



The Chronicles of **FUTURE EARTH**

Player's Guide

**Cosmic Fantasy Roleplaying
in the Post-Historical Age**

by Sarah Newton



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ISBN (ebook): 978-1-7385423-1-4

ISBN (physical version): 978-1-7385423-0-7

Product Code: TGP00100

Published by Typhon Games Ltd, 20 Wenlock Road, London N1 7GU, United Kingdom


Publicity and Promotion by Typhon Games Ltd. For publicity and promotion details contact hello@typhon-games.com.



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The Chronicles of Future Earth Roleplaying Game Player's Guide

**COSMIC FANTASY ROLEPLAYING
IN THE POST-HISTORICAL AGE**

BY SARAH NEWTON



DEDICATION

To Chris, the Brown Dirt Cowboy, Harper of Payorian, who passed beyond the Veil before this book could be published, but who always believed;

To Paco, who first discovered the Venerable Autocracy with us, and who understood the Ages of the Earth;

To Jason and Garry, who kept the flame during the Time of Darkness when I was fighting my way back from the Underworld;

To Mil, who brought me back from the Lands of the Beloved Dead, and played Payorian's Harp until I smiled again;

To Graham, whose constant and gentle encouragement helped me see that I could still write;

And to all of you who backed the Chronicles of Future Earth Kickstarter, who had faith that we would return bearing this tome;

*To you I dedicate this book and this world.
Neither would exist without you. I salute
you all, and all of you who go on to sing and
adventure and continue to write...*

...these Chronicles of Future Earth.



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FOREWORD

The game you're reading now is the fruit of a labour of love extending more than twenty-five years. Back in 1999, I first put pen to paper to create a world that had been brewing in my mind for longer still.

I'd always dreamed of the strange worlds of the future. Not of gleaming rocket ships, of interstellar empires, of bright-eyed explorers—but of what happened after, when those star-spanning glories were lost far in the distant past. From H.G. Wells' *The Time Machine*, to the works of Clarke Ashton-Smith, Gene Wolfe, Jack Vance, Michael Moorcock, to the timeless cover art of Bruce Pennington, I'd been raised on dreams of the Post-Historical Age—when so much time had passed, when so much history had happened, that nothing seemed new any more, and the world slumbered in senescent dreams of a tumultuous past.

From those dreams came the world of Future Earth. Maps, first, then sketches, histories, legends. I first wrote *The Chronicles of Future Earth* as a campaign for the 3rd edition of a very popular roleplaying game, back in 1999. Then, in the early 2000s, it entered an incarnation powered by the wonderful Basic Roleplaying, and there was even a supplement published by Chaosium in 2009. After that, I fell in love with the Fate system, and in 2014, after the publication of *Mindjammer* 2nd Edition, I began to wonder how Fate Core could handle gaming in this huge, deep, mysterious world.

This book—and its game engine, Cosmic Fate—is the result. Kickstarted in 2018, it's been much-delayed due to unavoidable personal tragedy in my life, but I'm so proud to bring it to you at last, thanks to the patience of a wonderful community of gamers and Kickstarter backers, and to the friendship and support of some very special people: Jason Juta and Garry Harper, who I'm now working with in Typhon Games to bring you the *Chronicles* today; Graham Spearing, who championed my work during my dark days and gave me the operational support and encouragement I needed to get writing again, and who is a key part of our Typhon work today; Paco Jaen, who enthused so wonderfully when he joined us to play *Chronicles* in its very first incarnation, a quarter century ago; and to Chris Birch, who first gave me my publishing break in 2008, and who has been tirelessly supportive of my mad ideas ever since, as friend, publishing guru, and distributor, making sure that they get into stores the whole world over.

This game is for all of you. Welcome to the Fifth Cycliad of the Venerable Autocracy of Sakara, oldest of the Springtide Civilisations. A new world for gaming, but one of unfathomable richness and antiquity. Welcome, at last, to the *Chronicles of Future Earth*...

Sarah Newton
Normandy, France, Spring 2024



Introduction

Welcome to the Springtide Civilisations! To the far future of Earth, where the stars have been won and lost, where technological civilisations have risen and fallen, where history has crumbled into forgotten dust. It's an age of decadence, when ancient technologies rust in ruin, when superstition fuels strange cosmic powers, when monsters roam a world grown strange with time. Humanity itself totters on the brink of extinction. Yet all is not lost...

WHAT IS FUTURE EARTH?

The world of the farthest future is unimaginably old, diverse, sophisticated, with more history than anyone can remember. It's a world of ancient traditions that say "this is how things have always been done", where innovation is feared, where the old ways have saved the cosmos in the past and where everyone hopes they will again.

Imagine a world that looks back on a lost greatness it's sure it can never achieve again. Where magic and gods are real, where ancient technology survives in incompre-

hensible relics, yet where the true nature of reality is understood like never before. A world like ancient China, Rome, or Byzantium, beset by barbarians, chaos, and destruction, with no idea how to defend itself except to fall back on ancient solutions which no longer apply...

Imagine scholars and philosophers, learned generals and canny priests, teeming masses in decaying cities so vast they feel empty. Imagine taverns filled with twinkling-eyed rogues, thieves stalking streets in nights illuminated by mysterious lights in the sky. A world where humankind shares stage with other intelligent species. A world terrified of change, yet suddenly faced with a dangerous, unpredictable future.

And then there's you. You're mavericks, misfits. You know something needs to be done to save the world before it's too late...

Maybe you're the Heroes of the Age. Maybe you can save the world from the sins of its past. Maybe...



WHAT IS THE VENERABLE AUTOCRACY OF SAKARA?

The Venerable Autocracy of Sakara is the greatest empire on Earth. Fifteen millennia old, it occupies what was once western Africa and the Iberian Peninsula. But that world is gone; the lands once known as Europe are covered in the glaciers of a new Ice Age, and ravaged by the hordes of Entropy. Sakara itself is a temperate land, cold in the north, subtropical in the south. Ancient, decadent, sophisticated, its society is a little like Europe in the early 18th century, but with one huge difference: long since stripped of resources, there's almost no metal, no fossil fuels, nothing to permit industry to be reborn. The world would be condemned to spartan misery, were it not for three things: the poorly understood remnants of an ancient, hyperadvanced technology; strange biotechnological organisms replacing metal and machines; and magic...

Yes, magic. The gods are real. You can wield their powers, learn sorcery, summon demons. Using these arcane resources, the Springtide Civilisations have created a flourishing society—but at the expense of innovation. Long ago, in a mythic age, the gods saved the world from destruction, and fossilized its societies in a deep conservatism. Now innovation is frowned upon, even forbidden, lest the world face annihilation again. Yet innovation is so badly needed, to face a terrifying foe...

WHAT IS “THE CHRONICLES OF FUTURE EARTH”?

The Chronicles of Future Earth is a cosmic fantasy roleplaying game, powered by a unique incarnation of the *Fate Core System*. This *Player's Guide* gives you the core rules for creating characters and adventuring with them in the lands of Future Earth, and background information for players to orient themselves in this deep and fascinating world. Its companion books, the *Guide to Future Earth* and the *Chronicler's Guide*, provide detailed descriptions of the world and its realms, and lots of information for Chroniclers to run games and create adventures, including an extensive bestiary and details of ancient artefacts.

But what do we mean by “cosmic fantasy”? Well, at its simplest, *The Chronicles of Future Earth* is a fantasy roleplaying game, replete with fantasy tropes: you'll find magic and monsters, enchanted items, trackless forests, ancient and adventure-filled ruins, smoky taverns with mysterious patrons, treasure, and more. If you're a fan of swords and sorcery roleplaying games, you'll feel right at home here.

But it's also more than that. It's a game which deals with epic themes: strange dimensions, other worlds, mighty cosmic entities with terrifying inhuman agendas. It describes ancient technologies, alien artefacts, and elements commonly found in the trippiest of science-fantasy fiction. It's a game that will grow with you and your players, getting bigger in scope, more awe-inspiring in theme, and taking you anywhere in this vast and mysterious cosmos you want to go...

WHAT IS THE “POST-HISTORICAL AGE”?

The Springtide Civilisations are so old, history seems to have lost all meaning, dwarfed by the weight of what has gone before. People live lives little different from those a thousand years ago—or two thousand, or five, or ten! Nothing ever seems to change, nor has done since anyone can remember. Some buildings are older than the world is said to be, dating to a Golden Age that was destroyed in the War of the Gods described in the ancient scripture of the *Helemoriad*.

This has a big effect on people's mind-sets. Not yours, necessarily—you're a hero, maverick, misfit, determined to make a difference, to change things. But most people can't even conceive of the world being different from how it is today—it's the way things have always been.

And that's a big theme in this game. You're not just fighting against a threat that might destroy the world—you're fighting against a society *that doesn't know it's asleep and needs to wake up*.

SO WHAT DO YOU DO IN THE GAME?

This is a big game. You can play almost any kind of game you want, within the cosmic fantasy genre. But we're presenting a handful of default assumptions to keep things digestible—if you're looking for a quick way into *The Chronicles of Future Earth*, we suggest you start by playing this way, and then, as you get used to the world and its rules, you let your own games take flight. Let's start with the basics.

To begin with, let's assume you're playing the "good guys". You've realised the world is in deep trouble, and you're trying to do something about it. Maybe you're keeping it small, looking after your local community; maybe you're looking a little larger, working within your temple, legion, or sorcerous college. Temples like Regos, Lord of War, or Unthar, Lord of Time. Legions like the Legion of Lord Regos, Indomitable. Guilds like the Respectful Explorers of Antiquity (colloquially known as Tomb Robbers).

You've got together with a band of like-minded individuals in the city of Glorious Kados, capital of the empire, or in the province of Korudav just to the north, where the huge city of that name has just suffered the devastation of the Firecloud, the province overrun by ravening entropic monsters. You share the views of Jakai Tellisan, Autarch of Korudav, who's trying to hold the northern provinces together under savage pressure. You're "troubleshooters" trying to keep chaos and corruption at bay.

Here are some character concepts you might choose:

- A mystical non-human martial artist with an inhuman worldview.
- A sorceress from the Autocracy's Heartlands.
- A priest of the war god, with a bound demon!
- A princess of thieves, with a handful of magical cantrips.
- A near-human scholar with awesome psionic powers.
- A devious artificer, looking for ancient artefacts to repair and re-use.

SO THIS IS A FATE CORE GAME, RIGHT?

Yes, it is. But hold on! This is Fate Core, but not as you know it. The *Fate Core System* is immensely flexible, and we've devised a version to fit the "cosmic fantasy" of Future Earth. We've adjusted a lot of Fate Core's "dials" towards a game-play which is epic, lethal, and fascinating. We're calling it *Cosmic Fate*.

It's Epic

The "Zero to Hero" path is integral to *The Chronicles of Future Earth*. You begin with decent abilities, facing challenges without dying horribly; but, as you advance, you become more powerful, eventually becoming an epic hero capable of saving the world.

The Chronicles of Future Earth does this in a special way. Advancement isn't just a matter of becoming individually more powerful, getting higher skill levels, more stunts and fate points, and so on. Instead, you become more capable of affecting the world around you—influencing and commanding communities, leading legions and temples, extending your abilities into deepening relationships with other people and organisations. Advancement is (pardon the pun) multi-dimensional: not only do you advance vertically, with higher skill levels and so on, but also horizontally, broadening the scope of your abilities and the focus of your actions. It's up to you how you advance, but expect to become more epic as you do.

It's Lethal

The challenges you face are dangerous, let's make no bones about it. The world is in peril, the dangers are real, and characters will die. You'll find rules customisations that make it easier for your character to suffer serious damage and death. There's everything to play for.

This means you'll want to play tactically. You can't simply save up all your fate points and chuck them at the Big Boss in the final scene. Instead, you're going to be retreating before impossible odds to fight another day, preparing your attacks carefully, working out ways to do things that deepen the story you're telling and your exploitation of what these rules will let you do. To begin with, that'll mean a gritty style of play, but also, we hope, one that's satisfying, exciting, and which makes the fruits of victory all the sweeter.

It's Fascinating

This is a deep game. The background might look a little daunting, but don't worry: approach *The Chronicles of Future Earth* like you were playing a traditional fantasy roleplaying game—one which is gritty, epic, and dangerous, to be sure, but, let's face it, you know the territory, your instincts will hold true. Then, as you play, you'll find mysteries, setting details and rules relationships ripe for exploiting. As your character advances, you'll interact with these specifics in amazing ways. Maybe you found a dormant Planing Machine in a lost undercity? Well, now you've developed the ability to repair it—or developed a relationship with a person, temple, or other organisation (maybe even a demon!) that can repair it for you. And so you open a gate to... where? Do you know where you're going? Can you control where the Planing Machine takes you? And what will you do when you get there?

So WHAT'S IN THIS BOOK?

The Chronicles of Future Earth Player's Guide is modular, gradually introducing the game world and rules. Have a flick through, check out the contents pages, index, and the glossary. Look over the maps.

