

A.I.G.E.

copyright © 1995 Dark Tier Games

<b>A.I.G.E.</b> .....	<b>2</b>	DETERMINE SUCCESS.....	11
<b>ROLEPLAYING</b> .....	<b>2</b>	DETERMINE FINAL OUTCOME.....	11
<b>CHARACTER CREATION</b> .....	<b>3</b>	<b>SKILLS YOU WISH YOU HAD</b> .....	<b>12</b>
SKILL CREATION.....	3	<b>HONING AND REORGANIZING</b> .....	<b>13</b>
FOCUS SKILLS.....	4	<b>COMBAT</b> .....	<b>14</b>
SUPPORT SKILLS.....	4	HAND-TO-HAND COMBAT.....	14
BACKUP SKILLS.....	5	RANGED COMBAT.....	16
INVERSE SKILLS.....	5	<b>DAMAGE</b> .....	<b>18</b>
WEAKNESSES.....	6	AFFECTS OF DAMAGE.....	18
STARRED SKILLS.....	6	DEATH.....	18
HOW STARRED SKILLS WORK .....	7	<b>HEALING</b> .....	<b>19</b>
<b>USING SKILLS</b> .....	<b>8</b>	MEDICAL TREATMENT.....	19
PERFORMING ACTIONS.....	8	SPECIAL HEALING METHODS.....	19
DECIDE ON AN ACTION.....	8	<b>ANTAGONISTS</b> .....	<b>20</b>
CHOOSE YOUR SKILLS.....	8	<b>SPECIAL ABILITIES</b> .....	<b>20</b>
MISCELLANEOUS FACTORS.....	8	<b>DICELESS ROLEPLAYING</b> .....	<b>21</b>
DETERMINE SUCCESS.....	9	TO ROLL OR NOT TO ROLL.....	21
DETERMINE FINAL OUTCOME.....	9	BE YOUR CHARACTER.....	21
<b>USING DICE (OPTIONAL)</b> .....	<b>10</b>	ABOUT PLAYERS.....	22
PERCENTAGES AND SUCCESSES.....	10	ABOUT JUDGES.....	23
PERFORMING ACTIONS.....	10		
DECIDE ON AN ACTION.....	10		
CHOOSE YOUR SKILLS.....	10		
DETERMINE THE DIFFICULTY.....	10		
MISCELLANEOUS FACTORS.....	11		

# A.I.G.E.

The A.I.G.E. system stands for Artificially Intelligent Gaming Engine. A.I.G.E. is a unique gaming engine that promotes imagination, strategy, and creativity, and as the acronym implies, it is intelligent in and of itself. It incorporates the strengths of both diceless roleplaying and the traditional roleplaying with dice. It is also a universal system, which means that it is adaptable to any genre of roleplaying game. We view it as the idealistic roleplaying system. As you begin to experience this system we hope you will come to the same conclusions that we have. It's great!

## ROLEPLAYING

### *Roleplaying (role'-play'ing)*

1. modification of one's behavior to accord with a desired personal image, as to impress others or conform to a particular environment
2. a method of psychotherapy aimed at changing attitudes and behavior, in which participants act out designated roles relevant to real-life situations.

Hmmm...above is the definition of roleplaying as defined by Webster's College edition dictionary. We will clarify a few points on that so as to not give false impressions. First, we must note that roleplaying involves only temporarily modifying behavior or changing attitudes. Secondly, it is certainly not to be construed as psychotherapy. Okay

let's scrap everything except the part that states: *participants act out designated roles relevant to real-life situations.*

Roleplaying is like acting. All of the participants create a role which they wish to play. Then the participants pick someone to act as a director of sorts. We call the actors players and we call the director the Judge. So, now we have players and a Judge.

Every play needs a stage, but in roleplaying there is no real stage, only an imaginary stage. The set is supplied by the Judge and all of the players must use their imaginations to visualize what it looks like based on the descriptions that the Judge supplies. Now we have an environment for the players to interact in.

Since there is no script, the Judge makes up a general outline of what happens, but the players do not know what happens until the Judge tells them. This outline is called a scenario, and in a scenario events will occur and the players will convey their actions to the Judge. Now, there is no script so the players must improvise; make it up as they go along.

Several scenes make up an act and a couple of acts could make an entire play. So, Roleplaying is like a big, imaginary play where the Judge sets up scenarios and gives bits of information to the players who, in turn, improvise on the information they are given.

# CHARACTER CREATION

Each player begins the game with 165 Skill Points which will be used to purchase skills. The points cover the cost of the level of expertise the character will start with in that skill. The available skills are entirely up to and actually created by each individual player.

## SKILL CREATION

With the A.I.G.E. system you no longer have to hassle with endless lists, charts, tables and cross-referencing endless dice rolls. There are no in-depth descriptions or special cases that vary from skill to skill, and you don't even need to look at this book to create your character. The reason is simple: You make your own skills. You create everything about your skills from its name right down to what its definition is.

There are three distinct skill levels: **FOCUS**, **SUPPORT**, and **BACKUP**. Focus skills are those skills that your character excels at, support skills support the focus skills, and backup skills are there to backup both the support and focus skills.

When you create your characters' skills there are few things you need to know. First, every skill needs a name and the name can be anything you want. The only rule you need to follow is that the name be kept to one or two words. Running, athletics, shooting, sleight-of-hand and fleet-footed are all examples of valid skill names.

Next, for each Focus and Support skill you need a description. The length of the description varies for each skill level, however both skill levels share a common factor in that the description must

be a short phrase or sentence and cannot be a list of words. For example, the skill *Martial Arts*, defined as:

*Martial Arts— punching, kicking, grabbing, throwing, biting*

does not have a valid description. However, if the skill is defined as:

*Martial Arts— ability to attack and defend with hands and feet*

Then it would have a valid description.

