vision
Allegiances	None	None	None or owner	None
Saves	Fort +4, Ref +6, Will +1	Fort +3, Ref +6, Will +1	Fort +2, Ref +5, Will +2	Fort +2, Ref +3, Will +1
Action Points	0	0	0	0
Reputation	+0	+0	+0	+0
Abilities	Str 8, Dex 19, Con 15, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 6	Str 6,Dex 19, Con 13, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 7	Str 6, Dex 17, Con 10, Int 2, Wis 14, Cha 4	Str 4, Dex 13, Con 10, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 4
Skills	Balance +12, Climb +7, Hide +12, Jump +7, Listen +6, Move Silently +8, Spot +6	Listen +6, Spot +6, Swim +12	Listen +14, Move Silently +20, Spot +6 [1]	Hide +5, Listen +5, Spot +5
Feats	Weapon Finesse	Weapon Finesse	Weapon Finesse	None
Advancement	2–3 GD (Small)	1 GD (Small)	1 GD (Small)	None

[1] Owls have a total bonus of +14 on Spot checks in dusk or darkness.

opportunity. If it wins the grapple check, it establishes a hold and can rake.

Skill Bonuses: Mountain lions have a +8 species bonus on Balance, Climb, and Jump checks and a +4 species bonus on Hide and Move Silently checks. A mountain lion can always choose to take 10 on a Climb check, even if rushed or threatened.

Mule *(none)*

Mules are sterile crossbreeds of a male ass and a mare. A mule is similar to a light horse, but slightly stronger and more agile. They have features from each of their parents—such as the long ears of the ass and the uniform coat of a horse. Their hardiness makes them valued as beasts of burden, as they can bear hardships that would kill other draft and pack animals. A male mule is commonly known as a "john" and a female as a "molly." On rare occasions a stallion will breed with a female donkey, the result of this union is known as a "hinny."

Species Traits

Carrying Capacity: A light load for a mule is up to 200 pounds; a medium load, 201–400 pounds; and a heavy load, 401–600 pounds. A mule can drag 3,000 pounds.

Sure-footed: Mules have a +4 species bonus on Dexterity checks, Reflex saves, or Balance checks to avoid slipping or falling.

Ocelot *(Leopardus pardalis)*

This cat is usually found in Texas and regions southward. Noted for the dark spots on its otherwise smooth, tawny fur, the ocelot normally weighs between 25-35 pounds and stands about 18 inches at the shoulder. Hunting at night for rodents,

birds and reptiles, these silent predators are skilled climbers who prefer forests and brush regions, although they sometimes make their lairs near human settlements. The statistics presented here can describe any wildcat of similar size, such as the jaguarundi *(Puma yaguarondi)*.

Species Traits

Improved Grab: To use this ability, an ocelot must hit with its bite attack. It can then attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity. If it wins the grapple check, it establishes a hold and can rake.

Skill Bonuses: Ocelots have a +8 species bonus on Balance, Climb, and Jump checks and a +4 species bonus on Hide and Move Silently checks. An ocelot can always choose to take 10 on a Climb check, even if rushed or threatened.

Otter *(Lontra canadensis)*

Making its home in North American lakes and streams, the river otter has glossy dark-brown fur that is prized among traders and trappers. This small critter is most playful, intelligent and inquisitive—when taken into captivity while young they can be easily trained to do a variety of tricks. In the wild, it's common to find otters sliding down a slippery bank of mud or snow when they aren't hunting for fish and other small aquatic critters. Obviously, otters are strong swimmers and they often work in teams to bring in a haul of fresh fish.

Species Traits

Diver: Otters can hold their breath much longer than most animals. They do not need to start making Constitution checks to avoid drowning for a number of minutes equal to their Constitution score. Furthermore, they receive a +4 species bonus to all checks to avoid drowning.

Skill Bonus: An otter has a +8 species bonus on Swim checks.

Owl *(various)*

This nocturnal critter has distinctive horn-like tufts of feathers on its head and is found throughout North America, adapting to life in the desert or the forest. The owl is a powerful bird that preys on all manner of small mammals, and whose vise-like grip is capable of carrying off critters such as a hen. Mottled-brown and reaching a length of up to 2 feet, owls have developed an aura of mystery with greenhorns because of their ability to listen and watch for prey in utter darkness, while remaining nearly motionless.

Species Traits

Skill Bonuses: Owls receive a +8 species bonus on Listen checks and a +14 species bonus on Move Silently checks. They receive a +8 species bonus on Spot checks in dusk and darkness.

Pheasant *(Phasianus colchicus)*

Ringnecked pheasants are long-tailed birds found in open woodlands and fields. The male has colorful speckled plumage (purple and copper and brown) while the female is far less conspicuous. Pheasants often take a liking to fields of crops and can be found in the brush near human settlements. They are valued for their place at or, more properly, on the dinner table. The bird detailed here is the common ringnecked pheasant; however, this entry can be used for a variety of game birds, including other pheasant species, grouse, partridge, ptarmigan, sage hens, and wild turkeys.

Pig, Domestic *(Sus scrofa scrofa)*

The pigs found on family farms in the Old West were originally domesticated from the European wild boar. Although they aren't as aggressive as their distant ancestors or local cousins, the javelina, pigs can be just as feisty in combat situations. Domesticated pigs, can reach 200 pounds or more.

Species Traits

Ferocity: A pig is such a tenacious combatant that it continues to fight without penalty even while disabled or dying.

Table 9.1 5: Critters X

	Pig, Domestic	Porcupine	Prairie Dog	Rabbit
Challenge Rating	2	1/4	1/6	1/6
Type	Animal	Animal	Animal	Animal
Size	Medium-size	Small	Tiny	Tiny
Grit Die	3d8+12 (25)	1d8+2 (6)	1/4 d8 (1)	1/4 d8 (1)
MDT	17	14	10	10
Initiative	+0	+0	+2	+4
Speed	40 ft.	20 ft.	15 ft.	40 ft.
Defense	16 (+6 natural), touch 10, flat-footed 16	15 (+1 size, +4 natural), touch 11, flat-footed 15	14 (+2 size, +2 Dex), touch 14, flat-footed 12	16 (+2 size, +4 Dex), touch 16, flat-footed 12
Base Attack Bonus	+2	+0	+0	+0
Grapple Modifier	+4	–6	–12	–12
Primary Attack	Bite +4 (1d6+3)	Bite +1 (1d3–3)	Bite +4 (1d2–4)	Bite +4 (1d3–4)
Full Attack	Bite +4 (1d6+3)	Bite +1 (1d3–3)	Bite +4 (1d2–4)	Bite +4 (1d3–4)
Fighting Space	5 x 5 ft.	5 x 5 ft.	2.5 x 2.5 ft.	2.5 x 2.5 ft.
Reach	5 ft.	5 ft.	0 ft.	0 ft.
Special Qualities	Ferocity, low-light vision, scent	Low-light vision, quills, scent	Low-light vision	Low-light vision
Allegiances	None or owner	None	None	None
Saves	Fort +6, Ref +3, Will +2	Fort +4, Ref +2, Will +0	Fort +2, Ref +4, Will +1	Fort +2,.Ref +6, Will +1
Action Points	0	0	0	0
Reputation	+0	+0	+0	+0
Abilities	Str 15, Dex 10, Con 17, Int 2, Wis 13, Cha 4	Str 5, Dex 10, Con 14, Int 2, Wis 10, Cha 4	Str 2, Dex 14, Con 10, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 4	Str 3, Dex 19, Con 10, Int 2, Wis 13, Cha 4
Skills	Listen +7, Spot +5	Climb +3, Listen +4, Spot +4	Listen +6, Spot +6	Hide +12 [1], Jump +8, Listen +6, Spot +6
Feats	None	Weapon Finesse	Weapon Finesse	Weapon Finesse
Advancement	4–5 GD (Large)	None	None	None

[1] Rabbits have a total bonus of +16 to Hide checks when stationary.

Porcupine *(Erethizon dorsatum)*

A coat of nasty, barbed quills sets these short-legged, plump critters apart from other varieties of rodents. Under 30 inches long with a muscular tail, the porcupine prefers an arboreal lifestyle. As an herbivore, the porcupine tends to stay solitary and harmless. Still, when threatened it can turn its tail against an attacker, striking and leaving a few quills in the skin of any cowpoke or critter fool enough to mess with it. Porcupine quills are highly valued by some Indian tribes for use in decorative clothing.

Species Traits

Quills: Any character or critter that successfully hits a porcupine with an unarmed strike or with a natural weapon suffers 1d3 piercing damage from the porcupine's quills. On a successful touch attack (+1 attack bonus), the porcupine may also lodge quills in its opponent (1d3 piercing damage).

Skill Bonus: Porcupines receive a +6 species bonus on Climb checks.

Prairie Dog *(Cynomys ludovicianus)*

"I remember the first time I found out what was in prairie stew. I turned as green as spinach myself. But then, you know, it starts to grow on you a little bit. Rattlesnake and prairie dog . . . some damn good eatin'!"

