



**BLACK  
COFFEE**  
GAMES



# Spectrum, a universal collaborative storytelling system

*Open Beta Release*

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Friend,

If you are reading this, it means that you have done us the honor of participating in our Beta Playtesting. We want to begin by thanking you for your curiosity in our system. We hope that as you progress through this document, your curiosity progresses to fondness, or, even better, to believe in the success of our passion project...

The following pages of Spectrum Core represent the efforts of a four-person creative team with nearly a century of gaming experience between them. Thousands of collective hours have gone into developing our product, which we unironically refer to as our beloved child. However, we recognize that the document in front of you is far from the ultimate form of our vision. There are doubtless flaws – contradictions, ambiguities, over- and under-complications, typos, omissions, and any number of other shortcomings. These are issues that we are not capable of fixing on our own: theorycraft and internal playtesting can only get us so far. You and our other playtesters are the only ones who can help us through the final stages of development.

As you carry us up the slope of our proverbial Mount Doom, please know that providing blunt and honest criticism is the kindest and most valuable thing you can do for us. If you love something about our work – and we are confident that there is plenty here to love – we will be ecstatic to hear about it. But we also want to know what you hate. We want to know what you find frustrating, clunky, illogical, or otherwise antithetical to fun. Our feelings are unhurttable in this regard; our desire to create the best possible TTRPG system far outweighs our capacity to be offended by the illumination of our flaws. Though we have spread our dreams under your feet, there is no expectation that you tread lightly. Please stomp as if you are pressing grapes into wine.

Again, we thank you beyond measure for the gifts of your time and attention. Our sincere hope, and our unshakeable commitment, is that you will one day look back on this experience as your contribution to something great.

– Black Coffee Games

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## Introduction

Presented here are the Core Rules and gameplay mechanics of the Spectrum universal collaborative storytelling system. As Spectrum is designed to work with any paradigm or genre, the Core Rules have been stripped of the supplementary rules associated with the specific resources, skills, techniques, associations, assets, and metaphysics. This was intentionally done to make learning Spectrum as quick and simple as possible and to provide the maximum amount of freedom to narrators and players to weave their stories, while at the same time, providing enough structure to facilitate a common vernacular for narrative focused game play.

The purpose of this document is to introduce the reader to the Spectrum system, with each new set of mechanics building off the previous. Examples are rife throughout the text, as well as snippets of advice gathered by the developers through their decades of experience. Once you have learned the core rules, you can explore the extensive documents describing resources in their own dedicated volumes without complicating the process of learning the rules for the basic structure of the system.

## Rolling Dice

Spectrum uses a d100, also known as a percentile die. With a d100, the results vary from 1 to 100, with each number having a 1% chance of being rolled. There are three common ways to generate a d100 roll.

- Using an actual die with 100 sides. This is the least common of the three options, as a 100-sided die is expensive, unbalanced, hard to read, and is so smooth that it rolls like a golf ball.
- Using two different colored ten-sided dice with one color representing the 10s place and the other color representing the 1s place. It should be noted that with this method, rolling two 0s represents a 100.
- Using two ten-sided dice with one die marking the 10s value with double digits: 00, 10, 20, 30, 40, 50, 60, 70, 80, and 90 and the other die having ten single digits to represent the 1s value. It should be noted that with this method, rolling a 00 and a 0 represents a 100.

### Examples for rolling a d100:

- A 100-sided die is rolled. The roll shows an 82. The value of the roll is 82.
- A Red and a green 10-sided dice are rolled, the player determines that the red die represents the 10s value, and the green die represents the 1s value. The roll shows a red 8 and a green 2. The value of the roll is 82.

### A (Nonstandard) roll of the Dice

There are lots of other methods for determining a d100 value. Please feel free to use any or all of them in your gaming session. But be aware that many of the other options available have varying degrees of balance that may affect the actual chances of generating specific numbers and results. At the same time, it can be fun and adventurous to introduce nonstandard methods of generating dice rolls. We encourage groups to explore and experiment in any way that improves the value of their storytelling experience.

## The Chart

The Chart is the central reference tool for the Spectrum system. The Chart is used along with a rolled d100 to determine outcomes for the scenarios conceived by narrators and characters alike. The magnitude of these outcomes is represented using the numbers listed at the top of each column, these numbers are called goal points (GP). Goal points are used to quantify various story elements, such as success or failure of a skill check, sustained damage, environmental effects, strength of a spell, or the speed of a car as it takes a gnarly corner.

### Anatomy of The Chart

**Column Values:** The top cells of the columns correspond to the value of the variable in question. When a value exists between two columns, the lower value column is used (at Black Coffee Games, we always round down).

**Dice roll Result:** Each cell contains a numerical range corresponding to the possible results of a d100 roll.

**Color Result:** Matching up the result of a dice roll with its corresponding cell on the appropriate Column yields the roll's color result. The color result will determine the number of shifts applied to the starting column value.

Color Result	Context
Infrared 3 ▶	The stars align and Lady Luck smiles, or frowns. The absolute maximal GP possible.
Hyper-Red 2 ▶	Commonly called a "critical success". Largest amount of GP rationally conceivable.
Red 1 ▶	Amount of GP generated when everything goes exactly right.
Orange ◀ 0 ▶	The most likely value of GP.
Yellow ◀ 1	"Not quite right", a slightly less than average number of GP given the situation.
Green ◀ 2	A less than average number of GP generated.
Cyan ◀ 3	Significantly less GP than one would expect.
Blue ◀ 4	Smallest amount of GP possible before it becomes questionable if you've misread the situation
Purple ◀ 5	GP are low enough within the situation that at least one person is confused.
Ultraviolet ◀ 6	The absolute lowest amount of GP that can be generated
White (0 GP)	This is classically referred to as a basic failure.
Light Grey (0 GP) ◀ 1 to the next roll	The failure represented by this roll is impressive enough that it effects the next set of events.
Dark Grey (0GP) ◀ 2 to the next roll	"It's not my fault". Failure is significant enough that it might create an unforeseen circumstance.
Black (0 GP) ◀ 3 to the next roll	"Oh... oh no..." Catastrophic failure.

-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3	5	7	10	13	17	22	28	35	50	70	100
100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99
97-98	97-98	97-98	97-98	97-98	97-98	97-98	97-98	97-98	97-98	97-98	97-98	97-98	97-98	97-98	97-98	97-98	97-98
64-96	64-96	64-96	64-96	64-96	64-96	64-96	64-96	64-96	64-96	64-96	64-96	64-96	64-96	64-96	64-96	64-96	64-96
42-63	42-63	42-63	42-63	42-63	42-63	42-63	42-63	42-63	42-63	42-63	42-63	42-63	42-63	42-63	42-63	42-63	42-63
29-41	29-41	29-41	29-41	29-41	29-41	29-41	29-41	29-41	29-41	29-41	29-41	29-41	29-41	29-41	29-41	29-41	29-41
21-28	21-28	21-28	21-28	21-28	21-28	21-28	21-28	21-28	21-28	21-28	21-28	21-28	21-28	21-28	21-28	21-28	21-28
16-20	16-20	16-20	16-20	16-20	16-20	16-20	16-20	16-20	16-20	16-20	16-20	16-20	16-20	16-20	16-20	16-20	16-20
11-15	11-15	11-15	11-15	11-15	11-15	11-15	11-15	11-15	11-15	11-15	11-15	11-15	11-15	11-15	11-15	11-15	11-15
8-10	8-10	8-10	8-10	8-10	8-10	8-10	8-10	8-10	8-10	8-10	8-10	8-10	8-10	8-10	8-10	8-10	8-10
5-7	5-7	5-7	5-7	5-7	5-7	5-7	5-7	5-7	5-7	5-7	5-7	5-7	5-7	5-7	5-7	5-7	5-7
3-4	3-4	3-4	3-4	3-4	3-4	3-4	3-4	3-4	3-4	3-4	3-4	3-4	3-4	3-4	3-4	3-4	3-4
2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1

### What You See vs. What It Is

The collective hallucination that is color perception varies from person to person. That is to say, there are an infinite number of arguments for what color is actually being represented. Any efforts to precisely describe which color is which can easily be thwarted by a printer with low toner or screen resolutions. Therefore, the terms listed below are our approximation; you may term them how you wish.

The Chart's color range is (from bottom to top): Black – Dark Grey – Light Gray – White – Ultraviolet – Purple – Blue – Cyan – Green – Yellow – Orange – Red – Hyper Red – Infrared.

### Shifts and Adjustments

Shifts and adjustments are the actions used to represent the various bonuses and penalties that can be applied when using The Chart. Shifts involve rolling on a different column than the character would generally utilize for the test. Adjustments involve adding to or subtracting from the result of a dice roll. The foundational question when choosing between a shift and an adjustment is this:

1. Am I, as the narrator, attempting to change the value of a color result?
2. Am I attempting to change the likelihood of achieving a color result?

### Shifts

A **shift** is the act of moving from one column to another, either to the left or to the right. Shifts are most commonly applied by the narrator when the circumstances requiring the use of The Chart should increase or decrease the goal points generated by any given color result on The Chart.

A penalty shift (aka "Left Shift", aka "◀") moves a column value a set number of columns to the left determined by the number assigned to the shift. The penalty shift is used when the narrator determines that the situation is such that the goal points generated should be less for any of the colors rolled. A bonus shift (aka "Right Shift", aka "▶") moves a column value a set number of columns to the right determined by the number assigned to the shift. The bonus shift is used when the narrator determines that the situation is such that the goal points generated should be greater for any of the color results rolled.

#### Example:

1. The player needs to determine goal points for an "action".
2. Usually, the player would determine the "action's" goal points using the 13 column on The Chart.
3. But, due to "narrator's discretion," there is a ◀ 2 penalty to the roll.
4. The player refers to The Chart and finds the column two spaces to the left of the 13 and sees the 7 column.
5. The player rolls a d100 and gets a 17.
6. 17 is a BLUE result, which has the player referencing ◀ 4 of the rolled column (7)
7. The player looks four spaces to the left of the 7 column and sees that it is the 1 column.
8. The player declares that their roll has generated 1 goal point.



## Adjustments

Adjustments involve adding to or subtracting from the result of a die roll. Adjustments are used to increase or decrease the chances of achieving a color result.

A penalty adjustment (aka “negative adjustment”, aka “-“) will subtract a value from the die roll as determined by the number assigned to the penalty adjustment. Penalty adjustments increase the likelihood of a low roll and eliminate the possibility of high rolls.

A bonus adjustment (aka “positive adjustment”, aka “+“) will add a value to the die roll as determined by the number assigned to the bonus adjustment. Bonus adjustments increase the likelihood of a high roll and eliminate the possibility of low rolls.

### Example:

1. *The player needs to determine goal points for an “action”.*
2. *The player determines the “action’s” goal points using the 13 column on The Chart.*
3. *Due to the “narrator’s discretion,” the player is allotted a +4 adjustment to the roll.*
4. *The player rolls the d100 and gets a 17.*
5. *The player adds the +4 adjustment to the roll results, which  $17 + 4 = 21$*
6. *21 is a CYAN result, which has the player referencing ◀3 of the rolled column (13)*
7. *The player looks three spaces to the left of the 13 column and sees that it is the 5 column.*
8. *The player declares that their roll generated 5 goal points.*

### Shifts vs Adjustments – The Nuances

At first glance, a shift and an adjustment would both do the same thing, and in many instances, they do. They can make a roll easier or harder, depending on which direction you want to go with it.

When deciding which to use, it is worth taking a moment to consider the character’s skill level and the number of goal points necessary to achieve their task. At lower levels, a shift could very well make the roll impossible. If the character had to bypass a high-tech Mag Lock using nothing but a bobby pin and a screwdriver, they may just be out of luck.

They can certainly make the attempt, but success is far from guaranteed.

Conversely, an adjustment could provide a bit more nuance to the situation. Maybe it is a lock the character is more than equipped to tackle, but the steady drizzle and the sound of the nearby guard house door opening have the would- be burglar feeling the pressure. An adjustment here could still leave the task in the realm of possibility, but it could be a near thing, heightening the drama of the moment.

## How to Use The Chart

Whenever the narrator determines that a dice roll is necessary to determine an outcome, the process begins by referencing the appropriate column for the determined value of the effect. If the value exists in between two columns, it is rounded down to the lower of the two column numbers and that column is used for the dice roll.

A d100 is then rolled, and the rolled number is referenced on the established column to determine the color result. The color result of the roll will (in most cases) shift from the original column that was rolled on. In Spectrum, the shift value of a color result is constant.

Determine the shift value based on the color corresponding to the rolled value. Starting with the original column, shift left or right the designated amount. Once the color result is determined and the appropriate number of shifts have been taken, the top cell of the final resulting column determines the number of goal points that have been generated.

### Example:

1. *The appropriate starting column is chosen based on the context of the scenario.*
2. *The player is required to roll for a value of 15, the player would round down to the 13 column.*
3. *The d100 is rolled getting “52”*
4. *The player tracks down the 13 column to the cell that contains 52, which is yellow.*
5. *A yellow color result requires ◀ 1. The player moves 1 column to the left of the 13 column to the 10 column.*
6. *The player has generated 10 goal points on that roll.*

## Taking a Blue

Any time a player is required to use The Chart, if the column to be rolled on has a blue value, the player can choose to forgo rolling dice and instead simply calculate goal points as if they had generated a blue color result on said column. Choosing to “take a blue” forgoes the possibility of rolling well to eliminate the risk of rolling poorly.

The efforts of a character who decides to “take a blue” are commonly described as conservative, uninspired, “good enough for government work”, half-assed, or phoned-in.

### Example:

*A player needs to roll on the 17 value column. Instead of risking generating no goal points or, worse, generating a grey or black result, the player opts for “taking a blue.” The player refers to The Chart and from the 17 column performs the standard blue color action of 4 left-shifts. The result column value is 3, reflecting that taking a blue, in this case, generated 3 goal points.*

## What is a Character?

A **character** is a person or other being within a narrative. Characters are the *dramatis personae* that players use to navigate, explore, and shape our collaborative stories. They can be based on real people, imaginary people, or both, or neither. Spectrum is designed to allow you to create any character you can possibly conceive of, so long as it fits in with the story setting agreed upon between the narrator and players. The only limiting factors in creating a character in Spectrum are your imagination and the narrator's discretion.

Want to play a pair of demon-hunting brothers with codependency and daddy issues? We have you covered. Perhaps you would like to play a young wizard from a prestigious school of magic. Maybe your entire group wants to play a group of plucky, meddling teenagers who travel around solving mysteries in a van with a Great Dane who has an extreme case of the munchies. Go for it!

## Concepts and Foundations of a Character

Creating a character concept that fits into the group dynamic is one of the most crucial and satisfying tasks of collaborative storytelling.

The process of creating a character begins with generating a character concept. A character's nature – for example, “honorable swordsman,” “haunted mercenary,” “bored hacker,” or “promiscuous poet” – provides the foundation upon which the rest of the character is built. This initial concept may develop as a result of discussing the setting and genre of the story with the rest of the group, or it may be a pre-existing idea that is simply refined by such discussion.

## Character Aspects

In every story, characters have access to several elements that help define their capabilities when participating in the narrative. These aspects which govern a character's physical and mental faculties are divided into four distinct categories: **Attributes**, **Instincts**, **Vitalities**, and **Movement**. Aspects are intrinsic to your character, as they comprise the physical and mental makeup of your character and their capabilities.

### Attributes

Represent a character's most fundamental physical and mental characteristics. During character creation, each of the character's attributes have a score between 3 and 20.

- **Agility (AGI):** Agility represents the character's bodily coordination and the ability to navigate through physical space.
- **Endurance (END):** Endurance represents the character's ability to resist physical and environmental stressors and gives a measure of overall stamina and hardiness.
- **Finesse (FIN):** Finesse represents a character's fine motor control, minute spatial acuity, and manual dexterity.
- **Intuition (INT):** Intuition represents the character's ability to unconsciously correlate data points and navigate the emotional landscape within an environment.
- **Martial (MAR):** Martial represents a character's capacity for fighting and other conflicts.
- **Perception (PER):** Perception represents the character's ability to process and unconsciously interpret data received by their physical senses.

- **Reason (REA):** Reason represents the character's declarative memory, ability to apply logic, and overall learning speed.
- **Strength (STR):** Strength represents the character's physical power and vigor.
- **Power (POW):** In stories where metaphysics that defy normal conventions are part of the paradigm, a character's power determines the overall maximum metaphysical output they can wield.

### Instincts

Represent complexities of a character's physical and mental abilities and are derived from the character's primary attributes and, in game, are used to reflect the key mechanics of a character's strengths and weaknesses.

- **Aegis:** A character's innate resistance to metaphysical effects. Governs resistance to backlash and other metaphysical effects.
- **Awareness:** The ability to process data from the physical senses. Governs overall situational mindfulness.
- **Reflex:** The ability to physically react to unexpected situations. Governs response time to unexpected events.
- **Resolve:** The ability to withstand adverse mental conditions. Governs resistance to mental conditions and detriments.
- **Toughness:** The ability to withstand and recover from physical harm. Governs resistance to physical conditions and detriments.

### Vitalities

Represents the character's physical capacity for survival and continuation of existence:

- **Life:** Represents the characters physical integrity and overall life force, the loss of which can result in death.
- **Will:** Represents the characters threshold for remaining capable and conscious, the loss of which can result in the character losing consciousness.

### Movement

- **Run:** Number of meters a character can run in a round.
- **Jog:** Number of meters a character jog in a round.
- **Walk:** Number of meters a character can walk in a round.
- **Horizontal Jump:** Number of meters a character can jump horizontally from a stationary position.
- **Vertical Jump:** Number of meters a character can jump vertically from a stationary position

### *Hop, Skip and... Moonwalk?*

There are any number of ways for a person to move their body from point A to B. Such that there are any number of ways a character can cavort, caper, perambulate, slither, slide, and ultimately relocate themselves.

## Character Resources

Throughout the course of the story, your character will need to rely on more than just their physical and mental capabilities in order to prevail within the narrative. Equipment, training, and “knowing a guy” are examples of resources a character can leverage. Resources are broken down into the following categories: *Associations*, *Assets*, *Metaphysics*, *Skills*, *Techniques*, *Traits*, *Experience Points*, and *Kismet*. Spectrum houses resources in living documents on the [Black Coffee Games website](#). The goal of the resource living documents is to allow Spectrum to be as dynamic and adaptable as possible. Our crack shot dev team can add new resources in real time, as new paradigms are introduced and as these documents grow old rules can be adapted for better game balance, without having to change the core mechanics or wait for “the next edition”.

Note, because Spectrum is designed to work with every possible genre and paradigm, there are many resources provided that will not be appropriate for your game. For example, a Tolkienesque medieval fantasy setting would likely have no use for the Computers or Handgun techniques. That is not to say that it could not be incorporated, if the narrator decided to blend genres.