Then, when you're ready, take a read through **Chapter 2: Welcome to the Venerable Autocracy** and **Chapter 3: The Basics**. These will introduce the world and setting, and the essential rules. You can play a simple game just with those few pages! After that, you'll be guided through how to create characters, and then given a full presentation of the game system—the *Chronicles of Future Earth* version of the Fate Core rules. Finally, we'll show you how to advance your character, how to create relationships with other characters, and how to use magic, including introducing one or two temples and schools of sorcery.

What you won't find in this book is all the secret stuff—descriptions of monsters, treasures, mysterious places, uncanny artefacts, and deadly dangers. That material is presented in the companion volumes to this *Player's Guide*—the *Guide to Future Earth*, and the *Chronicler's Guide*.

We hope you enjoy your adventures in *The Chronicles of Future Earth*. The world cries out for heroes!



How Does The Chronicles of Future Earth Differ From Mindjammer?

*You'll see parallels between **The Chronicles of Future Earth** and **Mindjammer**, the transhuman science-fiction roleplaying game, both in rules and setting. This, however, is a very different game, and the new **Cosmic Fate** rules work in different ways. Here are some of them:*

- **Scores, Modifiers, and Scales:** We've broken out of the Fate Core convention of referring to everything in terms of the "ladder", ie "Great (+4) Melee Combat", "Good (+3) difficulty", "Fair (+2) size". For simplicity of presentation, you'll find skills like *Melee Combat 4*, difficulties like *difficulty 3*, and scales like *Large (2)*.
- **The Bonus Cap:** We've introduced a cap on the bonuses you can apply to a dice roll, linked to your skill. You can't just spend a bunch of fate points to get a humongous bonus in your fight against the Big Bad. Watch out—this is a major, and potentially lethal, change!
- **Buils:** We've expanded on **Mindjammer's** concept of "buils" to produce a flexible, modular approach to character creation and advancement. It's not prescriptive, but it helps define the boundaries of what characters are capable of, providing you with pick-lists of skills and other abilities. Your character may start with buils like *Hivernian homeland*, *Holy Warrior occupation*, and *Temple of Regos community build*, which you can use to quickly build a character. Thereafter, you can navigate through buils as you advance, and even create your own!

- **Relationships:** Relationships are a big deal in **The Chronicles of Future Earth**. In **Mindjammer**, they were called "extras", but we've refined that definition to refer precisely to how you can draw on the abilities of other people and organisations to help your character. Relationships are important for beginning characters, but become more so as your game advances.
- **Equipment:** We've rebuilt the equipment rules, bringing them more in line with fantasy roleplaying game tropes. You can buy things with treasure, make and sell gear, and keep lists of stuff to use in play. The Fate Core tropes still apply, but you no longer have to spend valuable character points when you pick up a magical item and want to use it in play.
- **The Cosmic Fate Dice:** In keeping with the wild, dangerous, and unpredictable cosmic fantasy genre, we use D6–D6 instead of Fate Dice as the core dice roll mechanic. This increases swinginess, giving random chance a greater role. You'll no longer roll mostly +1, +0, or -1, and nothing can be taken for granted, even for the greatest hero!
- **Criticals and Fumbles:** Again part of the wildness of cosmic fantasy play, we've introduced critical successes and failures to create moments of exciting and amazing victory and devastating defeat. Game play feels epic and dangerous at all levels!

There's lots more to discover. We're excited about this new **Cosmic Fate** incarnation of the Fate Core System, and hope it'll give you rip-roaring adventures at your table!





Welcome to the Venerable Autocracy!

Welcome, friend, to the Venerable Autocracy of Sakara, oldest of the Springtide Civilisations. This is your land!

But what a land! Almost too big to fathom, it's a world unto itself. In the north, it's mountainous and cold, up against the Wilderness of Sarag and the Wall Against the Shakh, all that stops the Entropics of the Yurashan Wastes from descending on the Autocracy. In the south, the rainforests of Aiforia and Laigas give way to jungles, thick with ruins, where ancient evils dwell.

And, in between—such variety! Subtropical provinces striped with rice paddies and terraces; the arid eastern borderlands of Khadis, where grey-skinned worshippers of the Death God fend off the Hagyan Hordes; fertile forests beloved of Emeldias; high mountains where Kesh pilots ride their elenisor steeds; and the fragile frontier with the violent mantis people of the Tung Mai.

The Autocracy is ruled from the city of Glorious Kados, which stands at the Ethereal Falls that straddle the strait between the Yurazi coast and the Hivernian peninsula. There, in his ancient palace, rules Enessi XXI, Avatar of the Venerable Autocrator, eternally re-incarnating ruler of Sakara and living god.

For the Venerable Autocracy has a holy mission: to defend the world from annihilation by the forces of Entropy and Domination. In the mythic past, the Great Hegemonist and the Reaver Gods brought the world to the brink of destruction, thwarted only by the concerted actions of humankind and the Gods of the Great Compact. Those twenty deities could not be more different from one another: some seem almost evil, but the one thing which unites them is a belief that the cosmos should endure, and not fall prey to the devouring Void.

The battle with the Hegemonist was fought at the dawn of time, as told in the holy *Helemoriad*. Today, it's only humankind's total obedience to the Gods of the Great Compact that keeps the Hegemonist and his ravaging servitors at bay. Even so, the Entropic Hordes seethe in the frozen northern Wastes of Yurasha, just beyond the Autocracy's frontier. It's said they love the cold and hate heat, and only the warmth of settled lands stops them invading. They probe the Kadram Mountains, the Wall Against the Shakh, for any weakness that might allow them to slip through.

Several times in the incomprehensibly long history of Earth, during and following the tens of millennia before the Empire of Tlan and the Time of Snows which came after its fall, mortals tried to circumvent the iron rule of the Gods, and each time the forces of Entropy and Domination surged in to almost ruin all of existence again. Even in the Five Cycliads of Autocracy history after it emerged from the Snows, battles against the Entropics caused untold harm, such as the Nightmare Siege of Kados which began the Wars of Entropy eight millennia ago.

It's now the year 2993CV, the very end of the Fifth Cycliad, and the Doom of the World is upon us. Mere months ago, foul entropic monsters breached the Kadram Wall and descended on the Autocracy, killing or mutating all in their path. How and why they broke through is unknown; but the incursions could not have come at a worse time. For the Autocracy is divided against itself, the Avatar Enessi XXI so obsessed with intrigue and persecutions that he seems willing to ignore the northern provinces of Elikan and Korudav, and the Amadorad Protectorate, in their hour of need. Enessi has always been divisive; since his war against the False Avatar, Aglaya, a century ago, he has persecuted the followers of Belorias the Storm Lord in both Ellib, now an abandoned wilderness, and Amadorad. He has weakened the Autocracy, perhaps fatally.

LIFE IN THE AUTOCRACY

Many cultures, kindreds, and religions call the Autocracy home. Most are human; many are not. Some are the *jeniri*, the Cousins of Humankind, who were changed by unfathomable science before time began to adapt them to strange lost worlds: the psionic Virikki, the red giant Magigi, the troglodytic Maggot Men, and many more. Others are stranger still, the *esteri*, the Not-Humans of Earth, who originated on alien worlds yet who adapted themselves—or were adapted—to share the Earth with humankind: the violent Tung Mai mantis people, the monstrous Hsun spider folk, the herd-folk of the Paladoi Consensus—and, again, many more... All share one thing: a belief that blind obedience to the will of the immortal Autocrator keeps the world from ruin.

Life in the Autocracy is conservative with a small “c”. People live much as they’ve always done, following their parents’ beliefs and occupations, living in the same houses, handing down tools, clothes, slaves, books, furniture, from generation to generation, until all talk of origin is gone. It’s an old world; sometimes just thinking about how old can feel like an unbearable weight. Happy are the very young, who for a brief butterfly moment think they invent the world anew.

Much of the world is hard to understand. There are strange lights in the sky, as well as the Five Planets and the Green Moon. The Pentalogiat drifts across the star-scape every night, lighting up the heavens with a word in an unknown tongue. And there are secrets; so much time has passed, that every stone tells a thousand stories, steeped in blood and ancient evil.

Because it’s a violent world, too. Ancient conflicts are never far away. Unhappy kindreds of *jeniri* or *esteri* beyond the Autocracy’s borders, who feel only blind hatred for its people. Rivalries between houses, temples, kindreds, that break out into feuds and minor wars. And a constant rot within the Autocracy itself, where fools and traitors sell tomorrow for fleeting glory and power today, and enslave themselves to the pernicious Void Cult and the dominators of the banished Hegemonist.

But you’re not defenceless! The Gods of the Great Compact gave humankind magic. Temples teach it to their priests; sorcerous schools cast arcane spells; and demons from Beyond the Veil, servitors of the Gods, provide their aid. *Jeniri* and *esteri* contribute, too, the Virikki bring their psionic powers, the Hsun Spider Folk their zoans, artificial life forms enhancing bodies and replacing lost and malformed limbs.

Science, too, remains. Even though the earth is depleted, the knowledge of how its resources were once exploited can still be understood, if sometimes poorly. Artificers employ ancient artefacts, jealously guarded or recovered from the Rust Marshes or the undercities of the archaeopolises.

A Map of the Venerable Autocracy of Sakara

Kilometres
0 200 400





Avladoo Range

GASHTAK
RIET

VLADOOOL

Tyrant Queendom
Of Night

ZGOV

The Wall
Against
The Shakh

PRIDE
OF TLAN

TRANSMISSIO
POINT

Kadram Mountain

Wastes of
Kastalon

ESHOU

AMADORAD

CHANTU

Amadorad
Protectorate

OSSO

ANDALAS

Ilisab River

GANDAREEN

Timosia River

SAPEDRA

Korudav
Province

OSSO
SKYLANCE

ANATINE
GRAVE
CIRCUIT

The Falais

SHAFUL

KORUDAV

REM
BREAKER
POSTILION

Landusi River

Helesper Mountains

AMBARA

HON

MOLOKH

CALAMIS

JIBARA

TANOC

KADOS

A Map of
Hivernium

0 Kilometres 50 100

THE GODS!

Among all these essentials which permit the Autocracy to survive, it is the Gods that are the most important. Their influence is everywhere, determining how you're raised, what occupation you choose, how the calendar tracks events from day to day, year to year, century to century...

Twenty gods pledged themselves to the Great Compact that saved the world in the *Helemoriad*. From peaceful Konfu and bounteous Emeldias, through warlike Regos and bloody Dafur, to deathly Belom, provocative Qal, and uncaring Pline. The Autocracy depicts them with human or near-human forms, but they're greater than mere physical form can encompass, and direct the motive principles of the cosmos itself.

Against the Great Compact are ranged a handful of gods. Foremost is the Great Hegemonist, the almost irresistible force of domination that would control, command, and wield authority over all things. The Easy Dark Path of the Hegemonist is always a temptation to mortals, however much his cult is forbidden and purged by fire wherever it takes root.

Alongside the Hegemonist are arrayed the Reaver Gods. It's unclear if they're gods at all; perhaps they're demons, or indescribable cosmic forces. They stand for the destruction of all that exists, in shrieking terror, horrifying pain, or silent breathless snuffing-out into non-being, forever.

Myths and Monsters

For all its size and sophistication, the Venerable Autocracy doesn't control its world. The Springtide Civilisations are sparsely populated—perhaps forty millions call the Empire home, leaving a vast wilderness that has known neither plough nor footfall for millennia. And there be monsters...

Some are wild animals. Others are jeniri or esteri, implacably hostile. Others still are uncanny beings, perhaps mutated by magic or science, perhaps from other worlds, other dimensions.

The Autocracy's myths promise ancient treasures, too, mighty items of magic and sorcery, powerful artefacts of the lost sciences. Out there, in the howling, monster-infested wild...

WHAT JUST HAPPENED IN KORUDAV?

All is not well in the Venerable Autocracy. For millennia, life slumbered peaceably, growing senescent, quietly decaying. Recently, however, forces have gathered to hasten its fall; ancestral feuds of religion and allegiance have weakened the Autocracy's defences; Entropics have probed the Kadram wall; and, rumour says, ancient machines have begun to stir in the blasted wastes of the east.

A few months ago, a devastating explosion in the archaopolis of Korudav, the like of which had not been seen since the Bright Death of Larum an age ago, sent Hivernium into panic, just as an Entropic incursion from beyond the Wall fell upon its lands. Chaos has reigned since, and fear and bloodshed are everywhere. No one knows what happens next.

Lord Jakai Tellisan, Autarch of Korudav, had tried to prepare for disaster. Interpreting omens, seeing how vulnerable the Autocracy had become, he allied in secret with Barayan-san-Samith, Duke of Amadorad, to create the New Northern Army, dedicated to protecting the Autocracy's northern frontier and bolstering the the Che Kwa jeniri who have garrisoned the Kadram Mountains since time beyond memory. He did this in defiance of the Avatar's orders; for whatever reason, Enessi XXI had forbidden the creation of armed forces in Hivernium. Since then, the Avatar has condemned the New Northern Army, arrested Barayan, and sent his own hand-picked force of the Legion of Dafur to seize Amadorad. The New Northern Army has splintered into factions, weakened by internal fighting just as it's most needed to fight the Entropic Horde. And black smoke from the pyres of human sacrifices mark the Protectorate wherever the Dafuri go.