Barkley – *Cheyenne Warrior, 1994*

The black-tailed prairie dog *(Ed. Note: also known as the Colorado speed bump)* is found in the Great Plains of the Old West. This social rodent, related to a squirrel, has a sharp call that resembles a dog's bark; thus how this critter got its name. The prairie dog has small ears and short legs reaching only 5 inches or so in length. They eat grass and sometimes cross paths with settlers if they do damage to crops in order to feast on some good old green blades. Prairie dogs live in large colonies composed of burrows with many rooms and intricate connections between them. In the days of the Old West prairie dog colonies could cover an area of miles, and any hombre traveling on horseback through the area had to be mighty careful, lest his steed step into a burrow and break a leg. These statistics provided here explicitly apply to the

Table 9.1 6: Critters XI

	Raccoon	Rat	Raven	Roadrunner
Challenge Rating	1/4	1/8	1/4	
Type	Animal	Animal	Animal	Animal
Size	Small	Tiny	Tiny	Small
Grit Die	1d8+1 (5)	1/4 d8 (1)	1/4 d8 (1)	1/2 d8 (2)
MDT	13	10	10	10
Initiative	+1	+2	+2	+3
Speed	30 ft., climb 20 ft.	15 ft., climb 15 ft., swim 10 ft.	10 ft., fly 40 ft (average)	40 ft., fly 40 ft (average)
Defense	13 (+1 size, +1 Dex, +1 natural), touch 12, flat-footed 12	14 (+2 size, +2 Dex), touch 14, flat-footed 12	14 (+2 size, +2 Dex), touch 14, flat-footed 12	15 (+1 size, +3 Dex, +1 natural), touch 14, flat-footed 12
Base Attack Bonus	+0	+0	+0	+0
Grapple Modifier	–1	–12	–13	–8
Primary Attack	Bite +2 (1d4–2)	Bite +4 (1d3–4)	Bite +4 (1d3–5)	Bite +4 (1d4–4)
Full Attack	Bite +2 (1d4–2)	Bite +4 (1d3–4)	Bite +4 (1d3–5)	Bite +4 (1d4–4)
Fighting Space	5 x 5 ft.	2.5 x 2.5 ft.	2.5 x 2.5 ft.	5 x 5 ft.
Reach	5 ft.	0 ft.	0 ft.	5 ft.
Special Qualities	Low-light vision, scent	Low-light vision, scent	None	Low-light vision
Allegiances	None	None or owner	None or owner	None
Saves	Fort +3, Ref +3, Will +2	Fort +2, Ref +4, Will +1	Fort +2, Ref +4, Will +2	Fort +2,.Ref +5, Will +1
Action Points	0	0	0	0
Reputation	+0	+0	+0	+0
Abilities	Str 6, Dex 13, Con 13, Int 2, Wis 14, Cha 7	Str 2, Dex 15, Con 10, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 2	Str 1, Dex 15, Con 10, Int 2, Wis 14, Cha 6	Str 3, Dex 16, Con 10, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 4
Skills	Balance +4, Climb +6, Hide +8, Move Silently +5, Listen +5, Spot +5	Balance +10, Climb +12, Hide +18, Move Silently +10, Swim +10	Listen +6, Spot +6	Listen +6, Spot +6
Feats	Weapon Finesse	Weapon Finesse	Weapon Finesse	Run, Weapon Finesse
Advancement	None	None	None	None

black-tailed prairie dog; however, they can also cover other species of prairie dog, including the white-tailed prairie dog *(Cynomys leucurus),* the Gunnison's prairie dog (*C. gunnisoni*), and the Utah prairie dog *(C. parvidens*). These statistics can also be used for any similarly sized rodent, such as ground squirrels, marmots, and mountain beaver *(Aplodontia rufa).*

Rabbit *(Sylvilagus floridanus)*

This small critter usually goes by the name of Cottontail, because of the recognizable white patch on the underside of its tail. These gregarious mammals have powerful hind legs for hopping quickly away from predators. Rabbits are a staple of hunters and trappers across the frontier and they make cute pets for little children in every town, ranch and settlement. These statistics are explicitly for the Cottontail; however, they can be used equally well for any variety of rabbit (and there are a lot of different species).

Species Traits

Skill Bonuses: Rabbits receive a +4 species bonus to Hide checks when stationary. Furthermore, rabbits receive a +12 species bonus to Jump checks.

Raccoon *(Procyon lotor)*

Preferring an environment of woods near water, the coon, sometimes called a ringtail, is found across the Old West in a variety of locations (even in and around human towns). An intelligent mammal, this nocturnal critter hunts smaller critters or forages for berries and other fruits and plants. The coon's inquisitive nature sometimes causes trouble, as if it had donned the distinctive mask around its eyes to give warning to greenhorns everywhere. When in a fix, the raccoon relies on its climbing skill and sharp claws. These statistics describe the raccoon; however, they could also be applied to coatis *(Nasua narica)*, ring-tails *(Bassariscus astutus)*, and opossums *(Didelphis virginiana).*

Species Traits

Skill Bonus: Raccoons receive a +8 species bonus on Climb checks.

Rat *(various)*

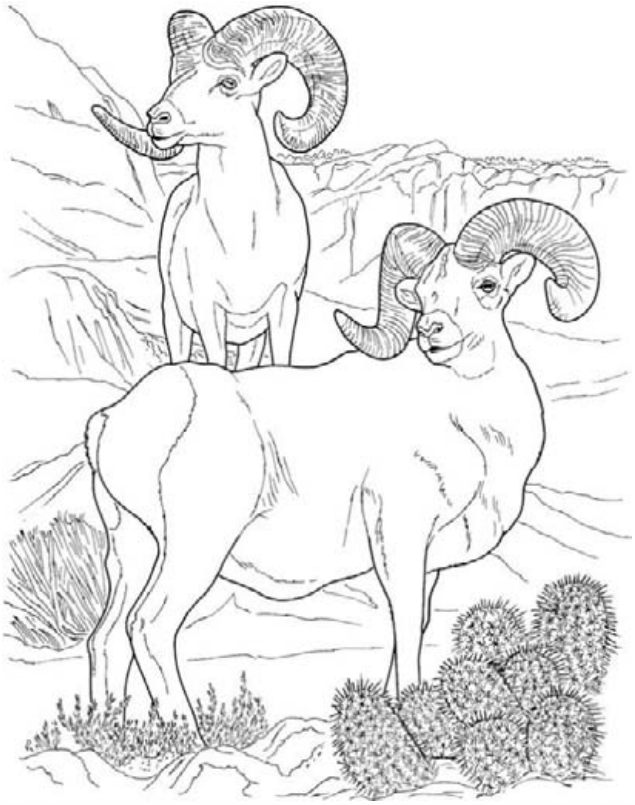
Many kinds of rodents roam the prairies, hills and forests of the Old West, surviving in just about any environment, including the desert. Rats are representative of many such critters, with their ability to scurry around finding sustenance with their heightened sense of smell, agility and adaptability. Rats tend to live with man, following him to new settlements and breeding quickly to replenish their numbers in even the most inhospitable of places. As they are likely to consume vast quantities of valuable resources, from grain to poultry, as well as spreading disease, rats remain one of the vilest pests out on the range or in town.

Species Traits

Skill Bonuses: Rats receive a +8 species bonus on Balance checks and a +4 species bonus on Hide and Move Silently checks. They use their Dexterity modifier for Climb checks.

Raven *(Corvus corax, C. cryptoleucus)*

Ravens are dark, heavy-billed birds that can achieve a wingspan of up to four feet. Raven feathers usually have a dark purple iridescence that makes them readily recognizable at close range. One variety commonly found in the West also has a ring of distinctive white neck feathers. Regardless of its appearance, these hardy birds have keen sight and a natural fearlessness that has engendered tales of supernatural powers—or at least as emissaries or harbingers of dark prophecy. Ravens are usually solitary, noisy critters who live in coarse nests high on a cliff or at the top of a tree—in all environments including barren mountains or harsh tundra. These statistics are for the raven; however, they could also be applied to any similarly sized bird, such as crows, magpies, and seagulls.



Roadrunner *(Geococcyx californianus)*

Known far and wide in the southwestern deserts of the U.S., the roadrunner is a small clumsy flyer that prefers to race along the ground. These small olive-brown critters have a distinctive graduated tail that makes them easy to recognize (well, that and scurrying across the sage on two stick-like legs). Roadrunners feed on insects and small reptiles (which are pummeled to death with the bird's bill before swallowing).

Scorpion *(Paruroctonus boreus, Bothriurus burmeister)*

Many cowpokes choose to sleep with their boots on rather than risking the possibility of one of these little critters making a home where only toes should go. One of the largest of arachnids, the scorpion comes in two basic varieties in the U.S. and has adapted to various environments, from the desert to grasslands and forests. The distinguishing feature of the scorpion's multi-segmented chitinous body is the venomous tail. While the North American species' sting packs a poison that can kill a small critter, to a human being that same sting, while annoying and painful, is no more severe than a bad bee sting.

Species Traits

Poison: A scorpion injects venom with a successful sting. The victim must succeed on a DC 12 Fortitude save or take 1 point of temporary Constitution damage; a second Fortitude save must be made 1 minute later to negate the venom's secondary damage (same as the initial damage).