### Associations

Associations are the resource that represents a character’s influence and reputation (good or bad) with a various institutions or individual contacts. The character’s relation and involvement with various associations throughout the story will determine the institution or contacts disposition towards the character, as well as the benefits and obligations they receive based on this disposition.

### Assets

[Assets](#) represent all of a character’s equipment, vehicles, property, weapons, armor, and anything else a character might own or use.

### Metaphysics

[Metaphysics](#) represents far more than the mere pondering philosophic of the nature of existence. It is the ability of a character to wield extraordinary powers, called manifestations. Depending on the nature of the story, manifestations may be rooted in sources such as magic, psionics, contact with eldritch beings, esoteric energy fields, mutations, superpowers, or something that defies even these “mundane” conventions.

### Skills

[Skills](#) are resources that represent a character’s experience and overall proficiency with a particular task, knowledge, or equipment. Every skill has an associated attribute. Throughout the course of the narrative, nearly every action a character performs will fall under the purview of a particular skill.

### Techniques

[Techniques](#) represent a character’s ability to apply skills in a variety of ways that extend beyond its most straightforward use. In combat, these techniques allow a character to perform attacks with a wide array of effects beyond simply doing damage to an opponent. For other skills, techniques augment the use or effect of a skill or improve a character’s chance of success when using said skill.

## Traits

[Traits](#) are the physical or mental characteristics that affect a character’s capabilities. Trait options are Spectrum’s answer to other games’ problematic delineation of “races,” “species,” or “lineages.” These delineations, in addition to implicating racist attitudes and stereotypes, are often hackneyed, inaccurate, and logically inconsistent. Instead, Spectrum differentiates between character options that are purely aesthetic and those that require mechanics. Want a tail, horns, or claws that are purely for looks? Go for it! If you want a tail, horns, or claws that have a mechanical function in the game, it will require a trait.

Spectrum adopts the philosophy that your character’s abilities and appearance are not innately and invariably affected by their cultural or genetic history. Your character can look however you want. They may be as tall or as short as you want or as fat or as thin as you want. Their skin can be any color imaginable. They may have horns, tails, tusks, and pointed ears in any combination. They can look, act, and perform like other members of their society entirely, somewhat, or not at all.

### Experience Points

Experience points (XP) are the abstraction used to represent a character’s development through the course of the story. XP is awarded by the narrator at various points throughout the game. XP can be spent to improve the character’s attributes, metaphysical power, spent on learning new techniques or manifestations (when appropriate) as well as to improve association ratings.

#### *Awarding XP*

The narrator is tasked with the responsibility to assign XP as the story progresses. Of course, you are welcome to award XP as you see fit, as it’s your story.

We suggest 1 point of XP per hour of real-world time spent playing, give or take a few points for exceptional role-playing and awesome dramatic moments.

### Kismet

Kismet represents a player’s ability to assert their character’s destiny to influence the forces of Fate. A character’s kismet pool is equal to their number of unspent XP. A player may use kismet to perform techniques or invoke powerful metaphysics and is one of the few ways a character can perform post-roll adjustments.

When a player spends kismet, the player subtracts the amount of kismet spent from their kismet pool. This decrease is temporary, and characters regain kismet after resting.

**Example:** *A character with a kismet pool of 20 who spends 5 kismet on a dice roll will only have 15 kismet to spend until their kismet pool is restored after resting.*

## What is a Skill?

Skills represent a character's ability to do things. They represent the experience and training that coalesce to form a character's capabilities. Attempting to make use of these capabilities is called a skill test, a dice roll that represents the likelihood that a character will successfully accomplish an intended application of a Skill. In Spectrum, a skill test is defined by the skill to be used, the type of skill test required, the difficulty of the test, and the time that each skill test roll represents.

The success or failure of a skill test is determined by the number of goal points generated compared to the difficulty of the test.

## Determining a Skill Value

All skills start at a negative value to represent the time and effort required to learn a new skill. Sheer physical or mental prowess can, to some degree, compensate for a lack of skill. To represent this, each skill has an associated attribute that will offset at least some of the negative base.

The negative base for various skills will vary based on the complexity and time required to learn. Learning to swim is a relatively straightforward process. Learning astrophysics on the other hand... not so much. Skills with higher learning costs, such as applied sciences, require a considerably higher amount of investment before a character can be considered viable in that skill.

To determine a character's overall aptitude for any skill, the player adds the associated attribute value and the skill point to the negative starting base. The resulting number represents the character's overall ability in that skill.

## When to Perform a Skill Test

Spectrum is about roleplaying, not *roll-playing*. Therefore, one of the most crucial roles of the narrator is to require skill tests frequently enough that the players feel their skill choices matter but sparingly enough to prevent collaborative storytelling from becoming a soulless game of chance. A car chase should require a Driving test, driving to the supermarket should not. Replacing the firing pin of a handgun should require a Repair test, cleaning the handgun should not. Requiring players to roll for things that are well within their wheelhouse, especially during moments of low tension, can add an unnecessary level of frustration for players, especially in the event of a failure on something that should be an "unfailable" task.

## Selecting the Appropriate Skill

There will be times in which the required skill for a situation is obvious, but none of the characters have any ranks in that skill. In such instances, it is appropriate for the narrator to allow players to make a case as to why a different skill could be used in its place. In such a case, narrators have the option to apply penalty shifts as necessary (unless the player can make a very convincing argument).

**Example:** *The players are trying to tail a messenger through the forest without revealing their presence. The trees are fairly dense in this part of the forest, so they decide to climb the trees and scramble through the canopy to keep pace with the messenger. The narrator calls for an Acrobatics check to hop from branch to branch. All but one of the players has the Acrobatics skill. The*

*remaining player asks if they can substitute their climbing skill instead. As the aspects of the acrobatics skill used for this task are very much parallel to the climbing skills that would be used, the narrator agrees to the request and allows the player to use their climbing skill with ◀ 1 to perform the task.*

## Timing of a Skill test

Each skill test requires a certain interval of in-game time to complete the task. The narrator should consider the period of time over which the character is attempting to accomplish their goal and how much time each roll in the test represents. Suggested standard time increments are:

- 1 Turn
- 10 Turns
- 1 Minute
- 10 Minutes
- 1 Hour
- 10 Hours
- 1 Day
- 1 Week
- 1 Month

A shorter time requirement does not inherently correspond to lower goal Point requirements. An Engineering test to defuse a bomb might require 60 goal points, with each roll representing 3 seconds, while an Electronics (Software) test to mine cryptocurrency might only require 34 goal points, with each roll representing 24 hours.

## How to Perform a Skill Test

A skill test is performed in the following steps:

1. It is determined that the situation requires a skill test.
2. The narrator determines the time span over which the skill test will be performed.
3. The narrator determines the appropriate skill test, or the player makes a case for using an adjacent skill.
4. The narrator determines the difficulty of the test.
5. The player selects the appropriate skill (or makes a case for an adjacent skill).
6. The player finds the appropriate column for their skill rating (if the skill rating falls between two columns, always round down to the closest column).
7. The narrator and the player apply any shifts or adjustments to the test.
8. The player rolls, references the die results on The Chart, and announces either a failure or the number of goal points generated.



## Types of Skill tests

Skill tests are divided into three specific types: *Instant*, *Extended*, and *Contested*.

### Instant Skill Tests

A character makes an instant skill test when the success or failure of the goal is determined by a single dice roll. Instant refers to the fact that a character's success or failure is determined the "instant" the dice are rolled. That is not to suggest that these types of skill checks happen instantaneously in terms of how much time passes in the game to accomplish the success or failure. For example, the narrator might call for an instant skill test that requires 15 minutes of in-game time to complete.

When an instant skill test does not yield enough goal points to produce a success, the attempt has failed. It is determined by the narrator as to the appropriateness of allowing the character to try again. In no case are the goal points earned from instant skill tests cumulative. Each roll is its own self-contained instance of success or failure.

**Example:** *A character is attempting to cross a narrow footbridge. About halfway across, the bridge begins to creak and shudder. The narrator calls for an instant Acrobatics test to see if the player can scamper to the other side before the bridge below gives way.*

### Extended Skill Tests

A character makes an extended skill test when success or failure depends on a sustained effort over time. This test involves multiple dice rolls, each roll representing an amount of time.

With an extended skill test, the goal point results of each individual die roll are cumulative.

**Example:** *The player encounters a locked door in the otherwise open mansion. Intrigued by what is behind it, they ask the narrator if they can make a lockpicking check. The narrator agrees, saying that each roll will represent about 30 seconds, and they need a total of 30 goal points to open the door.*

### Working Under Pressure

Sometimes it is appropriate to limit the maximum number of attempts of an extended skill test.

For example, there is no reason to limit the number of Repair tests a character can attempt to get an old truck running when they have all the time in the world to tinker. However, there are legitimate narrative reasons to set a maximum number of rolls allowed when the character is trying to get the same truck started before the zombie hoard gets into the garage.

### Contested Skill tests

Contested skill tests occur when characters are trying to outperform each other, such as performing in an underground dance-off. Alternatively, a contested skill check can occur if a character is actively trying to stop a character from performing an action, such as trying to wrest away control of a remote detonator from an insane clown.

In contested skill tests, the goal point requirement to outperform an opponent is set entirely by the number of goal points the opponent achieves. Note that winning the contest by outperforming the opponent does not necessarily mean the task was accomplished successfully or well. It just means that one character did better than the other.

**Example:** *Matt achieves 3 goal points on his Music test during a night of karaoke, while Rob achieves only 2 goal points. This outcome reflects that Matt outperformed Rob. But this does not mean Matt succeeded in singing a song that anyone wanted to hear.*

A contested skill test can either be an instant or extended test. An instant contested skill test is determined by whoever achieves the most goal points on a single dice roll.

An extended contested skill test is determined by either:

- A. Achieving the most goal points after a set number of rolls.
- B. Achieving a target number of goal points in fewer rolls (and therefore a lesser amount of time).

## Determining Difficulty

Defining the difficulty of a skill test is the narrator's responsibility. Success or failure on any given skill test is determined by whether the character achieves the target number of goal points.

Target numbers are largely subjective and left to the narrator's discretion. However, to assist the narrator in avoiding arbitrarily choosing, Spectrum has created a quick reference difficulty chart. This chart is intended to assist narrators in setting consistent goal point requirements across all difficulties throughout the story without disrupting the flow of the game. The difficulty chart contains the following ratings: *Easy*, *Standard*, *Moderate*, *Difficult*, *Improbable*, and *Inconceivable*. While these terms and their associated goal points are quite subjective, they are meant to provide an accessible scale of difficulties.

It is important to note that the difficulty of any given task is meant to be constant, meaning that the difficulty of the task should not change based on the character performing the task. The variables are the character's skill rating and any applicable shifts or adjustments from resources and environmental factors.

### To Use or Not to Use: The Difficulty Chart

Consistency often plays a big role in telling a successful story. When there is a wide degree of variance in difficulties, it's easy for players to get confused or even frustrated, especially when they believe that the skill they are attempting should be well within their capabilities. Additionally, there are times your players will catch you completely off guard with a plan that's so off-base that it's inspiring. How do you define the difficulty of training a monkey to use a flamethrower while riding a unicycle? It seems absurd, but we'd be willing to bet you have some equally zany stories. Of course, you're welcome to disregard the difficulty chart. It is, after all, your story.

## How to Use the Difficulty Chart

1. The narrator determines the base difficulty of the task: Easy (2), Standard (7), Moderate (17), Difficult (35), Improbable (100), Inconceivable (375).
2. Based on the context of the task and the environmental conditions of the story, the narrator may choose to adjust the difficulty. This is done in two steps:
3. The narrator chooses to move the difficulty up or down by one step. For example, Moderate (17) may be adjusted to Moderate (13) or Moderate (22), slightly easier or harder, respectively.
4. If the narrator feels further adjustment is necessary, they may choose a number in the floating zone between difficulties. This zone can represent any number of possible nuances that would cause the difficulty of a task to fall outside of the normal ranges.
5. After the target number of goal points is determined, the character continues the standard steps for performing a skill test.

INSTANT SKILL DIFFICULTIES		EXTENDED SKILL DIFFICULTIES	
Difficulty	Goal Points	Difficulty	Goal Points
Easy	1	Easy	5
Easy	2	Easy	7
Easy	3	Easy	10
	4		11-12
Standard	5	Standard	13
Standard	7	Standard	17
Standard	10	Standard	22
	11-12		23-27
Moderate	13	Moderate	28
Moderate	17	Moderate	35
Moderate	22	Moderate	50
	23-27		51-69
Difficulty	28	Difficulty	70
Difficulty	35	Difficulty	100
Difficulty	50	Difficulty	150
	51-69		151-249
Improbable	70	Improbable	250
Improbable	100	Improbable	375
Improbable	150	Improbable	600
	151-249		601-999
Inconceivable	250	Inconceivable	1000
Inconceivable	375	Inconceivable	1600
Inconceivable	600	Inconceivable	2500

## Applying Shifts and Adjustments

With every skill check, the narrator decides any necessary shifts or adjustments to the character's skill roll based on the context of the story. There are times a character will get a bonus to their skill test that will provide a shift or adjustment. The most common sources of these bonuses come from collaboration, assistance, and resources.

### Character Bonuses

There are times in the story when a character's actions can certainly lend themselves to creating a more dramatic moment. When a player's description of their action is nothing short of badass, it is often worth giving their roll a little nudge towards success, as it can help inspire more such moments in the future. While narrators are welcome to apply any shifts or penalties, they believe are necessary, we recommend limiting shifts to between 1 and 3, and adjustments to between 1 and 10. If more shifts are required, it likely means the difficulty is either too low or too high to begin with.

## Collaboration

A collaborative effort occurs when all members of the group are equally working on the same task. For example, when fixing a car, one character might work on the engine while the other two focus on changing the tires.

In order to make a collaborative roll, all collaborators must have a positive (greater than 0) rating in the same appropriate skill.

### Collaboration Steps:

1. Count the number of collaborators.
2. Shift everyone's skill left by the number of collaborators.
3. Everyone rolls on their determined skill column.
4. All the generated goal points are added together.

**Example:** *An archaeology team of 3 members finds themselves in an ancient library searching for a document or text with some reference to an ancient artifact. Rather than dividing their efforts, they decide to collaborate in the search. Because there are 3 members collaborating, each member of the team would suffer ◀ 3 shifts to their skill check. The narrator declares that they need to generate a total of 50 goal points to find the information they are looking for.*

*Player 1 rolls and generates 5 goal points.*

*Player 2 rolls and generates 10 goal points. Player 3 rolls and generates 0 goal points.*

*Added together, the first round of collaborative searching generated 15 (5+10+0) goal points. With 35 more goal points to go, the search continues.*

## Assistance

Assisting occurs when one character (the Primary) is responsible for producing the outcome while the other characters (Assistants) are attempting to improve the Primary's chance of success by focusing on ancillary tasks. All assistants must be involved throughout the majority of the process. Each assistant chooses an appropriate skill they have that could help improve the process (the skill choices must be approved by the narrator). Each character rolls the approved assisting skill check, and the goal points generated are added directly to the skill rating used by the Primary. The Primary's skill rating cannot be more than doubled.

### Assistance Steps

1. Assisting characters determine if their chosen skill is appropriate to the task at hand.
2. Assisting characters roll their appropriate skill.
3. Any resultant skill points are added to the skill value of the Primary, while GREY results cause a cumulative left shift to the Primary's skill column to be rolled.
4. Primary rolls skill test on the appropriate column.

**Example:** *The Chef (Primary) who must cook a meal for a hungry ghost, has a skill rating of 10 in Craft: Cooking. The first assistant will use their search skill to look for ingredients appropriate to the phantasmal meal.*

*The second will use their language skill to translate the battered copy of "Soul Food: Cooking for the Dearly Departed." The two assistants managed to generate 7 goal points between them. Adding the assistant's 7 GP directly to the Primary's skill rating in Craft: Cooking means that Chef now rolls on the 17 column when making the cooking roll.*

## Results of a Skill Test

### Success

Success will vary depending on the type of skill test being rolled, the target number of goal points required, and the context of the scene. For an instant skill test, success is either meeting or exceeding the required number of goal points in a single roll. For extended and contested skill tests, success can mean anything from acquiring some number of goal points to simply not rolling an abject failure.

When rolling a skill test, the roll is handled just as any other roll using The Chart would be, regardless of which type of skill test is being rolled. After all shifts and adjustments have been applied, the roller chooses the appropriate column, rolls the dice, and determines its color result. All color results from ULTRAVIOLET to INFRARED will result in their respective number of shifts to the final column which will determine the number of goal points generated for that roll.

As with all things, if possible, a character may choose to default to a blue result on any skill test. A blue result represents the character performing below their average potential or baseline expectation. "Taking a blue" allows a character to earn goal points without risking failure while foregoing the possibility of performing extremely well.

## Failure

Not generating GPs is usually bad and can have some unintended consequences regarding the progress of your skill check. During a skill test, failure to generate goal points on a roll is reflected as follows:

- WHITE result, the character accumulates no goal points
- LIGHT GREY result, they accumulate no goal points and suffer one penalty shift on their next roll.
- DARK GREY result, they accumulate no goal points and suffer two penalty shifts on their next roll.
- BLACK result, they fail the task. They also experience catastrophic failure.

### Example:

**narrator (setting the scene):** *"You make your way down the ancient hall. Cobwebs and moth-eaten tapestries adorn the walls, and everything is coated in a thick layer of dust. To your left you see a stout wooden door, banded with thick pieces of blackened iron. The dust on the ring suggests the door hasn't been opened in quite some time."*

**Newbie Rae:** *"Maybe there are clues inside about who owned this castle?" I try to open the door."*

**narrator:** *"You try to push the door open, but it's no good. A heavy iron lock plate is set beneath the iron ring."*

**Newbie Rae:** *"Fortunately, I came prepared! I fish out my lockpicks and try to pick the lock."*

**narrator:** *"Sure. roll your Lockpicking Skill. This is a fairly standard lock, so you'll need 15 goal points to unlock it."*

**Newbie Rae:** *"Alright, so my lockpicking skill is 15, which rounds down to the '13' column."*

*Newbie Rae rolls the dice, getting '83'*

*Newbie Rae tracks down the 13 column and sees that an 83 is ORANGE, meaning she doesn't have to shift the column result in either direction.*

**Newbie Rae:** *"Hah! 13 goal points!"*

**narrator:** *"Alright, 2 more points to go. Go ahead and try again."*

*Newbie Rae rolls the dice a second time and gets '3'*

**Newbie Rae (wincing):** *"Alright, that's a LIGHT GRAY. Not good, but it could have been worse."*

**narrator:** *"You feel one of your picks bend slightly, malforming it. Your next roll will have to be with 1 penalty shift"*

**Newbie Rae:** *"Well, that's no bueno. Okay, Third time's the charm!"*

*Newbie Rae rolls the dice and gets a '9' on the 13 column, which would normally be ULTRAVIOLET. However, the penalty shift from the previous roll shifts Newbie Rae's roll to the left 1 column from the '13' column to the '10' column, changing Newbie Rae's color result from ULTRAVIOLET to WHITE.*

**Newbie Rae:** *"Damn it. So close. Fourth time for sure!"*

*Newbie Rae rolls a fourth time and rolls a '17' and tracks down the '13' column to 17, revealing a BLUE color result which means Newbie Rae has to shift left four columns (◀ 4). Newbie Rae counts 4 columns to the left of '13', landing on the '3' column, generating 3 goal points for a total of 16 goal points.*

**narrator:** *"You feel your picks catch, sliding the bolt free. The door swings inward on silent, well-oiled hinges. Now, please make a Reflex roll as a gout of blue fire erupts from the wall opposite you..."*

## What are Associations?

Associations represent the relationships between the characters and individuals and the myriad of groups and organizations that might exist in the story. As in life, these relationships can exist in any kind of shape and dynamic. Associations are a resource that can be allocated during character creation as well as gained during roleplaying.