TABLE 2-1: THE GODS OF THE GREAT COMPACT

DEITY	MYSTICAL PRINCIPLE OF...	COMMENTS
Ankadar	Law	Bringer of Order From Chaos, Venerable Autocrator, Great Springtide.
Babisiya	Darkness	Crone, Night Hag, the Maid of Darkness.
Belom	Death	Lord of Death, Decay, and Corruption; Destroyer of the Undead.
Belorias	Turmoil	Lord of Storm, Turmoil, and the Winds.
Dafur	Change by Fire	Lord of Flame and the Fire Beneath the Earth; God of Earthquakes, Volcanoes, and the Forge.
Emeldias	Growth	She Who Springs Forth From the Earth, Goddess of Growth, Light, and the Spring.
Entos	Animality	The Horned God.
Eshtikar	Fate	Horse and Rider, God of Fate.
Khosht	Realisation of the Will	The Great Architect, Builder of Cities.
Konfu	Wisdom	God of Healing, Master of Zofi, Listener to the Silent Song.
Madiz	Destruction	Lord of the Iron Legions, God of Vengeance, the Temple Laid Low.
Minisia	Narcissism	The Empty Smile, Goddess of Winter, Ice Queen.
Nimur	Cyclicity	Moon Goddess, Mistress of the Ebb and Flow, Mother Ocean.
Payorian	Passion	God of Love and the Vine, Bard and Archer.
Pline	Void	The God of Empty Spaces.
Qal	Unification of Opposites	The Two-Faced God, the Light That Is Darkness.
Regos	Command	Lord of War and Rule, the Conqueror.
Staros	Eternity	God of the Ages, the Everlasting.
Unthar	Time	Chronicler and Timekeeper.
Vareltias	Communication	God of Trade, Traveller and Mediator.



WHAT ELSE IS GOING ON?

As if that wasn't enough, people everywhere talk and fret about an Empire suddenly coming apart at the seams. In the wilderness of Ellib, followers of Aglaya, the False Avatar, martyred by Enessi when he seized power a century ago, move openly and try to ally with their fellow Storm Worshipers in Amadorad. In the Autocracy's heartlands, followers of the Bright Trinity talk of using armies of undead to quell the unrest; and everywhere the People of the Sword and the Storm oppose them, and civil war seems a heartbeat away.

Other Lands

Although the Autocracy alone is bigger and more complex than anyone can comprehend, it's just one of the Springtide Civilisations that cluster around the Middle Sea.

Beyond the Autocracy's southeastern borders lie the jungles of Qamraan, invested with scorpion men, rotten with ancient evil. To the east lie the wastes of the Rabaq Hor and Rabaq Nun, blasted in prehistory, populated only by raiders. Somewhere beyond them lie the dreaming lands of Shai Nub and Abishin.

To the northeast are more civilized lands, still strange in their foreignness. Chinis and Egipet, and beyond them the mythical reaches Far Shuash and the wetlands of the Ing Shu.

And, finally, to the west... endless ocean, beyond which lie the cursed ruins of Nayarak, City of Sorcerers, where the heretics of Demos once brought the world to its knees. And, at the End of the World, the Caliphate of Ornia, ruled by Zangelis, Lord Sunset himself.

Finding Out More About Future Earth

The second volume of The Chronicles of Future Earth, the Guide to Future Earth, provides maps, gazetteers, histories and descriptions of the Venerable Autocracy and other realms of the Springtide Civilisations, and even beyond. But even in this Player's Guide, you can find out more about this vast and complex world:

- **Chapter 5: Homelands and Kindreds** describes the Autocracy's main cultures and the jeniri and esteri kindreds that share it with humankind.
- **Chapter 6: Occupations** describes the professions practiced in its societies.
- Page 320 gives you a description of the temple of the god Regos, Lord of War.
- Page 38 introduces the houses and bloodlines of the Autocracy, according to which its social hierarchy is formed.

You'll also find lots of other information about the Venerable Autocracy and its peoples, landscapes, and denizens throughout this book.



The Basics

Now you know a little about the world of Future Earth, let's look at how the game works and how to play.

A TABLETOP ROLEPLAYING GAME!

So, we're assuming you already know what a tabletop roleplaying game is! If by remarkable chance you've got this far *without* knowing that, then—congratulations, and welcome to the party! Before you go any further, let us direct you to the internet for countless articles and videos explaining what RPGs are—just search for “What is a tabletop roleplaying game?” and have a read, look, or listen. Come back here when you're ready. We'll wait!

WHAT YOU NEED TO PLAY

Like most RPGs, *The Chronicles of Future Earth* doesn't require a huge amount of stuff to play. Here's the minimum:

- **A copy of the game:** At least one person should have this book, and have read the key parts and know where to look for rules and background materials. Start with this chapter! And, although you can play the game with just this *Player's Guide*, we recommend you also have its companion volumes, the *Guide to Future Earth* and the *Chronicle's Guide*, for maximum game fun!
- **Some six-sided dice, preferably of different colours:** *The Chronicles of Future Earth* uses six-sided dice, abbreviated “D6”. You need at least two, and ideally of different colours (or sizes). For the best experience, every person playing should have two differently-coloured D6.
- **Some scratch paper and pencils:** Every player should have at least one sheet of paper and something to write on it with.
- **Several people with a few free hours, looking for a great game!** Although you can play solo, we recommend at least 2 people should play the game, and ideally between 3 and 6. (You can play with more, but it can get a little unwieldy if you're inexperienced.) Get yourselves around a table (real or virtual) for at least 2-4 hours and prepare for adventure!

We also recommend the following optional items:

- **Some character sheets:** The game works more smoothly if every “player” (see below) has a copy of the game’s “character sheet”, and probably one copy of the “relationships sheet” (kind of like a character sheet second page). You can photocopy the ones at the back of this book (page 353), or print copies from the digital version. You can find downloadable versions at www.typhon-games.com.
- **A couple of dozen tokens:** These are great for keeping track of “fate points” (page 28), one of the game’s expendable resources. You can use coins, chits, beads, or even bits of paper; custom-made fate point tokens are available online or at your favourite local game store.

PLAYERS AND GAME MASTERS

The Chronicles of Future Earth has a traditional approach to “game-mastering”, ie refereeing and guiding the game. One person playing the game takes charge of guiding the story you’re telling together, describing the world, the adventurous and perilous situations you find yourselves in, playing the roles of characters you meet (called **non-player characters** or **NPCs**), and adjudicating the rules. We call that person the **Chronicler**, and each **adventure** or **scenario** you play together a **Chronicle**. You can take turns to be Chronicler, or one person can assume the role for a whole **campaign** of multiple Chronicles. You can find out more about NPCs, adventures, scenarios and campaigns in the *Chronicler’s Guide*.

The other people playing are called **players**. Each plays the role of a person in the world of the Springtide Civilisations, called a **player character** or **PC**. You can play more than one character, which can be fun in games where you only have one or two players. Each PC may also have one or more sidekicks that they’re responsible for or who travel with them—more on this below.

The Example Game

In this book we refer to an “example game” to help explain the game rules. It’s played by Sarah, the Chronicler, and five players: Chris, Paco, Rika, Sharma, and Vitas. They’ve got together to play in the Venerable Autocracy of Sakara, the default “home base” for your games (start here if you’re new to the game). Say hi, everyone!

THE CHARACTER SHEET

You use a character sheet to jot down all the relevant information you need for playing your character. Check out the sample character sheet on page 22, filled out for Zabet Karja, one of the characters from the example game. Don’t worry too much about the specifics—we’ll explain how to create characters in the next chapter, but for now let’s take a quick look at what the sections on the character sheet mean.

1. Name and Personal Details

This is where you write your character’s name, and information like where he comes from, what he does, and so on. **Homeland**, **Kindred**, and **Occupation** are also what we call **builds**, pick lists of abilities used in character creation and advancement. The “Builds” entry here just lists all the builds available to your character for ease of reference. See page 36 for more.

2. Aspects

Aspects are an important part of the game, short phrases describing something significant about your character. Aspects get used in lots of cool ways; sometimes they help you; sometimes they cause you hassle. And the best aspects do both!

Every character has six “personal aspects”: **Origin**, **Essence**, **Shadow**, **Blood**, **Doom**, and **Companion**, described on page 39. There are also two **Game Aspects**, which are the same for every PC in your game.

Other things have aspects, too. Your **weapons**, **armour**, and **equipment** can have aspects, as can your **relationships**. Even the **consequences** you suffer in conflicts are aspects. See below for more on all these.

3. Skills

Skills represent your character's areas of competence, what he's good at, by inclination, natural ability, or training. They're sometimes called **mundane skills**, in contrast to **power skills**, which measure magical ability and are dealt with in the magic chapter (page 271). All skills have a numeric **score** or **level**, and range from 1 (basic) to 5 (expert). Skill levels can go higher, but anything above 5 is extraordinary.

You usually start play with **ten skills** with levels between 1 and 4, organized in a kind of pyramid, meaning that you may never have more skills of a certain score than you have at the score below it. So, if you have two level 3 skills, you can't have more than two skills at level 4, and so on. Skills are written using the skill name followed by its level, like "Melee Combat 1".

When you attempt an action whose outcome is in doubt, you roll dice and add your score in an appropriate skill (say, Stealth, if you're trying to hide from someone), and compare it to a numeric **difficulty** to see if you succeed or not. See page 193 for more on these dice rolls.

4. Stunts and Special Abilities, Spells and Cantrips

This part of the character sheet contains information about the special things you know how to do, including amazing feats and magical powers.

Stunts

Stunts are cool ways to break or bend the rules. Maybe you can make trick shots with your bow, or you're an expert in a particular field of knowledge. You start play with up to 5 stunts; many derive from your skills, and there are also **power stunts** which derive from your magical **power skills** (if you have any). Stunts don't just derive from skills, though—you can get them by belonging to builds like legions, fighting schools, and so on. See page 137 for more.

Special Abilities (and Constraints)

Special abilities are a type of stunt that represents an inherent talent or physical capability. Human beings don't normally have special abilities, as they're the default from which other character **kindreds** are measured. Instead, special abilities are usually the preserve of non-human characters, and especially monsters. See page 51 for more.

Constraints are the flipside of special abilities, disadvantages your character incurs because of his physical nature. Again, it's usually non-humans that have constraints—they may be especially large, small, clumsy, or have difficulty communicating with or relating to humans, and so on. See page 52.

Spells and Cantrips

Magic is a big part of *The Chronicles of Future Earth*, and there are many ways to use it. As well as magical **power skills** and **power stunts**, characters also learn sorcerous **spells** (page 268), and every character with a power skill can automatically perform minor magics called **cantrips** (page 267), which you can note down here.

Gods and Temples

*As you read in the previous chapter, the gods are real, and provide power to their worshippers. Your character may be devoted to one of these gods—he may be a priest or holy warrior of its "temple", and so on. Often you note this as part of your occupation ("Priest of Regos") or an aspect (Wandering Minstrel Initiated to Payorian). You can see a write-up of an example temple on page 320, and your Chronicler has information on many more in the **Chronicler's Guide**.*

The Chronicles of FUTURE EARTH

Name: ZABET KARJA
 Homeland: Hivernian
 Kindred: Human Female
 House: Chain of Heroes
 Social Class: Middle (1)
 Occupation: Legionnaire
 Native Language: Low Sakaraiic
 Size: Human-sized (0)
 Age & Birthdate: 20 (2973 CV)
 Consequences: 3 personal + 3 social
 Builds: Hivernian, Legionnaire, Legion of Lord Regos
 Relationships: Blue-Claw (Chelother Mount)
Legion of Lord Regos



Fate Points

5

Refresh: 5

Advancement Points

Treasure

4T

Encumbrance

4

Max: 5

Level 5+:

Level 4: Melee Combat

Level 3: Notice, Ride

Level 2: The Legions, Physique, Ranged Combat

Level 1: Athletics, Contacts, Provoke, Willpower

SKILLS

Doom: We Stand to the Last
Against the Entropic Horde!

Essence: Legionnaire-Errant of Lord Regos

Shadow: The Death of the Age is Upon Us!

Blood: I Follow in the Footsteps
of Family Heroes

Origin: Called to Adventure in the Battle
of the Firecloud

Companion: Zimiri Tegus Makes Sense of
the World Gone Mad

Game Aspects: Nothing Ever Changes,
The World's Going to Hell in a Hand-Cart

ASPECTS

STUNTS & SPECIAL ABILITIES SPELLS & CANTRIPS

FORMATION FIGHTING: +2 skill level in
 Melee Combat defend actions when fighting
 in formation with formation weapons.

INDOMITABLE DEFENCE FIGHTING
 STYLE: When using fighting style weapons, if
 you don't retreat, spend 2FP on a successful
 attack to create "Indomitable Defence" aspect.

KILLING STROKE: 1/scene, pay 1FP to
 increase a physical consequence you inflict
 by 1 step.

LORE SPECIALIST (HIVERNIUM): +2 Lore
 skill for questions relating to Hivernium.

MOUNTED CHARGE: On a successful Ride roll,
 rush a target 2-3 zones away and make a
 Melee Combat or Ride attack in same exchange.