Skill Bonuses: A scorpion has a +4 species bonus on Climb, Hide, and Spot checks

Sheep, Bighorn *(Ovis Canadensis)*

Whether called bighorn sheep or mountain sheep, these critters live in remote crags and cliffs in mountainous areas. They have compact, muscular bodies with deer-like fur and a whitish rump patch. They are sure-footed climbers that subsist on grasses, shrubs and even cacti, eating close to the root. The males, or rams, have large curled horns that make formidable weapons. These statistics could also be used for Dall's sheep *(Ovis dalli)* or Mountain Goats *(Oreamnos americana)*.

Table 9.17: Critters XII

	Scorpion	Sheep, Bighorn	Sheep, Domestic	Skunk
Challenge Rating	1/6	2	1	1/4
Type	Animal	Animal	Animal	Animal
Size	Fine	Medium-size	Medium-size	Tiny
Grit Die	1/8 d8 (1)	3d8+6 (19)	2d8+2 (11)	1/2 d8 (2)
MDT	10	14	12	10
Initiative	+0	+2	+1	+2
Speed	20 ft.	40 ft.	30 ft.	30 ft.
Defense	20 (+8 size, +2 natural), touch 18, flat-footed 20	14 (+2 Dex, +2 natural), touch 12, flat-footed 12	14 (+1 Dex, +3 natural), touch 11, flat-footed 13	14 (+2 size, +2 Dex), touch 14, flat-footed 12
Base Attack Bonus	+0	+2	+1	+0
Grapple Modifier	–21	+4	+2	–12
Primary Attack	Sting +3 (1,poison)	Slam +4 (1d6+3) [1]	Gore +2 (1d4+1) [2]	Bite +4 (1d3–4)
Full Attack	Sting +3 (1, poison), 2 Claws –2 (1)	Slam +4 (1d6+3) [1]	Gore +2 (1d4+1) [2]	Bite +4 (1d3–4)
Fighting Space	6 x 6 in.	5 x 5 ft.	5 x 5 ft.	2.5 x 2.5 ft.
Reach	0 ft.	5 ft.	5 ft.	0 ft.
Special Qualities	Blindsight, darkvision 30 ft., massive damage resistance	Low-light vision	Low-light vision	Low-light vision, scent, spray
Allegiances	None	None	None	None
Saves	Fort +2, Ref +0, Will +0	Fort +5, Ref +5, Will +2	Fort +4, Ref +4, Will +0	Fort +2, Ref +4, Will +1
Action Points	0	0	0	0
Reputation	+0	+0	+0	+0
Abilities	Str 1, Dex 10, Con 10, Int —, Wis 10, Cha 2	Str 14, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 6	Str 12, Dex 13, Con 12, Int 2, Wis 11, Cha 4	Str 3, Dex 15, Con 10, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 5
Skills	Climb +0, Hide +20, Spot +4	Balance +10, Climb +10, Listen +8, Spot +5	Listen +5, Spot +5	Hide +4, Listen +6, Spot +6
Feats	None	None	None	Weapon Finesse
Advancement	1/4 GD (Diminutive)	4–5 GD (Medium-size)	None	None

[1] The listed attack form is for males only. Females possess a Gore +4 (1d4+3) attack.
[2] Only males have an attack form.

Species Traits

Skill Bonus: A bighorn sheep has a +4 species bonus on Balance and Climb checks. They can always take 10 on Balance and Climb checks even when harried or distracted.

Sheep, Domestic *(Ovis aries)*

"How come you get into the sheep business, boss?"

"Well I'll tell ya, Angelo. You see, it's this way. I just got tired of kicking cows around. You know how dumb they are."

"And you think sheep are smarter?"

"Oh no, no. They're dumber. Only they're easier kicking . . . and woollier."

Angelo and Jason Sweet – *The Sheepman, 1958*

Domestic sheep provide a number of resources necessary on the range, including wool, milk and meat. Domesticated sheep differ from their wild counterparts in several ways, including their coloring, general appearance, milk production and quality of fleece. These statistics can also be used for the domestic goat.

Skunk *(Mephitis mephitis, Spilogale gracilis, etc.)*

While most small mammals pose no great threat to humans, the skunk has a special attack and defense capability that has earned it a place in the legends of the Old West. These critters always have black and white fur patterns that make them stand out in the wilderness, whether it's a stripe down the back or spotted fur. They exhibit warning signals such as foot-stamping or even hand-standing before using their spraying attack, which can reach a target up to 15 feet away.

Table 9.1 8: Critters XIII

	Snake, Constrictor	Snake, Rattlesnake	Songbird	Spider, Black Widow
Challenge Rating	1/4	1/3	1/10	1/6
Type	Animal	Animal	Animal	Vermin
Size	Small	Small	Fine	Fine
Grit Die	1/2 d8 (2)	1/2 d8 (2)	1/8 d8 (1)	1/16 d8 (1)
MDT	11	11	10	4
Initiative	+3	+3	+3	+1
Speed	20 ft., climb 20 ft., swim 20 ft.	20 ft., climb 20 ft., swim 20 ft.	10 ft., fly 40 ft. (average)	10 ft., climb 10 ft.
Defense	16 (+1 size, +3 Dex, +2 natural), touch 14, flat-footed 13	16 (+1 size, +3 Dex, +2 natural), touch 14, flat-footed 13	21 (+8 size, +3 Dex), touch 21, flat-footed 18	21 (+8 size, +3 Dex), touch 21, flat-footed 18
Base Attack Bonus	+0	+0	+0	+0
Grapple Modifier	–3	–6	–21	–21
Primary Attack	Bite +4 (1d4+1)	Bite +4 (1d4+1, poison)	Bite +3 (1)	Bite +3 (–, poison)
Full Attack	Bite +4 (1d4+1)	Bite +4 (1d4+1, poison)	Bite +3 (1)	Bite +3 (–, poison)
Fighting Space	5 x 5 ft. (coiled)	5 x 5 ft. (coiled)	6 x 6 in.	6 x 6 in.
Reach	5 ft.	5 ft.	0 ft.	0 ft.
Special Qualities	Constrict, improved grab, low-light vision, scent	Low-light vision, poison, scent	None	Blindsight, darkvision 30 ft., massive damage resistance, poison
Allegiances	None	None	None	None
Saves	Fort +2, Ref +5, Will +1	Fort +2, Ref +5, Will +1	Fort +2, Ref +5, Will +1	Fort +2, Ref +5, Will +0
Action Points	0	0	0	0
Reputation	+0	+0	+0	+0
Abilities	Str 13, Dex 17, Con 11, Int 1, Wis 12, Cha 2	Str 7, Dex 17, Con 11, Int 1, Wis 12, Cha 2	Str 1, Dec 17, Con 10, Int 1, Wis 12, Cha 3	Str 1, Dex 17, Con 4, Int —, Wis 10, Cha 1
Skills	Balance +11, Climb +12, Hide +11, Listen +9, Spot +9, Swim +9	Balance +11, Climb +12, Hide +14, Listen +8, Spot +8, Swim +11	Balance +5, Hide +16, Listen +5, Spot +5	Climb +11, Hide +15, Spot +4
Feats	Weapon Finesse	Weapon Finesse	None	None
Advancement	1 GD (Small)	1 GD (Small)	None	None

Species Traits

Spray: As a full-attack action a skunk can spray a single target up to 15 feet away with a smelly noxious fluid. This requires a ranged touch attack by the skunk (Attack +4 ranged). If the spray hits and the target fails a DC 15 Reflex save, the target is blinded for 1d4 rounds (see Character Condition Summary, page 228). Whether the Reflex save is successful or not, the character is nauseated for 1 round, and for the next 24 hours any character approaching within 15 feet of a "sprayed" character must make a DC 10 Fortitude save or, likewise, become nauseated for 1 round. The skunk may use this ability once per day.

Snake, Constrictor *(various)*

From the racer to the boa and the bull snake, constrictors are common in the old west. A number of species exist—the boa alone has several varieties including North American species such as the rosy and rubber boas. They are usually large snakes with blotches of color that form disruptive patterns; they vary in size but are usually no more than 11 feet long. Constrictors hunt by biting their prey first, subsequently using their powerful bodies to hold and squeeze their prey to death. Normally, constrictors pose little danger to humans. Out on the range, anything can happen.

Species Traits

Improved Grab: To use this ability, a constrictor snake must hit with its bite attack. If it gets a hold, it can constrict (see Improved Grab, page 246).

Constrict: With a successful grapple check against a critter of its size or smaller, a constrictor snake deals damage equal to its bite damage.

Skill Bonuses: Snakes receive a +8 species bonus on Balance checks and a +4 species bonus on Hide, Listen, and Spot checks. Snakes apply either their Strength or Dexterity modifier, whichever is higher, to Climb checks.

Snake, Rattlesnake *(various)*

More than two dozen species of rattlesnake make their homes in North America, from the large diamondback to the tiny pygmy and, of course, the sidewinder. All of these rattlesnakes have dangerous venom and most of them feed on small rodents or lizards. While most rattlers have a light background color, such as gray or tan, with dark diamond, hexagon or splotchy spots, others have different coloring that makes them hard to recognize, until a cowpoke sees or hears the distinctive buzzing of the tail rattle. Rattlesnakes range from 1 foot to 8 feet long.