Associations allow players some level of influence over the shape of the story, which is the very heart of collaborative storytelling. As the narrator creates the world the story will take place in, associations help anchor the player's characters to that world. Associations also provide a level of context for the narrator to incorporate these elements into their world and story. Associations allow a character to start the game with a high ranking in a particular guild or organization in a way that makes sense. Alternatively, it allows a player to incorporate a plot-relevant non-player characters (NPCs), such as a powerful mentor or an evil twin.

## Contacts

Contacts represent the individuals the character knows and, perhaps more importantly, how well they know them.

Contacts are assigned ratings which reflect how much an NPC likes or dislikes your character and how strongly that emotion will influence their behaviors and actions. An NPC who genuinely likes your character is more likely to help out and will typically be more friendly during interactions. Conversely, if your character's an asshole, it's just as likely that NPCs will go out of their way to inconvenience your character or act to obstruct your goals. If they absolutely despise your character, they might be willing to hurt themselves just to hurt you.

## Who are My Contacts?

Contacts can be as generic or as specific as you'd like (per the narrator's consent). Maybe your contact is the bartender at the local watering hole and likes your character enough to make sure you always have access to a table in exchange for keeping the bar room free of those looking to brawl. Your contact could be someone incredibly specific; your character might be the favored nephew of Rear Admiral Fa'Huan Dantis, a celebrated war hero and leader of the human resistance trying to stop the Martian invasion of the New Sol system.

There is usually a correlation between the number of association points spent and the depth of the NPC and their back story. A character that has only a few association points with a very elaborate NPC represents a tangential relationship at best. Conversely, spending every point on the "Local Innkeeper" could represent a long and deep relationship with a person whose name you've never managed to remember.

### *A Reminder to Everyone*

Associations are a resource that can have a direct impact on the story itself. Providing players with flexibility often helps open up story possibilities that might not have been considered otherwise. Likewise, allowing players to have strong relationships with story-relevant NPCs can be an excellent plot hook to leverage... just saying... Remember narrator that you have final say on the extent of associations. You determine the appropriateness of a Wondersniff, the Superpowered Space-dog Sidekick, who loves with the intensity of 10,000 burning suns and has death ray vision.

## How Do I Gain Contacts?

Contacts can be gained during character creation and/or through role-playing and story progression. During character creation, players have the ability to decide who their contacts are and the depth of their relationship by spending association points. The number of points the character has is dependent on how they prioritized associations during character creation. When assigning association points to contacts, the player and the narrator will work together to decide what kind of NPCs will fit into the paradigm, with the narrator being the final arbiter of what is or isn't appropriate for the story. Once the story begins, characters will develop contacts organically as the plot progresses and they make story-relevant choices. Negative contacts are developed through roleplay, character choices, and plot progression.

Over the course of most stories, characters will interact with NPCs, and over time, these interactions might result in something akin to a friendship or, at the very least, a working relationship. Of course, the opposite is true if your character tends to rub people the wrong way or give little to no consideration to how their actions affect others. Stiffing the barkeep at a local tavern one too many times might earn your character a ban. Scratching the Megacorp CEO's new hovercar, however, just might be the start of a path to making a nemesis.

## Maintaining Contacts

Contact ratings are neither one-sided nor static. Just because a player spent association points on a contact doesn't mean they'll keep those points if their character behaves poorly or refuses to help the NPC when they should, especially if the NPC often assists the character. The inverse also applies, a character that is actively good to their NPC contacts and is willing to help out will see the relationship continue to grow. Contact ratings operate a little differently from any other resources due to the nature of relationships. The greater the contact rating is, the more likely an NPC is willing to forgive a slight or a social misstep. A contact with a high rating is a friend or confidant and wouldn't expect your character to act or behave in a certain way outside of not being abusive or hostile. Socially speaking, a high contact rating grants a good bit more leeway in terms of behavior.

Somewhat paradoxically, a higher contact rating also means a greater impact in regard to a character's choices, specifically when the NPC calls in a favor. Ignoring or neglecting a friend in their hour of need is a quick way to spurn a relationship.

## How to Use Contact Points

Contact points are an abstraction intended to represent a character's connection with an NPC. Attempting to define the scale of a relationship is all but impossible, given the sheer number of variables. There simply is no direct translation from the number of contact points between a character and an NPC to what one is willing to do for the other. At what point does an acquaintance become a friend? How many points in contacts does it require for a friend to help you bury a body? At what point should you feel obligated to help a friend move their library of vintage and iconic tabletop role-play books? Mechanically speaking, contact points directly affect a character's influence with a specific NPC through the process of *interactions, favors, or both*.



The chart below is intended as a rough outline in regard to the full spectrum between abhorrent enmity and absolute adoration.

-250+	The target loathes the character and will abandon reason to destroy the character
-100 to -249	The target is the character's enemy and is willing to hurt themselves in order to hurt the character.
-99 to -35	The target will try to sabotage the character
-34 to -17	The target will actively seek to not interact with the character.
-16 to -7	The target dislikes the character.
-6 to -2	The target finds the character tedious to deal with.
-1 to 1	The target is neither overtly positively nor negatively influenced.
2	The target has a minor interest in the character
3-4	The target enjoys interacting with the character.
5-6	The target genuinely likes the character.
7-12	The target is the character's friend.
13-21	The target trusts the character and is happy to do favors for them that are reasonable and not significantly inconvenient.
22-49	The target is actively invested in the happiness and success of the character and will help them even if such help represents some amount of risk to themselves.
50-99	The target is actively invested in the happiness and success of the character and will help them even if such help represents a significant risk to themselves.
100-249	The target is actively invested in the happiness and success of the character and will help them in any endeavor despite the risk involved.
250+	The character is effectively the center of the target's universe.

## Favors

Favors have the potential to impact the relationship between a character and an NPC. Some favors requested of an NPC may require a successful Persuasion roll, which falls under the purview of Interactions.

Because the narrator cannot directly influence a player's thoughts or feelings about a situation, when the NPC asks a favor of a character, the narrator secretly assigns a number of contact points to the favor, up to the total contact rating between the NPC and player character. The greater the number of contact points, the more important the favor is to the NPC. The player may attempt to suss out just how important the favor is to the NPC (though not the exact number of points) by attempting a Read Non-verbal roll or by successful role-playing. If the character refuses to grant the favor, their contact rating with the NPC who made the request is reduced by that amount.

## Getting Out of a Favor

There are times when a character is either unable (or simply unwilling) to attempt to fulfill an NPC's request. After all, favors are seldom asked for when it's convenient to the one being asked. That being said, there are times in which a player character needs to be able to get out of doing a favor without significantly damaging the relationship. It is highly encouraged to make the player role-play the refusal. And how exactly would you get out of helping your friend move their collection of vintage and iconic tabletop role-playing books? As an optional rule, narrators may require the player character to generate a number of goal points through Interaction equal to (or possibly greater than) the amount assigned to the initial request. For example, a 5 point request could require the player to generate 5 or more goal points to be able to decline the request gracefully. However, it's worth noting that a continued refusal to help an NPC contact will begin to strain the relationship over time, if not immediately.

## Institutions

An institution can be any form of organized group, such as a guild, branch of the military, gangs, academic institutions, religious sects, etc. These groups will typically have some form of hierarchy, with those at the top having access to all of the ranks and privileges below them, while those at the bottom are entry-level with no significant authority.

A character's rating with a particular institution determines their position within the institution, as well as the amount of access that character has to its resources.

## How Do I Gain Ranks in an Institution?

Institution ranks are gained by spending association points during character creation or through role-playing and story progression. During character creation, players have the ability to determine their rank within an institution by spending association points. The number of points the character has is dependent on how they prioritized associations during character creation.

The player and the narrator will work to decide what kind of Institutions will fit into the paradigm, with the narrator being the final arbiter of what is appropriate for the story. Once the story begins, characters will rise or fall through the ranks of an institution as they make their choices.

## What Institutions Can I Join?

Institutions present within a paradigm are largely left to the narrator's discretion. Of course, players are encouraged to make suggestions and work with the narrator to develop the structure of institutions.

In most cases, a character is not restricted to joining a single institution. With the narrator's approval, the character can join several different institutions.

## Example:

- *Military: A branch of the military or the local militia.*
- *Intelligence: An organization established to gather information. Can be clandestine or not.*
- *Guilds: An organization or Union that controls access to the labor of its members.*
- *Education: A facet of the education system such as a public school, college, or other intellectual organization.*

- *Corporation: A business conglomerate.*
- *Government: The infrastructure of the current ruling faction.*
- *Religion: A faction committed to a particular set of beliefs, ideals, and rules. Includes churches as well as cults.*
- *Clubs: A group of people with a similar interest or background, such as a Chess Club or the VFW.*
- *Metaphysical: A group established to teach or uncover arcane secrets.*
- *Criminal: An organized gang, criminal underground, etc.*

## Rising (or Falling) Through the Ranks

Most institutions follow a hierarchical structure of some form, and a character's association points roughly translate to their rank or position within said structure. After creation, a character can earn additional Institution points in many ways, such as the completion of missions, favors, bribes, blackmail, poison, accidents, etc.

Unlike contacts, institutional structures hold their members to particular rules and levels of expected etiquette. In most cases, institution points are gained or lost through infractions and missions.

## Missions

Ranks within an institution impose certain responsibilities on its members. These responsibilities take the form of missions. Just like favors for a Contact, the narrator will secretly assign a number of points to a mission. However, unlike with a contact, the player character is unlikely to have a means of determining the actual importance of an assigned mission, as most in power love to play up the importance of busywork. Regardless of the actual importance of the mission, a failure to complete a mission will incur a penalty, reducing the character's total institution points by some amount, depending on the degree of the failure. Conversely, an outright refusal to perform the mission will typically incur at least double the penalty of an abject failure.

It's worth noting that unlike a relationship with a contact, the reward gained vs the potential penalty are seldom equivalent. Namely, a character is likely to gain less for a success than they would for a failure.

### Examples:

- *A Blacksmith sending his apprentice out to purchase more coal for the forge. Success 0, Failure -1, Refusal -2*
- *The Chief of Police dispatching officers to check out a "strange" event downtown. Success +1, Failure -2, Refusal -3*
- *The Megacorp CEO sending a group of "interns" to a rival company to commit corporate espionage. Success +2, Failure -2, Refusal -4*
- *A cult leader sending out acolytes to retrieve an ancient ritual text locked in a secret vault within the Vatican. Success +5, Failure -2, Refusal -10*

## Infractions

Institutions require various levels of conformity and obedience and failure to adhere to these can result in a character losing institution points. Failure to follow the established etiquette within the institution is likely to incur an infraction.

Insubordination and disobedience might only cost a character a few points, whereas outright treachery or perfidy might result in required penance, the loss of ranks, expulsion, or worse.

## Getting out of a Mission

There are times in which opting out of a mission isn't a matter of insubordination but practicality. Characters looking to shirk their responsibilities, regardless of the legitimacy of their reasons, should role-play the exchange with their superior. However, depending on the nature of the institution, the character may have more, or less, latitude in regard avoiding responsibilities.

## Institutional Access to Resources

All institutions have some access to resources, but this varies from organization to organization. A Corporation, for example, would likely have a much higher level of access to funding and information than they would gear. A small militia, on the other hand, might have more gear than they would access to information, funding, and possibly personnel if they were hurting for new recruits.

An institution's resources are divided into the following categories:

- **Gear:** Items and equipment that are specific to the institution.
- **Money:** Liquidity of financial assets that can be spent.
- **Knowledge:** Specific insights into various categories such as world events, politics, protected knowledge such as recipes and formulations, and the sensitive data of other institutions.
- **Personnel:** The number of bodies the institution has at its disposal.

In much the same way that characters have specific priorities, the narrator will rate an institution's access to resources on a scale of 0 to 5.

0: Has no access to this particular resource

1: Has very limited access to this particular resource.

2: Has some access to this resource.

3: Has full access to this resource.

4: Has great access to this resource.

5: Has near unlimited access to this resource.

There is no limitation in how these resources are prioritized. An institution might have a 3 in Personnel but a 0 for Gear, Knowledge, and Money, indicating a fairly large number of individuals with common cause but little else going for it.

**Example:** *The Joy Pharmaceutical company is a worldwide conglomeration with a wide range of products. While some of these products are fairly benign, there are some with much darker insinuations and even darker side effects.*

*The narrator assigns The Joy Pharmaceutical company with the following resource ratings.*

- *Gear = 1 Outside of lab equipment, the company doesn't have much in the way of physical resources.*
- *Money = 5 Fingers in many pies and a veritable army of lawyers and investors, the Joy Pharmaceutical company has a virtually endless stream of wealth at its disposal.*
- *Knowledge = 4 A corporation of this scale has just as many industry spies as they do corporate offices.*
- *Personnel = 3 The overall working mass of the Joy Pharmaceutical company is fairly substantial. Larger if you count the test subjects...*

## *Institutional Discretion*

When it comes down to it, there are few better motivators than cold, hard cash. Whether that's funding for a mission so the characters aren't expected to shell out for their own travel expenses, or a salary earned by serving the duties of functional work.

In either case, the narrator has full discretion over how an institution spends its resources, including if and how well it pays its people.

### **Ranks, Responsibilities, and Resources**

As characters gain institution points, their overall position within the institution rises. A rise in the institution means access to more resources, such as personnel and materials. There is also a direct increase in the extent and number of responsibilities the character must maintain if they wish to keep their position or continue to climb the ranks.

As every institution is different and largely dependent on the paradigm of the story, the ranks, responsibilities, privileges, and overall structure of the institution are subject to the narrator's discretion. The list below is a generalized ranking structure and may be tailored, amended, or ignored as necessary.

#### **Rating: 0-1**

**Responsibilities:** Acquiring knowledge of etiquette and expectations and learning technical processes of the institution.

**Resources:** None

**Examples:** Recruit / Initiate / Private

#### **Rating: 2**

**Responsibilities:** A basic understanding of institutional etiquette and expectations. Executes apprentice-level processes and tasks such as fetch and carry and other menial, repetitive tasks.

**Resources:** None

**Examples:** Intern / Apprentice / Acolyte / Specialist

#### **Rating: 3-4**

**Responsibilities:** Considered to be fully adjusted to the institution's etiquette and expectations. Executes early journeyman-level processes and basic assignments, often with direct oversight.

**Resources:** None

**Examples:** Junior Associate / Craftsman / Disciple / Sergeant

#### **Rating: 5-6**

**Responsibilities:** Expected to conduct themselves in accordance with established standards and provide a positive influence and example for subordinates and peers alike. Executes established journeyman-level processes with little to no direct oversight. Early leadership position.

**Resources:**

**Examples:** Associate / Craftsman / Follower / Staff Sergeant

#### **Rating: 7-12**

**Responsibilities:** Expected to exemplify institutional values such as personal integrity, loyalty, leadership, dedication and devotion to duty. Executes advanced journeyman level process with no oversight and little direction. Responsible for the tasks and quality of tasks assigned to subordinates.

**Resources:** Access to (and responsible for) basic issued property.

**Examples:** Senior Associate / Senior Craftsman / Staff Sergeant

#### **Rating: 13-21**

**Responsibilities:** Exemplify institutional values within a much larger sphere of influence. Executes highly complex and technical duties. Responsible for the development and training of subordinates.

**Resources:** Access to (and responsible for) a large range of tools, training, and support they need to achieve maximum performance in the execution of tasks and responsibilities.

**Examples:** Manager / Master Craftsman / Master Sergeant

#### **Rating: 22-49**

**Responsibilities:** Expected to exemplify institutional values while interacting with nearly all levels of the institution. Plans, oversees, or executes all but the most complicated tasks.

Manages multiple tiers of subordinates.

**Resources:** Broad access to large amounts of high-value resources. Access to sensitive institutional data.

**Examples:** Senior Manager / Master Craftsman / 1<sup>st</sup> Sergeant

#### **Rating: 50-99**

**Responsibilities:** Sets the standard for institutional loyalty, leadership, dedication, and devotion to duty while interacting with nearly all levels of the institution. Serves as superintendent or management for any level of task. Directly responsible for the oversight, discipline, dedication to institutional values, and success or failure of subordinates.

**Resources:** Broad access to all organizational resources.

Accesses and distributes sensitive institutional data

**Examples:** Director / Guild Leader / Sergeant Major

#### **Rating: 100-249**

**Responsibilities:** Loyalty, leadership, dedication and devotion to the institution Is unquestioned. Is responsible for developing new and innovative techniques and modalities and serves as a senior level manager of the institution.

**Resources:** Complete access to all tiers of organizational resources. Manages all sensitive institutional data with some amount of access to other institution's sensitive data

**Examples:** VP / Grandmaster / Sgt Major of the Army

#### **Rating: 250+**

**Responsibilities:** Is the final arbiter of the organization's perspectives. Determines all levels of responsibilities.

**Resources:** Has complete control over all tiers of organizational resources. Manages all sensitive institutional data with extensive access to other institution's sensitive data

**Examples:** CEO / Guildmaster / Archon

## What is Conflict

Conflict is the state of incompatibility between individuals, groups, or forces, derived from opposing needs, drives, demands, or perspectives that gives rise to dramatic action when those involved are unable or unwilling to come to terms.

Conflict encompasses a great deal more than mere physical violence. And while more traditional TTRPGs almost exclusively use combat to generate conflict in their narratives, you will find that the Spectrum system is designed to explore the full gamut of possibilities in respect to the human capacity to generate conflict, which seems to be nearly infinite.

## Engaging in Conflict

Conflict can take many forms, depending on the context of the story and the nature of the conflict. The dragon swoops down from the sky; the king's "advisor" tells the King that the party is comprised of traitors; the merchant has gone back on his word and summoned his mercenaries; the zombie horde breaks through the fence.

Regardless of the nature of the conflict, it is engaged by taking the following steps:

1. Determine the order in which the entities engaged in the conflict perform their actions, this is referred to as the initiative order.
2. Those involved in the conflict perform actions in initiative order until the conflict is resolved, or until a state change requires the determination of a new initiative order.