Also, both Focus and Support descriptions must maintain a minimum and maximum word count. You cannot have less than the minimum nor can you exceed the maximum. However, when counting the words in a description any function, transition or two and three letter words such as **and, an, a, or, is, of, nor and to** do not count against the minimum and maximum. If you use hyphenated words in a description, such as jack-of-all-trades, you must count the words as would if it were not hyphenated (i.e. it does not count as only one word).

You can have skills with the same name if you wish, however any skills with the same name cannot be in the same level. So you can have two skills called *Fighting* but, they both cannot reside on the same skill level. Additionally, you cannot have two skills with the exact same definition but, you can have similar definitions. Thus, two skills can apply to the same situation, but still have distinctly different definitions. Consult the Judge if you have any questions.

## Focus Skills

Focus skills are those skills that your character could be considered an expert in. These skills will most likely reflect what your character does professionally. Each focus skill that you create for your character should have a name and a short phrase or sentence that describes it. **The description must be of four to six words in length.** Focus skill will most often cover one or two specific skills in one skill area. Focus Skills cost **20** Skill Points.

### Sample Focus Skills

<i>Name</i>	<i>Description</i>
Acting	
Animal Lore	
Archaeology	
Archery	
Athletics	
Contacts	
Chemistry	
Deception	
Dextrous	
Electronics	creating and fixing electronic devices and equipment
Endurance	
Fast Talk	
Gymnastics	
History	
Investigation	
Language	
Locksmith	
Law	application of western law and judiciary system
Martial Arts	
Parapsychology	
Psychology	
Shooting	accuracy with handguns and accessories at long distances
Spellcasting	
Stealth	
Strength	
Vigilant	
Zoology	

## Support Skills

Support skills are those skills that supply support for your characters focus skills. Like the focus skills, the support skills should reflect what your character does professionally, although this need not always be the case. Support skills are usually slightly broader and more vague than focus skills, and cover a complete area rather one or two specific skills within an area. Similar to the focus skills, the support skills are to be followed by a brief description. **The description of a support skill must be two to three words in length.** Focus Skills cost **10** Skill Points.

### Sample Support Skills

<i>Name</i>	<i>Description</i>
Acting	
Animal Lore	
Archaeology	
Archery	
Athletics	
Contacts	
Chemistry	
Deception	
Dextrous	
Electronics	creating and fixing electronics
Endurance	
Fast Talk	
Gymnastics	
History	
Investigation	
Language	
Locksmith	
Law	application of western law
Martial Arts	
Parapsychology	
Psychology	
Shooting	knowledge of handguns and accessories
Spellcasting	
Stealth	
Strength	
Vigilant	
Zoology	

## Backup Skills

Unlike either focus or support skills, backup skills are those odds and ends skills that your character just happened to pick up along the road of life. They may or may not have anything to do with what your character does professionally. These skills are important for rounding out your character and, as their name implies, they are here to backup your support and focus skills.

Backup skills are by far the most broad and most controversial skills. **Backup skills are a merely the name of a skill.** A Backup skill is not followed by a definition and is purposefully supposed to be extremely broad and encompassing. The name should normally be something that carries with it an implied or associated meaning. If the word is obscure or has a different meaning be sure to tell the Judge about it before the game begins. Backup Skills cost 5 Skill Points.

## Inverse Skills

Each skill that your character possesses also has an Inverse. This means is that if your character has a skill, then the character also knows what other characters would do if they were trying to use a similar skill. For example, a character with the Support skill of sneak (move quietly and follow) would not only know how to sneak, but would also know what others would do when they are attempting to sneak. In effect, the character can use inverse sneak to help detect when others are using sneak. However, we must note that other characters may only have a skill *similar* to that of another character and may not be exactly the same skill. The Judge will have to use discretion in deterring how much an inverse skill Applies to a give course of action.

## Sample Backup Skills

<i>Name</i>	<i>Name</i>
Acting	History
Animal Lore	Investigation
Archaeology	Language
Art	Law
Athletics	Locksmith
Archery	Medicine
Contacts	Martial Arts
Chemistry	Parapsychology
Deception	Psychology
Dextrous	Riding
Electronics	Spellcasting
Endurance	Stealth
Fast Talk	Strategy
Firearms	Strength
First Aid	Vigilant
Gymnastics	Zoology

## WEAKNESSES

Ahhh, weaknesses, a Judge's favorite instrument. Just as everyone has something that they consider a weakness, whether it is bad vision, a limp, or even bad breath, so should your character. After all, weaknesses are what help us to realize that we are only human. Of course, there are those of us who feel that they have absolutely no weaknesses at all, and this is fine, too.

You may choose any weaknesses for your character that you wish, and you are not limited to any specific number of them. Just like skills, you make up the names and the descriptions of your characters weaknesses. The descriptions are not limited to any number of words and you may use lists if you wish.

You may be asking why you should give your character any weaknesses at all. Well, first of all it builds character (ha, ha!). Second, there are advantages to taking weaknesses which come in the form of **Starred Skills**. We'll talk about starred skills in just a moment though.

There are three levels of weakness:

**minuscule, moderate, and severe.** A minuscule weakness is a very minute weakness such as an allergy, or bad (but correctable) vision. A moderate weakness would come in the form of a missing eye, or a severe limp. A severe weakness is any condition that is deemed severely debilitating such as blindness, deafness, missing a limb, or lameness. If you have any questions about which level a weakness fall into consult the Judge.