Species Traits

Poison: A rattlesnake injects venom with a successful bite. The victim must succeed on a DC 11 Fortitude save or take 1d6 points of temporary Constitution damage; a second Fortitude save must be made 1 minute later to negate the venom's secondary damage (same as the initial damage).

Skill Bonuses: Snakes receive a +8 species bonus on Balance checks and a +4 species bonus on Hide, Listen, and Spot checks. Snakes apply either their Strength or Dexterity modifier, whichever is higher, to Climb checks.

Songbird *(Minus polyglottos)*

Dozens of songbird varieties exist throughout the frontier of the American West, but none exceed the Mockingbird's melodious efforts, thus the selection of this bird's Latin name for this entry. Songbirds range in size and sound, living in diverse environments from grasslands to forests—and nearly all of them make fascinating sounds that constitute simple or complex forms of social communication. These sounds are generated by a special voice-box, called the syrinx. While this entry explicitly describes the mockingbird, it can apply to any bird of similar size and diet.

Spider, Black Widow *(Latrodectus mactans, L. curacaviensis)*

These two species of black widow spider can be found in different environments across the U.S. *Latrodectus mactans* is the most common species, known for the female's shiny black exterior that bears a reddish hourglass shape. While that spider lives on the ground near human dwellings; *L. curacaviensis* prefers to make its webs under logs and stones in wooded fields. Black widow webs may be recognized by their funnel-shaped center, and while these spiders' bites can cause severe pain and nausea in humans, the effects usually wear off in time without long lasting damage.

Species Traits

Poison: A black widow spider has a poisonous bite. The victim must succeed on a DC 12 Fortitude save or take 1 point of temporary Constitution damage and 1 point of temporary Strength damage; a second Fortitude save must be made 1 minute later to negate the venom's secondary damage (same as the initial damage).

Toad *(various)*

Several different kinds of toad can be found in the Old West, and this short squat amphibian comes in poisonous and non-poisonous varieties. The Colorado River toad and the cane toad can boast of poisonous secretions that can take down predators up to the size of a large dog. Toads are nocturnal and their natural mottled coloring gives them excellent camouflage in a variety of natural habitats.

Species Traits

Skill Bonus: A toad's coloration gives it a +4 species bonus on Hide checks.

Turtle *(various)*

Many varieties of turtles can be found on the frontier. Known for the hard, bony shell that protects them against predators and other hazards, these reptiles come in various sizes and colors. Turtles are hardy, adaptable critters that eat a varied diet but can go for long periods of time without sustenance. Some species are terrestrial (generally called tortoises), while others are aquatic.

Species Traits

Defensive Shell: When threatened, turtles can pull their arms and legs into their shell to protect their

Table 9.1 9: Critters XIV

	Toad	Turtle	Vulture	Weasel
Challenge Rating	1/10	1/6	1/2	1/4
Type	Animal	Animal	Animal	Animal
Size	Diminutive	Tiny	Small	Diminutive
Grit Die	1/4 d8 (1)	1/2 d8 (2)	1d8+1 (5)	1/4 d8 (1)
MDT	11	12	12	10
Initiative	+1	–1	+0	+2
Speed	5 ft.	10 ft.	10 ft., fly 40 ft. (poor)	20 ft., climb 20 ft.
Defense	15 (+4 size, +1 Dex), touch 15, flat-footed 14	19 (+2 size, –1 Dex, +8 natural), touch 11, flat-footed 19	13 (+1 size, +1 Dex, +1 natural), touch 12, flat-footed 12	16 (+4 size, +2 Dex), touch 16, flat-footed 12
Base Attack Bonus	+0	+0	+0	+0
Grapple Modifier	–17	–12	–5	–14
Primary Attack	None	Bite +1 (1d3–4)	Bite +1 (1d4–2)	Bite +5 (1d2–5)
Full Attack	None	Bite +1 (1d3–4)	Bite +1 (1d4–2), 2 Claws –4 (1d3–2)	Bite +5 (1d2–5)
Fighting Space	1 x 1 ft.	2.5 x 2.5 ft.	5 x 5 ft.	1 x 1 ft.
Reach	0 ft.	0 ft.	5 ft.	0 ft.
Special Qualities	None	Low-light vision, defensive shell	Low-light vision	Attach, low-light vision, scent
Allegiances	None	None	None	None or owner
Saves	Fort +2, Ref +3, Will +2	Fort +3. Ref +1, Will +1	Fort +3, Ref +3, Will +1	Fort +2, Ref +4, Will +1
Action Points	0	0	0	0
Reputation	+0	+0	+0	+0
Abilities	Str 1, Dex 12, Con 11, Int 1, Wis 14, Cha 4	Str 3, Dex 8, Con 12, Int 1, Wis 12, Cha 2	Str 6, Dex 13, Con 12, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 5	Str 1, Dex 15, Con 10, Int 2, Wis 11, Cha 5
Skills	Hide +21, Listen +5, Spot +4	Hide +10, Listen +3, Spot +3	Listen +2, Spot +6 [1]	Balance +10, Climb +11, Hide +17, Move Silently +9, Spot +4
Feats	None	Weapon Finesse	Weapon Finesse	Weapon Finesse
Advancement	None	None	None	None

[1] Vultures have a total +12 spot check during daylight.

unarmored body parts. Withdrawing in such a fashion is a free action and grants the turtle damage reduction to physical attacks (DR 4/–). The turtle cannot move or attack while hiding within their shell.

Vulture *(Coragyps atratus)*

Images of carrion-eating birds waiting for a starving man to die (and thus become dinner) abound in most depictions of the Old West. These large, often ugly birds live in just about every kind of terrain, usually roosting in groups on cliffs, in tall trees or even on the ground. The black vulture is most common in the U.S. It is a chunky bird, with short, dark wings, a bare black head and a short tail.

Species Traits

Skill Bonus: Vultures gain a +6 species bonus on Spot checks in daylight.

Weasel *(Mustela erminea)*

Several kinds of weasel can be found out on the range; *Mustela erminea* (the ermine) is probably the best known simply because of its valuable reddish-brown pelts. All weasels have slender bodies and small heads, with five toes on each foot, bearing sharp claws. These voracious predators come in various sizes, from 6 – 12 inches long, hunting at night for rats and other rodents. When threatened, these critters rely on their dangerous claws to survive. These statistics can be used for many other smaller members of the weasel family, including the long-tailed weasel *(Mustela frenata)* and the dwarf weasel *(Mustela nivalis).*

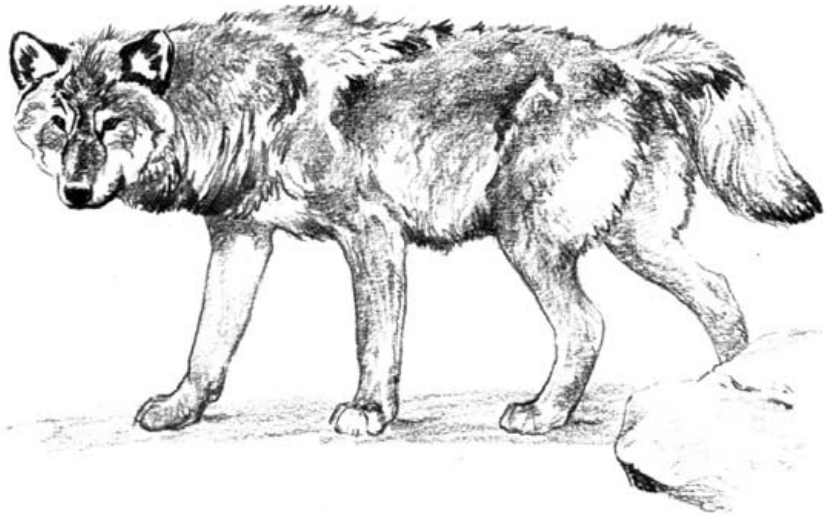
Wolf *(Canis lupus, Canus rufus)*

Two kinds of wolves roam the open range and hilly regions alike. The timber wolf (or gray wolf) is the best known, most commonly found and largest, while the red wolf is smaller and normally found only in the south-

Table 9.20: Critters XV

	Wolf	Wolverine
Challenge Rating	1	2
Type	Animal	Animal
Size	Medium-size	Medium-size
Grit Die	2d8+4 (13)	3d8+15 (28)
MDT	15	19
Initiative	+2	+2
Speed	50 ft.	30 ft., burrow 5 ft.
Defense	14 (+2 Dex, +2 natural), touch 12, flat-footed 12	14 (+2 Dex, +2 natural), touch 12, flat-footed 12
Base Attack Bonus	+1	+2
Grapple Modifier	+2	+4
Primary Attack	Bite +3 (1d6+1)	Claw +2 (1d4+2)
Full Attack	Bite +3 (1d6+1)	2 Claws +2 (1d4+2), Bite –3 (1d6+1)
Fighting Space	5 x 5 ft.	5 x 5 ft.
Reach	5 ft.	5 ft.
Special Qualities	Low-light vision, scent, trip	Low-light vision, rage, scent
Allegiances	None	None
Saves	Fort +5, Ref +5, Will +1	Fort +7, Ref +5, Will +2
Action Points	0	0
Reputation	+0	+0
Abilities	Str 13, Dex 15, Con 15, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 6	Str 14, Dex 15, Con 19, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 10
Skills	Hide +3, Listen +6, Move Silently +4, Spot +4, Survival [1]	Climb +10, Listen +6, Spot +6
Feats	None	Toughness
Advancement	3–4 GD (Medium-size)	4–5 GD (Medium-size)

[1] Wolves have a total +5 Survival bonus when tracking by scent.



central region of the United States. Gray wolves are powerful, intelligent critters that usually hunt in packs consisting of up to two dozen members. Each pack generally claims a territory of a few hundred square miles, ferociously defending it against neighboring packs or other intruders. With their acute sense of smell and excellent hearing, wolves are rarely caught off-guard.