## Initiative, When Timing Matters

During conflict, timing is crucial, as the order of operations can impact the overall outcome of the scene, where one action can prevent another.

Example:

- Locking the front door just before the killer gets to it and hoping you can get to the backdoor before he does.
- Landing a truth bomb at just the perfect moment to slam home your point.
- Approaching a likely ambush point.
- Realizing that your toilet has a bomb attached to it.
- Shooting the bounty hunter across the table milliseconds before they shoot you.

Initiative can begin *any time* the narrator or the players decide that a scene has reached the point where timing of character's actions is important.

## Determining Initiative Order

Initiative is the power or opportunity to act before others do. In Spectrum, initiative determines the order in which characters will take their actions.

A character's or creature's Initiative is governed by their Awareness score. Players roll their character's Awareness score using The Chart to determine the number of goal points generated on their Initiative roll. Initiative order is resolved from the highest number of goal points to the lowest. Any ties are resolved in favor of the character with the higher Reflex score.

## We had First Tie, What About Second Tie?

There will be times in which characters tie on initiative and tie on their reflex score. When this occurs, the narrator may choose a suitable tiebreaker such as a higher Awareness score, a coin toss, a kismet roll, a dance off...

After the Initiative order has been established, turns will be taken in a succession of **rounds**. A round represents an in-game period of approximately three seconds, during which time the characters **act**. While Spectrum uses rounds as an abstraction to avoid the chaos of players yelling their intentions at the same time, the reality is that every action, within a round, overlaps with every other action over the same three seconds.

Around the gaming table, a round has no real-world time limit; it keeps going until everyone has taken a turn, then repeats until the narrator announces that the event has ended or until a significant state change occurs, at which time the narrator may decide to have the initiative order rerolled. Initiative order does not necessarily remain consistent from round to round as there are innumerable happenings that might change a character's position in initiative order.

**Example:** *The two characters round the corner to see an ogre sitting idly in the middle of the room. The narrator calls for initiative.*

*Player 1 has an Awareness of 13 and rolls a 24, shifts ◀ 3 for the CYAN color result, and generates 5 goal points. Player 2 has an Awareness of 10 and rolls a 47, shifts ◀ 1 for the YELLOW color result, and generates 7 goal points.*

*The Ogre has an Awareness of 7 and rolls a 10 and generates a WHITE color result failing to generate any goal points but otherwise has no effect.*

*Turn order is as follows: Player 2 – Player 1 – The Ogre*

## Actions in Conflict

An "action" is simply the process of doing something within a round. The actions characters take are categorized into the following:

- Concurrent Action
- Simple Action
- Complex Action
- Extended Complex Action
- Readied Action

During their turn, a character may choose between the following combinations of actions on their turn:

- Two simple actions +/- a concurrent action with each simple action.
- One complex action +/- a concurrent action
- One extended action +/- a concurrent action

Sometimes, an action is not what the character thinks it is. It is *always* the narrator's discretion to state what category an action is, given the context of the situation.



## Concurrent Actions

Concurrent actions are actions for which the time and effort required to perform the action is almost negligible, such as walking and talking at the same time. And as such, they can be performed “concurrent” with other actions.

When using a concurrent action, the player must clearly declare their intent to use a Concurrent Action combined with another action. Declaring a Concurrent Action involves phrasing such as “I open the door and walk through it” or “I work the lever on my rifle concurrently with shooting.” The player decides the order the actions occur.

When a character takes any Concurrent Action in combination with an action that requires a roll, this roll is made with a -1 adjustment. An action that does not require a roll is unaffected by combining it with a Concurrent Action unless otherwise specified.

A concurrent action may be combined with another concurrent action with the result that one of them is now treated as a simple action. For example, handing off an item at the same time as walking is equivalent to one Simple and one Concurrent Action. Here again, the player can decide in which order the actions occur.

Because Concurrent Actions take place simultaneously with their paired action, it is not possible to combine a movement concurrent action with any other movement action.

### Example:

- *Walk up to max Walk speed*
- *Drop to a prone position*
- *Hand off or toss an item*
- *Flash a discrete hand signal to a teammate*
- *Drop a maintained manifestation*

## Simple Actions

A simple action is any singular action that can be performed within roughly half of a round (~1.5 seconds) and encompasses an incredibly wide range of actions.

### Example:

- *Jog up to the character's Jog speed*
- *Aim with a weapon*
- *Make a single melee attack*
- *Draw and ready a weapon*
- *Retrieve a small item from a pocket*
- *Jump horizontally or vertically from a standing position*
- *Channel or invoke a manifestation*
- *Change the power of a maintained manifestation*
- *Stand up from a prone position*
- *Perform a simple Technique*
- *Knock an arrow*

## Complex Actions

A complex action is an action or series of actions that requires the entire round to perform (~3 seconds).

### Examples:

- *Sprint a number of meters up to the character's Sprint score*
- *Perform a complex Technique*
- *Grapple technique*
- *Block/Dodge next three melee attacks made against the character until the start of the character's next turn*
- *Perform a running jump*

## Extended Actions

Extended Actions are actions that reflect the need to continue an ongoing effort beyond a single round. For each round that the extended action is performed, the character has the opportunity to accrue more goal pints to their intended outcome.

### Example:

- *Perform a Ritual Manifestation*
- *Reloading certain complicated weapons*
- *Resuscitating a dying teammate*
- *Extended skill check*

## Ready Actions

A character may choose to “ready” an action to be performed outside of their turn if triggered by a declared set of parameters. A character declares the ready action and the trigger event on their turn. If the declared trigger event occurs prior to the character's next turn, they will perform the readied action.

### Example:

- *Readying to strike the next person who walks into the room*
- *Preparing to block the next attack*
- *Readying a jump maneuver if given “the sign”*
- *Readying a yell if an enemy walks into sight*
- *Prepare to dodge the next three incoming attacks*

## Movement in Conflict

As part of the round, a character may need to traverse from one point to another, whether to close the distance with an opponent, move closer to an objective, or keep pace with the caravan as it travels down the road. In Spectrum, most movement distances are expressed in meters.

- **Walk** (Concurrent action) move 2m and imposes ◀ 1 adjustment to the appended action roll.
- **Jog** (Simple action) can be performed simultaneously with another action for ◀ 1 and a ◀ 2 adjustment to the appended action roll.  
*Texting on your cell phone while jogging to the bus.*
- **Run** (Complex action) – can be performed simultaneously with another action for ◀ 2 and a ◀ 4 adjustment to the appended action roll.  
*Running after the bus while picking up the cell phone you just dropped while texting.*
- **Jump (H)** (Simple action) – can be performed simultaneously with another action for ◀ 1 and a ◀ 2 adjustment to the appended action roll.  
*Jumping across the room whilst firing a gun.*
- **Jump (V)** (Simple action) can be performed simultaneously with another action for ◀ 1 and a ◀ 2 adjustment to the appended action roll.  
*For Example: Jumping up and grabbing hold of a tree limb.*

## Techniques

Techniques are maneuvers of a specific skill that allow the practitioner to perform specialized practiced actions. Each technique has its own set of special rules and effects and represents a deeper knowledge of the requisite skill.

**Example:** *Increasing one's skill with a fencing foil will increase one's overall effectiveness; a fencer cannot be expected to perform a glazad transitioned to an incortata without first having learned those specific techniques.*

## Social Conflict

Social conflict is a representation of the contest when one character attempts to influence another character to respond to their words or actions in a specific way.

### Examples:

- “Discussing” strategy at a shareholder’s meeting.
- Ending a relationship with your lover.
- Interrupting your friend at the bar before she embarrasses herself, or you, or both.

The majority of social conflicts are resolved using the following:

- **Intimidation:** The attempt to coerce cooperation through fear or awe.
- **Persuasion:** The attempt to gain cooperation through convincing arguments, charm, temptations, lies, or bribes.
- **Read Nonverbal:** gaining information from a target’s nonverbal communications.
- **Etiquette:** Understanding and following expected social conventions, particularly within specific professions or groups.
- **Disposition:** A character’s attitude and opinion of another character, good or bad, that can change based on that character’s actions or attitudes.

Since social conflicts are often more subtle than overt, it is not uncommon for a person to not know that they are engaged in a social conflict. However, the realization of an ulterior motive, the failure of a particular persuasion attempt, or anything else that would prompt a state change should require all participating characters to roll for initiative.

In keeping with Spectrum’s core philosophy that players have total agency over their characters’ actions and beliefs, social conflict works differently depending on whether the target is a player character or a non-player character.

### *It’s like Trying to Tickle Yourself*

Trying to tell someone how they feel about a situation doesn’t work, especially in a roleplaying game. As any seasoned narrator will tell you, trying to tell a player how they feel in response to a certain circumstance ultimately does not have the desired effect. And it usually makes what would normally be an intense, dramatic moment awkward and cheap.

## Player vs. NPC: To Influence

1. Characters enter initiative.
2. The player chooses which social skill to use and role-plays the attempt.
3. The narrator determines the difficulty using the difficulty chart as well as any bonuses or penalties earned from the effort of the player’s roleplay attempt.
4. Apply any adjustments to the roll based including the characters contact rating (positive or negative) the NPC’s current disposition toward the player’s character, the character’s conformity to any rules of etiquette that may apply within the context of the story.
5. The player rolls their chosen social skill test and determines the total number of goal points generated.
6. The narrator may choose to allow any NPC(s), directly or indirectly involved, to perform an Assist or Contested social skill check. Any goal points generated are subtracted from the player’s roll.

## *Effort vs. Performance*

Not everyone is going to be good at social roleplay attempts. It can be nerve-wracking for new players in particular, but even veteran players can flub lines from time to time. As the narrator, you should be evaluating the effort that’s made in the attempt, not the actual performance of it. A sincere effort should be rewarded. The inverse is also true for those that decide to phone it in.

## Player vs. NPC: To Gauge Sincerity

While an NPC is not capable of directly influencing the behavior of the player character, they are quite capable of lying to a character.

When a character wants to gauge the sincerity of a target, that character must initiate a contested social roll, using their Read Non-verbal skill (or other appropriate skill given the context of the encounter) against the relevant social skill of the target they wish to gauge. When a PC is trying to gauge the sincerity of an NPC, it is up to the player if and when to initiate the contest, otherwise, the narrator will continue to play the NPC as they would normally.

If the target wins the contest, the NPC or PC who initiated the contest is unable to determine whether the words and actions of the target are genuine. If the initiating character succeeds, their level of success will determine what they can glean from the interaction, including but not limited to, details they were previously unaware of regarding the target’s ulterior motive, assuming they have one.

1. The player initiates a contested test against a target NPC.
2. The player rolls Read Non-verbal against the NPC’s chosen social skill and adds any relevant shifts or adjustments such as Contact rating.
3. If the NPC wins the contest (generates more goal points), the player is unable to determine the sincerity of the NPC.
4. If the Player character wins the contest, the level of success determines how much they can interpret from the interaction.

### *Lying about Lying*

For any number of reasons, a narrator may intentionally choose to fail the contested roll. However, if they choose to do so, we recommend at least rolling the dice to avoid communicating to players that only insincere characters will contest their efforts.

## Conflict with Contacts

Whenever a character needs to make a social roll against an existing contact, they use their contact rating as an adjustment, adding or subtracting from the roll as appropriate based on the positive or negative contact rating.

**Example:** *Attempting to persuade a friendly NPC to harbor a known fugitive for a few days while working out a plan to help them flee the country, the character adds their contact rating with the NPC to their Persuasion roll, making it more likely they’ll succeed.*

**Player as Therrik, the Rogue with a Heart of Gold:** “Jondar, my dear friend! How are you?”

**narrator as Jondar, the Innkeep and Therrik’s**

**friend:** “You’re unusually cheery. Good haul from the royal banquet?” **Therrik:** “Why, Jondar, you wound me. Implying that I would help myself to something they high and mighty wouldn’t already be willing to spend.”

**Jondar:** “Perish the thought...”

A moment passes as Therrik steels his resolve.

**Therrik:** "Jondar... I need your help."

**Jondar:** "Oh? This wouldn't have anything to do with that imperial witch the palace guard has been so rigorously searching for, would it?"

**Therrik:** "She's not a witch, and she needs our help. Please, Jondar, just for a few days until I can work out transportation"

**narrator to Player:** roll Persuasion and add your contact rating with Jondar as an adjustment.

Therrik has a persuasion skill of 12 so the player rolls on the 10 column. The player rolls as 34 and adds his Contact rating with Jondar of 20 for a total of 54, increasing the color result of the roll from a GREEN to a YELLOW, netting 7 goal points.

**narrator to Player:** You can tell by the look on your friend's face that he is not entirely convinced.

**Therrik:** "Please Jondar. I know the risk I'm asking you to take. I'll make it up to you. You know I will."

**narrator to Player:** You hear a commotion outside. It sounds as though the palace guard is getting close. This will be your last chance to convince Jondar.

The player rolls again, rolling a 60. He then adds his contact rating of 20, increasing the roll to 80, an ORANGE color result, adding 10 goal points to his previous 7 for a total of 17.

**Jondar, with a heavy sigh:** "I'll put it on your tab. Bring her in and go see what you can do about stalling the guard..."

### Failed Interactions

An optional rule to add a dynamic variable when failing a social interaction is to lower the contact rating when the character fails on a social interaction roll. This might represent a social gaffe, an unintentional insult, a misunderstanding, or the NPC taking something personally.

**WHITE:** No harm, no foul.

**LIGHT GRAY:** You upset the other party but no loss in contact rating as long as you immediately fix your mistake.

**DARK GRAY:** You have offended the other party to the point that that results in -1 contact rating.

**BLACK:** You have made an egregious mistake in your interactions that result in -2 contact rating and the other party is not interested in dealing with you for a while.

### Stealth in Conflict

The stealth mechanic is used any time a character attempts to perform an action in a careful way to make their actions and/or themselves undetectable.

Making a Stealth test is a complex action.

When applying stealth mechanics, the narrator should keep two questions in mind:

1. Where is the focus of those whose attention the character wants to avoid?
2. Is it reasonable that the character and/or their actions could avoid attention?

In keeping with these questions, stealth is made possible by two circumstances: concealment and distraction. At least one of these factors must be present before a character can attempt a Stealth test.

### Concealment

A character who makes use of concealment may make a Stealth test to avoid their opponents' notice. The combatant ducks behind bushes, hides behind a stack of crates, or lingers in the shadows in hopes of being undetected, ignored, or forgotten. Factors to be considered for concealment are:

- How much of the character's body is concealed?

- How brightly lit is the environment?
- How noticeable is the character's clothing and/ or equipment?
- What is the position of the opponents relative to the source of concealment?
- Who, if anyone, noticed them before they attempted to enter concealment?

### Distraction

A character relies on distraction to make a Stealth test to avoid being detected by opponents who are focused on other events or scenarios. Distraction comes in many shapes and magnitudes. When a character utilizes distraction, the narrator may assign additional bonus shifts or adjustments based on the context of the situation.

### Steps to Performing Stealth in Conflict

If the narrator determines that a Stealth test is permissible under the circumstances, the character may perform a contested stealth skill test versus their opponent(s).

If a character is able to utilize both concealment and distraction, they will make their Stealth test with 2 ▶.

- 1) If the opponent is not actively looking for the character's presence or action, they must use their awareness instinct value for the contested skill test

Or

If the opponent is actively looking for the character or their action, then the opponent may use their awareness instinct or search skill for the contested skill test.

- 2) Shifts and adjustments for both the character and the opponent are established
- 3) Character and opponent(s) perform contested Stealth test.
- 4) If the character achieves a number of goal points equal to or greater to the goal points achieved by their opponent, they or their action have gone unnoticed. If the character fails to achieve a greater number of goal points than their opponent(s), they have failed to go unnoticed in their stealthy endeavors.

### What is Combat?

Combat is the narrative of an unfolding violent conflict that pits the characters against enemies controlled by the narrator. As with social conflict, violent combat begins with determining initiative, if it has not been determined already.

### Attacks

A character performs an attack by making an instant skill test using the appropriate combat ability. For example, a character wielding a short sword would roll an instant skill test using their 1-Handed Melee skill rating. A successful skill test (one that generates goal points) results in the potential of damage being dealt to the target.

In Spectrum, damage is an abstraction used to represent the physical or mental trauma caused by an attack.

Within physical combat, there are two types of attacks: *Melee* and *Ranged*.

- **Melee:** Melee attacks are non-projectile attacks from a weapon held by the user, where damage is dictated by the user's physical attributes.
- **Ranged:** Ranged attacks are projectile attacks launched or fired from a weapon held by the user. Damage is dictated by the weapon and the ammunition type.

## Damage

Upon successfully striking a target there is the opportunity for that strike to damage the target.

Damage exists in two states: damage **dealt** and damage **sustained**.

- Damage **dealt** is the total amount of damage imparted on the target prior to accounting for mitigating variables, such as armor.
- Damage **sustained** is the damage that the target accrues after any mitigating factors.

The types of damage that can be caused are determined by the weapons and techniques used.

- **Sharp** damage represents damage caused by cutting, piercing, and rending tissues and subtracts from a target's life points. Weapons that cause this type of damage include swords, spears, arrows, knives, etc.
- **Blunt** damage represents damage that is caused by a force that does not overtly cut, pierce, or rend tissues and subtracts from both life and will points. Weapons that cause this type of damage are staves, baseball bats, maces, hammers, etc.
- **Ballistic** damage represents damage caused by large amounts of kinetic energy displacing surrounding tissues, causing crushing, stretching, and tearing injuries; it subtracts from both life and will points. Firearms are the most common weapons that cause ballistic damage.
- **Stun** damage represents damage that only effects the target's will points. The most common cause of stun damage is fisticuffs, falling, and metaphysics.

## Attack Modifiers

Attack modifiers are static conditions that affect attack rolls. Unless the narrator dictates otherwise, these conditions will always apply and should be factored into every melee and ranged attack roll.

In Spectrum, there are two basic types of Attack Modifiers.

### Shift Modifiers

Shift modifiers are situational and environmental factors that can increase or decrease the overall outcome of attacking a target. Modifiers increase or decrease the gp generated from an attack roll.

**Example:**

- *Using a magically enhanced sword*
- *Using a scope on your rifle for a long-range shot*
- *Striking your opponent from concealment*

Shift modifiers do not increase the chance of success or failure in the to-hit attempt, but instead, change the value of the attempt, making it more or less impactful.

### Adjustment Modifiers

Adjustment modifiers are situational and environmental factors that can make it easier or harder to hit a target. For example, taking a moment to aim a shot at a target will make the target easier to hit. Likewise, targets that are immobilized or moving can make an attack easier or harder to land, respectively. Lighting conditions may also cause an adjustment to the roll.

## Melee Attacks

Melee Attacks are attacks made against opponents in close range, generally with a handheld weapon or part of the attacker's body.

A melee weapon is useless unless it is **drawn**. A melee weapon may be drawn from a sheath or other easily accessible location as a simple action.