## STARRED SKILLS

Take a look at the character profile sheet if you haven't done so already. We know that you've just been dying to find out what those stars are for. Well, when you fill in the star next to a skill, that skill becomes a starred skill. How do you get them? First, you can only get stars at character creation, it's a one shot deal. For each weakness that your character has you may obtain a starred skill, and the level of the weakness determines what level of skill (focus, support, or background) may be starred. Starring breaks down as follows:

**Starred Skill Table**

<i>Level</i>	<i>Backup</i>	<i>Support</i>	<i>Focus</i>
<i>Minuscule</i>	1	—	—
<i>Moderate</i>	2	—	—
	—	1	—
<i>Severe</i>		3	—
	1	1	—
	—	—	1

You can plainly see that each level of weakness directly corresponds to a level of skill that may be starred. If you choose to, you may also accumulate lesser weaknesses in order to star a higher level skill. For example, if your character has three minuscule weaknesses, instead of starring three backups you may opt to star one support and one backup or one focus. Additionally, you may never star a skill more than once.

## How Starred Skills Work

A starred skill means that your character has a slight edge on a situation in which that skill is used. Having a star is similar to having a special knack for that skill. However, only one character can gain an advantage from starred skills. So, when more than one character is involved in the same action the character using the most starred skills gets the advantage. If each character is using the same

number of starred skills then no one gets the advantage.

The actual results of a star will vary depending on the situation. If you are in a situation where you are rolling dice you will often get an extra roll. In some cases it may function as a luck factor, maybe giving your character that little extra something. The end result is, as always, at the discretion of the Judge.



# USING SKILLS

During the course of the story you will no doubt want your character to perform certain actions. Whether or not your character succeeds at this action will depend on your character's skills. Things get a bit vague when determining who has more skill when it comes to a given action. The Judge, of course, has final say over the matter. However, as a general rule, if your skills add up to more than your opponents, or more than is necessary, then you succeed.

## Performing Actions

- **Decide what action you wish your character to take.**
- **Choose up to three (3) skills that apply to the action.**
- **Account for any miscellaneous factors.**
- **Determine if you succeed.**
- **Determine the final outcome.**

## Decide On An Action

During the course of a story you will no doubt be faced with many decisions. It is up to you to decide what you will have your character do when these decisions are upon you. A multitude of options are available at any point in the story, you merely need to figure out what you want your character to do.

There are three different types of actions that your character may be involved in: single character actions, two character actions, and multiple character actions.

**SINGLE CHARACTER ACTIONS** are actions that involve only one character. Duh! Any action that involves only your character is considered a single

character action. An example of a single character action would be breaking down a door.

**MULTIPLE CHARACTER ACTIONS** involve two or more characters. Any action that is being performed by your character and one or more other characters is a multiple character action. A multiple character action could consist of characters attempting the same action together such as attempting to bust down a door. A multiple character action could also consist of the characters attempting to outdo one another such as in a game of cards or a race. The winner is determined by whoever has the most successes. If two or more act together as a group, the group will add its successes together.

## Choose Your Skills

After you have decided that you want your character to perform an action, examine the skills available to your character and choose up to three skills from any of the skill areas that you feel will help your character successfully accomplish the task at hand. Use the definition that you've come up with and determine any implied meanings that may exist if a backup skill is going to be used.

Once you've determined the skills you wish your character to use present them to the Judge and tell him what it is your character is attempting to do. If you are using any inverse skills be sure to make the Judge aware that the skill is an inverse.

## Miscellaneous Factors

Sometimes, the Judge may deem that due to extraneous circumstances that one or more of the characters will have additional penalties while performing an action. These circumstances can range from the character being wounded to the weather or

environment that the character is in while performing the action.

## Determine Success

Each of your skills is worth a specific number of points depending on the level of the skill. **Focus skills are worth four points, support skills are worth two points, and backup skills are worth one point.** Total up the points you get for each of the skills you are using. Roll two ten-sided dice once for each point you have and each time you roll under the difficulty you gain one success.

If the action is a single person action then you only need one success. However, if the action is a multiple character action then whoever has the most successes wins. If the result is a tie then the Judge may determine the outcome as he sees fit. Additionally, the more success that are obtained the better the task was performed, or in the case of multiple character actions the more successes a character has over his opponent increases the amount that the other character is defeated by. As a general rule subtract the losers success from the winners and consult the table below to determine the degree of victory the winner achieved.

## Determine Final Outcome

Based on the results of the steps above the Judge now has a general guide as to what has happened. Using this information and his own knowledge about how he wants his story to progress he will fill in the details and flush out the action. Normally, this consists of the Judge giving a detailed description of the actions that went on and the exact nature of the final result.

# USING DICE (Optional)

## Percentages and Successes

If you like to use dice and choose to use them then you will need two ten-sided dice. Why two ten-sided dice? Well, the dice portion of the system is based on percentages and successes. The percentage represents how difficult a given task is to perform, and the successes represent how well your character performs the task.

For example, let's say that Garg (a character) is attempting to perform some arbitrary task and this particular task has a 60% Difficulty; which means that your Garg has a 60% chance to succeed. Next, determine how many times we get to roll the dice to see if Garg succeeds. This number is calculated by the number and type of skills that Garg is using but, for now we'll say this number is three. Now we roll our two ten-sided dice four times. Each time we roll choose one dice to be the ten's and the other will be the one's. On our first roll we roll a 7 and a 3 which reads as 73%. The next roll is an 8 and a 7 (87%). The third and final rolls result in a 55% and a 39%. For Garg to succeed we needed to roll 60% or less on at least one of the four rolls, so the third and fourth rolls both came in under 60%.

You only need one success to succeed at an action that only involves you. If the action involves multiple characters you will need at least one more success than your opponent to succeed (you can have a tie). Each additional success is above and beyond the call of duty, so to speak, and each one means that you performed that much better.