Improvised: _____

WEAPONS

	SI	RG	Notes	Enc
Broadsword	+3		Slashing Wpn	0.5
Lance	+5		Mounted, Impale	2

ARMOUR

Scale Hauberk (-3, Good Protection
Against Blunt Attacks), Round Shield (-2,
Carrying a Shield), Plate Greaves (Difficult to
Sprint), Leather Vambraces, Open Helmet

Enc: 3.5 SR: -5

EQUIPMENT

Clothing marked with Chain of
Heroes symbol and golden sceptre of Regos

The Chronicles of FUTURE EARTH

RELATIONSHIP

Blue-Claw Chelother Mount Size: 1

Aspects: Sudden Excess of Violence

Skills: Physique 3

Stunts & Special Abilities:

INTEGRAL WEAPONRY: Hooves and Claws SI+3
LARGER SIZE (S1)

TRAMPLE: Use Physique to attack smaller targets in the zone you're entering. 2 SD targets, 4 S-1 targets, etc. Special success is a knockdown.

Stress

Physical: (1) (2) (3) (4) Status: ● ● ● ●

Mental: (1) (2) ● ● Wealth: ● ● ● ●

Consequences: _____

RELATIONSHIP

Legion of Lord Regos Size: _____

Aspects: House of the Chain of Heroes

Skills: Resources 1

Stunts & Special Abilities:

Stress

Physical: (1) (2) (3) (4) Status: (1) (2) (3) (4)

Mental: (1) (2) (3) (4) Wealth: (1) (2) (3) (4)

Consequences: _____

RELATIONSHIP

Size: _____

Aspects: _____

Skills: _____

Stunts & Special Abilities:

Stress

Physical: (1) (2) (3) (4) Status: (1) (2) (3) (4)

Mental: (1) (2) (3) (4) Wealth: (1) (2) (3) (4)

Consequences: _____

RELATIONSHIP

Size: _____

Aspects: _____

Skills: _____

Stunts & Special Abilities:

Stress

Physical: (1) (2) (3) (4) Status: (1) (2) (3) (4)

Mental: (1) (2) (3) (4) Wealth: (1) (2) (3) (4)

Consequences: _____

5. Personal Stress and Social Stress

This is where you mark down the wounds, embarrassments, and other stresses and consequences your character suffers in **conflicts**—combats, battles, debates, social clashes, and so on. When you take a “hit” in a conflict, you suffer one or more points of **stress**, and must fill in one of your **stress boxes**. Armour or other protections can absorb stress, but sometimes it affects you directly. Stress usually represents superficial damage you recover from quickly, and your stress boxes clear again after every **scene** (page 26). But, if you take too much stress, you suffer **consequences**, more serious and harder to recover from.

There are four types of stress, grouped into two categories. **Physical** and **mental stress** is **personal stress**, and can lead to physical wounds and mental trauma; **status** and **wealth stress** is **social stress**, and can lead to damage to your reputation and social standing. You automatically have two stress boxes in each of the four types of stress, and may have as many as four—some skills let you withstand more stress.

When you suffer points of stress, you must mark off one (and only one) stress box equal to that number. So, if you suffer 2 points of physical stress, you must mark off your 2-point physical stress box. If your 2-point physical stress box is already filled in (from a previous hit, say), you must mark off the **next highest** stress box. If you incur stress points higher than your highest available stress box, you're in trouble, and sustain more significant harm—what are called **consequences**.

Consequences

Consequences represent lasting harm—physical wounds from combat, confusion, breakdown, or trauma from mental attacks, and so on. Usually consequences require treatment before they can be removed; while they exist, they act as **aspects** which can cause you problems in play.

When you suffer more points of stress than your highest available stress box, you suffer a consequence. A consequence buys off a certain number of stress points. There are three levels of consequence, each of increasing seriousness: **mild**, **moderate**, and **severe**. A mild consequence absorbs 2 points of stress, a moderate absorbs 4, and a severe absorbs 6. You can take one consequence of each level; some characters can take more than one (it's a skill and stunt thing...). You can take more than one consequence at a time. For example, if you take 8 points of physical stress from a hit in combat, you may use your mild and moderate consequences to absorb 6 points of stress (2 and 4 points respectively), and then also mark off your 2-point stress box.

There are two categories of consequence: **personal consequences**, and **social consequences** (corresponding to the two categories of stress). You can sustain mild, moderate, and severe consequences in each category. Yes, that means that when you suffer physical **or** mental stress, you use the same personal consequences to absorb it; and when you suffer status or wealth stress, you use your social consequences.

If you're ever in a situation where you've taken 3 consequences of a particular category, and you've marked off all your available stress boxes, and you still take more stress and can't put it anywhere, then you're **taken out**. This means you've suffered so much lasting damage that your character is no longer playable, perhaps permanently. If you're taken out in physical combat, for example, this could mean your character is dead. See page 215 for more.

6. Fate Points (and Refresh)

Fate points are an important resource. You start play with a certain number, and spend them during play. They're used for various things, but the most important is for **invoking an aspect**—we'll go into what that means below (page 28).

In play, your fate points will fluctuate—usually downwards, as you spend them, but you can earn them back, too. You can note the number on your character sheet, but as it changes frequently, we recommend you use **tokens** instead.

Whenever you start a new session of play, your fate points reset to their initial number, referred to as your **Refresh**. The only time this doesn't happen is if you've finished the previous session with more fate points than your Refresh (you can earn fate points, too, remember). Resetting to your Refresh never lowers the number of fate points you have.

The default Refresh for a character is 10 points, which means you start each session of play with 10 fate points. However, each stunt and special ability your character has reduces your Refresh by 1 point. So, if you have 4 stunts and 2 special abilities, your Refresh will be 4, meaning you start each session of play with 4 fate points. Most characters (especially human ones) start with 5 stunts and a Refresh of 5.

7. Weapons, Armour, and Equipment

You automatically start play with all the equipment listed in the various **builds** you have access to, which may include things like weapons, armour, riding animals, and even special items like **zoans** and certain lower-powered **artefacts**. You can buy additional gear during character creation using a money budget derived from your wealth stress track.

Equipment can have statistics; weapons can increase the physical stress you inflict in combat, armour can reduce stress from attacks against you, and many items have aspects you can use in play. You get access to all these statistics just by owning an item, whether you acquire it when creating your character or during play.

Encumbrance

Encumbrance rules for equipment are for times when that's important. Often it won't be, but if you're deep in the wilderness or in a dangerous ruined undercity, it can be important to know whether you can physically carry the items you want to. You can carry a certain number of **encumbrance points**; write down your **maximum encumbrance** and **current encumbrance** on your character sheet for when you need it. See page 192 for more.



Treasure

Treasure is important, from the coins you carry, to gems worth a certain amount, to valuable artefacts, magical or technological. Treasure can be spent to buy new gear, or to get bonuses on dice rolls to acquire something out of the ordinary; see page 171.

8. Relationships and the Relationships Sheet

Your character doesn't exist in a vacuum; you're a member of society, and maybe of a tightly-knit religious, professional, or social community, and you have friends, allies, dependents, and even riding animals and summoned creatures who you can draw on for favours, getting them to use some of their abilities on your behalf. And they sometimes ask for favours in return! **Relationships** (page 241) are how we quantify this; on your main character sheet, you list your relationships by name. If you need to note down the skills, stunts, aspects, and other abilities you can get the target of your relationship to use on your behalf, you can use a dedicated **relationship sheet** (page 354). You develop your relationships as you play; it's a key part of advancing your character (see page 264).

TAKING ACTION

Let's take a look at how you can use your character in play. Here's a summary of the core game rules.

What's a Scene?

Your Chronicler has lots of information in the *Chronicler's Guide* for managing and measuring what we call **game time**. A **scene** is one such measure, and you'll see the term a lot. Simply put, a scene is the amount of time it takes to resolve a single significant situation in play—perhaps a conflict, or an encounter, or a series of actions in a place to attain a single limited goal. There's no exact time it takes to play out a scene, but usually they range from a few minutes to an hour or more.

How to Roll the Dice

As mentioned above, you play the game by having your characters **take actions** in a series of **scenes** to respond to the situations presented to you by the Chronicler. Many actions are simple and self-explanatory, and you can just say you do something and then do it. "I open the door" doesn't require any more attention than that. Sometimes, though, there'll be an element of uncertainty about an action. Maybe that door is locked—can you pick the lock? Or it's jammed—are you strong enough to force it open? Maybe it's hidden—can you find it?

In these cases, we use a **dice roll** to determine whether your character can do what you want him to. To make a dice roll, take two six-sided dice of different colours, and designate one the **Hero Die**, and the other the **Doom Die**. Now roll both dice, and subtract the value of the Doom Die from the value of the Hero Die. Now add your skill score in a relevant skill to the total; that's the **result** of your dice roll. Sometimes, your Chronicler may even ask you to roll more than one Hero Die or Doom Die. We call this process **rolling the Cosmic Fate dice**.

Next, compare the result of your dice roll to a **difficulty**. Difficulties may be set by the Chronicler, or they may be fixed and unchanging, or they may be equal to the dice roll of an opponent. It depends on the context. If the result of your dice roll is higher than the difficulty, you succeed at what you're trying to do. If it's lower, you fail. If it's exactly the same, the result is a tie—and that can mean various things (see page 197).

The Ladder

You might see a pattern in the way *The Chronicles of Future Earth* handles numbers; most skill levels fall between 1 and 5; the Cosmic Fate dice produce results between -5 and +5; and so on.

In fact, all numerical scores in the game exist on the same spectrum of numbers. A skill level of 1 is the same power as a Cosmic Fate roll result of +1, both of which give you an idea of how difficult a difficulty 1 task is. This spectrum is called **the ladder**, and lets you compare the relative magnitudes of skill levels, dice roll results, difficulties, and even the bonuses and penalties you sometimes apply to rolls.

TABLE 3-1: THE LADDER—WHAT THE NUMBERS MEAN

NUMBER	WHAT THAT NUMBER CAN REPRESENT
-5	A disastrously bad dice roll—most likely a fumble!
-4	An abysmal roll.
-3	A terrible roll.
-2	A very poor roll.
-1	A poor roll.
0	The difficulty of an easy task; an average dice roll; an unskilled character attempting a mundane task.
+1	A straightforward task performed without pressure; a moderately decent dice roll; an apprentice-level skill.
+2	A somewhat challenging task, or a straightforward task performed under pressure; a fair dice roll; a competent-level skill.
+3	A challenging task; a good dice roll; a professional-level skill.
+4	A very challenging task; a great dice roll; a journeyman-level skill.
+5	A difficult task; a superb dice roll—most likely a critical success; a master-level skill which is the maximum achieved by most people.
+6	A very difficult task; an advanced master-level skill achieved by exceptional individuals.
+7	A daunting task; a champion-level skill.
+8	A very daunting task; a heroic skill level.
+9	An utterly daunting task; a legendary skill level.
+10	An almost impossible task; a superhuman skill level.

The main numbers on the ladder are shown in Table 3-1: The Ladder—What the Numbers Mean. Note though that the ladder is open-ended; there are numbers above and below those shown.

Interpreting the Results

The amount by which your dice roll result exceeds the difficulty of the task you're attempting is called **shifts**. If you roll a result of 3 against a difficulty of 1, you generate 2 shifts. Shifts are used in many things—not only do they determine the magnitude of your success (or your failure), they also determine how much stress, for example, you cause your opponent in a conflict (page 201).

Some results have particular significance. A result with 5 shifts or more is called a **special success**, and can produce special effects, especially in conflicts. A roll of 6 on your Hero Die and 1 on your Doom Die is a **critical success**. This may have several effects: its most important is that it bypasses **stress reduction** (page 174) in conflicts. Conversely, a roll of 1 on your Hero Die and 6 on your Doom Die is a **critical failure**, also called a **fumble**. The most important effect of a fumble is that you may not re-roll the dice by invoking an aspect (page 198).

SCORES, MODIFIERS, AND SCALES

We use the following conventions to make it easy for you to differentiate between skill and difficulty scores, modifiers, and scales.

Scores

Scores are simple numbers that designate skill levels and difficulties, as well as the results of a dice roll. *Examples: Lore 4 (a skill), difficulty 3 (a difficulty), and result 9 (a dice roll result).*

Modifiers

Sometimes you modify a dice roll result upwards or downwards. These **modifiers** are written with a + or a -. For example, a weapon may give you a **Stress Increase (SI)**, increasing the shifts of stress you inflict when at-

tacking with it. Similarly, armour may give you a **Stress Reduction (SR)**, reducing the shifts of stress you suffer when someone hits you in combat. Additionally, **invoking an aspect** (see below) can give you a modifier of +2 to a dice roll. *Examples: Broadsword (SI+2), leather armour (SR-1).*

Scales

Scales measure the relative magnitude of your character's capacity for action. Rules for using scales are given on page 235. The main scales are **Size**, representing physical size, and **Social Class**, representing the caste systems of the Springtide Civilisations. Scales differ from scores by being fixed "bands", and often have a descriptive **label**. *Examples: Human-Sized (0), Noble (3).*

FATE POINTS

Fate points have several uses—see **Chapter 7: Aspects and Fate Points**. Here are the most important.