A combatant may only make a melee attack if their target is within their weapon's **range**. Melee weapon ranges are expressed as a range of distances representing both the minimum and maximum number of meters at which a character may attack with the weapon.

- A range of 1 or higher means there needs to be at least one meter between the attacker and their target before they can make an attack.
- A range of 0 represents no minimum distance and allows for attacks against opponents that are in physical contact with the attacker, such as when biting or grappling.
- Unarmed melee attacks, such as punches, kicks, and headbutts, are made with the Unarmed skill. Unarmed strikes have a melee range of 0-1.

### How to Make a Melee Attack

A melee attack is made in two parts:

**The Hit roll:** determines if and how well an attack lands and if you succeed in striking the target

**The Damage roll:** determines the damage inflicted on the target.

#### Hit roll

1. The player declares they are making a melee attack.
2. Using the appropriate melee skill the Player finds the appropriate column for their skill rating (If the skill rating falls between two columns, always round down to the closest column)
3. The narrator and player determine any appropriate shifts and/or adjustments.
4. The player rolls d100, references the die results on The Chart, and announces the number of goal points generated or the extent of their failure. If goal points are generated, they will be added as an adjustment to the subsequent damage roll. A failure means the attack has failed to strike the target.

#### Damage roll

- 5) The attack has struck the target (bravo). The player finds the column on The Chart that corresponds to the weapon's damage rating.
- 6) The narrator and player determine any appropriate shifts and/or adjustments. The goal points generated by the attack roll are counted as bonus adjustments to the damage roll.
- 7) The player rolls d100 and references the die results on The Chart and announces the number of goal points generated. This number is the damage dealt to the target with the type of damage dictated by the attack being used.



## Ranged Attacks

Ranged attacks involve propelling projectiles such as bullets, arrows, bolts, or thrown weapons.

Before a character may perform a ranged attack, their ranged weapon must be drawn and loaded. Simple and compound bows require arrows to be nocked on the bowstring prior to firing. The act of drawing an arrow from a quiver (or other location) and nocking it on the bowstring constitutes a simple action.

Firearms have different loading mechanisms, depending on the weapon. Some, such as pump shotguns and lever action rifles, require manual cycling (working the loading mechanism), which can be done as a simple action.

Reloading a spent firearm will have different action requirements, depending on the firearm.

A combatant may take one shot with a ranged weapon as a simple action. A shot is defined as:

- Firing a single arrow from a bow
- Pulling the trigger of a crossbow once
- Pulling the trigger of a firearm once
- Launching a single stone from a sling
- Throwing an object

Ranged weapons have various minimum, optimum, and maximum ranges that define the extent to which they can be effectively used.

- **Ultra Close:** Often mistakenly called “point blank,” this range describes using a ranged weapon so close to the target that they are considered nearly impossible to miss. In most cases, this is considered 5 meters or less.
- **Close:** The minimum distance before reaching “point blank.” At this range, hitting a target is easier, but so is closing the distance. A “don’t shoot till you see the whites of their eyes” distance.
- **Medium:** The maximum distance at which the weapon is capable of making non-arcing shots at a target.
- **Long:** The maximum distance at which, without special equipment and training, the weapon and ammunition are capable of making consistent hits.
- **Extreme Long:** The maximum distance at which, with specialized equipment and training, the weapon and ammunition is still capable of making consistent hits. Uses the Targeting Skill.
- **Ultra Long:** The maximum distance at which, with specialized equipment and training, the weapon and ammunition are still capable of effectively damaging a target. Uses the Targeting Skill.

## How to Make a Ranged Attack

A ranged attack is made in two rolls: a hit roll and a damage roll. The hit roll determines how well the attack lands, and the damage roll determines the total potential damage that will be inflicted by this attack.

To make an attack with a ranged weapon, the user must have a shot prepared, i.e., an arrow knocked, a sling stone loaded, or a round chambered.

### Hit roll

1. The player declares they are making a ranged attack.
2. Using the appropriate ranged skill the Player finds the appropriate column for their skill rating (If the skill rating falls between two columns, always round down to the closest column)

3. The narrator and player determine any appropriate shifts and/or adjustments.
4. The player rolls d100, references the die results on The Chart, and announces the number of goal points generated or the extent of their failure. If goal points are generated, they will be added as an adjustment to the subsequent damage roll. A failure means the attack has failed to strike the target.

### Damage roll

- 5) The attack has struck the target (bravo). The player finds the column that corresponds to the weapon’s damage rating, on The Chart.
- 6) The narrator and player determine any appropriate shifts and/or adjustments. The goal points generated by the attack roll are counted as bonus adjustments to the damage roll.
- 7) The player rolls d100 and references the die results on The Chart, and announces the number of gal points generated, this number is the damage dealt to the target with the type of damage dictated by the attack being used.

## Ranged Attacks into Melee

Melee represents a dynamic event where multiple creatures are moving around in close proximity. Because of this, making a ranged attack against a target involved in a melee always represents an inherent risk, as missing the intended target could mean hitting an unintended target, such as a teammate. Shooting into melee occurs when a ranged attack is used against a target engaged in melee combat.

1. The player declares the target of the ranged attack, adding ◀ 1 for each character within 2 meters of the target.
2. The player makes their attack roll using the appropriate Ranged skill, factoring in the penalty shifts and any other adjustments.
3. On an ULTRAVIOLET or above color result, the attack hits the intended target.
4. On a WHITE, the attack simply misses.
5. On a LIGHT GREY, DARK GREY, or BLACK color result, all qualifying characters or creatures perform a kismet check. The character or creature that generates the fewest goal points in this check is hit by the ranged attack. In the event of a tie, the narrator decides who is hit.

## Dodging

A **dodge** is an intentional attempt to move out of the way of an incoming attack. A Dodge is declared as a Ready action and is performed as either a Simple or Complex action.

- **Simple Action:** The character can attempt to dodge the next attack that targets them.
- **Complex Action:** The character can attempt to dodge the next three attacks that target them.

### When attempting to Dodge:

1. During their turn, the player declares either a Simple or a Complex Dodge as a Ready action.
2. After an attacker has declared their attack against the character, but before the attacker rolls, the character rolls their dodge skill.
3. Any gal points generated from the dodge are subtracted from the attacker’s hit roll.

Note that dodging can absolutely reduce an attack’s result to grey or black.

### Example:

1. *During their turn, the player readies a dodge action.*
2. *The player's character is attacked*
3. *The player has a dodge skill of 10 and makes a dodge skill rolls referencing the 10 column on The Chart.*
4. *The player rolls a 41, a GREEN color result generating a total of 5 goal points*
5. *The attacker, using their 1H melee skill of 17, makes their hit roll and rolls a 32.*
6. *The 5 goal points generated by the player's dodge roll are subtracted from the hit roll.  $32-5=27$ .*
7. *The attacker now scores a CYAN color result generating 7 goal points on their hit roll.*

## Blocking

A block is a character's attempt to interpose an object between themselves and an incoming attack. A Block is declared as a Ready action and can be performed as either a Simple or Complex action.

- Simple Action: The character can attempt to block the next attack that targets them.
- Complex Action: The character can attempt to block the next three attacks that target them.
- When blocking with a melee weapon, the Block is rolled using the same skill the character would use to attack with the weapon.
- When blocking with a shield, the character uses the Shield skill.

### Performing a Block action:

1. During their turn, the player declares either a Simple or a Complex Block as a Ready action.
2. After an attacker has made their hit against the character, but before they roll for damage, the character rolls their relevant block skill.
3. Any goal pints generated from the block are subtracted from the attacker's damage roll.

Note that blocking can absolutely reduce an attack's result to grey or black.

### Example:

1. *During their turn, the player readies a Block action.*
2. *The character is attacked.*
3. *The player has a Shield skill of and makes a melee, shield kill rolls referencing the 13 column on The Chart. The player rolls an 87, an ORANGE result, generating a total of 13 goal points*
4. *The attacker, using their 2-handed melee skill of 10, makes their hit roll and rolls a 60, a YELLOW color result. generating 7 goal points on their hit roll.*
5. *The attacker then makes their damage roll. With a strength (STR) of 10, the attacker makes a damage roll referencing the 10 column on The Chart and gets a 41. The attacker first adds the 7 goal points generated from the hit roll ( $41+7=48$ ) and then Subtracts the 13 goal points from the Block roll ( $48-13=35$ )*
6. *The attacker scores a GREEN color result generating 5 goal points, dealing 5 points of life damage to the player's character.*

## Armor

Armor is a protective covering that reduces damage dealt. It can be the outer metal shell worn over clothing or, in the case of natural armor, hide, scales, chitin, or other biological features that protect the body.

When damage is dealt to a character who is wearing armor:

1. The character wearing armor is attacked, and the attacker has made their damage roll
2. The character uses the column on The Chart that corresponds to the armor's protection rating.
3. Goal points generated from this roll are subtracted from the damage dealt to the character. If the attack would deal both life and will damage, the goal pints generated from the roll will reduce both types of damage.

### Example:

1. *A character is struck with a war hammer for 10 life damage and 10 will damage.*
2. *The character's armor has a protection rating of 10*
3. *The character rolls an armor test using the 10 column on The Chart.*
4. *The roll generates 5 goal points.*
5. *The 5 goal points are subtracted from both the 10 life damage and the 10 will damage.*
6. *The character takes 5 points of life damage and 5 points of will damage from the attack.*

## Sustaining Damage

Damage that isn't blocked, dodged, reduced by armor, or mitigated in any other means is sustained, which begins to reduce a character's life and/or will point totals. As a character continues to sustain damage, they may lose consciousness, or worse, their life. When a character reaches 0 will points, they may be inflicted with loss of consciousness (LoC) condition. When a character reaches 0 life points, they may be inflicted with the dying condition.

## Medical Intervention During Conflict

Eventually, everything breaks, including characters. This is especially true during conflict.

There is extraordinarily little field medicine that can be completed in a single initiative round. Medical intervention is restoring the body to a condition in which it can begin to repair itself. Furthermore, it should be understood that mundane medical interventions do not give life points back to characters but are used to address conditions such as poisoning, disease exposure, bleeding, fractured bones, torn ligaments, dying, and death.

Medical intervention is broken down into the following:

### Triage

The preliminary assessment of a patient determines the significance of the problem(s) and the urgency in which they need to be attended. Triage is rolled as a complex action. The more goal points generated, the more that is understood about the severity of the problem. In the event of multiple problems or patients, it provides a general sense of treatment priority.

**Example:** *An emergency department doctor walking into the trauma bay can quickly assess that the gentleman with flu like symptoms, while not having his best day, is not nearly as critical as the person one bay who has managed to sever a limb. With that knowledge, the ED doctor would likely choose to treat the severed limb before dealing with the shrapnel case next door.*

## Diagnose

Diagnosing a patient's condition determines what the issues are. While some issues are straightforward to diagnose, such as a compound fracture in a patient's leg, other issues can take considerably longer. The more complicated or cryptic the problem is, the more difficult it is to diagnose. If a patient is awake and able to communicate, that can often (but not always) help. Diagnosing a patient while in conflict is an extended action.

**Example:** *Assessing a patient in the field, the paramedic takes a minute to determine that the patient is hypoxic, hypotensive, pinpoint pupils, with a low respiratory rate, and unresponsive. The paramedic places opiate overdose as primary on the differential list.*

### *The Problem of Treating What You See*

There are certain conditions in which the medic shouldn't need to make a diagnosis roll at all because the issue is obvious. However, when there are issues that the medic can't readily see, such as an infection in the blood caused by the compound fracture, then a diagnosis roll is perfectly applicable.

It is also worth noting that there will be times in which a medic doesn't succeed on a diagnosis roll or, worse yet, fails it altogether, which is an unfortunate reality of attempting to keep something as complicated as a living organism functioning exactly as intended. It is at the narrator's discretion how penalizing a misdiagnosis should be.

## Treatment

After a patient has been diagnosed, the medic may be able to administer treatment. Given the delicate nature of living creatures, the medic must make an extended contested roll to represent the dynamic nature of the condition. The narrator will generate goal points referencing the column on The Chart that corresponds to the value of the condition while the intervening character rolls their appropriate skill test. If the medic scores more goal points, the excess goal points are subtracted from the condition's value. If the condition scores more goal points than the medic, the excess points are added to the condition's value.

**Example:** *A patient with severe allergies was stung by a bee and is beginning to experience anaphylactic shock. The paramedic pulls an epinephrine auto-injector from his kit and administers a shot to the patient's thigh. Within minutes the symptoms begin to subside, and the patient's vitals begin to return to normal.*

## Stabilize

When a medic lacks the necessary tools, equipment, or even skills to properly treat a condition, they can at least attempt to keep the problem from getting worse. Stabilizing is an extended action that prevents a condition from worsening. For example, a tourniquet is not a long-term solution, but it might keep a patient from bleeding out long enough to find help. If the narrator determines that the medic lacks the proper gear to sufficiently treat a condition, the medic makes a contested roll against the value of the condition. The goal points generated by the medic are only ever subtracted from the goal points generated by the condition and not the condition itself.

**Example:** *After witnessing a gruesome accident involving a cyclist and a delivery van, a Ash rushes to the cyclist's aid. While no Doctor, they have had some first aid training and begins to apply pressure to the wound until the ambulance can arrive.*

## Temporize

Temporizing is an extended action in which the medic applies a stopgap treatment to temporarily restore a patient to a working condition. This could be anything from applying enough morphine to allow a soldier to continue fighting through the pain or strapping a sword to a character's hand so they can continue to fight with broken fingers.

A temporized condition does not go away on its own. On the contrary, it tends to get worse. When a character has a condition temporized, the narrator will roll the condition's value on The Chart every turn the character takes an action that would exacerbate the situation, using a broken hand, for example. Any goal points generated by the condition are added to the condition's value, causing it to worsen over time.

**Example:** *A character suffers a tremendously painful wound in combat. In order to prevent the effects of the pain they take a triple dose of morphine in order to ignore the condition long enough to escape.*

## Resuscitate

When a character has gone from dying to dead, they may still be brought back to the dying status. To resuscitate a dying character, the medic makes a medical skill roll, and the rest of the responsibility is on the dead character.

1. The medic makes a medical roll, and any resulting goal points will be added to the dead character's roll.
2. The dead character then makes a contested Toughness check against their negative life point value.
3. If the character scores higher the goal points are added to their life point total. If the Dead condition scores higher, the goal points are subtracted from the character's life point total.
4. This process repeats until the character is no longer dead and only dying OR until the character's life points are negative 2x their endurance, at which time they transition from mostly dead to all dead.
5. If the character is brought back from dead to dying, the medic is no longer able to make a resuscitate roll and must instead begin either treating, stabilizing, or temporizing the dying character.

**Remember:** *"There's a big difference between mostly dead and all dead. Mostly dead is still slightly alive."*

**Example:** *A dying character exceeds their Endurance rating in negative life points and is now considered "Dead." Fortunately for the recently deceased, the party medic is able to rush to their aid and begin performing CPR.*

- The assisting medic rolls her Medicine Skill, generating goal points.
  - The dead character rolls his Toughness rating, adding the goal points generated from the medic's Medicine roll to his Toughness roll.
  - The dead character generates 3 goal points.
  - Death uses the character's negative life point rating to generate goal points using The Chart.
  - Death generates 7 goal points.
- The character's life points drop by another 4 points (7-3=4) as Death begins to sink its icy fingers into the soul of the nearly departed. The medic continues her efforts.*
- The medic once again rolls her Medicine Skill, generating goal points.

- *The dead character rolls his Toughness rating, adding the goal points generated from the medic's Medicine roll to his Toughness roll.*
- *The dead character generates 10 goal points.*
- *Death uses the character's negative life point rating to generate goal points using The Chart.*
- *Death generates 3 goal points.*

*The dead character's life points total increases by 7 (10-3=7).*

*The character begins to turn away from the light at the end of the tunnel, but they are not out of the woods yet.*

- *The assisting medic rolls their Medicine skill a third time but does not generate goal points.*
- *The dead character rolls his Toughness rating, without any added benefit from the medic's CPR roll.*
- *The dead character generates 13 goal points.*
- *Death uses the character's negative life point rating to generate goal points using The Chart.*
- *Death generates 1 goal point.*

*The dead character gains another 12 (13-1=12) life points, putting them above their negative Endurance rating. With a weak cough and splutter, the dying character begins to breathe on their own, albeit weakly. The character is pretty far from Okay, as they are merely dying, instead of dead. The medic begins to diagnose the patient so that she can hopefully treat the cause of the character's condition. dying, instead of dead. The medic begins to diagnose the patient so that she can hopefully treat the cause of the character's condition.*

## Stealth in Combat

Making a Stealth test in combat is a complex action.

When applying stealth mechanics to a combat scenario, the narrator should keep two questions in mind:

1. Where is the focus of the combatants whose attention the sneaking character wants to avoid?
2. Is it reasonable that the sneaking character could avoid attention, given their actions?

Stealth in combat is made possible by two circumstances: concealment and distraction. At least one of these factors must be present before a combatant can even attempt a stealth test.

### Concealment

A combatant who makes use of concealment may make a Stealth test to avoid their opponents' notice. The combatant ducks behind bushes, hides behind a stack of crates, or lingers in the shadows in hopes of being ignored or forgotten. Factors to be considered for using concealment in combat:

- How much of the character's body is concealed?
- How brightly lit is the environment?
- What is the position of the opponents relative to the source of concealment?
- Who, if anyone, noticed the character before they entered the source of concealment?
- Where was the character at the start of the round?
- Are the opponents engaged in combat?
- Has the character done anything to draw attention to themselves, such as attacking?
- Has the character been targeted in any prior rounds?

### Distraction

A combatant who relies on distraction makes a Stealth test to avoid being detected by opponents who are focused on other combatants or events in the combat scenario. After all, who is going to notice the assassin tiptoeing behind his back when he is crossing swords with a seven-foot-tall berserker?

### Steps to Performing Stealth in Combat

If the narrator determines that a Stealth test is permissible the character may perform a contested stealth skill test versus their opponent(s). Furthermore, if a character is able to utilize both concealment and distraction, they will make their Stealth test with 2 ►.

- 1) If the opponent is not actively looking for the character's presence or action, they use their awareness instinct value for the contested skill test

Or

If the opponent is actively looking for the character or their action, then the opponent may use their awareness instinct or search skill for the contested skill test.

- 2) Shifts and adjustments for both the character and the opponent are established
- 3) Character and opponent(s) perform a contested Stealth check.
- 4) If the character achieves a number of goal points equal to or greater to the goal points achieved by their opponent, they or their action has gone unnoticed. If the character fails to achieve a greater number of goal points than their opponent(s) they have failed to go unnoticed in their stealthy endeavors.

### Hiding in Combat

In addition to the clear benefits of being hidden, a character gains the following benefits:

- The ability to traverse the battlefield and change position unnoticed without an additional roll until they or their environment undergo a state change.
- The ability to ignore any benefit the target would normally receive from a declared Block or Dodge.
- The ability to perform certain Techniques specified in the Treatise.