In our above example, Garg only needed one success to actually perform the task successfully, but he got two successes. This means that not only did he succeed, but he did it even better than it needed to be done. This is where the Judge takes over because it is up to the Judge to determine how this extra success applies to the situation. Maybe Garg performed the task faster than normal, or maybe he went higher or farther than he thought he could.

## Performing Actions

- **Decide what action you wish your character to take.**
- **Choose up to three (3) skills that apply to the action.**
- **Determine the difficulty**
- **Account for any miscellaneous factors.**
- **Determine if you succeed.**
- **Determine the final outcome.**

## Decide On An Action

Just as described in the previous section, choose an action for your character.

## Choose Your Skills

Choose three skills which you feel apply to the action you are attempting

## Determine the Difficulty

When using dice to perform actions the Judge will need to determine how difficult an action is. The difficulty is a percentage that you must roll on your ten-sided dice in order to succeed. If you roll equal to or less than the difficulty percentage, you get a success.

Determining how difficult the action will be based on a percentage figure which he will estimate based on the type of action, the current condition of the character and environment. The table below is a

general guide to use when determining what difficulty percentage should be assigned to an action.

### Difficulty Percentages

<i>Action</i>	<i>Difficulty</i>
Very Easy	90%
Easy	80%
Below Average	70%
Average	60%
Tough	50%
Challenging	40%
Difficult	30%
Very Difficult	20%
Near Impossible	10%

### Miscellaneous Factors

There are two ways for the Judge to confer a penalty to a character. One is to give the character a lower difficulty percentage. For example, if two characters are racing across the a snow filled field and one character has snow-shoes while the other one is wearing tennis shoes, the character without the snow-shoes will have a lower difficulty percentage because it would be much harder for him to run through the snow. The other way a Judge can penalize a character is to not let the character have as many rolls. This will often occur when a Judge feels that the skills that the player chose to use for an action don't fully apply to the situation. We highly recommend you Judges to analyze each situation and adjust things accordingly.

## Determine Success

As described above each of your skills is worth a specific number of points depending on the level of the skill. **Focus skills are worth four points, support skills are worth two points, and backup skills are worth one point** You get to roll your ten-sided dice one time for each point you have. For each time you roll equal to or under the difficulty percentage you gain one success.

If the action is a single person action then you only need one success. However, if the action is a multiple character action then whoever has the most successes wins. If the result is a tie then the Judge may determine the outcome as he sees fit.

Additionally, the more success that are obtained the better the task was performed, or in the case of multiple character actions the more successes a character has over his opponent increases the amount that the other character is defeated by. As a general rule subtract the losers success from the winners and consult the table below to determine the degree of victory the winner achieved.

### Degree of Victory

<i>Successes</i>	<i>Degree of Victory</i>
1-2	Marginal
3-4	Solid
5-6	Heavy
7-8	Expert
9-10	Flawless

## Determine Final Outcome

Using the results of the dice rolls, the Judge can now determine the final outcome of the action and inform the players how the situation is resolved.

# SKILLS YOU WISH YOU HAD...

*"I'll try to bake a cake."*

*"Okay, roll your baking skill."*

*"But, I don't have a baking skill."*

Everyone has been in that situation where you wanted your character to do something and he could not do it for the mere fact that he did not possess the skill. Well, we're firm believers in the fact that everyone can attempt to do anything and there is always the slightest possibility that they will actually do it. At the Judge's discretion along with other miscellaneous factors the Judge may allow your character to succeed at an action that he doesn't have a skill for. These types of successes will rarely be exceptional. If you are incorporating dice, the Judge should allow you to roll at least once to see if you succeed. The Judge should offer a suitable difficulty percentage to go along with the roll as well.

# HONING AND REORGANIZING

As you go about your daily life you learn and increase the skills that you have. In a roleplaying game you must have a way to simulate the fact that your character learns from the experiences that occur throughout the character's life. Many roleplaying games award points for accomplishing goals, good roleplaying, killing the bad guy, etc. In the A.I.G.E. system you earn H&R points.

During the course of play your character may be awarded H&R points based on good roleplaying, completing a story or other factors. These points can be spent to hone and reorganize existing skill or to gain new skills.

## H&R Point Awards

Action	Points
Completing a Story	4
Accomplishing a major goal in a current story	2
Good Roleplaying	1
Executing a good idea that helps the group	1

Normally an H&R session occurs at the end of each story, however, many Judge's will have an H&R session at the end of each roleplaying session regardless of whether or not the story has been completed. This is up to each individual judge, of course.

## HONING

Honing consists of modifying the wording of a skill definition to expand on the original definition or subtract from the original definition. For example,

Eddie has a Support skill of *Drive* which has a definition of: *operate common vehicles*. He wants to hone that skill to make it just a bit more specific and he revamps it to read: *operate manual and automatic*. You can see where the definition is basically the same, but may allow a little more leeway during the course of a story if Eddie's drive skill is needed. **Honing a skill costs 1 H&R points.**

## REORGANIZING

Reorganizing a skill means that you move a skill a level (i.e. from backup to support or support to focus). For example, during the H&R session Eddie decides that his Vigilant skill has become pretty important and since it is a Backup Skill he decides to raise it up to Support Skill level. So he reorganizes by moving Vigilant up into the focus area and modifying its definition to fit the maximum and minimum word count of a Support Skill.

**Reorganizing a Backup to a Support skill costs 10 H&R points. Reorganizing a Support to a Focus skill costs 20 H&R points.**

When reorganizing skills you must stay aware of the definition of the skills you reorganize. When they move up you must adjust the definitions to remain within the word minimums and maximums. When you reorganize a skill you effectively get to hone it as well.