Invoking an Aspect

Invoking an aspect is the main use of an aspect. Remember, aspects are short phrases describing something important about a character, situation, condition, or even an item of equipment. When an aspect seems immediately relevant to the situation you're facing, you may **invoke** it for an advantage.

To invoke an aspect, you describe precisely how it's relevant to what you're trying to do, and then pay a fate point. The Chronicler must agree that your proposed invoke is reasonable—sometimes you might be tempted to stretch the use of an aspect a bit too far! Assuming the Chronicler accepts, you subtract a fate point from your total, and get either a +2 bonus on your dice roll, or re-roll the dice roll entirely. An invoke happens **after** you roll the dice; you don't have to invoke and **then** roll to see what your result is.



.....

For example, Zabet Karja is fighting a horde of entropic beasts overrunning a small border village. She's just rolled a dreadful -3 result on her attack roll. However, she has the Essence aspect Legionnaire-Errant of Lord Regos. She spends a fate point to invoke that aspect, describing how devoted she is to the defence of Hivernium's provinces, and re-rolls her attack. Hopefully she'll do better next time!

.....

Declaring a Story Detail

You can spend a fate point to make a minor narrative tweak to your situation. This can be very powerful. For example, if you're unarmed and surrounded by thugs in a debris-filled alleyway, you can spend a fate point to declare that there **must** be some heavy, lumpy item lying around to use as a cudgel. The Chronicler must agree with your **declaration** (it's not a license to trash a carefully prepared Chronicle!), but otherwise you spend the fate point and suddenly you're armed again!

Accepting a Compel

Sometimes aspects cause you trouble. But, hey, you're an adventurer, you're looking for trouble in the first place, so what better than trouble that means something to you personally? What's more, when you let an aspect cause trouble for you, you get a fate point to add to your total! This is called **compelling an aspect**—see page 128 for more!

.....

Zabet is at a swish dinner hosted by Jakai Tellisan, Autarch of Korudav, where she's hoping to pump her legion superiors for information. Word suddenly comes that the northern frontier is being attacked by entropics, and several heroic types leap to their feet and declare they're leaving immediately to fight them! Zabet has the Origin aspect Called to Adventure in the Battle of the Firecloud. Her player, Sharma, knows this is a call to action—who knows where it may lead? Zabet abandons her plans to quiz the legion brass, draws her broadsword, and yells "For Korudav!" Sarah, the Chronicler, smiles and hands Sharma a fate point to add to her total. Time for adventure!

.....

CHARACTER ADVANCEMENT

As your character adventures, his abilities improve and he gets more and more awesome. This is called **advancement**. You can find full details on page 258; for now, suffice it to say that during play you'll pass **milestones** where the Chronicler will award you **advancement points (AP)**, which you can use to buy increases in skill levels, new stunts and other abilities, and even new aspects, relationships, Refresh points, and more.

Your Advancement Point Pool

You don't have to spend your advancement points immediately; you can save them up to spend on bigger purchases. In particular, because AP can buy **relationships**, magic-using characters often keep a pool of AP to spend on temporary relationships like **summonings**. For example, if you want to summon a demon or elemental, you'll need AP to spend on its abilities. When that demon or elemental departs (or is killed), you get those AP back, and may spend them on something else (maybe another summoning...).

WHAT'S NEXT?

Now you know the basic rules! You can go right ahead now and play a simple game using just this information. Try it!

Probably, though, you're ready for more detail. Here's where to look.

To find out how to create your own characters, read **Chapter 4: Creating Your Character**. To see which places or species your characters can come from, check out **Chapter 5: Homelands and Kindreds**. To read more about the rules, see **Chapter 10: How to Do Things**. If you want to find out more about how magic works, see **Chapter 13: Magic**. If you want to read about gods, temples, and the fascinating world of Future Earth, see the *Guide to Future Earth*. And, if you want to read about being a Chronicler, check out beasts, artefacts, and more, see the *Chronicler's Guide*. Adventure awaits!





Creating Your Character

You're familiar with the character sheet and basic rules. Now let's look at how to create characters.

SETTING UP YOUR CHRONICLES GAME

Even before you start creating characters, it's good to chat with your fellow players about the kind of game you'd like to play. Sometimes it's obvious—the Chronicler has an adventure (a **Chronicle**) prepared, explains who your characters are and what they're doing. But you can play *The Chronicles of Future Earth* in many ways: your game could be grim and gritty, dealing with the hard lives of common people in the crumbling cities of the Venerable Autocracy, or facing the terrifying advance of entropics swarming over the mountainous Wall Against the Shakh.

Or your game could be political, filled with backbiting and intrigue in an autarchal court where dramas of nobility, greed, and corruption play out against a backdrop of grandiose opulence. Or it could be heroic, epic, your characters protecting villages, confronting terrifying threats, and saving the day. You could even play a comic or satirical game. The possibilities are almost endless.

It's good to pin this down before creating characters. There's nothing worse than expecting to play a doomed hero facing impossible odds, and then to be faced with a game of comical farce set in a circus run by the temple of Qal. Or vice versa!

There are two tools to help you set up your game: **game scope** and **game aspects**.

Game Scope

You know how some stories talk about everyday folks struggling to get by, facing problems with relationships and their social circle, while others deal with the machinations of generals and kings? And other stories **start** with an ordinary Jane or Joe (or Jilla or Jakai...), then track their rise to power, taking actions that eventually affect the whole world? All that stuff is **game scope**: how grand the events are, where the characters are going, how mighty the opponents and challenges they face.

When you get together to create characters with your fellow players, take a moment to discuss the scope of the game you'd like to play, at least to start with. There's no right or wrong answer, except that everyone should be happy with the decision and looking forward to playing that kind of game. Try and summarise this scope in a single sentence and jot it down. We won't use it in the rules, but it's useful to refer to.

.....
Remember our example game? Sarah, the Chronicler, has got together with Chris, Paco, Rika, Sharma, and Vitas, the players, to create characters. After a brief discussion, they decide they'd like to play a group of diverse and reasonably competent individuals recruited by a shadowy organisation to undertake secret missions. The idea is that the missions should appear to be "in a good cause", but that the organisation's ultimate agenda should be mysterious. The mood of the game should be heroic and a bit pulpy, with light-hearted moments, but essentially filled with deadly challenges, meaningful stakes, and secrets...

Sarah agrees this is a great approach: it's well-structured, and provides the group with clear goals and a reason for being together—but there's also the possibility of change, mystery, and intrigue. She knows a good organisation, too, and suggests "A Bunch of Ragtag Heroes, Recruited as Agents of the Autocrator's Hand" as a tag-line for the group's game scope.

Game Aspects

Once you've determined your game scope, the next step is to formulate a couple of phrases describing the dynamics of your immediate game environment. For example, is the land at war? What's the immediate challenge facing most people on a day-to-day basis? Is there a Big Bad looming in the near to medium future that everyone's worried about? What's the vibe on the street when you step outside your door?

What you're doing here is creating a couple of tag-lines to describe the world around the PCs. It doesn't have to be detailed—you're looking for atmosphere, a thread you can draw on to explore further. Try and make these two **game aspects** as different as possible; if they conflict or contrast, all the better—that's the stuff great stories are made of!

Try and encapsulate these two aspects as punchy phrases. They'll be permanent (or semi-permanent) background aspects for your game, which **anyone** can use. Don't sweat it too much—just get something down on paper, and you can refine it later.

.....
The group is discussing the world they see their characters moving in. Sarah describes the Venerable Autocracy and recent events there, and the players come up with two game aspects.

The first is Nothing Ever Changes. This feels like a good description of life in the ancient Empire. It'll be a source of frustration, predictability, and inertia—great things for the characters to bounce off in play.

The second aspect is The World's Going to Hell In a Hand-cart! Sarah explains that the Chronicle they'll be playing is set in and around the archaeopolis (a huge and ancient city) of Korudav, shortly after a massive, nuclear-style explosion partially destroyed it, scattering panicked waves of refugees, just as hideous entropic monsters invaded from the north! This game aspect contradicts the first one completely: things are changing, and fast! The group agrees that the tension between the two aspects should provide interesting and dramatic moments during play.

At that point, Sarah hands out blank character sheets to everyone. There's space on each for those two game aspects, and everyone notes them down. Now to create characters!

How Your Characters Fit Into The World

The Venerable Autocracy of Sakara is the default “home base” for player characters. It’s fifteen thousand years old, and survives through intense conservatism and an adherence to the rituals and traditions which protect the world from the forces of domination and entropy—the Great Hegemonist and the Reaver Gods. In the Autocracy, innovation and freewheeling aren’t just frowned upon, they’re actively resisted by society and religion. It’s an ancient, mythical conflict.

So how do the anarchic activities of player characters fit into this framework? That’s one of the major themes of the game: the end of the age is upon us, and traditional behaviours are no longer working. The Entropic Hordes threaten from the frozen wastes of Yurasha in the north, and the Venerable Autocracy seems riddled with corruption, on the verge of collapse.

Enter your player characters! There are factions in the Springtide Civilisations trying to rise to the challenge, to defend the world from the ancient foe—but can they relearn the adaptability they need when so many are mired in fear and lethargy? Unchecked change almost destroyed the world in the past, in the time of the Helemoriad, the Armageddon of the Gods, and again in the Doom of Nayarak and the fall of the Empire of Tlan. Who dares risk it again?

Why, you do, of course! Our default assumption is that your characters are the good guys: misfits, mavericks, and troubleshooters, people capable of seeing the world’s lethargy in the face of terrible peril, and ready to embark upon desperate missions to save it.

In our example game, the PCs are being recruited by the Autocrator’s Hand, a shadowy secret society that monitors, evaluates, and even terminates those who stray too far into the chaotic and freewheeling behaviours that are the gateway to the Reaver Gods—precisely the sort of behaviours beloved of player characters! In return, they’ll receive resources, access to special abilities and advancements, and power and influence in the Autocracy. So that’s why the players’ characters are together right now. Sarah explains that they’ve ultimately been tasked with infiltrating the ranks of the Autarch of Korudav, a heroic leader on the frontier with the Entropic Wastes, who has been disobeying the Venerable Autocrator, living god of Law, to assemble his New Northern Army, an innovative force which he believes can resist the rising danger. But has the Autarch gone too far? Is he unleashing forces of disorder and innovation which will allow the corruption of the Hegemonist and Reavers to overwhelm the Autocracy? Sarah likes the moral complexity of this set-up, and its built-in dilemmas as the PCs try to monitor others for behaviours they themselves are guilty of and sympathetic to!

Their first Chronicle, though, Sarah explains, is a rescue mission. Exactly what or who they’re supposed to rescue, and where and why, she leaves unclear for now, expecting to fill in more detail as the players create their characters.



So Who's Your Character?

Your character is your alter-ego in the world of *The Chronicles of Future Earth*. It doesn't have to be anything like you—it can be a different sex, gender, ethnicity, species, and have radically different abilities from your own. It should be **interesting**, though, giving you a role and identity you'll be happy playing.

Creating characters is a process of gradually zooming in on detail. You start zoomed out, deciding on an overall concept, then start to focus, describing the character in more detail, making decisions as you go. There's a structure—you can't just make everything up as you want. Instead, you have points to spend, blanks to fill in.

The “Character Creation Checklist” on page 35 summarises the steps you'll take. Don't worry if it looks complicated—it's pretty straightforward, a series of consecutive choices fleshing out your character idea. It's good to spend your first session of play creating your characters, doing so together, making suggestions to one another and ensuring your characters complement one another and have hooks into one another's stories. Here goes!



Family Structure, Gender, and Sexuality

The Springtide Civilisations are very conservative. Although there are wide ranges of acceptable behaviours and sexual, gender, and family norms, they've remained unchanged for millennia.

In the Venerable Autocracy, sexual relations are common, normal in legions and places of learning as ways of promoting bonding and group loyalty. Contraception is easy and obvious; there are plants with contraceptive properties, temple blessings for those who want fertility, those who don't, or those who don't care. Fertility is mostly the concern of the temple of Emeldias. Marriages of various kinds exist, including those between individuals and those which unite families. They're viewed as legal contracts.

Gender and sex roles are broad and flexible; male and female are two ends of a spectrum which contains many permutations diverging from an androgenous locus, and where you stand on that spectrum is unimportant. Even temples which practice gender dimorphism in roles, like Babisiya and Emeldias, recognise “Women Within” and “Men Within”. There are magics to change sex, and temples like Qal revel in sexual and gender ambiguity as they do in ambiguity of all kinds—androgynes often find the temple a great arena for philosophical self-expression. In a world of many intelligent and even alien species, diversity is so much the norm that few would ever think to question it. It's how it's been for thousands of years.

Character Creation Checklist

- Choose your character concept
- Choose your homeland, kindred, and occupation builds
- Choose your social class and community (if any)
- Choose your character aspects
 - > Choose your Origin aspect
 - > Choose your Essence and Shadow aspects
 - > Create your Companion aspect
 - > Select your Blood aspect
 - > Choose your Doom
- Choose your skills and stunts, and any special abilities and constraints
- Define any relationships you have, including communities
- Final touches
 - > Calculate your Refresh, stress tracks, and consequences
 - > Calculate your starting money and equipment
 - > Determine your age and size

Choosing Your Character Concept

This is the first thing to do. Just try and describe what you want your character to be in a sentence or two. Jot them down—you'll spend the rest of character creation unpacking them.