Species Traits

Trip: A wolf that hits with a bite attack can attempt to trip the opponent as a free action (see page 221) without making a touch attack or provoking an attack of opportunity. If the attempt fails, the opponent cannot react to trip the wolf.

Skill Bonuses: Wolves receive a +4 species bonus on Survival checks when tracking by scent.

Wolverine *(Gulo gulo)*

Resembling a squat, broad bear, these critters are actually members of the weasel family. They are similar to badgers but are bigger, stronger, and even more ferocious. Wolverines have semi-retractable claws and strong, sharp teeth, as well as an odor similar to a skunk, making them daunting opponents in a fight. These cunning critters are known to follow traplines to human cabins and campsites, stealing supplies and even small livestock. When threatened, they fight fearlessly; when injured they attack recklessly. Wolverines prefer colder climes and heavily timbered areas.

Species Traits

Skill Bonus: Wolverines have a +8 species bonus on Climb checks and can always choose to take 10 on Climb checks, even if rushed or threatened.

CHAPTER TEN : THE BUNKHOUSE

"There are three kinds of men. The ones that learn by readin'. The few who learn by observation. The rest of them have to pee on the electric fence for themselves."

Will Rogers

When they had gathered round the still unconscious Meese, Fate spoke up. "Obviously, Martel was on to us. He wanted us to attack this stage."

"Well, his sorry plan failed," Hildi said. "Wake him up."

Melody threw a cup of water into Meese's face, while kicking him in the shin. Fate and Sam leveled their guns as the man spit and sputtered his way back to the living.

Meese resisted for some time, but finally they made him talk. He told them he was Michael Meese, a bounty hunter who did regular work for Martel when outlaw bounties were slim. He was hired to bring in the Gunter sisters, he insisted, not to kill anyone. His story confirmed what Fate had guessed; Martel had learned of Zeke's plan and used it to set a trap. Hildi conferred with Fate and Melody, then she got right up in Meese's face and told him exactly what he was going to do next.

After they loaded the bodies into the stage and confiscated all the guns except for one driver's old Sharps, now held by Hildi, Sam none-to-gently untied Meese while the other three covered him. As Meese obediently climbed up to the driver's bench, with guns pointed at his back, Hildi reminded him to make sure he explained everything to Martel, just as she had told it. Then she threw the old Sharps into the stage and told him that when he got out of sight, he could help himself to it.

They watched the stage move out. "Let's ride," Hildi said, scowling. "With Martel wise to us, and blood on our hands, it's time to lay low." The others just nodded.

"One thing's for sure," Hildi said as they mounted up, with Sam and Hildi lifting Zeke onto his old Morgan, Professor Worthington. "Martel hasn't seen the last of the Gunter Gang." For a moment, Zeke thought he saw a smile on her face.

The Bunkhouse

When a cowpoke experiences adventures in a game of *Sidewinder: Recoiled* all of the characters and critters that he or she meets (other than other players' characters) are controlled by the Judge. As such, they are called Judge-controlled characters, or simply Judge characters. Of the multitude of characters that can be met, each will fall within one of two broad categories: ordinaries or heroes.

Ordinaries

"We can't all be heroes, because somebody has to sit on the curb and clap as they go by."

Will Rogers

Ordinaries are the non-heroic supporting characters and extras. Most of the people that inhabit the world are ordinaries. While some ordinaries may be quite accomplished in their chosen fields, their potential is still limited.

Ordinaries are built using the six basic classes (Strong, Fast, Tough, Smart, Dedicated, and Charismatic) and have starting occupations, skills, and feats. As they gain levels, ordinaries increase their skill points, base attack bonus, saving throw modifiers, Defense bonus, and Reputation bonus—just as heroes do. However, ordinaries differ from heroes in several ways.

The following rules apply to Ordinaries:

• They must always use the standard starting ability score package.

• Ordinaries determine starting grit randomly.

• Ordinaries lack action points.

• They cannot use any class features.

• Ordinaries can never acquire levels in an advanced class

Ability Scores

Ordinaries' ability scores are never determined randomly, rather they start with the standard score package: 15, 14, 13, 12, 10, and 8. The Judge can assign the scores as he or she sees fit. At 4th level and every four character levels thereafter (8th, 12th, and so on), an ordinary adds 1 point to one ability score—just as heroes do.

Grit

Unlike heroes, ordinaries don't automatically receive maximum grit for 1st level. The Judge should roll an ordinary's starting total grit as normal.

Action Points

Unlike heroes, ordinary characters don't receive action points, nor do they gain action points as they increase in level.

Class Features

Ordinaries gain none of the class features (talents or bonus feats) of a basic class.

Advanced Classes

Although ordinaries can multiclass freely between the six basic classes, they cannot take levels in any advanced class. Ordinaries are limited to the six basic classes.

Children

Children (newborns to age 11) are handled differently from adult characters. They do not have classes or levels. They begin with the same ability score package as ordinaries (15, 14, 13, 12, 10, 8), but their ability scores are reduced as follows: –3 Str, –1 Dex, –3 Con, –1 Int, –1 Wis, –1 Cha.

Children have total grit equal to 1d4 plus their Constitution modifier (minimum of 1 grit). They lack skills, feats, action points, and occupations. Their base attack bonus is +0, they have a +0 modifier on all saving throws (plus any modifiers for high or low ability scores), and their Reputation bonus is +0. Children have a +0 modifier to Defense (instead of a class bonus) and a normal speed of 20 feet. Children don't have effective attacks, and should be treated as noncombatants.

At 12 years of age a child becomes a young adult and takes his or her first level in one of the six basic classes. At that point, he or she becomes an ordinary or, in rare cases, a hero.

Challenge Ratings

Challenge ratings specify how difficult a character or

critter is to defeat in combat or overcome in some other fashion. These ratings are largely a tool for the Judge, so that he or she can design encounters that are both challenging and exciting, without being impossible to overcome. See Chapters 7 and 8 of the d20 Modern Roleplaying game to see how challenge ratings work.

An ordinary character has a Challenge Rating equal to his or her character level –1. A 1st-level ordinary has a Challenge Rating of 1/2.

Children have a Challenge Rating of 0, and heroes don't receive experience points for "defeating" them.

Sample Ordinaries

The following provides game statistics for a typical trail hand through his days riding the range. The 2nd level ordinary character shown here is suitable for use with the Tin Star's Posse ability (see page 197). The indicated skill bonuses include skill ranks, key attribute modifier, and any permanent modifiers from feats and class features. Abilities that grant a bonus only in particular circumstances haven't been included.

Low-Level Trail Hand (Tough Ordinary 2)

Challenge Rating: 1
Level: 2
Grit Dice: 2d10+4 (15)
MDT: 15
Initiative: +2
Speed: 30 ft.
Base Attack Bonus: +1
Grapple Modifier: +1
Fighting Space: 5 x 5 ft.
Reach: 5 ft.
Action Points: 0
Reputation: +0
Defense: 14, touch 14, flat-footed 12 (+2 class, +2 Dex)
Saving Throws: Fort +4 Ref +2 Will -1
Abilities: Str 10, Dex 14, Con 15, Int 13, Wis 8, Cha 12
Attacks: Knife +1 (1d4), Colt new model army +3 (2d6), Sharps carbine +3 (2d8)
Occupation: Ranch Hand (bonus feat: Animal Affinity; class skills: Handle Animal, Ride)
Skills: Balance +2, Concentration +4, Handle Animal +7, Hide +2, Intimidate +3, Knowledge (current events) +3, Knowledge (popular culture) +3, Move Silently +2, Profession +2, Read/Write Language (English), Ride +9, Speak Language (English), Spot +0, Survival +0
Feats: Animal Affinity, Home Ground, Personal Firearms Proficiency, Simple Weapons Proficiency
Class Features: None
Possessions: Colt new model army, Sharps carbine, 20 rounds ammunition (.44 carbine), 50 rounds ammunition (.44 revolver), knife, various gear and personal items

Mid-Level Trail Hand (Tough Ordinary 4/Fast Ordinary 1)