## NEW SKILLS

For the mere cost of 5 H&R points your character may gain a new skill. Any new skill automatically begins as a Backup Skill and can be progressed to higher levels by spending the appropriate amount of H&R points as described above.

# COMBAT

For many gamers, combat is the most essential part of any roleplaying game. If a game does not have a good combat system that runs smoothly and is fun you can guarantee it will be stuffed on a shelf where it will do nothing but collect dust. With the A.I.G.E. system, we have strove for nothing less than optimum realism and playability. Combat is free-flowing and allows enough leeway to comply with the many options that should be available in a live combat situation.

## HAND-TO-HAND COMBAT

Hand-to-hand combat encompasses both armed and unarmed combat. It is up-close and personal. The only difference between the two is that armed combat incorporates weapons. Of course, a weapon can be anything from a ball point pen to a samurai sword so the line between the two can be very thin at times.

Combat is handled very similar to when a character performs any other action and it is considered a multiple character action. Each player will tell the Judge what his character is attempting. The Judge will pick a common difficulty percentage and apply penalties to any needed penalties to characters. Each player will choose up to three skills which apply to the combat and add up their points. Then everyone rolls the appropriate number of dice based on their chosen skills. The character with the highest number of successes wins.

Listed below are options, tactics and maneuvers commonly used in hand-to-hand combat. Use this to help add to color to the descriptions you

use when describing your characters actions during combat.

There are three options in hand-to-hand combat.

- **Unarmed vs. Unarmed**
- **Unarmed vs. Armed**
- **Armed vs. Armed**

Of these three options only Unarmed vs. Armed requires special consideration. In any situation where one character is armed and another is not, the armed character will be at an advantage. The nature of the advantage depends entirely upon the weapon involved and the skill of the armed character. It is entirely up to the Judge to decide what the exact advantage will be, normally it is a few points added to the armed character's point total during the combat.

### Combination

Stick and move, stick and move. This is a combination of offensive and defensive maneuvers and allows for the most versatility. You throw enough at your opponent to keep them guessing, but you never commit quite enough to allow your opponent a good whack at you. This tactic is most effective when your opponent is using the combination tactic as well.

### Defensive

Use this strategy when you think your opponent might be better than you. A defensive strategy will allow you to conserve your energy and especially in a multiple opponent scenario, will allow you to take minimal damage. The idea behind a defensive tactic is to tire your opponent out to the point where you can

take over. This tactic works well against both the combination and offensive tactics.

### **Offensive**

When you feel like your opponent is less of a fighter than yourself an all-out offensive is a good strategy to adopt. The idea behind an offensive tactic is to keep the opponent on the defensive by constantly throwing everything that you have in your arsenal. However, you must completely disregard your own defenses, so you better hope you pound the other guy into oblivion. This tactic works best against a combination tactic.

## **MANEUVERS**

### **Block**

This is a defensive maneuver where one character stops the attack of another by directly interfering with the path of the intended weapon. Both characters must both be using unarmed combat in order to execute a block.

### **Disarm**

This is one of the most difficult maneuvers to perform and involves the removal of a weapon from an armed opponent.

### **Dodge**

Dodging is the only effective way for an armed or unarmed opponent to avoid a ranged attack.

Dodging involves the actually throwing oneself to the ground or behind some form of protection to avoid a ranged weapon attack.

### **Evade**

A purely defensive maneuver that involves the character running, and moving to avoid being struck.

### **Feint**

The feint is a classic maneuver which involves a the character executing a combat technique, such as a punch or kick, and stopping the technique prior to its completion. The idea behind a feint is to get your opponent to react to the false technique so you can create an opening.

### **Misdirection**

Misdirection involves an unarmed character altering the course of and attack from an armed character. The armed character still ends up following through on the attack, however the idea is that when the attack is finished the weapon will not have struck the unarmed character.

### **Parry**

A parry is a standard maneuver where one armed character blocks the attack of another armed character.



## RANGED COMBAT

Ranged combat is any form of combat that involves projecting a weapon over a distance. Using a gun, bow and arrow, or throwing an object are all forms of ranged combat. Ranged combat is conducted very similar to hand-to-hand combat with the only main difference being the extended range of the combat.

Listed below are some options and tactics you can use to help you add a little flourish to the descriptions you use to describe the actions your character performs in a ranged combat scenario.

### OPTIONS

There are four options in ranged combat.

- **Ranged vs. Ranged**
- **Ranged vs. Hand-to-Hand**
- **Ranged (covered) vs. Ranged/Hand-to-Hand**
- **Ranged vs. Hand-to-Hand (covered)**

The only time a distinct advantage arises from a ranged combat is if one character has cover and another does not. Ranged weapons are almost useless against a character who has full cover, but this is usually not the case; however, even partial cover will help immensely. The Judge should apply penalties or bonuses accordingly when taking cover into account. When using dice, the table listed below gives estimated percentage difficulty penalties when attempting to use a ranged weapon against a covered target.

### Cover Bonus Table (Optional)

<i>Target Cover</i>	<i>Penalty</i>
Partial	-10%
Half	-20%
Full	-40%

A character with a ranged weapon will almost always have the advantage over a character who does not have a ranged weapon. The only way for a character using hand-to-hand to gain any sort of advantage over a character with a ranged weapon is to disarm the character, and this requires that both characters be in close enough proximity to engage in hand-to-hand combat.

### TACTICS

#### Area Fire

Some weapons, including automatic weapons, are capable of delivering damage to multiple targets. The difference between targeting multiple targets and just one is the amount of damage inflicted upon each target. Obviously, the more targets that are chosen the less chance of actually hitting and inflicting damage on each one of them.