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 Here's what our players in the *Autocrator's Hand* game come up with:

- Chris wants to play a tricky, thief-type character, with ambiguous morals and a propensity to shock. They're not concerned with kindred, so opt to play a human.
- Paco fancies playing a **really** non-human character, perhaps one of the *esteri* "Not-Humans of Earth". He'd like that person to be a bit of an intriguer, too.
- Rika wants to play a big tough warrior, but also someone with unusual abilities, so probably a non-human, maybe one of the *jeniri* "Cousins of Humankind".
- Sharma wants to play a fighter, someone embedded in *Sakari* society, with contacts and relationships. She opts to play a human.
- Vitas is fascinated by artefacts and technologies, so wants to play someone who can identify, repair, and perhaps even create them. He's going to play an artificer, and probably a human.

The group decides their characters have a decent range of competences already, but someone should probably also know how to use ranged weapons, and another should have some basic healing abilities. Otherwise they're good to go!

.....

Choosing Your Homeland, Kindred, and Occupation

Now you've got your basic character concept, let's unpick it slightly to decide where your character comes from, what culture or species (called **homelands** and **kindreds**) they are, and what they do for a living (their **occupation**).

These elements will provide your character with pick lists of abilities—skills, stunts, maybe even special abilities, and so on—to choose from when filling out your character sheet. We call these pick lists **builds**, and they're a common feature of the game; while character creation is pretty free-form, and in theory you can choose **any** ability for your character, builds provide logic and consistency, ensuring you have the requisite **permissions** for your abilities. For example, it's possible to create a custom background, in discussion with your Chronicler, to give you access, say, to divine magic and its associated pow-

ers; but, if you choose the Priest occupation and a corresponding temple to belong to, doing so gives you access to two builds (one for Priest, one for your temple—see below), which automatically give you the permissions you need to take divine magic freely. You don't have to take every ability listed for your chosen builds, but, unless you have good reason not to, you should **choose at least one** from each category (one skill, one stunt, etc) to ensure your character is a decent representative. Indeed, to create a character really quickly, you can just select nothing but build abilities until you've filled out your character sheet according to the guidelines below. Builds are also important in character **advancement** (page 258).

Homeland

There are many homelands in the Springtide Civilisations. This book focuses on the Venerable Autocracy of Sakara, but each of its provinces and regions is a homeland in its own right. You can find descriptions of these in **Chapter 5: Homelands and Kindreds**.

Most people in the Autocracy don't move around much. Local cultures are strong and distinctive, and conflicts between customs and ideologies frequent. Your character's homeland determines the gods he worships, his attitudes to the world, the occupations available to him, even his kindred. You can select a homeland from those beginning on page 53, and note it on your character sheet. If you're playing a non-human from outside the Autocracy, you don't have to choose a separate homeland; your kindred build contains all the information you need. If you're playing a non-human from within the Autocracy, you can choose both a kindred **and** a homeland.

Kindred

Most characters belong to human kindreds, but you don't have to. You can be one of the **jeniri**—the Cousins of Humankind—or even the alien and unfathomable **esteri**, the Not-Humans of Earth. See pages 64 and 76 respectively for descriptions of jeniri and esteri kindreds. Playing a non-human character gives you an additional build; if you're a human character, you won't have a separate kindred build as those abilities are subsumed in your homeland (but see page 64). Note your kindred on your character sheet.



Occupation

Your **occupation** is what your character does in his daily life—his profession, vocation, main activity. You may have an idea of your occupation from your character concept; or you can pick one of the examples listed in your kindred or your homeland writeup; or you can pick something completely different—check with your Chronicler!

Chapter 6: Occupations details occupations commonly found in the Venerable Autocracy. It's not exhaustive, and you can even create your own. Each occupation has several builds; pick one when you select that occupation. Maybe you want to play a fighter; but are you a warrior, legionnaire, mercenary, or holy warrior?

Once again, you don't have to choose every ability listed for your occupation build, but if you find yourself ignoring most of the suggestions, maybe think about a different occupation!

A Quick Note on Community Builds

*This is a good moment to mention **community builds**, which are a kind of "extended occupation build" which we'll discuss later. When you choose an occupation for your character, like a legionnaire or priest, that will give you a build with pick-lists of abilities. However, you can also choose which legion you belong to, which temple you're a priest of, etc—and that will also give you a customised pick-list of additional abilities called a **community build**. You don't always do this, and in any case you don't have to choose abilities from your community build, but it can be a cool way to differentiate your character from others. See page 88 below for more on community builds.*

Choosing a Name

At some point during character creation you should pick a name for your character. You'll find a selection of names in the homeland and kindred writeups to give you a feel. Write your name on your character sheet now; don't worry too much about getting it exactly right—you can change it later if you wish.

The players in the Autocrator's Hand game are picking homelands, kindreds, and occupations.

- *Chris wants to be anchored in the immediate campaign environment, so chooses the Hivernian homeland—their character is from the city of Korudav. Looking at the Rogue occupation, they don't want to be an out-and-out thief, so select the "Tomb Robber" build, deciding they belong to the Guild of the Respectful Explorers of Antiquity. They also want their character to be provocative and tricky—more on that below. At this point they don't have a name in mind.*
- *Paco looks through the non-human kindreds and decides his character is one of the octopoid Ing Shu esteri—he likes their unusual take on morality, reasoning he can play an interesting, Machiavellian character. Looking through the suggested Ing Shu occupations, he picks "Trader Priest", meaning the "Temple Priest" build from the Priest occupation, worshipping Vareltias, god of trade and communication. He doesn't select a homeland build; his kindred build contains the background information he needs, and he notes "Formen Isle", an Ing Shu stronghold, as his homeland. For a name, Paco wants something relating to the number of tentacles his character has, so starts off just calling them "Six".*
- *Rika's found the ideal jeniri kindred for her massive warrior character: a Magigi "Red Giant", a three-metre tall hulking humanoid with an affinity for the mystical principle of Change By Fire. She decides to emphasise that affinity, choosing the "Holy Warrior" build of the Fighter occupation, and noting she's a worshipper of Dafur, god of fire, and affiliated with the Autocracy's Legion of the Sword of Fire. She doesn't choose a separate homeland build, but notes down "the Hagya Mountains", a Red Giant stronghold, in her homeland entry. Looking through the suggested names for female Magigi, she picks the name Ukhta.*

- *Sharma decides her fighter is also from the city of Korudav—maybe her character knows Chris's character already! She decides she's a legionnaire of the Legion of Lord Regos, as they feel like the "good guys". She picks a name from the list in the Hivernium homeland writeup: Zabet Karja.*
- *Finally, Vitas decides he's another local, picking the Hivernian homeland. He sees that priests of the god Khosht the Builder are called "Artificers" and have the abilities to repair and create artefacts which interest him, so he also picks the "Temple Priest" build of the Priest occupation. Even though that's another priest for the party, Vitas's Artificer will be very different from Paco's Ing Shu Trader Priest. Vitas decides to use his own surname, Varnas, for his character name. He might develop it more later.*

Sarah notes that, to begin with, none of the PCs have access to the Autocrator's Hand secret society build, but that if their mission goes well they'll gain a permission to buy its abilities in play.

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Let's see what the players' chosen builds mean for their characters' abilities.

Choosing Your Social Class, House, and Communities

The Venerable Autocracy is status-conscious and stratified, and precedence and hierarchy influence interpersonal relations. Several factors determine where your character stands.

Social Class

Your character's **Social Class** describes the hierarchical social grouping into which he is born. The homelands of the Venerable Autocracy and the jeniri and esteri kindreds existing outside it have similar social classes. Often the labels differ—a chieftain in one homeland may be a noble, lord, or vizier in another. You can roll your social class, or pick one, using the table for your homeland or kindred. It's no advantage to be higher social class, as each comes with duties and responsibilities.

TABLE 4-1: GENERAL SOCIAL CLASS

SCALE	TYPICAL LABEL	EXAMPLES
-3	Outcast	Outcasts, outlaws, exiles, slaves.
0	Lower Class	Peasants, rural farmers, hunters, warriors.
1	Middle Class	Townsmen, crafters, guilders.
2	Upper Class	Officials.
3	Noble	Parigers*; gentry, lesser nobles, clan chieftains.
4	Aristocrat	Astrigers*; upper nobility, tribal kings.
5	Ruler	Astrigers*; immediate royal family, imperial family.

In game terms, your Social Class is a **scale**; the scale rules (page 235) regulate interactions between social classes. Table 4-1: General Social Class provides an overview of Social Class scales; labels change based on your homeland or kindred.

House

People in the Venerable Autocracy belong to **houses**, small-scale social groupings that in the distant past were (probably) tribal clans. They're **communities** (page 39), and some have members throughout the Empire. Pick one now; your homeland build gives examples of Sakari house names, or you can invent your own.

Houses are associated with social classes. Most Sakari never think of social class, but rather which house a person belongs to, knowing which house outranks another. See page 52.

Bloodline

Bloodlines are lineages. They can go back millennia, the most prestigious with family trees listing every member. They're a "family name" for most Sakari. Most belong to a single social class, though not always to a single house. Their fortunes wax and wane unpredictably.

If you're Sakari, pick a "surname" now: that's your bloodline. Bloodlines are useful for making contacts, finding information, exercising influence, and more.

Non-Sakari characters, particularly non-humans, probably won't have a bloodline. Sometimes, though, they create fake house and bloodline names to better fit into the Empire's hierarchies. You can do this if you want.

Other Communities

A community is a group of like-minded individuals united for a common purpose. Communities can be important in your game, especially as you advance and become more powerful—your Chronicler has rules for creating and making use of them. As far as your character is concerned, communities can provide you with additional pick-lists of abilities—what's called a **community build**—and you can also create **relationships** with communities to get them to help you out.

At this point while creating your character, take a moment to jot down any communities you belong to. Check with your Chronicler—they might include guilds, legions, fighting schools, temples, sorcerous schools, and so on. If you want any of these communities to give you a community build, you must refer to that community in one of your aspects. It doesn't have to be a personal aspect; it can be an aspect belonging to a relationship you have with that community.

Check with your Chronicler if you want to pick abilities from a community build. You can find example community builds in **Chapter 6: Occupations** (page 98) and in **Chapter 13: Magic** (page 320), and the *Guide to Future Earth* contains many more. You don't have to choose communities for your character, but it often makes sense to do so.

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Let's look at Sharma's character, Zabet Karja. She's a Hivernian legionnaire. Looking at Table 5-1: Hivernian Social Class, Sharma sees "Legionnaire" is a typical occupation for middle class characters, so notes down "Middle (1)" in the Social Class entry on her character sheet. She could make up her own house name, but picks the example given—Zabet is from the House of the Chain of Heroes.

That house is one community Zabet belongs to. However, her legion is probably more important to her: her occupation, Legionnaire, is already a build, and if she likes she can mention the Legion of Lord Regos, Indomitable, in one of her aspects and gain access to the abilities it offers as a community build. In any case, she decides she's also going to create a relationship with her legion, so that it can help her out sometimes.

Choosing Your Character Aspects

You know that each character has six personal aspects. Now's the time to create them. Personal aspects highlight facets of your character's existence, and can be regularly **invoked** and **compelled** (see page 28 above and page 126 in **Chapter 7: Aspects and Fate Points**). Here are the six personal aspects; each is described in detail below.

- **Origin:** Why your character chose a life of adventure in the first place. Your "origin story".
- **Essence:** Your character concept—a single-phrase description of who he is.
- **Shadow:** The main reason your character gets into trouble—it might be a weakness, a "dark side", and so on.
- **Blood:** A cultural value which affects how you behave, often derived from your homeland or kindred.
- **Doom:** Your character's destiny, what drives him onwards in his perilous life.
- **Companion:** This aspect refers to another character—either a PC or NPC—who's important to you in your everyday life. This person may travel with you, or you may interact with them on a regular basis. It doesn't even have to be a person—a companion can be a favoured riding animal.

These aspects are single, short phrases, and not definitive, once-and-for-all statements about your character. They're "teasers", often vague and ambiguous, which you'll explore during play. When you create your personal aspects, don't be afraid to invent names of people, places, events, without knowing what they mean. This is good juju; you, your fellow players, and the Chronicler can use these as stepping stones to improvise cool details later in play.

Let's create these personal aspects.

Choosing Your Origin Aspect

Think about why your character is adventuring. Why isn't he staying at home, living his day-to-day life? Why is he risking life and limb for some grand cause? Answering these questions will give you your **Origin aspect**.

Remember, you're just creating a short phrase, which can be ambiguous and replete with unspecified references you'll explore later.

Sharma is interested in Zabet Karja's experiences during the Firecloud explosion that devastated Korudav, figuring it was a formative event that turned her from a rank-and-file legionnaire into the adventurer she is today. She defines her Origin aspect as Called to Adventure in the Battle of the Firecloud.