Challenge Rating: 4
Level: 5
Grit Dice: 4d10+1d8+4 (36)
MDT: 15
Initiative: +2
Speed: 30 ft.
Base Attack Bonus: +3
Grapple Modifier: +3
Fighting Space: 5 x 5 ft.
Reach: 5 ft.
Action Points: 0
Reputation: +1
Defense: 18, touch 18, flat-footed 16 (+6 class, +2 Dex)
Saving Throws: Fort +4 Ref +4 Will +0
Abilities: Str 10, Dex 14, Con 15, Int 13, Wis 9, Cha 12
Attacks: Knife +3 (1d4), Colt new model army +5 (2d6), Sharps carbine +5 (2d8)
Occupation: Ranch Hand (bonus feat: Animal Affinity; class skills: Handle Animal, Ride)
Skills: Balance +4, Concentration +4, Handle Animal +9, Hide +3, Intimidate +5, Knowledge (current events) +3, Knowledge (popular culture) +3, Move Silently +3, Profession +3, Read/Write Language (English), Ride +13, Speak Language (English), Spot +0, Survival +1
Feats: Animal Affinity, Defensive Riding, Home Ground, Personal Firearms Proficiency, Simple Weapons Proficiency
Class Features: None
Possessions: Colt new model army, Sharps carbine, 20 rounds ammunition (.44 carbine), 50 rounds ammunition (.44 revolver), knife, various gear and personal items

High-Level Trail Hand
(Tough Ordinary 5/Fast Ordinary 3)

Challenge Rating: 7
Level: 8
Grit Dice: 5d10+3d8+4 (57)
MDT: 15
Initiative: +2
Speed: 30 ft.
Base Attack Bonus: +5
Grapple Modifier: +5
Fighting Space: 5 x 5 ft.
Reach: 5 ft.
Action Points: 0
Reputation: +2
Defense: 19, touch 19, flat-footed 17 (class +7, +2 Dex)
Saving Throws: Fort +6 Ref +5 Will +2
Abilities: Str 10, Dex 14, Con 15, Int 13, Wis 10, Cha 12
Attacks: Knife +5 (1d4), Colt new model army +7 (2d6), Sharps carbine +7 (2d8)
Occupation: Ranch Hand (bonus feat: Animal Affinity; class skills: Handle Animal, Ride)
Skills: Balance +5, Concentration +5, Handle Animal +11, Hide +5, Intimidate +6, Knowledge (current events) +4, Knowledge (popular culture) +3, Move Silently +5, Profession +5, Read/Write Language (English), Ride +16, Speak Language (English), Spot +2, Survival +3
Feats: Animal Affinity, Defensive Riding, Home Ground, Personal Firearms Proficiency, Simple Weapons Proficiency, Trail Lore (choose state or territory)
Class Features: None
Possessions: Colt new model army, Sharps carbine, 20 rounds ammunition (.44 carbine), 50 rounds ammunition (.44 revolver), knife, various gear and personal items

Heroic Judge Characters

Heroic allies and antagonists are built in the same way as heroic player characters. Heroes controlled by the Judge have the same potential for glory or mischief as the player characters. Often, the chief antagonist of an adventure, and perhaps a few of his or her primary servants, are heroic Judge characters.

Ability Scores

A Heroic Judge character's ability scores are determined in the same way as a player character's. Alternatively, the Judge may assign ability scores as he or she sees fit. At 4th level and every four character levels thereafter (8th, 12th, and so on), heroic Judge characters add 1 point to one ability score—just as player characters do.

Grit

Heroic supporting characters gain maximum grit at 1st level, just as heroic player characters do.

Action Points

Heroic supporting characters gain action points. However, few of them will have the maximum number of action points for their level (because they will have spent some of them). Assume that a heroic supporting character has a remaining number of action points equal to one-half his or her class level.

Class Features

Heroic supporting characters gain the class features (talents and bonus feats) available to the six basic classes as appropriate for their class and level.

Advanced Classes

Heroic supporting characters with levels in one or more basic classes can take levels in an advanced class, provided they meet the prerequisites for that class.

Challenge Rating

A heroic supporting character has a Challenge Rating equal to his or her character level.

Sample Heroes — The Gunter Gang

Throughout these pages, we have regaled you with the exploits of the Gunter Gang. You have seen them appear in the fiction launching each chapter as well as in detailed examples of game play. In this section, we provide the statistics for each of the Gang members, as examples of heroic characters.

Hildi Gunter
(Tough Hero 3/Wrangler 4)

"There's two theories to arguing with a woman. Neither one works."

Will Rogers

Using a sinister scheme of land and power grabs, several larger ranch owners in Trego County, Kansas have made it their business to force out the smaller ranchers. The Gunter sisters' Pa was one of the unfortunate victims. When Hildi and Melody came home one morning after a night-out riding the range, they discovered their house burned to the ground and their father strung up from a nearby tree. Broken arrows, a sloppily taken scalp and other signs seemed to point to an Indian attack. But seeing as the Sioux aren't known for lynching their victims, the evidence just didn't add up. Certain that Eli Martel and his partners were behind the destruction of Pa Gunter's Diamond Bar Ranch, the Gunter sisters have dedicated their lives to avenging their loss. They aim to foil any dirty plan of Martel's that they catch wind of, hoping to ruin his business prospects and, given half a chance, kill him. They welcome the assistance of anyone willing to help them fight Martel and his cronies.

The eldest Gunter sister, Hildi is the more forceful of the two. While her anger against Martel may be no greater than her sister Melody's, she acts as the ramrod of the group, keeping the goal clearly in mind and fomenting the resistance.

Hildi Gunter
(Tough Hero 3/Wrangler 4)

Challenge Rating: 7
Level: 7
Grit Dice: 3d10+4d8+14 (56)
MDT: 14
Initiative: +3
Speed: 30 ft.
Base Attack Bonus: +5
Grapple Modifier: +5
Fighting Space: 5 x 5 ft.
Reach: 5 ft.
Action Points: 4
Reputation: +1
Defense: 17, touch 17, flat-footed 14 (+4 class, +3 Dex)
Saving Throws: Fort +6 Ref +8 Will +2
Abilities: Str 10, Dex 17, Con 14, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 14
Attacks: Unarmed attack +6 (1d6 nonlethal), Colt new model army +8 (2d6), Spencer carbine +8 (2d10), Bowie knife +5 (1d4/18-20 threat range), lasso +8
Occupation: Ranch Hand (bonus feat: Exotic Ranged Weapon Proficiency (lasso); class skills: Handle Animal, Ride)
Skills: Climb +1, Handle Animal +14, Knowledge (current events) +5, Knowledge (popular culture) +4, Perform (sing) +4, Profession +4, Read/Write Language (English, German), Ride +15, Speak Language (English, German), Spot +6, Swim +3, Survival +3
Feats: Animal Affinity, Blazing Saddle, Brawl, Cavalry Training, Defensive Riding, Exotic Ranged Weapon Proficiency (lasso), Personal Firearms Proficiency, Simple Weapons Proficiency
Class Features: Bareback Riding, Bronco Bustin', Cool in the Saddle, Damage Reduction 1/–, Robust
Possessions: Colt new model army, Spencer carbine, Bowie knife, lasso, horse (Pacer) various gear and personal items

Melody Gunter
(Dedicated Hero 2/Fast Hero 1/Scout 4)

"The quickest way to double your money is to fold it over and put it back in your pocket."

Will Rogers

Being the baby of the Gunter sisters, Melody often adopts a petulant tone and sulky manner. But, don't let her angelic appearance and pouting fool you. She has a mean streak, particularly when it comes to Martel. If you turn your back on her you might just find that Bible she carries knocking you stone cold.

Melody Gunter
(Dedicated Hero 2/Fast Hero 1/Scout 4)

Challenge Rating: 7
Level: 7
Grit Dice: 2d6+1d8+4d10+14 (52)
MDT: 14
Initiative: +3
Speed: 30 ft.
Base Attack Bonus: +4
Grapple Modifier: +4
Fighting Space: 5 x 5 ft.
Reach: 5 ft.
Action Points: 4
Reputation: +2
Defense: 20, touch 20, flat-footed 17 (+7 class, +3 Dex)
Saving Throws: Fort +8 Ref +8 Will +4
Abilities: Str 10, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 12, Wis 13, Cha 12
Attacks: Remington pocket pistol +7 (2d4), Spencer carbine +7 (2d10)
Occupation: Ranch Hand (bonus feat: Personal Firearms Proficiency; class skills: Handle Animal, Ride)
Skills: Balance +4, Gamble +1, Handle Animal +14, Hide +7, Knowledge (current events) +3, Knowledge (popular culture) +3, Listen +2, Profession +3, Read/Write Language (English, German), Ride +11, Sense Motive +2, Sleight of Hand +4, Speak Language (English, German), Spot +11, Survival +11, Treat Injury +1
Feats: Blazing Saddle, Dead Aim, Defensive Riding, Far Shot, Personal Firearms Proficiency, Point Blank Shot, Simple Weapons Proficiency, Track
Class Features: Evasion, Hard to Follow, Skill Emphasis (Handle Animal), Terrain Awareness, Terrain Specialization (plains)
Possessions: Remington pocket pistol, Spencer carbine, horse (Bells), various gear and personal items

Ezekial "Zeke" Phelps
(Charismatic Hero 3/Grifter 4)