#### Automatic Weapons

Weapons capable of automatic fire are able to fire a multitude of shots in a short period of time and deliver massive damage compared to a weapon that can only fire single rounds or short bursts. The Judge should take into account the size and damage capabilities of these kinds of weapons and apply the damage accordingly.

#### Crossfire

This common tactic to incorporate when you have two or more people on your side. It consists of you and one or more characters surrounding the targets position and firing from multiple angles and directions at the target. This makes it tough for the

target to shoot back since he is being fired upon from themselves. This process repeats until the group is in multiple directions. its desired position.

## MANEUVERS

### Careful Aiming

This is the most effective way to shoot at and actually hit a target, although it is considerably slower than most other options. This consists of a character setting up and taking his time to aim as best as he possibly can at his intended target. This maneuver receives the snipers choice award.

### Cover Shoot—Shoot Cover

This tactic is commonly used to retreat or advance a group. It is effective against both small and large groups, and consists of one or more character firing upon the enemy while one or more other character race for better position. The characters who were running for position, once they reach their new position, will stop and fire upon the enemy while the remaining characters run for better position

### Duck and Shoot

This maneuver is particularly effective when you have a large amount of cover. Basically, a character pops up from behind his cover and fires a few shots in the general direction of the enemy. Again, this maneuver is not very accurate, but can be used to keep peoples heads down while your fellow characters can move into better position.

### Shoot and Roll/Run

This maneuver consists of a character rolling or running, usually toward some form of cover, and firing his weapon as frantically and fast as possible. Not very accurate, but it will keep peoples heads down and is an excellent way to get out of a bad situation with minimal damage, if your lucky.

# DAMAGE

There is no set formula for determining damage, however, damage will most likely be proportionate to the degree of victory that the winner achieves (see Performing Actions). Of course, it is the Judge who will determine the exact nature of any damage that a character takes.

For example, if after making a combat roll Bob has six successes and Eddie has five. Bob has achieved a marginal victory over Eddie and Eddie takes a small amount of damage; a nick from Bob's blade, or a solid punch in the gut. If Bob had had ten successes and Eddie had five then Bob would have achieved a heavy victory and inflicted much more serious damage; a full thrust of Bob's blade in the stomach, or a punch to the head that causes Eddie to fall unconscious.

## AFFECTS OF DAMAGE

Whenever a character is wounded several things usually occur. First, the character is less able to function physically than he was prior to the injury. Second, the character is less able to function mentally because the mind tends to linger on injuries. Injuries often show up in the form of penalties to difficulties or to the number of dice available to roll.

The most difficult part of determining a how much of a penalty a character has incurred is determining how severe the damage actually was. The Judge should use his own discretion when determining how damage affects the characters. If

you use dice consult the degree of victory table to help determine how bad the damage actually was. The table below is a rough guide to determining penalties for damage.

### Damage Penalties

<i>Damage</i>	<i>Physical Penalty</i>	<i>Mental Penalty</i>
Scrapes & Bruises	NA	NA
Minor	-1 Dice	NA
Serious	-2 Dice	-1 Dice
Crippling	-3 Dice	-2 Dice

When a character incurs damage there will come a point when that character just can't function physically any longer. The character would no longer be able to stand or eventually would just pass out from exertion and pain. Ultimately, of course, the character would die if enough damage were inflicted. Each of these factors should be considered by the Judge and applied if and when they are needed.

## DEATH

A Judge should think long and hard before he allows a character to be killed. The situation should be extreme and the decision should not be taken lightly. If a character is performing an action that could have fatal results the Judge should warn the player that there is a possibility of death. If the player continues then he has been forewarned and the Judge should follow through if needed.

# HEALING

Healing is often times a long and arduous process, and the more extensive and complicated the damage is the longer it takes to heal. Sometimes, the damage is too much to heal at all. When determining the rate of healing the Judge should take into account the type of damage (i.e. knife wound, broken limb, damage from a fall, poison, electrical shock, etc.) and determine the healing rate based on this as well as how the story will progress and benefit. It's no fun to have to wait for a month for a character to heal before he can do anything useful.

## Medical Treatment

A character will, of course, heal much faster when in a proper environment and when under the care of a trained medical expert. Recover time should be adjusted downward when some or all of the proper conditions exist for expert medical care.

## Special Healing Methods

Certain genres of roleplaying games will allow for alternative methods to healing. These methods are often the result of either extreme technological advances, or magical powers. These types of healing will often dramatically increase healing time and can often heal injuries that are not capable of being healed through normal recovery methods.

# ANTAGONISTS

The hardest thing for a Judge to do is keep track of the multitude of non-player character's that must be controlled during the course of a story. A good antagonist should not be any less developed than a good protagonist. So, for any story that you concoct, be sure that you develop the antagonists just as if they were going to be played by a player. These guys should be just as real as the player characters are. In fact, during an H&R session, you should pull out the antagonists who took part in the story and hone and reorganize their skills as well; They learn too you know. They shouldn't be static and unlearned characters, they should learn and gain experience from an event just as the player's characters will learn from every situation they encounter.

# SPECIAL ABILITIES

Special abilities are as wide and diverse as the gaming genres themselves, and there should be no fear in adding a special ability to your campaign. The process is actually very simple; a player merely needs to give his character the special ability as a skill. When the character attempts to use this ability just follow the processes described for using skills and your off and running.

With the A.I.G.E. system there are no special rules that need to be applied, and you don't need to look up the rules for a special ability when you want to use it. You just use it and keep on going and the game does not drag or stop while people cross-reference and double check on how a skill actually works.