That'll be a good aspect to unpick during play. For example, how was Zabet called to adventure? What was the Battle of the Firecloud? Sharma can imagine explanations, people Zabet knows, experiences she's had, perhaps even against the entropics, which could lead to some cool invokes of her Origin.

Choosing Your Essence and Shadow Aspects

You're now going to create two aspects: a pithy one-liner summarising your character "at a glance", and a short phrase summing up what most often gets him into trouble.

Your **Essence aspect** often references your builds, especially those that encapsulate "who your character is".

Although "Legionnaire of Lord Regos" is what Zabet is, it's fairly drab as an Essence aspect. Sharma asks Sarah, the Chronicler, if her Essence could be Legionnaire-Errant of Lord Regos. Sarah knows that "Legionnaire-Errant" isn't a defined rank in Zabet's legion, but she can see what Sharma means: it implies Sharma took up her sword after the Firecloud and is now out in the wild, travelling, fighting entropics, and righting wrongs. This one-word addition makes Zabet's Essence aspect more interesting, to be unpacked and invoked in cool ways during play. It also mentions her membership of the Legion of Lord Regos, Indomitable, meaning she can also select abilities from the legion's community build (see page 98).

Your **Shadow aspect** may come directly from your homeland, kindred, or occupation build, referring to dark sides, social prejudices, poor behaviour, or typical defects in their members' personalities and behaviours.

Sharma's starting to see that Zabet has been through a shocking experience, and is fighting to do something about it. She may be overcompensating for her trauma, and may suffer bouts of mania and fatalistic depression as she contemplates the magnitude of the threat facing her beloved Hivernium. She decides The Death of the Age Is Upon Us! would be a great Shadow aspect, thinking of the many ways that could get her into trouble—in return for extra fate points, of course!



Using Your Power Skills to Colour Your Essence, Shadow, Blood, or Doom Aspects

*If your character uses magic, he'll have at least one **power skill**, meaning he has an affinity for a mystical principle of the cosmos, like Eternity, Growth, Change By Fire, or even Domination, which profoundly affects his personality. Every power skill you have must be reflected in one of your aspects. This doesn't have to be overwhelming: your aspect can be about something completely different, but nevertheless a personality trait you have by virtue of your power skill affinity must modify its wording. The power skill writeups in **Chapter 13: Magic** give examples. See page 279 for more.*

Choosing Your Blood Aspect

Your Blood aspect expresses how you've been influenced by your homeland or kindred. It's often an ideology, belief system, prejudice, or cultural value. **Chapter 5: Homelands and Kindreds** gives typical Blood aspects you can use directly, or as inspiration when creating your own.

The suggested Blood aspects for Hivernians are mostly about loyalty, respect and honour towards fighters. While those virtues are important to Zabet, it also makes Sharma think that maybe her character is from a military family—that one of her parents or other predecessors was also in the Legion of Lord Regos, Indomitable, before her. She decides Zabet's Blood aspect is In the Footsteps of Family Heroes.

Choosing Your Doom

Now you know something about your character's attitudes and background, it's time to define what's driving him—his great motivation, fate or destiny. This is your **Doom aspect**, and it's rather special.

Defining Your Doom

Your Doom is a motto, philosophy, or catch-phrase for your character. It's grandiose, heroic, something he can shout as a war-cry or mutter between clenched teeth when facing impossible odds. It encapsulates your character's view of himself as a doomed hero on the quest of his life.

Your Doom aspect shouldn't be banal. Avoid *Legionnaire of the Sword of Fire* in favour of *Blood and Souls for my Lord Dafur!*

Zabet's Doom aspect comes to Sharma in a flash: from everything she's figured out about Zabet's motivations and beliefs, We Stand to the Last Against the Entropic Horde! seems an obvious way for Zabet to articulate her destiny.

Invoking and Compelling Your Doom

Invoking and compelling your Doom works differently than for other aspects. We describe this on page 132, but, essentially, when you invoke your Doom, you incur an automatic consequence instead of paying a fate point, and in return you get a huge +4 bonus instead of the usual +2.

Creating Your Companion Aspect

Your **companion** (or sometimes companions) is another character whose story has become entangled with your own—and now you're battling through life together dealing with the consequences. They're often called **Doom Companions**, as they may share elements of your **Doom** (above).

To create your **Companion aspect**, think about how the other character's Doom interacted with your own, and derive a single aspect from that. The aspect may refer to how you took part in the other character's Doom, or how that character took part in yours.

Ideally your Doom Companion should be another player character in your party—it'll provide awesome possibilities for roleplaying, which is why it's good to create characters together. First, each of you should tell the other player your character's Doom aspect; then, together, try and come up with a short description of how your paths became entwined because of those Doooms. Don't go into detail—the broad strokes are important. Once you've agreed your short description, boil it down to a brief phrase which mentions your Doom Companion by name—that's your Companion aspect.

.....

Remember we said Sharma's and Chris's characters may know one another, both hailing from Korudav? Well, Chris has been creating his character too, discovering they're a fascinating androgyne rogue from the Respectful Explorers of Antiquity, with an occupation build of Tomb Robber. They've picked the name Zimiri Tegus, and have just defined their Origin aspect as Lost Everything to the Firecloud. Zabet and Zimiri were both in Korudav when the Firecloud struck! Sharma and Chris decide their characters are Doom Companions!

First, they exchange Doom aspects: Zabet has We Stand To The Last Against The Entropic Horde! and Zimiri has The World Needs To Be Shocked Out Of Its Complacency! Chris and Sharma decide Zabet and Zimiri's paths crossed in the Battle of the Firecloud. Zimiri is a provocative character, affiliated with the temple of Qal of the Two Faces; clearly, something they said pushed Zabet to embark on her life of errantry. Sharma comes up with the Companion aspect Zimiri Tegus Makes Sense Of The World Gone Mad.

Now it's Chris's turn. Chris reasons that, as Zimiri lost everything in the Firecloud, they've stuck to Zabet like glue, the legionnaire providing the tomb robber with a reason to stay alive. They decide on the Companion aspect Zabet Karja Is My Sword-Sister As We Wake Up the World.

Zabet and Zimiri are clearly a team, tightly knit by adversity. There's a lot to explore here.

.....

You don't have to refer to another player character in your Companion aspect; you can refer to an NPC if you wish, or even a riding animal like an elenisor or chelother. The process is the same—imagine how your companion's Doom became entangled with your own, and derive an aspect from that. You may also want to define your non-player Doom Companion as a **relationship** (page 243).

Choosing Skills and Stunts

Now's the time to select your character's skills and stunts. Characters begin play with ten skills, with scores ranging from 1 to 4, arranged in a pyramidal structure. This means starting characters have the following skill slots available for filling:

- One level 4 skill.
- Two level 3 skills.
- Three level 2 skills.
- Four level 1 skills.

If you have a Venerable Autocracy homeland, then one of your ten skills **must** be something called your Pillar skill, which has a predetermined level; see below.

There are two types of skill: **mundane skills**, also called general skills or just "skills"; and **power skills**, which represent your ability to use magic. You may pick any mundane skill, but you must have a **permission** to pick a power skill. Usually you'll get a permission by choosing an **occupation** like Priest or Sorcerer, or by having a **power aspect** (page 271), or by belonging to a certain **kindred**.

Your most important skill is your **peak skill**, at the top of your skill pyramid. For a starting character, it's your level 4 skill. This should be a skill vital to your Essence or Occupation, although sometimes you may be obliged to take your Pillar skill as your peak skill. If you like, you can simply place the skills listed for your homeland, kindred, and occupation **builds**, and any community builds, straight into your **skill pyramid**, fitting in other skills that look interesting. **You don't have to pick all the skills listed in your builds, but you should choose at least one from each build available to you.**

Your Pillar Skill

Sakari society separates people into five caste-like “Pillars”. These are, in descending order of social status, the Lords (Aristocracy), the Priesthood, the Guilds, the Legions, and the Peasantry. When you write your Pillar skill on your character sheet, instead of writing “Pillar”, you use the appropriate title. If your character is a legionnaire, your Pillar skill is “The Legions”.

Your Pillar skill represents how you can influence another character within Sakari society. You can find a full writeup on page 158. It also affects your **status stress track** (page 225).

Your Pillar skill is different from your Social Class. Social Class is a **scale** expressing the importance of your birth rank; Pillar is a **skill** encapsulating how well respected your occupation is when you try to influence someone. Social Class is your blood and breeding; Pillar is what you do. Pillar and Social Class interact in interesting ways, like when a low-born priestling tries to pull rank on a high-born legionnaire, with entertaining consequences!

“Foreign” characters, especially non-humans who haven’t grown up in the Venerable Autocracy, generally won’t have a Pillar skill, and possibly won’t have a Social Class either. They’re effectively powerless when trying to influence people inside the Empire. Such characters may, with the Chronicler’s approval, adopt the Pillar of their occupation.

TABLE 4-2: THE FIVE PILLARS

PILLAR	PILLAR SCORE
The Peasantry	1
The Legions	2
The Guilds	3
The Priesthood	4
The Lords (Aristocracy)	5

.....

Paco names his Ing Shu Trader Priest “Six Tentacles Bearing Treasure”, or “Six” for short. As Six is a foreign-born esteri hailing from Formen Isle, it wouldn’t normally have a Pillar skill. But Paco reasons that as Six is active in the Temple of Vareltias, God of Trade and Communication, inside the Autocracy, it makes sense for it to have a Pillar skill. Sarah agrees, and Paco writes in “The Priesthood” as Six’s level 4 skill.

.....

Do You Speak Any Other Languages?

A starting character usually has one native language. You needn’t worry about communicating with someone sharing that language; if you have the Lore skill, you’re also literate in it.

You may learn other languages using the Learned Language skill, and sometimes you’ll need to make rolls to understand or be understood. You need a separate Learned Language skill for each additional language (learning and maintaining other languages takes time and effort!). If your character doesn’t speak Low Sakaric as a native language, you should take it as a Learned Language skill, otherwise you’ll have trouble talking to people in the Autocracy! See page 149.

.....

Zabet Karja is a legionnaire, giving her the Pillar skill “The Legions 2”, which Sharma writes on her character sheet. Her available builds are: Hivernian, Legionnaire, and the Legion of Lord Regos, Indomitable (page 98). From the Hivernian homeland build, Sharma selects the Willpower skill at level 3; from the Legionnaire occupation build, she selects Melee Combat 4 (her peak skill) and Physique 2; and from the Legion of Lord Regos, Indomitable community build she selects Notice 3 and Ride 1.

*For the rest of Zabet’s skills, Sharma selects from the list in **Chapter 8: Skills and Stunts**, picking skills she thinks will be useful in play and appropriate for her character concept. She selects Ranged Combat 2, Athletics 1, Contacts 1, and Provoke 1. That’s ten skills in total—Zabet’s skill pyramid is complete!*

.....

Choosing Stunts (and Special Abilities)

Stunts are ways to break the rules in exciting ways. They're often associated with skills, including power skills—there are Melee Combat stunts, Athletics stunts, Change By Fire stunts, and so on. There are also independent stunts which don't derive from any skill. Stunts give you cool abilities, and differentiate between characters with similar skill pyramids.

When you create a character, you have **20 advancement points (AP)** to spend on stunts. Each stunt costs 4AP, so most starting characters have 5 stunts.

Special abilities are a form of stunt that require a **permission** to put on your character sheet. They're natural abilities, particular to non-human kindreds, beasts, animals, and monsters; human characters don't usually have them. Sometimes special abilities have **levels**. You buy special abilities like stunts, except they cost 2AP per level instead of 4AP.

Some non-human kindreds have special abilities they must take, known as **mandatory special abilities**. A special type of special ability is the **constraint**, a negative special ability usually imposed on your character when you belong to a certain kindred. Your character **must** take any constraints that apply. Constraints don't cost you AP; instead, they offset 2APs-worth of special abilities. So, if your character has one special ability and one constraint, the net AP spend is zero.

Stunts (including special abilities) reduce your **Refresh** (the maximum number of fate points you may have) by 1 point for every stunt or special ability you have. **Special abilities which have been offset by constraints don't count in this calculation.**

You'll find stunts throughout this book, particularly in **Chapter 8: Skills and Stunts** and **Chapter 13: Magic**. You'll also find examples in the *Guide to Future Earth*. Special abilities are referenced in the kindred writeups in **Chapter 5: Homelands and Kindreds**. If you like, simply select stunts and any special abilities from those listed for your homeland, kindred, occupation builds, and any community builds. **You can choose other stunts than those listed for your builds, but you should try and choose at least one stunt from each build available to you.**

You don't have to spend all 20AP on stunts; any unspent AP may be added to your **relationships budget** (page 45).

.....

Zabet is human, so doesn't have any special abilities, meaning she can select up to five stunts. From the Hivernian homeland build, she picks Lore Specialist: Hivernium. From the Legionnaire occupation build, she picks Formation Fighting and Mounted Charge—it's looking like Zabet has a riding animal! From the Legion of Lord Regos, Indomitable community build, she selects the Indomitable Defence Fighting Style (the custom fighting style of that legion) and Killing Stroke.