## Critical Effects

Sometimes a well-placed or lucky strike can do more than just damage a target. To represent this, when an attacker achieves a RED, DARK RED, or INFRARED on a hit roll, they may choose to spend kismet to perform a critical effect roll on the critical effects table to reflect the attack having a greater than expected effect. The amount of kismet required to make a critical effect roll is determined by the color of the attack result. Critical effects are in addition to the damage that is dealt to the target.

- RED – One roll for 2 kismet
- DARK RED- One roll for 1 kismet
- INFRARED – Two rolls for 1 kismet. Effects from multiple rolls are cumulative.

Result	Critical Effect
1	The target suffers 60 stun damage
2-3	The target suffers 3 Pain Points
4-6	The target suffers 40 stun damage
7-10	The target suffers 2 Pain Points
11-15	The target suffers 20 stun damage
16-20	No effect
21-30	The target drops all held items
31-40	The target suffers 1 Pain Point
41-50	The target suffers 1 Daze Point
51-60	The target suffers 1 Bleeding Point
61-65	The target is knocked prone
66-70	No effect
71-75	Attack damage is increased 1 ►
76-80	The target suffers 1 Trauma Point*
81-84	The target suffers 2 Daze Points
85-88	The target suffers 2 Bleeding Points
89-91	Attack damage is increased 2 ►
92-94	The target suffers 2 Trauma Points*
95-96	The target suffers 3 Daze Points
97-98	The target suffers 3 Bleeding Points
99	Attack damage is increased 3 ►
100	The target suffers 3 Trauma Points*

## What is Metaphysics?

Metaphysics is the process by which supernatural forces are manipulated to affect reality in ways that defy conventional explanations allowing characters to re-shape the very fabric of reality. Metaphysical abilities may be rooted in any conceivable source, and may involve such themes as arcane knowledge, divine intervention, eldritch horrors, radioactive mutations, the existence of caped superheroes, and other equally esoteric concepts.

As Spectrum is designed to work with all paradigms, the mechanics governing metaphysics are designed to be consistent. A metaphysical practitioner is known as a “wielder,” while the specific metaphysical effects are known as “manifestations.”

## How to Wield Metaphysics

Utilizing manifestations consists of three phases: *Channeling*, *Invocation*, and *Backlash*.

### Channeling

Channeling is the act of a character becoming a conduit for metaphysical energies. During the Channeling Phase, the caster decides which manifestation they intend to invoke and the amount of power, up to their power limit, with which they wish to channel into the manifestation.

A wielder may have a manifestation channeled for any amount of time. However, unless otherwise specified, a wielder may only have one manifestation channeled at a time.

Channeling is a discrete action in which the wielder prepares a manifestation to be invoked. During Conflict, the act of channeling a manifestation requires a simple action.

**Example:** *While exploring the old graveyard, Tara, a fire magic wielder, decides to channel a FIREBOLT, just in case something nasty pops up around the corner. With a total power of 17, she decides to play it a little more conservatively and channels 10 power into the manifestation.*

*FIREBOLT has a range of power x 3 Meters, meaning she can target anything within 30 meters, dealing 10 points of life damage to anything she hits. While it might not be enough to stop a monster in its tracks, but it certainly makes a compelling argument for it finding dinner elsewhere.*

### Invoking

Invoking is the act of transforming that channeled potential metaphysical energy into a tangible effect on reality. The manifestation is unleashed with whatever quantity of power the wielder chooses during the channeling phase.

Invoking is a discrete action in which the wielder unleashes a previously channeled manifestation. During Conflict, the act of invoking a manifestation requires a simple action.

**Example:** *Tara’s intuition pays off as the narrator calls for Initiative. Something nasty was indeed lurking around the corner, and now it has reared its ugly head.*

*On Tara’s turn, she takes a simple action to Invoke the FIREBOLT, and a streak of flaming energy erupts from the tip of her finger and hurtles directly at the creature.*

## Backlash

Backlash represents the physical toll risked every time a character wields metaphysical power. Depending on the stories’ paradigm, this toll can be explained in many different ways.

### Example

- *Overexertion of your mutant synapses*
- *Overexposure to psychic drain causes your delicate brain to misfire.*
- *Using your power dramatically increases your caloric needs*
- *Reality punishing you for doing something “impossible”.*

After a wielder has invoked a manifestation, they must resolve backlash. Backlash is equal to the amount of power the wielder channeled into the manifestation. Additionally, there are other factors that can increase or decrease the amount of potential backlash the wielder must resolve.

Once the total amount of potential backlash has been calculated, the wielder performs an Aegis check. The number of goal points generated (if any) is subtracted from the potential backlash. Any remaining backlash is treated as stun damage and subtracted from the character’s will points. In reality, the backlash occurs simultaneously with unleashing the manifestation.

**Example:** *Once Tara invoked the spell, she has to resolve the backlash, the price for manipulating the nature of reality. With an Aegis of 11, Tara rolls a ‘27’ on the 10 column, a CYAN result and ◀ 3, generating 3 goal points.*

*Because she Channeled and Invoked the FIREBOLT manifestation at 10 power, she suffers 7 (10 – 3) will points of damage from the backlash. Had she Channeled her full 17 power, she would have taken 14 points of will damage, which is generally not a great way to start a fight.*

### Power Has a Price

Yes. It is quite possible for a practitioner of the metaphysical arts to backlash themselves into unconsciousness or even death.

### Steps to Manifesting

1. The player announces that their character is going to channel a manifestation.
2. The player declares how many points of power the manifestation will have.
3. The player chooses to invoke the manifestation.
4. The narrator determines if there are mitigating variables that would complicate invocation.
5. The player calculates the amount of potential backlash damage based on the power of the manifestation and other mitigation factors as determined by the narrator.
6. The character rolls an Aegis score using The Chart. The goal points generated from this roll are subtracted from the total backlash.
7. The character takes stun damage equal to any remaining backlash.
8. The effects of the manifestation are resolved.

## Maintained Manifestations

Maintainable manifestations may remain persistent after being invoked for as long as the wielder chooses. When invoking a maintainable manifestation, the wielder declares whether they will maintain it. Maintaining a manifestation does not require any overt action from the wielder; however, increasing or decreasing its power does require effort on a character's part. During conflict, a wielder can increase or decrease the power of any one maintained manifestation as a simple action.

Increasing the power of maintained manifestation requires another Aegis roll to resist backlash damage equal to the increase in power.

**Example:** During their turn in Initiative, a wielder channels a maintainable manifestation at 10 power as a simple action. For their second simple action, they invoke the manifestation and choose to maintain it.

The wielder rolls their Aegis against the 10 backlash, generating 5 goal points and taking 5 will damage.

On their next turn, the wielder decides to decrease the power of the maintained manifestation from 10 to 3 and does so as simple action.

During a later round, the wielder uses a simple action to increase the power of the maintained manifestation back to 10 and must resolve the 7 backlash from the increase.

A wielder can drop one maintained manifestation as a concurrent action.

A wielder can maintain any number of manifestations they wish so long as the cumulative power of all the active manifestations does not exceed the wielder's power attribute. A character may channel a manifestation while maintaining manifestation(s).

A character may invoke a manifestation while maintaining manifestation(s). When a wielder invokes a manifestation while maintaining manifestation(s) the backlash from the invocation is equal to the combined power of the maintained manifestation(s) and the manifestation being invoked.

### Example:

1. A wielder is maintaining a manifestation at power 6, they have a power attribute of 13.
2. The wielder channels and invoke a different manifestation at power 4.
3. The backlash to be resolved is  $6 + 4 = 10$
4. The character performs an aegis check vs backlash 10.
5. The character channels and invokes a third manifestation with their remaining 3 power.
6. The backlash to be resolved is now 13 ( $6 + 4 + 3$ )
7. At this point, the wielder is maintaining 13 power worth of manifestations and cannot invoke another one until they either drop or reduce the power of one of the manifestations they are actively maintaining.

**Did we mention earlier that wielding metaphysics can be dangerous?**

## Instant Manifestations

Instant manifestations are those whose effects end the "instant" after it has been invoked, such as firebolts, healing, or creating water. While instant manifestations cannot be maintained, they can be channeled and invoked while a character is maintaining other spells, even if their power is already maxed out by maintained manifestations. Of course, this means that the character could be facing serious backlash if they decide to push the limits.

**Example:** A wielder with 10 power is currently maintaining all 10 points worth of other manifestations. A situation arises in which they desperately need to fire off another manifestation but cannot afford to drop one of the ones they are maintaining. So, with desperate times being what they are, they dig deep and push their power beyond its normal limits.

When they invoke the instant manifestation, the character must now resolve 20 backlash (10 from the maintained + 10 from the instant) which is double their normal power limit.

The wielder is currently maintaining 10 power worth of manifestations.

They decide to channel an instant manifestation at 10 power without dropping any maintained effect.

### Power beyond Power

There are times in which a character can exceed their normal power limits, such as through the use of rituals, manifestations, metaphysical tools, and certain environmental effects. With great power comes great responsibility and even greater chances of blowing yourself up. We did mention that wielding metaphysics can be dangerous, yes?

## Ritual Metaphysics

A Ritual is a form of extended channeling that allows a wielder to invoke metaphysical energy that far exceeds their own power limit. The wielder accumulates power over specified intervals of time until they have amassed enough power to invoke the manifestation. The amount of time for each interval and the total power required to invoke the effect is dictated by the individual manifestation. At every interval, the wielder generates a number of ritual points equal to the amount of power they are channeling. During Conflict, channeling a ritual is an extended action.

Unlike other manifestations, when channeling a ritual, the wielder must use all of their power.

As with other manifestations, backlash must be resolved when the manifestation is invoked. The total amount of backlash damage is equal to the total amount of ritual points generated by the ritual, including any excess that was generated.

During the ritual, this potentially devastating amount of backlash is offset by the wielder's innate resistance to metaphysical effects. For every interval spent channeling, the character automatically resolves an amount of backlash as though they achieved a CYAN result on an Aegis roll.

If the wielder chooses to channel a different manifestation before the ritual is finished, they will lose all accumulated ritual points and must begin again if they wish to invoke the ritual. Additionally, rituals that span a considerable length of time may run the risk of the Exhaustion condition. Loss of consciousness will result in the loss of all accumulated power and require the wielder to start again from the beginning.

**Example:** A wielder with a total power of 10 wants to invoke a 1000-point ritual.

The manifestation has a 1-minute interval, which means that for every 1 minute of in-game time that passes, the wielder generates 10 more points of power toward invoking the effect. At this rate, it will take the character 100 intervals, or 1 hour and 40 minutes of time in-game, to generate the amount of power necessary to invoke the ritual.

After the 100 minutes of in-game time has elapsed, the wielder has amassed 1000- points of power and may invoke the ritual when they choose.

When the Ritual is invoked, the wielder will have to resolve a devastating backlash of 1000 points. However, the character's Aegis rating is 13. A CYAN result would mean 3 goal points, or 3 points of backlash per interval  $3 \times 100 = 300$ , meaning the character only has to mitigate 700 points of backlash instead of 1000. Only 700...

## Group Rituals

Rituals are a potentially powerful type of manifestation but amassing the amount of power necessary to perform a ritual can be a time-consuming and dangerous. Collaborative and assisted rituals allow wielders to amass power more quickly and mitigate at least some of the risks.

Taking the time to prepare for a ritual is advised, and narrators might want to consider reducing either the cost requirement or the overall backlash directed at the wielder through adequate preparation.

Preparations may take the form of drawing an intricate summoning circle, collecting rare materials, or the willingness to prepare a sacrifice, such as an acolyte or six...

## Collaborative Rituals

In order to perform a collaborative ritual, all collaborators must either know the specific ritual or have access to a focus with access to it. When performing a collaborative ritual, all participating collaborators use their full power, as per usual. At each interval, the collaborators deduct the CYAN result of their Aegis test from the total amount of backlash that would be accrued.

Any remaining backlash is split evenly among the collaborators when the ritual is invoked, regardless of the amount of power each one contributes.

**Example:** Two wielders are collaborating on a 500-point ritual.

- Collaborator A channels 17 power and would mitigate 10 backlash on a CYAN color result. Collaborator B channels 10 power and would mitigate 7 backlash on a CYAN result.
- Their combined power of 27 means they need a total of 19 intervals to generate enough ritual points to invoke the ritual. Their collective backlash mitigation of 17 would reduce the total amount of backlash generated during the ritual by 323.  $(10+7) \times 19 = 323$ .
- When the ritual is invoked, the remaining backlash is divided evenly among the collaborators, rounded down in the event of a decimal. In this case, the remaining backlash is 177. Divided among the two collaborators, each wielder would have to mitigate 88.5 backlash, which would be rounded down to 88.  $177 / 2 = 88.5 \sim 88$ .
- Each collaborator rolls their Aegis score as they would normally when invoking a manifestation.

## Assisted Rituals

When conducting an assisted ritual, the assistants do not need to know the manifestation to be invoked. However, in order for a character to contribute, they must not be mundane (they may have a power rating of 0 but not null.)

At each interval, assisting characters serve as a living backlash sink. While they do not contribute power to the ritual, they reduce the amount of backlash accrued at each interval by the CYAN color result of their Aegis score. When the ritual is invoked, the amount of backlash remaining is divided evenly among all participants.

**Example:** A wielder with a power 22 is attempting to conduct a 1000-point ritual and has two acolytes assisting him.

- Collectively, they would reduce the amount of backlash at each interval by 15.
- At 22 power, it will require 46 intervals to complete the ritual,  $22 \times 46 = 1012$
- Cumulatively, they've generated 690 points of Aegis resistance  $(15 \times 46 = 690)$ , reducing the total amount of backlash by 690 points, down to 322.  $1012 - 690 = 322$ .
- The remaining 322 points of backlash damage is divided evenly among the contributors, which rounds down to 107 points of backlash damage each.
- Each collaborator may roll their Aegis score as they would normally when invoking a manifestation.

## Assistants and Collaborators

It is possible to perform a ritual with both collaborators and assistants. Simply add up the collective Aegis results for each interval as you would for either the Collaborative or Assisted Ritual and subtract that from the total amount of backlash accrued. The remaining backlash, if any, is divided evenly among all participants.

Note that with enough collaborators and assistants, it is possible to reduce the risk of backlash from a ritual altogether. It pays to be prepared.

## Disruption

Disruption is the process of preventing or unmaking a metaphysical effect using raw metaphysical power. Any character with a power greater than 0 may attempt to disrupt the invoking of a manifestation or mitigate an existing one. During conflict, the process of channeling a disruption is a simple action. Invoking Disruption towards an existing manifestation is a simple action.

Readying a disruption to prevent an invocation is a simple action that requires the player to declare parameters for invoking, just as they would any other readied action.

Disruption has a maximum range of Power x Meters.

While a disruptive charge is being held, the character may not channel any other manifestations, but they may continue to maintain any current manifestations, at their own risk.

When the channeled disruption is invoked, the wielder subtracts the disruptions power from the power of the target manifestation. If the manifestation has power remaining, the manifestation is resolved at the new power. Note that the wielder who channeled the target manifestation must still resolve their backlash at the full power of the manifestation. The wielder of the disruption must then roll to resist backlash equal to the power of their declared disruption regardless of how many points of power were effective in disrupting the target manifestation.



### Steps to disrupt a metaphysical effect:

1. Character announces that they will channel a Disruption
2. The player declares how many points of power the Disruption will have.
3. The player selects a target or readies the disruption.
4. The player chooses to invoke the Disruption.
5. The player calculates the amount of potential backlash damage based on the power of the Disruption.
6. The player rolls an Aegis check and the goal points generated are subtracted from the total backlash.
7. Character takes the remaining backlash as stun damage.
8. The power of the Disruption is subtracted from the targeted maintained manifestation, or other persistent metaphysical effects such as Runes, Batteries, and Walls.

### Example:

1. *A wielder with a power of 17 is exploring ancient ruins. Not wanting to be surprised, they prepare a Disruption at full power. The player declares that the character has readied the disruption to target any manifestation that originates within 17 meters of the character.*
2. *The player's intuition pays off as their character rounds a corner and detonates a hidden Flame Rune.*
3. *The Flame Rune erupts with 35 power while the prepared Disruption is invoked at power 17.*
4. *The Disruption reduces the Flame Rune's power.  $35 - 17 = 18$*
5. *The character first resolves an aegis check against the 17 backlash of the disruption.*
6. *They roll well and generate 10 goal points, which  $17 - 10 = 7$*
7. *The character takes 7 points of will damage from the backlash.*
8. *With the backlash resolved, the character must now resolve damage from the flame rune. With 17 power disrupted, the flame rune deals 18 points of life damage to the character.*

### ***How "Magical" is Your Paradigm?***

So why not just call it magic? While the term might apply in a good number of cases, it doesn't work for every case. Calling it magic and spells tends to invoke a swords and sorcery kind of vibe. Which is great unless you're playing a Dark-Tech Cyberpunk where all of the metaphysical comes from psionics or gene mods.

## What is a Condition?

Within the realm of the story, there are any number of hazards and effects that a character can be exposed to, deadly toxins, scorching heat, caustic acids, virulent pathogens, any or all of which will have an effect on the physical or mental wellbeing of a character. These are referred to as conditions. Some conditions have effects that are binary, meaning a character is either affected by the condition or they are not. These effects do not scale with increased exposure to the inciting event. Other conditions have an effect that scales in severity in relation to the magnitude of the condition. Sometimes, due to the nature of the condition, exposure will put the character into conflict, i.e., initiative.

## Complicated Environments

Sometimes there are events that happen in the story that make for hazardous footing. A gas main exploding under the city street, a massive earthquake that topples buildings, natural geological features, and manmade traps are just some of the events that can wreak havoc on the environment, leaving a character figuring out the safest way through. Complicated environments are divided into *difficult terrain* and *treacherous terrain*.

### Difficult Terrain

Some types of terrain are such that they can impose a penalty to the movement of a character traveling across, over, in, or through. Terrain conditions can vary infinitely, and as such, it is up to the narrator's discretion just how much the terrain impedes character movement. If a character chooses to NOT modify their movement speed while traversing difficult terrain, they have a chance of falling. The number of goal points a character needs to achieve on an acrobatics or reflex roll depends on the type of terrain.

Terrain Difficulty	Chance of Falling	Speed to Traverse safely	Example terrain
Normal	N/A	N/A	Smooth, even ground such as a tiled floor.
Minor	5	3/4	Even ground with slightly loose or slippery firmament such as gravel or wet grass.
Mild	7	1/2	Uneven ground with slightly loose or slippery firmament such as sand dunes or a muddy field.
Moderate	10	1/4	Uneven ground with loose or slippery firmament such as broken asphalt or a muddy bog.
Severe	13	1/8	Steep, uneven ground with unevenly loose and/or slippery firmament such as a scree mound, crumbling mountain path, or a rotted foot bridge.
Horrorific	17	1/16	Shifting, uneven ground such as an upheaval caused by an earthquake or volcanic eruption.