# DICELESS ROLEPLAYING

The following section is taken from an essay we wrote about diceless roleplaying. It is meant as a guide for you if you are new to diceless roleplaying. Now, we realise that the A.I.G.E. system does use dice, but the meat of the system is not truly visible until you encompass the fact that those rolls are only a very general guideline, and not the complete system unto itself. All of the lecturing aside, we recommend you read this section as it will help you to settle into the A.I.G.E. system if you are a player or a Judge

## TO ROLL OR NOT TO ROLL...

When to use the dice and when to not use the dice is probably a big question in your mind right now. Diceless roleplaying can initiate some of the most interesting and complicated roleplaying that you'll ever experience. But, it's not for everyone. If you feel like using the dice, do it.

However, we feel that there is an even more important question whether you roll the dice or not. What do I determine the final outcome of a situation? This is a difficult question to answer because the possibilities are endless. A good answer to that question is to use the results (whoever has a higher point total or successes) as a guideline to determine what happens. Don't just use them as answers to a yes or no question, but expand on the results and use them as an outline to story. After all, roleplaying is usually about extenuating circumstances, so use these circumstances to weave a tale. This is the key to smooth, uncomplicated and entertaining roleplaying. Entertainment is what a roleplaying game should be

about. You're not here to worry about whether or not you're sticking to the rules that are carved in stone (or a book in this case), but you're rather here to enjoy yourself and create an environment where you can get away from the stresses of real life for a short while.

## BE YOUR CHARACTER

The first thing that everyone should know about a diceless roleplaying is that the player needs to be the character. This means that when the character speaks and acts the player should perform these in first person as if the player is the character. This is always an entertaining aspect to cover, because many players (yes, even the experienced ones) tend to take a third person approach to character interaction. This is to say that the player will often say such things as "I tell Bob that I don't like him." A first person aspect is an essential tool to a successful and entertaining campaign. In order to use this tool to its utmost and squeeze every advantage out of it you need to become the tool. If you want to catch a thief you have to act like a thief. So, the next time you feel like you don't like Bob, turn to Bob and in the first person say, "Bob, I don't like you."

Everyone should be aware of what and how their character acts and talks and this is essential to creating a believable and fun gaming session. Even adding something small like speaking with an accent will help to add those minute elements that contribute to play. The tiniest enhancements will often times stimulate larger commotions in a diceless scenario. When it is the only thing you've got, flaunt it.

## ABOUT PLAYERS

As a player in a diceless system there are a few things that you must be aware of. First, it is up to you to create the story. You need to act and react as your character would, not as you would. The single hardest factor to duplicate when assuming the role of a character is forgetting what you know and knowing what your character knows. You may not really know a thing about quantum physics, but if your character has that skill then you should at least sound as if you know about quantum physics. I find that the best tool that you have at your disposal is the one tool that probably started you in roleplaying: your imagination. You have to remember that the other players are in character as well, and they will never know whether or not what you say about quantum physics is actually the truth. Make it sound good, be creative, have fun and everything else will fall into place.

By far, the largest complaint that players have about diceless roleplaying systems is that there are no real random events. If this is the case then the players are not doing their job properly. In a diceless roleplaying game the plot is advanced through constant interaction between the Judge and the players. The players react to something that the Judge does, and then the Judge reacts to the players' reactions and this little cycle continues until the game is finished. The Judge can never know what every player will do in every situation, and the players certainly will not know how the Judge will react to their actions. So, in effect the randomness is built right in without any effort other than playing the game. Of course, every event may not be random, but the game as a whole becomes random because you never can tell what is going to happen next or how the game is going to end. So, all of you players

keep in mind that it is your job to give your Judge good material to act on. You only get out of it what you put into it.

Description is everything to a diceless roleplaying system. The more detail that you use to describe your character's actions the greater the story is going to be. You will also open up more options for your character; options that could determine whether your character lives or dies. The difference between a player who describes his attempt to hit an enemy as "I try to hit the guy" and the player who describes his attempt as "I duck low and sweep at his feet, trying to knock him off balance" is so vast that I could not describe even begin to describe it.

Given the first description the Judge really has only two options to play with; a hit or a miss. Think of all the options that the Judge can return with a description similar to the second of the two. The possibilities are much greater and will undoubtedly lead the Judge to return an equally good description that will offer more options to the player. It is important to not just sit back and let the story take place, you need to sit forward and take control of the story.

Next on the player's check list is what to do about the all powerful, unmerciful Judge who is out to destroy the players no matter what the cost. Sometimes the players will get a little paranoid that their Judge is having delusions of grandeur, and sometimes that may be the case. Most of the time, though, the players are merely feeling frustrated because things are not going quite as they had planned. Things should get frustrating occasionally, otherwise you may want to check your Judge to make sure the batteries aren't worn out. It is usually a good rule of thumb that if one or two players think that the Judge is being a bit too almighty it's usually

just the players feeling a bit baffled, but if all the players start to get this feeling then the group should speak up before things get out of hand. Don't be afraid to tell your Judge to not be so Hitlerish and to step down off the soap box. If worst comes to worst and your Judge is just too pushy and doesn't seem to listen you may just need a new Judge. Personally, I've never had a session come down to this, although I have had a few close calls. The best way to avoid problems like this is to communicate with your Judge, and your entire roleplaying troupe for that matter. If you can't communicate with one another then problems are unavoidable. Also, it really helps to have the group pick a Judge that everyone trusts will be impartial and willing to sacrifice a little dignity to further the story.