Challenge Rating: 7
Level: 7
Grit Dice: 3d6+4d6+7 (36)
MDT: 12
Initiative: +2
Speed: 30 ft.
Base Attack Bonus: +3
Grapple Modifier: +3
Fighting Space: 5 x 5 ft.
Reach: 5 ft.
Action Points: 4
Reputation: +4
Defense: 16, touch 16, flat-footed 14 (+4 class, +2 Dex)
Saving Throws: Fort +4 Ref +7 Will +4
Abilities: Str 10, Dex 15, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 16
Attacks: Remington pocket pistol +5 (2d4), Sharps pepperbox +5 (2d4)
Occupation: Outlaw (bonus feat: Personal Firearms Proficiency; class skills: Disable Device, Sleight of Hand)
Skills: Bluff +19, Diplomacy +19, Disable Device +8, Disguise +17, Escape Artist +5, Gather Information +13, Knowledge (business) +3, Knowledge (current events) +4, Knowledge (popular culture) +4, Knowledge (streetwise) +6, Perform (act) +9, Profession +6, Read/Write Language (English), Sleight of Hand +10, Speak Language (English)
Feats: Deceptive, Dodge, Mobility, Personal Firearms Proficiency, Point Blank Shot, Shot on the Run, Simple Weapons Proficiency, Trustworthy
Class Features: Cut and Run, Dazzle, Fast-Talk, Silver Tongue, Work the Crowd
Possessions: Remington pocket pistol, Sharps pepperbox, horse (Professor Worthington), various gear and personal items

Ezekial "Zeke" Phelps (Charismatic Hero 3/Grifter 4)

"Lettin' the cat outta the bag is a whole lot easier 'n puttin' it back in."

Will Rogers

Born and reared near Birmingham, Alabama, Ezekiel Phelps is an ex-quartermaster of the Confederate army. After serving with the southern forces for little more than a year he was accused of disposing of army property for his own benefit. Even though the evidence was suspect, Ezekiel didn't wait around for military justice. With the Confederate army hot on his trail, and narrowly escaping the clutches of two bounty hunters in Arkansas, Zeke headed west to seek his fortune.

Traveling around under the guise of an Englishman by the name of Nigel Worthington, Zeke began selling a tonic called Professor Worthington's Healthful Elixir. Touting the tonic as a cure for "gout, rheumatism, consumption, and a host of other maladies of the spirit and body," in actuality, it was just good-ole moonshine with a small amount of bitters added to give it that nasty, this-is-so-bad-it-must-be-good-for-ya, flavor.

While traveling between markets, the Professor met up with the Gunter sisters in Kansas shortly after their father's ranch was destroyed, and he's stood by their side ever since.

Lafayette Lillard "Fate" Lawson (Fast Hero 2/Dedicated Hero 2/Gunslinger 3)

"My ancestors didn't come over on the Mayflower, but they met the boat."

Will Rogers

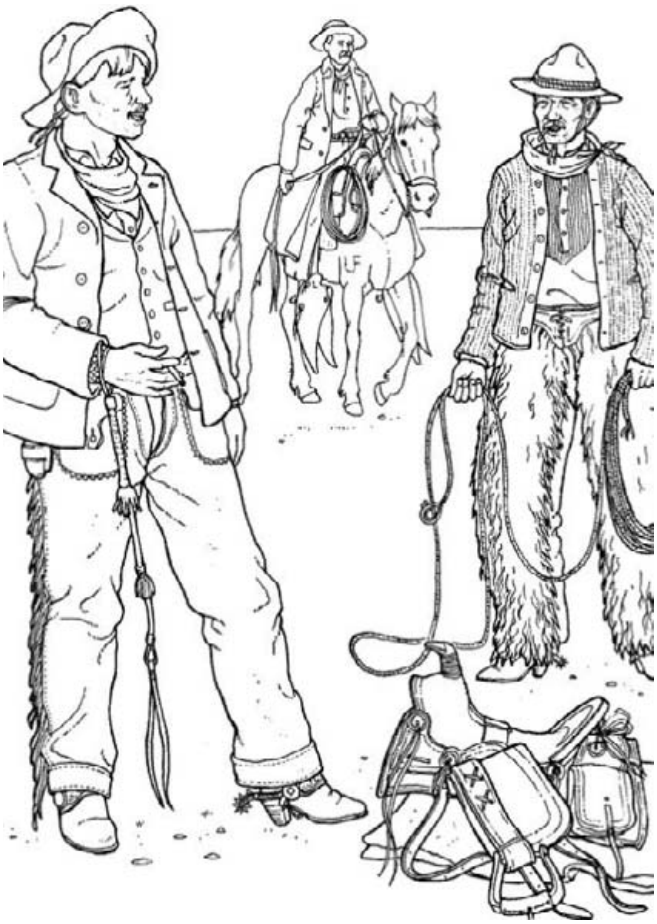
Lafayette Lillard "Fate" Lawson
(Fast Hero 2/Dedicated Hero 2/Gunslinger 3)

Challenge Rating: 7
Level: 7
Grit Dice: 2d8+2d6+3d10+7 (43)
MDT: 12
Initiative: +4
Speed: 30 ft.
Base Attack Bonus: +4
Grapple Modifier: +5
Fighting Space: 5 x 5 ft.
Reach: 5 ft.
Action Points: 4
Reputation: +2
Defense: 20, touch 20, flat-footed 18 (+8 class, +2 Dex)
Saving Throws: Fort +4 Ref +6 Will +6
Abilities: Str 12, Dex 15, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 14, Cha 12
Attacks: Colt new model army +7 (2d6), Remington pocket pistol +6 (2d4), Henry rifle +6 (2d8), saber +5 (1d6/18-20 threat range), Bowie knife +5 (1d4/18-20 threat range)
Occupation: Military (bonus feat: Personal Firearms Proficiency; class skills: Handle Animal, Navigate)
Skills: Bluff +5, Diplomacy +3, Gamble +3, Handle Animal +10, Hide +7, Intimidate +13, Knowledge (streetwise) +3, Listen +5, Move Silently +10, Navigate +5, Read/Write (English), Ride +15, Sense Motive +4, Sleight of Hand +9, Speak Language (Cherokee, English, Signaling), Spot +5, Survival +8, Treat Injury +4
Feats: Archaic Weapons Proficiency, Defensive Riding, Gunplay, Personal Firearms Proficiency, Quick Draw, Ride-by Attack, Simple Weapons Proficiency, Track, Two-Weapon Fighting
Class Features: Close Combat Shot, Empathy, Evasion, Greased Lightning, Weapon Focus (Colt new model army)
Possessions: Colt new model army, Remington pocket pistol, Henry rifle, saber, Bowie knife, horse (Ill Wind), various gear and personal items

Lafayette Lillard Lawson was born in 1838 in McMinn County, Tennessee. Although his paternal grandfather was a Cherokee chief, his family avoided the Trail of Tears by passing for white and taking advantage of his maternal grandfather's land agency connections. Despite his family's ardent Unionist sympathies, Lafayette joined his cousins and enlisted in Co. D of the 5th TN Cavalry CSA in the fall of 1861.

After the company's second narrow triumph against overwhelming odds, one of his cousins joked, "How can we not win? We have Fate on our side." – and the name stuck.

During a raid on Murfreesboro in 1862 "Fate" found himself helping a dying Union soldier from Kansas. The soldier made Fate promise, as a true southern gentleman, to find his family in Kansas and help them out. A few transfers later, Fate found himself in the Cherokee Nation, close to the Kansas home of the dead soldier. While trying to make good on his word, he met up with the Gunter sisters and joined their quest for vengeance against Martel.



Jeremiah Samuel Lee
(Fast Hero 2/Tough Hero 2/Rustler 3)

"Good judgment comes from experience, and a lot of that comes from bad judgment."

Will Rogers

A scion of the famous Lee's of Virginia, Jeremiah Samuel Lee had it all, a young pretty wife, a new son and a small farm in Sudley Springs to call his own. Then the call to arms came for the south. Joining the Confederate Army at Richmond, Sam was assigned to the artillery. During the Second Battle of Manassas, he suddenly realized how close he was to home and panicked. Abandoning his unit to look in on his family, to Sam's dismay, he found that an artillery barrage had collapsed his home. Picking through the wreckage, he found the bodies of his young wife and son in the ruins of the basement.

Losing all control, Sam charged back into battle. Seeing some Yankees pinned down in the forest, he plunged in, emptied his rifle and then set to fighting with his saber. He awoke in a hospital in Richmond, to be transferred out west shortly thereafter. Despite the change of venue, Sam's grief and bloodlust kept him isolated from his fellow soldiers. When his new commander gave foolish orders for an attack, Sam refused to go along. He was tied up and left "for after the battle," but just as Sam reckoned, his unit was wiped out. After freeing himself, he walked away from the army. He met up with the Gunter sisters while looking for work in Kansas.