## Treacherous Terrain

Unlike difficult terrain, which merely makes traveling harder, treacherous terrain is any type of terrain that is dangerous to walk through. This type of terrain will actively damage a character if they choose not to modify their speed when traveling across, over, in, or through. The type of damage and the amount incurred is determined by the narrator.

Terrain Difficulty	Chance of Incurring Damage	Speed to Traverse Safely	Example Terrain
Normal	N/A	N/A	A well-maintained hiking path.
Minor	5	3/4	A path overgrown with brambles and other spiky foliage.
Mild	7	1/2	An overgrown thicket of brambles and other spiky foliage.
Moderate	10	1/4	A dense patch of Honey Locust trees.
Severe	13	1/8	A patch of caltrops or broken glass
Horrorific	17	1/16	A tour of a broken glass factory during hurricane season.

## Daze

The dazed condition severely impacts a character's ability to focus and can be caused by a number of effects, including flashbangs, drugs, critical effects, and manifestations.

When a character is subjected to a daze-causing effect, they must immediately make a Toughness or Reflex check (whichever is appropriate). Any goal points generated by this roll are subtracted from the total number of daze points, the character acquires any remaining daze points.

While a character has any number of daze points, they suffer a ◀ 4 to all rolls. Daze points are resolved at a rate of 1 point per round.

**Example:** *During the middle of a performance, just before the pyrotechnics are due to go off, the character sees that someone has pushed their way past security and is attempting to mount the stage. The "fan" is quickly subdued but not before he nudged one of the pyrotechnic launchers out of alignment.*

*As the primers are ignited, the character notices a streaking flash of color heading right towards her face. She makes a Reflex check, attempting to turn away and not get directly blasted in the face by the exploding firework. The narrator determines she needs at least 13 goal points to move out of the way in time. Unfortunately, she scores 10 goal points. Enough to avoid the worst of it, but not enough to avoid it completely.*

*The firework explodes next to her with a flash and abang. The player records 3 points of daze on the character sheet as her character reels from the blast. For the next 3 rounds, all of her rolls are at ◀ 4 until she shakes off the last of the daze points.*

## Death and Dying

When a character's life reaches 0, they are incapacitated and when their life reaches <0, they are incapacitated and begin dying. An incapacitated character is unable to move or interact with the world around them. When a character begins their turn with negative life, they immediately lose 1 additional life, and their will is reduced to 0.

- A dying character may spend a point of kismet to avoid losing additional life for a single combat round.
- A dying character requires some sort of external intervention in order to reverse the dying process. A character is no longer dying when their life points cease to be <0. A character restored to 0 life is still incapacitated while a character restored to >0 life may, on their next turn, attempt to Rally (as described in the Rally section).

A combatant is dead when their life points are reduced to a negative number greater than their Endurance Score. Death can be stayed for a time. A dead character may, with the proper equipment and personnel, be resuscitated back to the condition of only dying. If a dead character does not receive any attempt at resuscitation, the dead character continues to lose life points equal to the current purple value of the dead character (the number of negative life points they currently have ◀ 5).

Once a dead character has reached or exceeded 2x their Endurance rating in negative life points and has gone beyond the point of saving through medical intervention, they may only be revived through a manifestation.

### Memento Mori / Memento Vivere

In a TTRPG, the death of a character can be quite an emotional experience, especially when that character has played an integral role in the story. A reminder to players and narrators both, depending on the style of narrative, death may be inevitable consequence of living. How you choose to handle it, whether by creating a new character or mounting a quest to venture beyond the pale to bring them back, is up to you.

It is suggested that if a character dies during a campaign and the player is going to roll a new character, to allow them to start with all of the experience their previous character generated. This optional rule can help alleviate some of the sting of dying without completely eliminating the significance and consequence of dying.

## Distraction

A distraction effect can be caused by nearly anything with sufficient potency. A sudden flash, a loud bang, a distant earthquake, or a manifestation are just some possible examples.

When a character is targeted by a distraction effect, they immediately make a contested Resolve check, subtracting the resulting goal points from the number of Distraction points. If there are no distraction points remaining, the character ignores the effect. If there are *any* remaining distraction points, the character becomes distracted, which has the following effects:

- The character suffers -4 to all rolls until the end of their next turn.
- Readied actions and channeled metaphysics require a Resolve roll vs the Distraction rating or be lost.

**Example:** *On a dark night, a character lies in wait. A high-powered rifle sighted and aimed at the back of the Cartel henchman's head. As he begins to squeeze the trigger a blinding flashlights up the sky with a blinding radiance. The narrator determines that flash is dazzling enough to cause 17 points of distraction as the character's eyes being adjusted to the dark. The character rolls his Resolve and generates 13 goal points, 4 short of the mark. Dazzled and now light blind, the character rolls his Resolve a second time to see if he gets to keep his bonus from his readied Aim action. This time he scores an abysmal 5 goal points, nowhere close to the 17 he needed. Sighing in disgust, he begins to disassemble his rifle. The Cartel henchman will live for another day. Now to figure out what the hell caused that flash.*

## Exhaustion

Exhaustion occurs when a character has surpassed their physical limits and begins to suffer from extreme fatigue. While exhausted, a character will suffer -1 to all rolls for every point of exhaustion they have accrued.

With 10 hours of uninterrupted sleep, a character will purge all accrued exhaustion points. Otherwise, a character loses 1 exhaustion point per hour of uninterrupted sleep.

The effects of certain diseases, poisons, and other substances may augment the rules for Exhaustion, as specified in their individual descriptions.

**Example:** *After days of nonstop effort, the writer rubs bleary eyes and reaches for yet another cup of coffee. With a deadline fast approaching, the writer is pushing his absolute limits. He has to if he wants to keep a roof over his head, but the quality of his work is beginning to suffer as a result. After trying, and failing, multiple times to continue his work, he relents and makes his way to bed. With 12 exhaustion points, he knows that a full night's sleep will set him to rights. Unfortunately, he's only managed a meager 2 hours, reducing his Exhaustion rating by 2 points, before the pounding on his door begins...*

## Encumbrance

There is a point where a character is simply trying to carry too much. When a character's total carried mass reaches a threshold beyond their toughness, any task they try to perform will suffer.

Encumbrance	Total Mass Points (MP)	Penalty	Actions to Ignore
Negligible	$MP \leq \text{Toughness}$	N/A	N/A
Mild	$\text{Toughness} < MP \leq 1.25x \text{ Toughness}$	-1	Concurrent, Simple, Complex, Kismet (1)
Moderate	$1.25x \text{ Toughness} < MP \leq 1.5x \text{ Toughness}$	-2	Simple, Complex, Kismet (1)
Severe	$1.5x \text{ Toughness} < MP \leq 1.75x \text{ Toughness}$	-5	Complex, Kismet (1)
Crippling	$1.75x \text{ Toughness} < MP \leq 2x \text{ Toughness}$	-10	Kismet (1)
Incapacitated	$MP > 2x \text{ Toughness}$	-20	Kismet (2)

## Falling

While falling is generally attributed as being a health hazard, in reality it is the landing that poses the problem. Objects sustain 3 points of Blunt damage per gravity per meter of fall. A character may mitigate the number of points of falling damage equal to the number of goal points achieved on an Acrobatics test or Reflex check. Damage from falling is not, under most circumstances, reduced by armor. If a character falls from a standing position, their falling distance is half of their height.

3 blunt damage x Gravity x Meter(s) fell.

Note: Unless otherwise specified by the narrator, the game takes place at 1g.

**Example:** *A character falls from her horse under normal Earth gravity (1g). The narrator decides this is a 2-meter fall given the size of the horse.*

- 3 blunt damage x 1g x 2 meters = 6 blunt damage
- Lacking any skill in acrobatics, the character opts to use a Reflex check in an attempt to mitigate the fall
- She generates 5 GPs from her reflex check,
- $6 - 5 = 1$
- The character takes 1 blunt damage and subtracts 1 from her LP and 1 from her WP

## Fear

The fear condition is not a reference to the normal fear associated with adventuring. The fear condition is when a character is exposed to preternatural forces that instill levels of anxiety and dread such that the character experiences trouble concentrating or making decisions.

When a character is exposed to a fear-inciting effect, they immediately make a contested Resolve check, subtracting the resulting goal points from the number of Fear points inflicted by the effect, and the character acquires any remaining Fear points.

When a Character has Fear points, they suffer -1 to all rolls per point of Fear. On their turn, the character may choose to:

1. As a complex action, make a Resolve check and subtract any generated GPs from the number of Fear points.
2. Characters may spend 1 kismet to have a Fight response, which adds Fear Point value to the character's next skill roll and reduces their will points by the same amount.

**Example:** *A character has been sent to dispatch an undead abomination that has been causing havoc on a nearby town. After nights of careful stalking and watching, she finally catches sight of the monster, a banshee. The character attempts to creep up behind the wailing ghost to get the drop on it with a silvered sword. Unfortunately, a cracking branch alerts the banshee to the presence of the intruder and lets out an ear-piercing wail. The narrator tells the player that this action will cause 22 points of fear.*

*The character makes a Resolve check against the Banshee's wail and scores a 17, leaving a remainder of 5 points of fear. The player jots those down on her character's sheet.*

*Deciding it's now or never, the character steels her nerve (the player spends a point of kismet) and she attacks. Instead of subtracting the 5 points from her attack roll, she adds them instead. She also reduces her will points by an equal amount.*

## Gravity

Gravity is the fundamental interaction that causes mutual attraction between all things that have mass, i.e., weight. Gravity is expressed in g's, with the earth's standard being 1 g. The relationship between weight and g's is linear (about damn time something was in this book), so double the g is double the weight while half the g's is half the weight.

In addition to weight, the biological functions of the body are generally attuned to a specific gravity. Increasing the amount of gravity a body is subject to will eventually cause things to start failing.

- 1g = No effect
- 2g = -1 to all rolls
- 3g = -3 to all rolls. Character testing for exhaustion.
- 4g = -4 to all rolls. Tunnel vision as your eyes stop getting enough blood flow.
- 5g = -8 Visual blackout, still conscious, and NOT incapacitated.
- 6g = Conscious but incapacitated
- 7g = G-LoC (g-force induced loss of consciousness)
- 8g = Character takes 1 Blunt dmg/round
- 9g = Character takes 2 Blunt dmg/round, +1 roll on critical damage table
- 10g = Character takes 3 Blunt dmg/round +2 rolls on critical damage table
- 11g = Character takes 5 Blunt dmg/round +3 rolls on critical damage table
- 12g = Character takes 7 Blunt dmg/round +4 rolls on critical damage table
- 13g = Character takes 10 Blunt dmg/round +5 rolls on critical damage table

Please note, the effects of gravity on the human body are brutal and nearly absolute. Past 6g, a character is helpless. Without some form of outside intervention, prolonged exposure to heavy gravitational forces is fatal.

**Example:** *With the Martian Star Destroyer in Hot pursuit the character decides their only way to evade them is to perform a turn and burn, a maneuver that flips his ship and then punches the accelerator for all it's worth. While it might be enough to get him off their radar and give him a chance to escape, he knows the 9gs he's about to endure is not only going to hurt but leave him helpless. He'll have to rely on his ship's autopilot system to slow the ship down after the maneuver is completed and he's evaded his pursuer.*

*The pilot makes the necessary skill checks to set the computer and straps himself in before initiating the autopilot on the command console. Boosters pop and his as the ship turns itself in a quick 180 before the main engines kick in. The pilot is crushed into his seat as the g's begin to mount.*

*The narrator informs him of a violent shaking as the ship begins to build speed. The enemy Star destroyer managed a lucky shot and an alarm sensor is going off. Already at 4gs, the character attempts to reach for the command console but misses due to the -4 to his Toughness roll.*

*Now at 5gs, and suffering from a visual blackout, he flails blindly for the command console, this will be his last chance.*

*With the -8 to his roll, he misses again.*

*The ship continues to accelerate as the pilot loses consciousness. With no one around to slow the ship, he'll have to rely on luck to survive.*



## Space and Beyond

Not everything is attuned to the 1 g of earth. A spacer who has spent their life aboard an asteroid mining ship, for example, would be used to zero-g and would struggle to survive on Earth. A being from a planet with even higher G's would have no issue navigating the gravitational pull of Earth and would likely be stronger and faster than a human by comparison.

## Hypothermia and Hyperthermia

Hypo/hyperthermia occurs when the body is too cold or hot, respectively. Hypo/hyperthermia is most often caused by exposure to the elements but can also be caused by other sources, such as manifestations. The greater the exposure, the more condition points a character will accrue and the worse the effects.

The only way to remove hypo/hyperthermia points is by eliminating the source, i.e., warming up if a character is too cold or cooling down if a character is too hot.

**Example:** A character, with a toughness of 12, is in a too cold environment while woefully underdressed. As the hours pass, they start to accumulate cold points. Once the cold points become greater than the character's toughness 12, they begin to suffer the effects of hypothermia. If the character is unable to mitigate these points their condition will continue to progress until such time as they start dying when their cold points exceed 60 ( $12 \times 5 = 60$ )

Description	Physical state	Condition points	Effects
Negligible	Uncomfortable	Points $\leq$ toughness	No effect
Mild	Shivering	Toughness < points $\leq$ 2x Toughness	-2
Moderate	Weak	2x Toughness < points $\leq$ 3x Toughness	-5
Severe	AMS	3x Toughness < points $\leq$ 4x toughness	Resolve check vs exhaustion
Crippling	Syncope	4x Toughness < points $\leq$ 5x toughness	-5 WP per round
Fatal	Dying	Points > 5x Toughness	Dying

## Hypoxia

Hypoxia occurs when a character lacks enough breathable oxygen to support life. While suffering from hypoxia, a character loses 1 will Point every 3 seconds.

**Example:** While out at sea a ship strikes an unseen rock formation and begins to sink. After failing his swimming check, a character starts to get dragged down with the wreckage. While under the water, the character begins to suffer the effects of hypoxia.

It takes crewman 30 seconds to swim down to rescue the character and bring him back to the surface.

In that time, the sinking character suffers 10 points of will damage.

## Illusions and Hallucinations

Hallucinations are false perceptions involving your senses of sight, sound, smell, touch, and taste, which have a compelling sense of reality despite not being real. A character experiencing a hallucination might hear voices in an empty room or feel insects crawling across their feet when there are none to be found.

Illusion refers to sensory distortions, where the mind misinterprets existing stimuli. For example, a character experiencing an Illusion might hear voices in the sound of running water or see a vision of beauty when, in reality, what they are looking at is an utter monstrosity.

Regardless of the cause, these false perceptions can be minor disturbances, such as seeing movement in peripheral vision, or hearing faint noises or voices, to grandiose experiences like having dinner with the Queen of England. A character may experience these conditions with or without the insight that what they are experiencing is not real.

Most situations or effects that cause hallucinations or illusions will have a rating to reflect how convincing or powerful the effect is.

In order to “see past” or “disbelieve” an illusion, two things must occur:

1. A state change must occur that creates a paradox between the character's reality and the reality of the illusion.
2. The character immediately makes an Awareness check if their awareness GP value is greater than the rating of the illusion, they recognize it for what it is, not real.
3. If any Illusion points remain after the awareness check, the character believes the Illusion is real.

**Example:** While in pursuit of a mysterious figure, the character rounds the corner and is immediately blasted with a mind-altering metaphysical effect. The walls and floor around the character begin to undulate around her, making it hard to focus and even harder to walk. She stumbles down the hallway, staggering with every step. Her comrade in arms catches up and puts a steadying hand on her shoulder.

A brief exchange reveals her current condition and the reassurance that what she is seeing isn't real, prompting a reasonable doubt of this perceived reality.

She attempts to shake off the effects, looking at the roiling rippling ground and seeing it for the flat stone it must truly be. The effect, invoked at power 10 is potent, but was likely only a delaying tactic.

She rolls her Awareness score and generates 13 goal points, watching as the undulating cavern floor and walls immediately become still again.

Who knows how long she might have staggered along if her party member didn't catch up when he did.

### Seeing is Believing... or Not.

The mind is immensely powerful. The mind has a horrible tendency to latch on to what it's perceiving despite being presented with contrary evidence. It will see, hear, smell, taste, or feel that which its rational side knows cannot be. Because of this we feel that Illusions and Hallucinations shouldn't be conditions that can simply be unbelievably away or dumbed down to a mechanical default where fixing perception is guaranteed with long enough timeline. Illusions and hallucinations should have the capability of being quite powerful, persistent, and dangerously subtle.

## Loss of Consciousness (LoC)

A character risks a Loss of Consciousness whenever their will points are dropped to 0 or subjected to a loss of consciousness effect. Will points can never be reduced to less than 0; any will Point damage that would bring a character below 0 is instead subtracted from the character's life points.

The first time in a scenario that a character is brought to 0 will points, they may attempt to stave off unconsciousness by making an instant Resolve test (aka Rally) with any resultant GPs being added to the character's willpower. Every subsequent time in the scenario that the character is brought to 0 willpower points, they may spend 1 kismet to attempt a Rally again.

If a character fails to rally, chooses not to, or cannot, they experience loss of consciousness (LoC). When a character falls unconscious, they immediately lose all muscle tone and will fall to the ground, slump over in their chair, etc. While unconscious, a character does not move, protect themselves, ponder, or respond. They are out of the fight and just about everything else. During conflict, at the end of the round, an unconscious character has their Initiative lowered to 0.

## Regaining Consciousness

After a character has lost consciousness, unless otherwise specified, they must attempt to recover on their next turn as, even in cases where it might be disadvantageous, the body does not like to stay unconscious. During the character's turn, they perform an extended Toughness check with the GP goal of 10. Once the 10 goal points have been obtained, the character will gain consciousness on their following turn with will points equal to their toughness rating. The narrator may decide to ascribe the dazed or distracted condition to the character based on the situation.

**Example:** *With teeth gritted, the boxer attempts to shake off yet another hit. The world begins to swim as the beating begins to take its toll. An uppercut connects solidly with the bottom of the boxer's jaw, dealing 10 points of will damage which will reduce the boxer's will point total to -7, a potential knock out.*

*The narrator determines the boxer needs to make a Toughness check to stay on his feet. The player rolls a 7 (WHITE). The world fades to black as he falls to the ground.*

*The narrator announces that they've begun the countdown, the boxer has one chance to get back on his feet.*

*The boxer has a toughness of 17. After splashing some kismet for good measure, the boxer scores 13 goal points, more than the required 10.*

*Down, but not out, the boxer gets back to his feet with 17 will points and an urge to settle the score.*

## Pain

The pain condition extends beyond the loss of life points and represents a source of physical or mental anguish that robs the character of their ability to function. A character accrues pain points when they are exposed to pain-inducing stimuli and will suffer penalties to all rolls unless they are able to ignore the pain. The more pain a character is suffering from, the harder it becomes to ignore.

Pain can be temporarily mitigated through various means such as drugs, meditation, manifestations, poisons, and more. A character can only remove pain points by eliminating the cause of pain.