## ABOUT JUDGES

For all you Judges out there you have the toughest job of all. You have to play every NPC that comes onto the stage, you have to weave all the jumbled fragments and components into a cohesive, entertaining story; which is often times easier said than done. The first rule you need to learn and keep in mind at all times is that it is your world and you make the rules. Don't be afraid to put your foot down when you really feel it is necessary. The second rule you need to know is to know when not to use rule one. Before the game even starts you should decide how strict you're going to be sticking to the rules. Talk to all the players and tell them if this particular session is going to be hard-lined and strict or if you plan on letting them bend the rules a little. If the players know beforehand that you're going to be a real hard-head then they will expect it and unwanted arguments will be reduced.

Judges often have this stereotype of having to be the almighty ruler and overseer of the realm. Often times, especially in a group that plays together a lot, the players will come to expect certain things of their Judge. Don't ever let this happen. If the players find you predictable then you've already lost an important element involved in keeping the attention of your players. The Judge should be free to alter his style of judging, just as the players are free to alter their style of playing. However, I caution against changing your style in mid-game, pick a style for your current session and stick with it.

A common misconception that both players and Judges have, especially by those new to gaming, is that the Judge's job is to "get" the characters; to force the characters into submission. Nothing could be further from the truth, especially in a diceless game. As a Judge it is your ultimate duty to create a world that is exciting every time that it is entered and to have created a story that is entertaining every time you leave it. When a gaming session is over with you and all the players should be able to tell a fun and exciting story about what happened during the adventure. The greatest thrill for me as a player or a Judge is when a session has ended and I can run off and tell others what happened and they enjoy hearing about it. In a diceless roleplaying game the story takes precedence over everything else and it is your job as the Judge to bring it all together.

Mentioning the story brings me to the next issue that is often extremely frustrating to a Judge: How to keep the story moving. After all there are no charts or tables or dice to fall back on when you feel that your brain is not working correctly. Diceless gamers will often times refer to these methods as "crutches". So what do you do if you don't have a crutch to fall back on? The best advice I can give any



Judge on this point is to let the players do their job and make the story. You should never feel as if the entire game is completely on your shoulders, your job is to weave the parts together and the players need to supply those parts to you. Give the players something to play off and then ride the wave it creates. Introduce something simple such as a raving lunatic bursting from a nearby store and attacking one of the characters, or a small puppy wandering out of a nearby ally and attaching itself to a character. It sounds strange, I know, but you would be amazed at some of the assumptions that players will make about an incident that really doesn't mean anything at all. Something as simple as telling the players that they notice a little extra smog in the air could lead to an astounding story about a government scandal involving a chemical plant that is mixed up in producing mind-controlling chemicals which are being tested on the entire population of the US. You may laugh, but I've seen it happen.

One of the easiest forming and hardest to break habits that every Judge has been guilty of at one time or another is what I refer to as "monkey on the shoulder" syndrome. This refers to when a Judge pulls rank on the players and forces them into a situation without giving them a say in the matter. The reason I coin this phrase as such is because of an experience I had with a Judge who really wanted the party to get thrown in jail. While they were all looking around a shop the Judge informed one of the players that a monkey had suddenly jumped on his shoulder and stolen a piece of jewelry from one of the vendors. Without any chance to react at all the entire party found themselves accused of thievery and locked up in dungeon. They did not even get a chance to react to the monkey or to the guards who hauled them off to jail. Needless to say they were all

very unhappy players. This is an extreme case, I know, but still a valid one and is a big no-no. As a Judge, be aware of the fact that the players should always have a choice, even if one of those choices is death.

On a similar thread a Judge should never exact vengeance on the players if they outsmart or leapfrog over your most elaborate conflict without even a scratch. You should expect the players to do this sort of thing. What is the fun in Judging if you just have a group of zombie players that do everything you expect? The players are there to keep you on your toes. Another no-no that stems from "monkey on the shoulder" syndrome is when the Judge takes out his frustrations on a party member because the party member got away with something that the Judge did not want to happen. Maybe the player got possession of a magical gem before she was supposed to, or the player killed off one of the bad guys before he was supposed to die. Any way you look at it, situations like these are going to happen and they are bound to be frustrating. So how do you deal with them? You forget them. No matter what happens during a gaming session it is a Judge's job to be completely fair and impartial. A Judge should show neither prejudice nor favor to any player. It's just not right. So don't do it.

When you are the Judge you should never expect the players to do what you planned. It will never happen and you shouldn't fool yourself into thinking that you can make it happen. No matter how many outs you think you've thought of some smart-alec player is going to find some loophole that you didn't even consider. However, there are some neat little tricks that you have at your disposal which will help you to manipulate those players into doing the things you want them to do.

First off, you're the Judge and as such you are entitled to know everything about a character playing in your world right down to the kind of underwear they wear. You should know every character in your campaign as well as the player knows the character. Know every skeleton in their closet, every flaw, every skill that they are good at and everything that they are bad at. Information such as this is most valuable and can place the character at your mercy at the most inopportune times. Remember, it is your job to keep the players on their toes just as much as it is for them to keep you on yours.

Second, don't stop at just knowing the character who is recorded on that piece of paper. Know the character that interacts with the other PC's and NPC's during the course of the game. Every little bit of information that you can pick up, whether it's before the game starts or during game play, can be used to manipulate and exploit the characters. Keep a notebook next to you and while the players are interacting with each other and the NPC's that they encounter scribble a few notes if you hear something important that you may be able to use later on. You may never find anything usable, but when you do, oh boy! There is nothing more enjoyable for a Judge than when a piece of information floats their way and it comes back to haunt a character later on. I love it when this happens, and strangely enough the players always seem to get a kick out of it as well.

Both of these little tips, although seemingly minute are immense tools for a Judge. They will help you develop a great story as well as put a cap on those characters that may be getting a bit too big for their britches.