Jeremiah Samuel Lee
(Fast Hero 2/Tough Hero 2/Rustler 3)

Challenge Rating: 7
Level: 7
Grit Dice: 2d8+2d10+3d8+14 (57)
MDT: 14
Initiative: +6
Speed: 35 ft.
Base Attack Bonus: +3
Grapple Modifier: +5
Fighting Space: 5 x 5 ft.
Reach: 5 ft.
Action Points: 4
Reputation: +1
Defense: 20, touch 20, flat-footed 18 (+8 class, +2 Dex)
Saving Throws: Fort +5 Ref +7 Will +1
Abilities: Str 15, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 12
Attacks: Unarmed attack +6 (1d6+2 nonlethal), Colt new model army +5 (2d6), Loomis side-by-side +5 (2d6)
Occupation: Military (bonus feat: Personal Firearms Proficiency; class skills: Demolitions, Knowledge (tactics))
Skills: Concentration +4, Craft (mechanical) +2, Demolitions +4, Escape Artist +2, Gamble +4, Hide +10, Intimidate +13, Knowledge (current events) +5, Knowledge (popular culture) +4, Knowledge (streetwise) +6, Knowledge (tactics) +5, Move Silently +12, Profession +5, Read/Write Language (English), Ride +8, Sleight of Hand +8, Speak Language (English), Spot +5, Survival +1, Tumble +5
Feats: Brawl, Confident, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Knockout Punch, Personal Firearms Proficiency, Point Blank Shot, Quick Draw, Simple Weapons Proficiency
Class Features: High-Tail It, Increased Speed, Remain Conscious, Sweep
Possessions: Colt new model army, Loomis side-by-side, dynamite (12 sticks), horse (Uncle), various gear and personal items

HAPPY TRAILS

"Ever hear what William Shakespeare said? 'All's well that end's well.' "
"Shakespeare, huh? He must have come from Texas. We've been saying that for years."

Fletch McCloud and Bob Seton – *Dark Command, 1940*

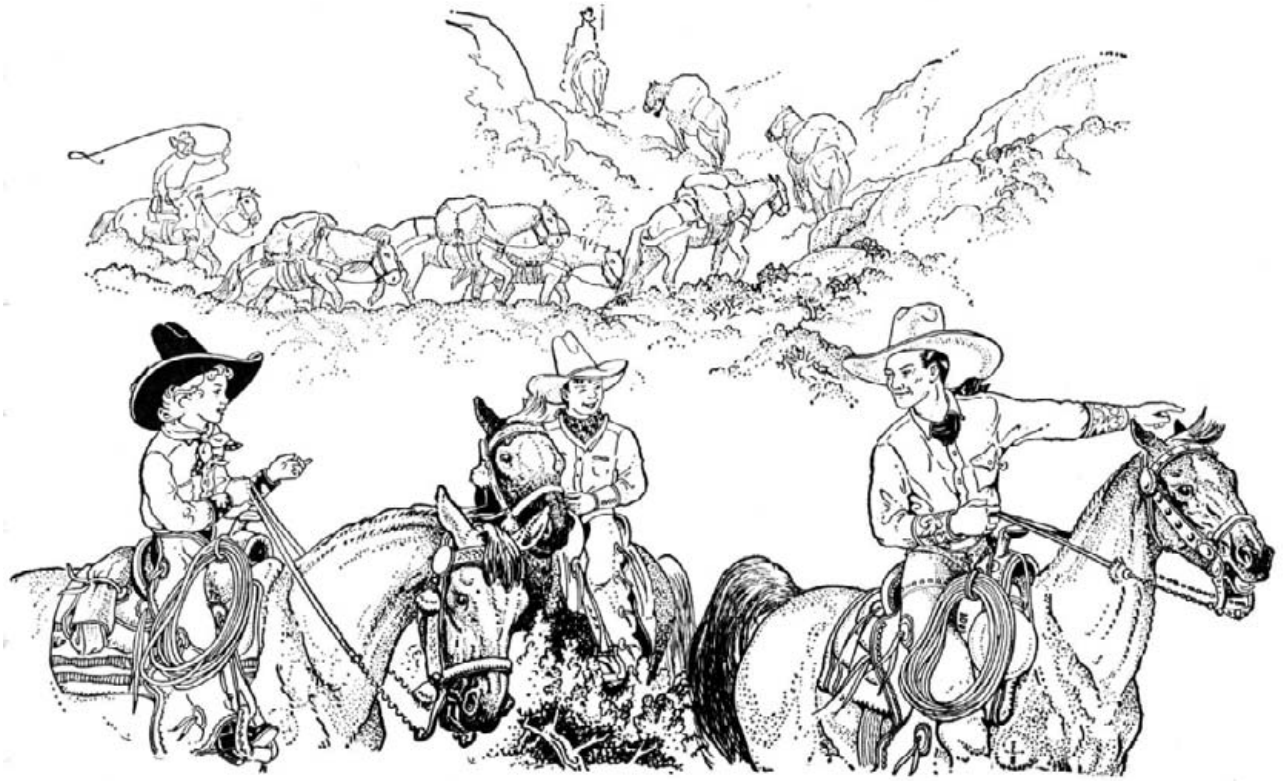
We, the five founding members of the Dog House Gang, wish to thank you for purchasing *Sidewinder: Recoiled*. It's mighty kind of you to give us your patronage.

It's our true pleasure to present this book for your enjoyment. We appreciate the feedback, the words of encouragement and the great patience you have given us during the months of development on this project. Our best hope is that you have as much fun playing *Sidewinder: Recoiled* as we had crafting it for you.

Well, it's time to ride out. We're burning daylight. Thanks again.

Thomas L. Gregory
Bradley W. Hindman
Karl Keesler
Geoff Spakes
Christopher S. Warner

P.S. If you enjoyed this product please come and visit our website (www.doghouserules.net) and let us know. Also keep an eye open for future products in the *Branded for Recoiled* line.



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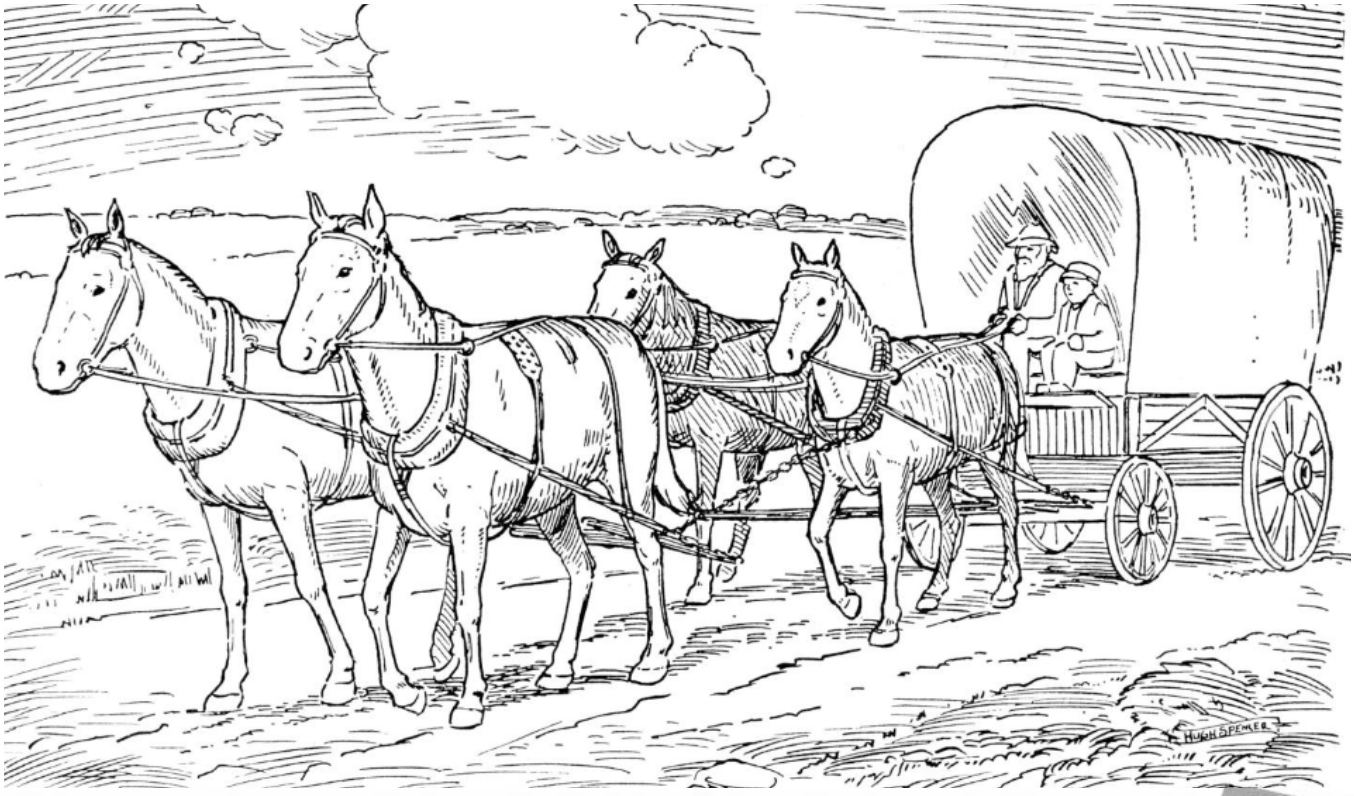

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