**Example:** *Tied to a chair in an abandoned warehouse, a character is struggling to keep from spilling his secrets while being tortured. After rounds of gruesome and brutal treatment, the character has accrued 36 points of pain. With a Resolve rating of 11, they've reached the Severe level of pain, suffering a -10 to all rolls until the pain stops. If they're going to have any chance of making it out of this alive, they're going to have to act, and soon...*

Pain level	Amount of Pain Points	Penalty	Actions to Ignore
Negligible	$\text{Pain} \leq \text{Resolve}$	-1	Concurrent, Simple, Complex, Kismet (1)
Mild	$\text{Resolve} < \text{Pain} \leq 2x \text{ Resolve}$	-2	Simple, Complex, Kismet (1)
Moderate	$2x \text{ Resolve} < \text{Pain} \leq 3x \text{ Resolve}$	-5	Complex, Kismet (1)
Severe	$3x \text{ Resolve} < \text{Pain} \leq 4x \text{ Resolve}$	-10	Kismet (1)
Crippling	$4x \text{ Resolve} < \text{Pain} \leq 5x \text{ Resolve}$	-20	Kismet (2)
Incapacitated	$\text{Pain} > 5x \text{ Resolve}$	-	Incapacitated

## Rest and Revitalization

Throughout the story, there will be times when a character simply needs time to rest and recover from various factors, such as extreme physical or mental duress, extensive traveling, disease, combat, or any other variety of story elements.

Rest is defined as an uninterrupted period of at least 6 hours during which all the following occur:

- The character receives high-quality sleep for at least four consecutive hours.
- The character undertakes no activity more strenuous than light chores or other activities of daily living.
- The character receives an adequate amount of food and water, loosely defined as 2 liters of water and 600 calories worth of food.
- The character has adequate shelter from weather and stressful environmental conditions. Characters will not benefit from revitalization in temperatures less than 0°C or higher than 40°C without adequate measures, i.e., blanket, circulating air, etc.

When a character successfully rests, they are revitalized.

Revitalization is the recovery of Life, Will, and Kismet and results as follows:

- Life is restored by an amount equal to 1/10th the character's current life points with a minimum of 1.
- Will is restored by an amount equal to 1/10th the character's maximum will points with a minimum of 1.
- Kismet is restored by half of the deficit with a minimum of 1.

The medicine skill and certain manifestations can augment revitalization. When attempting to augment a character's revitalization (typically when recouping from some form of injury) the assisting character will roll their Medicine skill using the Chart. Any goal points generated from this roll increase the LP and WP accumulation of the aided character up to 2x their normal maximum.

**Example:** *A grueling push into the dungeon's depths has left a character in rough shape.*

- *Life Points = 13 / 40*
- *Will Points = 9 / 51*
- *Kismet = 0 / 20*

*Fortunately, she is well provisioned and finds an empty room with a stout door that should keep her safe while she rests. She manages to sleep a solid 5 hours and has a filling, if not entirely satisfying, breakfast of trail rations and water. She spends another two hours rearranging her pack and sharpening her sword for the next push.*

*The narrator declares she's had adequate rest to receive the benefit of revitalization.*

- *She recovers 1 Life Point ( $13 \div 10 = 1.3 \approx 1$ )*
- *She recovers 5 will points ( $52 \div 10 = 5.2 \approx 5$ )*
- *She recovers 10 Kismet ( $20 \div 2 = 10$ )*

*Though rested, she's still in fairly rough shape.*

- *Life points = 14 / 40*
- *Will points = 14 / 51*
- *Kismet = 10 / 20*

*She now has to decide if she should go back or if pressing on is worth the risk.*

## **Trauma**

With physical injury from any source comes the risk of trauma to the damaged area. Trauma points represent damage to the character's body that is profound and cannot be recovered from without medical intervention.

Each point of trauma temporarily decreases the character's maximum life points.

Trauma points are resolved by 1 point per day of medical treatment and full, uninterrupted rest.

**Example:** *It was a bad altercation, but Susan dishd out more than she took, barely. Unfortunately, through the course of the fight she sustained 12 trauma points. At baseline Susan has a max life point value of 51 but due to her trauma sustained that is temporarily decreased to 39 and will not start to resolve until she gets out of the field and is able to spend 12 days of full rest.*

## What is a Character?

A **character** is a person or other being in a narrative.

Characters can be based on real people, they can be based on imaginary people, or both or neither. Characters are the *dramatis personae* that players use to navigate, explore, and shape our collaborative stories.

These rules are intended to facilitate character creation by offering an objective, quantifiable measure of how a character's myriad aspects interact with the mechanics of this system to bring a concept to life.

## How to Create a Character

1. Create Character Concept
2. Distribute 90 Attribute Points
3. Choose Priorities
4. Assign power Limit
5. Distribute trait points.
6. Calculate Instincts, Vitalities, and Movement
7. Distribute skill points.
8. Distribute technique points.
9. Distribute association points.
10. Purchase Assets
11. Assign +10 Experience Points

## Character Concept

Will you play the wandering Exile, looking for a place to call home? Maybe a hardened soldier who wants nothing more than to open a bakery? Maybe a merchant with a taste for the finer things in life who has gotten herself in over her head? Creating a compelling character that both fits into the story and is interesting to play requires defining what the character is capable of and where their limits are.

A character concept can be as deep or shallow as the player wants.

**Example:** *Christina decides that she wants to play a much more interesting and accessible version of her favorite character from a somewhat popular series of novels about a special magic school set in the hills of Nova Scotia. This character is bright, studious, brave, and geeky.*

## Distribute Attribute Points

All Characters begin with 90 Attribute Points to distribute as they wish among the 8 core capabilities. The attribute values will later determine a character's Instincts, Vitalities, and Movement.

At character creation, a character may not assign any attribute greater than 20 points.

- **Agility (AGI)**
- **Endurance (END)**
- **Finesse (FIN)**
- **Intuition (INT)**
- **Martial (MAR)**
- **Perception (PER)**
- **Reason (REA)**
- **Strength (STR)**

**Example:** *Christina takes her assigned 90 points for attributes and arranges them as follows:*

- **Agility: 10** – *Not a natural athlete but also not a klutz, Christina chooses 10 to represent an average agility.*
- **Endurance: 13** – *As the character was on the cross country team and walks everywhere Christina has chosen a slightly above average endurance.*

- **Finesse: 13** – *Her character paints tabletop models, practices close-up coin tricks, and is otherwise fairly nimble.*
- **Intuition: 7** – *Christina has decided that her character grew up with no real friends or other social interaction, spending most of her time reading books and pursuing various extracurriculars that further encouraged the character's solitary predilections. To represent this, Christina has chosen a below-average Intuition.*
- **Martial: 11** – *While not an overtly violent person, the character comes from a rough family and a rougher neighborhood. She has learned how to keep cool even when taking a hit. But Christina feels that her character genuinely does not like conflict or violence, and this is reflected in a martial score that is greater than an average score but not so much that it gets to the next column on The Chart. Maybe her character has just a little natural talent for conflict but has not yet reconciled that, if she ever will.*
- **Perception: 13** – *Christina wants to make the perception above average to reflect that the character understands the significance of nuance and has spent some time trying to become more observant.*
- **Reason: 17** – *This is where the character shines. Christina wants a high reason to reflect the character's superior memory and aptitude for learning.*
- **Strength: 6** – *While the character can run a 5k fairly easily, she is small, and the heaviest thing she regularly picks up is one of her many potted plants.*

Before finishing this section, the narrator points out to Christina that she could easily decrease the character's martial by one and increase the strength by one, which would put the character's strength to the next column on The Chart without changing the column of the character's martial attribute. Christina thanks the narrator but explains that while the math works out better, she does not think that the character would be as well represented if the attributes were optimized for rolling. Instead, she explains that she is looking forward to playing the character and figuring out which direction the character should go in.

## Choose Priorities

During character creation, a character's defining characteristics are broken into six priorities. Guided by your character concept, you will rank the six priorities to represent the prevalence and importance of each aspect to your character's identity.

Assign each of these aspects a priority from 1 to 6, with 1 being the highest priority and 6 being the lowest. Each number may only be associated with one aspect.

- **Assets:** Your character's startup cash, used to buy gear and other material assets or services.
- **Associations:** Who your character knows and/or organizations they belong to.
- **Metaphysics:** Your character's starting power limit.
- **Skills:** Your character's knowledge and skill set.
- **Training:** Your character's specialized training in metaphysics or techniques.
- **Traits:** Extra features or characteristics your character might have.



Priority	Association	Assets	Metaphysics	Skills	Techniques	Traits
1	45	\$120,000	13	150	35	17
2	30	\$50,000	10	100	22	13
3	20	\$30,000	7	70	17	10
4	10	\$10,000	3	50	10	5
5	5	\$5,000	0	35	7	3
6	0	\$2,000	Mundane	22	2	0

**Example:** *Christina is prepared for this step and quickly chooses her priorities.*

- 1 = Techniques = 35 points
- 2 = Metaphysics = 10 power
- 3 = Skills = 70 points
- 4 = Associations = 10 points
- 5 = Assets = \$5k
- 6 = Traits = 0 points

Priority	Association	Assets	Metaphysics	Skills	Techniques	Traits
1	45	\$120,000	13	150	35	17
2	30	\$50,000	10	100	22	13
3	20	\$30,000	7	70	17	10
4	10	\$10,000	3	50	10	5
5	5	\$5,000	0	35	7	3
6	0	\$2,000	Mundane	22	2	0

## Determine Power

Record the character's power based on the priority you chose for metaphysics. Yes, this step is, in fact, that easy.

**Example:** *As Christina chose Metaphysics for priority 2, so the character will start with 10 power.*

## Assign Trait Points

Use the assigned trait points, based on your priority choice, to determine the character's physiology. Trait points can be used to increase attributes or assign various traits that range from mundane to the utterly bizarre. Any unspent points will be banked as starting experience points.

**Example:** *Christina chose to make traits her lowest priority. This means she will not have any points to use to increase her attributes or give her character special physicalities. This works fine for the character concept as Christina's vision is a character, while having no outstanding or novel aspects to her physicality, has a hidden depth that she keeps close to the chest.*

## Calculate Instincts, Vitalities, and Movement

Using the following maths, the player calculates the character's Instincts, Vitalities, and Movement using your newly set attributes.

### Instincts

- **Aegis:** (Endurance + Reason) ÷ 2
- **Awareness:** (Intuition + Perception) ÷ 2
- **Reflex:** (Agility + Finesse) ÷ 2
- **Vitalities Resolve:** (Martial + Reason) ÷ 2
- **Toughness:** (Endurance + Strength) ÷ 2

### Vitalities

- **Life:** (Toughness + Reflex) × 2
- **Will:** (Resolve + Awareness) × 2

### Movement

- **Run:** (Strength + Agility + Endurance) ÷ 3
- **Jog:** Run ÷ 2
- **Walk:** 2

### Example:

*Instincts*

$$\text{Aegis} = (13 + 17) \div 2 = 30 \div 2 = 15$$

$$\text{Awareness} = (7 + 13) \div 2 = 20 \div 2 = 10$$

$$\text{Reflex} = (10 + 13) \div 2 = 23 \div 2 = 11.5 = 11$$

$$\text{Jump (H): Run} \div 7$$

$$\text{Jump (V): Run} \div 28$$

$$\text{Resolve} = (11 + 17) \div 2 = 28 \div 2 = 14$$

$$\text{Toughness} = (13 + 6) \div 2 = 19 \div 2 = 9.5 = 9$$

*Vitalities*

$$\text{Life} = (9 + 11) \times 2 = 20 \times 2 = 40$$

$$\text{Will} = (14 + 10) \times 2 = 24 \times 2 = 48$$

*Movement*

$$\text{Run} = (6 + 10 + 13) \div 3 = 29 \div 3 = 9$$

$$\text{Jog} = 9 \div 2 = 4.5 = 4$$

$$\text{Walk} = 2$$

$$\text{Jump (horizontal)} = 9 \div 7 = 1.29 = 1.2 \text{ one of the few times we use a decimal}$$

$$\text{Jump (vertical)} = 9 \div 28 = 0.321 = 0.3 \text{ one of the few times we use a decimal}$$

## Assigning Skill Points

Skill points are assigned based on the priority that skills were placed at. Choose skills from the "Skills Resource Document" and use the skill points to increase the character's rank in each chosen skill to represent how much the character knows or how well they know how to do it. Unspent points will be converted to starting XP.

**Example:** *Christina is going to try to make the character's skill list fit the profile of a studious middle schooler. She chooses the following skills:*

*Academics (Library Science), History, Herbology, Botany, Finesse weapons, Stealth, Sleight of Hand, Dodge, and Craft (Baking)*

*She then has 70 points to distribute amongst them. She chooses: Academics (Library Science) = 7, Academics (History) = 7, Science (Herbology) = 6, Science (Botany) = 7, Finesse weapons = 3, Stealth = 10, Legerdemain = 10, Dodge = 10, Craft (Baking) = 10*

### Skill Points + Base Attribute - Skill Adjustment

Skill Name	Adjustment	Attribute	Assigned	Rating
Library Science	-7	Reason (17)	7	17
History	-7	Reason (17)	7	17
Herbology	-17	Intuition (7)	6	-4
Botany	-17	Reason (17)	7	7
Finesse Weapons	-13	Martial (11)	3	1
Stealth	-13	Agility (10)	10	7
Legerdemain	-10	Finesse (13)	10	13
Dodge	-3	Agility (10)	10	17
Baking	-22	Finesse (13)	10	1

### Assigning Technique Points

Technique points are assigned based on the priority that Techniques was placed at. The character may then use these points to acquire Manifestations from the Grimoire or Techniques from the Treatise. Any unspent points will be converted to starting experience points.

**Example:** *The character starts with a few techniques from her fencing classes and a few starting manifestations that she was able to learn prior to starting wizardly school.*

*Finesse Techniques: Backstep (1), Parry (1), Assessment (2), Riposte (2)*

*Mana Manifestations: Detect Mana (2), Mana Beacon (3), Mana Shield (2), Increase Resistance (3)*

*Gravity Manifestations: Minor Telekinesis (2), Telekinetic Slam (2), Alter Gravity (2), Force Push (3)*

*Total technique points used = 25*

*Unused technique points = 10*

*Satisfied with her choices, she will convert any remaining training points into experience points for the character to start with.*

### Assign Association Points

Association points are assigned based on the priority that associations were placed at. The character may then use these points to establish contact ratings with individuals or ranks within an organization. While Spectrum has made every attempt to provide an extensive list of contacts and organizations to choose from, Players and narrators should feel free to collaborate during character creation to write up their own unique contacts and organizations. Any unspent points will be converted to starting experience points.

**Example:** *The character does not have many friends or confidants. Christina decides to give the character a pen pal from Portland, to whom she has written hundreds of letters back and forth over the years and with which she is quite genuinely fond of.*

*Amanda Whitman: Contact rating 10*

### Determine Assets

Use the money assigned based on the priority of Assets to purchase gear, provisions, and other assets from the Gear Compendium as appropriate to the story. This is another area where the players and narrators are encouraged to get creative with the use of the characters' starting capital. Any unspent money is kept by the character for later use.

**Example:** *With \$5,000 to spend before the first year of wizardly school starts, there are a few things that must be procured for the character.*

*Wand = \$2,000*

*Books for Year 1 classes = \$300*

*Research materials = \$150*

*School uniform x 3 = \$210*

*Tally = \$2660*

*Remaining capital = \$340*

*Character you are excited about = priceless*

### Assign Starting XP

Tally unused trait, training, and association points and add them to the character's starting experience points.

Additionally, all starting characters receive +10 XP.

**Example:** *The last step before the story begins, Christina looks back at the choices she has made so far. She did not have any trait points to spend so she moves on to associations. She spent all 10 of her association points on her pen pal so that only leaves Training, which there were 10 points she did not spend. Those 10 points are added to her character's 10 starting XP for a total of 20 starting experience points.*

# Quick Guide to Character Creation

## Character Creation Summary

1. Create Character Concept
2. Distribute 90 Attribute Points – Distribute 90 Attribute Points among Attributes, assigning each a Score between 3 and 20.
3. Choose Priorities – Prioritize Assets, Associations, Metaphysics, Techniques and Traits.
4. Assign Power Limit.
5. Distribute trait points.
6. Calculate Instincts, Vitalities, and Movement – calculate the score of each Instinct, Vitality, and Movement.
7. Distribute skill points – Spend Skill Points and determine the Skill Rating for each skill. The total maximum Skill Rating at character creation is 25.
8. Distribute training points – Spend Technique Points to purchase combat techniques and manifestations (if appropriate).
9. Distribute association points – Spend Association points to determine tiers within an Institution or rating with an Individual contact.
10. Purchase Assets – Purchase Gear and Other Assets: Use the character’s starting money to purchase gear, provisions, and other assets as appropriate to the story. Bank the remainder.
11. Record XP (Unspent + 10)

### Instincts

Aegis:  $(END+REA) \div 2$

Awareness:  $(INT + PER) \div 2$

Reflex:  $(AGI+FIN) \div 2$

Resolve:  $(MAR + REA) \div 2$

Toughness:  $END + STR) \div 2$

### Vitalities

Life:  $(Toughness + Reflex) \times 2$

Will:  $(Resolve + Awareness) \times 2$

### Movement

Run:  $(STR + AGI + END) \div 3$

Jog:  $Run \div 2$

Walk: 2

Jump (H):  $Run \div 7$

Jump (V):  $Run \div 28$

# Quick Guide to Generating Goal Points Using The Chart

## How to Use the Chart

1. Determine the value of the starting column.
2. Calculate any shifts to be made to the starting column.
3. Apply shifts to the starting column to determine the rolling column.
4. Determine pre-roll adjustments.
5. If possible, the player may opt to “take a blue” and assume the color result of blue.
6. Roll a d100 and apply pre-roll adjustments to determine the score.
7. On the rolling column reference the score to determine color result.
8. Determine if a post-roll adjustment is to be applied to the score. If a new score is created, then repeat step 7. If no post-roll adjustment is made go to step 9
9. Apply the color result action to the rolling column to determine result column.
10. The value of the result column is the goal points obtained.

**Example:** The story has reached a point where a player needs to roll on the chart.

1. The starting column is 13, based on the context of the required roll.
2. Situational variables are calculated to determine that two right shifts are to be applied.
3. Two right shifts are applied to the starting column (13) resulting in a roll column value of 22.
4. Pre-roll adjustments are tallied with a net pre-roll adjustment of -2.
5. The player chooses to NOT “take a blue” as this would only yield 7 goal points, which is less than they want.
6. The player obtains 52 on the d100 die roll and adds the -2 adjustment with the resulting score of 50.
7. A score of 50 on the 22 column yields a yellow result.
8. No post roll adjustments are added to the score.
9. The yellow result action of ◀ 1 is applied to the rolling column (22) which makes the result column 17.
10. The player has generated 17 goal points.