Zabet now has five stunts, costing 4AP each, and so has spent all 20AP available to her. Her Refresh is reduced by 5 points from a starting value of 10, so she has Refresh 5.

.....

Choosing Your Relationships

Relationships are a crucial part of the game, and **Chapter 11: Relationships** is devoted just to them. A relationship is a way of including on your character sheet the abilities of other characters (usually NPCs) or other entities which have character-like statistics, like demons, riding animals, and communities like legions, guilds, and temples.

When you create a relationship for your character, you don't write down absolutely everything that's on the character sheet of the person or entity you have the relationship with. In fact, it's likely the Chronicler doesn't have such a character sheet. So what do you include?

Simply put, you have a budget of **advancement points** you can spend to "buy" your relationships, by including some of the aspects, skills, stunts, and other abilities of the subject of your relationship on your character sheet. By default, you begin with 28AP in this **relationship budget**, to which you can add any AP left over from the 20AP you had to buy stunts. You can buy relationship abilities at the following AP costs:

- Every skill point costs 2AP.
- A stunt costs 4AP.
- An aspect costs 8AP.
- A special ability costs 2AP.
- A sorcery spell costs 2AP.

These AP costs are reproduced and expanded on in **Chapter 12: Advancement**.

Let's think about what this means. Let's say you want to create a relationship with your sword-fighting teacher, Arkos. When you have such a relationship, you can call upon Arkos to help you, when you can describe how that's possible (check with your Chronicler if you're not sure!). But what can Arkos do for you? That depends on which of his abilities you've included in your relationship. Let's say you spend 4AP from your 28AP relationships budget to give your relationship with Arkos two skills: Resources 1 and Melee Combat 1. What does that mean?

For starters, it means that Arkos the Sword-fighting Teacher has **at least** Melee Combat 1 and Resources 1 on his own character sheet (probably a notional character sheet, unless the Chronicler has already created one). He probably has more.

Second, it means you can call upon Arkos to help you with Resources rolls and Melee Combat rolls, when it makes narrative sense. You can ask him to make rolls **at those skill levels** for you; or you can ask him to support your own rolls with a **teamwork bonus** (page 202).

This must make narrative sense. If you're out in the wilderness and Arkos is holed up back in Korudav, you probably can't get his help. But if he's travelling with you and is sat on the horse behind you when you're attacked, he can ride up and assist you with the skills you've put into your relationship.

Let's look at the relationships you can create for your character.

Do Relationships Have Stress Tracks and Consequences?

The short answer is "yes". If you have a relationship with an NPC that's travelling with you, and they get attacked, your Chronicler will allocate them a couple of stress boxes and two basic consequences to measure how they fare.

There's one corollary: if you give your relationship a skill like Physique or Willpower, it can get more stress boxes—see page 48.

Don't sweat this facet of relationships too much; their main purpose is to provide you with additional skills and cool abilities. But, if it's important to your story, your Chronicler can track stress damage done to them to see if you lose your relationship permanently by leading them into horrible danger!

Sidekicks and Servants

Some relationships are with characters travelling with you who are subordinate to you—hirelings, loyal retainers, manservants, even slaves. The abilities you buy for these relationships are available to you whenever you need them: in particular, sidekicks and servants are great for getting teamwork bonuses (page 202) when they help you in combat, conflicts, or other tasks. Beware, though! If you get in trouble, you may find the Chronicler telling you your sidekick or servant has been slain or has fled! If that happens, you get the AP invested in the relationship back.

Allies and Dependents

These are relationships with equals or family members, elderly relatives, etc. They may be travelling with you, but are more likely somewhere else, living their own lives. To use the abilities you've put into an ally or dependent relationship, you must communicate with them (magic or artefacts is fine, as is sending someone over). Even though this might mean a delay when you want to use them, they can be useful relationships if they're at the heart of power or in an important locale where they can use their abilities on your behalf.

Mounts and Other Animals

Similar to sidekicks and servants, except they're not (usually) intelligent. They can have cool special abilities you may not otherwise have access to (an elenisor mount can fly, for example!). The downside is they can get injured and die if you ride them headlong into combat—if needed, your Chronicler will attribute your mount with a couple of stress boxes and consequences.

Often you need a **permission** to have a mount, like a kindred or community build; spending money to buy the mount is a good way round this. See pages 49 and 244 for more.

Avatars and Demons

If you're a priest or sorcerer, you may be able to summon extraordinary entities like **demons** and **elementals**, or incarnate your god's powers in the form of an **avatar** (page 310). These things are treated as relationships, and you use AP to buy their abilities. If an entity you've summoned is killed, dismissed, or otherwise departs, you get back the AP you spent on the summoning (which you then typically use to summon something else!). See page 315.

Zoans and Mindstones

Some items of what would otherwise be **equipment** (see below) are treated as relationships. This is usually because they give you access to skills, stunts, or special abilities **you have to learn to use**—that's where the AP spending comes in. Two examples are **zoans** (page 248), the strange symbiotic lifeforms created by the Hsun Spider Folk (page 76), and **mindstones** (page 254), crystalline secretions of the Paladoi esteri (page 81) which give you access to psi-powers (page 352). You must acquire these items, either via a permission or by spending treasure (page 49).

Communities and Constructs

Sometimes, relationships aren't with individual beings, but with the large gatherings known as **communities**. Communities include legions, temples, fighting schools, sorcery schools, guilds, and more; they can have special skills and stunts, and even take actions (page 199). Having a **community relationship** means you can get that community to act on your behalf—usually by interacting with other communities, but also (and this is a frequent use of communities) by loaning you equipment and money in the form of a Resources skill, or giving you access to their contacts network using a Contacts skill. Communities don't usually travel with you, so, like allies and dependents, you need to communicate with them to get them to do things for you.

You can also spend 8AP to acquire a community relationship as an aspect, if you just want access to its community build (page 39).

Constructs are a special form of community associated with a large-scale item of equipment or an artefact. They include things like ships, war waggons, and castles.

You can acquire a construct as a relationship. To do so, check with your Chronicler, who has full rules for constructs in the *Chronicler's Guide*. In such a case, what you're actually doing is acquiring a relationship with the *community* crewing or staffing the physical part of the construct (which is essentially a large-scale piece of equipment, with stress tracks, consequences, and so on). In other words, you buy a relationship with a ship's crew, and the ship "comes with it". You automatically get access to the construct's physical abilities which are required to use the skills you've bought in the relationship. In other words, buying a Lore 1 skill with a castle's garrison won't get you access to its catapults, but buying a Physical Combat 1 skill will. You often need a permission to take a relationship with a construct—see page 248.

Shared Relationships

Multiple player characters may buy relationships with the same entity. This is particularly common with communities and constructs; if two or more PCs buy relationships with the same sailing ship, say, then they have what's called a **shared relationship** and can pool their relationship abilities when they act together (for example, if they set off on a voyage). In such a case your Chronicler may combine the various relationship abilities onto a single shared **relationship sheet**. See page 242.

Improving Relationships

The cool thing about relationships is that you can (usually) improve them, by spending AP on them during play. This is one of the ways your character can achieve greatness; by adding to your relationships, you can assume control of temples, create and command armies, or have the unequivocal support of the great and good (or bad)! See page 264.

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*Sharma notices that Zabet has a permission for a **chelother** mount from her Legion of Lord Regos, Indomitable community build. A chelother is a warhorse with vicious fangs, terrifying claws, and a mean personality, and Sharma thinks it would be cool to have one as Zabet's main relationship—it'll augment her combat abilities in awesome ways. She calls the beast "Blue-Claw".*

Sharma checks out the typical chelother stat block on page 245 for an idea of the kind of abilities she can buy for this relationship. She spends 8AP of her relationships budget to give Blue-Claw the Sudden Excess of Violence aspect, and 6AP to give it the Physique 3 skill, allowing her to make powerful Physique rolls when necessary, and also giving her mount 3-point and 4-point physical stress boxes in case it suffers damage. She buys the Trample special ability for 2AP, and the Integral Weaponry special ability at level 3, costing 6AP and giving Blue-Claw a +3 stress increase (SI) when she uses Trample to make Physique attacks. Finally, she spends 4AP on one level of the Larger special ability, making sure she can take advantage of her chelother's great size—Large (1) will give her a big advantage in mounted combat (page 257).

That's a total cost for her Blue-Claw relationship of 26AP, almost her whole relationships budget! Sharma's happy, though; Blue-Claw will be a major part of Zabet's identity. With the final 2AP of her budget, she buys the Resources 1 skill in a relationship with the Legion of Lord Regos, Indomitable, meaning that the legion is funding at least some of her errantry expeditions—hopefully as she succeeds in her adventures, she can coax them into giving her more!

.....

FINAL TOUCHES

You're almost done! Here are a few final things to complete your character.

Calculating Your Refresh, Stress Tracks, and Consequences

As mentioned on page 24, characters have fate points, stress tracks, and can suffer a certain number of consequences in conflicts. Here's how to calculate yours.

Refresh

Your starting Refresh is 10, meaning you begin each session of play with 10 fate points. Now reduce that number by the total number of stunts and any special abilities you have. If you have constraints (page 52), each will offset one special ability when calculating Refresh, meaning you don't have to count it.



.....
Zabet has five stunts, so her Refresh is reduced from 10 to 5. She'll start each new session of play with 5 fate points, unless she's managed to accumulate more.

Stress Tracks

There are four stress tracks: physical, mental, status, and wealth. You have one 1-point stress box and one 2-point stress box in each. Certain skills, listed below, give you extra stress boxes. If you have the appropriate skill at a level of 1 or 2, you have an additional 3-point stress box; if you have the skill at level 3 or 4, you also have an additional 4-point stress box. If you have a skill level higher than 4, see the appropriate skill writeup in **Chapter 8: Skills and Stunts**. What the four stress tracks represent, and what the skills that modify their stress boxes are, are as follows:

- **Physical:** Your physical robustness, health, endurance, and resistance to disease and injury. Your Physique skill may modify your physical stress track (page 157).
- **Mental:** Your mental health. Your Willpower skill may modify your mental stress track (page 169).
- **Status:** Your current standing within your social class. Your Pillar skill may modify your status stress track (page 158).
- **Wealth:** Your immediate personal wealth and disposable material possessions. Your Resources skill may modify your wealth stress track (page 164), representing your ability to lean on your peers and fellow community members for material support.

.....
Zabet's Willpower 3 skill gives her 3-point and 4-point stress boxes on her mental stress track, and her Physique 2 skill gives her a 3-point stress box on her physical stress track. Her Legions 2 Pillar skill gives her a 3-point stress box on her status stress track. She has no Resources skill, so only has the usual 1-point and 2-point stress boxes on her wealth stress track.

Consequences

As mentioned on page 24, physical and mental stress tracks have **personal consequences**, and status and wealth stress tracks have **social consequences**. By default, you can withstand 3 consequences in each category: one mild, one moderate, and one severe; write "3 personal and 3 social" in the "Consequences" entry in the Personal Details section of your character sheet (page 353). Some stunts let you withstand more consequences. See page 215 for more on consequences.

.....
Zabet has no stunts or other abilities allowing her to take additional consequences, so Sharma writes the default "3 personal and 3 social" in the Consequences entry on her character sheet.



Calculating Your Starting Money and Equipment

Your character automatically gets whatever equipment is listed for him in his builds. You don't have to take all the items if you don't want to. Some items act as permissions for you to take a corresponding relationship; for example, if a mount, zoan, mindstone, and so on, is listed as an item of equipment, you may spend AP from your relationship budget to buy abilities for it. You don't have to do this at this stage; mark the item on your character sheet, and use AP you gain during play to describe its abilities. Check with your Chronicler for how to do this.

.....

Zabet's Hivernian homeland build indicates she starts play with clothing marked with the insignia of her House of the Chain of Heroes and the Golden Sceptre holy symbol of Lord Regos the Conqueror. Her Legionnaire build indicates she gets two weapons and a basic suit of armour appropriate to her legion; looking at the Legion of Lord Regos, Indomitable community build, she sees she gets a broadsword, a cavalry lance, a round shield, and armour comprising alagin scale hauberk, alagin plate greaves, leather vambraces, and open helmet. She notes these down on her character sheet, together with any stress increases (SI) and stress reductions (SR) they give her.

.....

Sometimes, the equipment you get from your builds might not be enough for you. Perhaps you want a certain item—maybe a weapon or suit of armour—that's not listed. In this case, you must use **treasure** to buy it.

When you create a character, you automatically start with a certain number of gold coins known as **templars** (and abbreviated "T"). You have a number of templars equal to your total wealth stress boxes: 1T, 3T, 6T, or 10T. Additionally, you get +1 templar for every level you have in the Burglary skill, and +1 templar for every level you have in a relationship Resources skill.

See **Chapter 9: Equipment** for lists of items you can buy, and their costs, as well as more information on coinage and treasure.

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Zabet would normally begin play with 3 golden templars (the total of her 1-point and 2-point wealth stress boxes). However, she has a Resources 1 skill in her relationship with the Legion of Lord Regos, Indomitable, so starts play with 4 templars. She keeps this in reserve, for any additional gear she may need when Sarah explains what the party's rescue mission entails.

.....



Calculating Your Encumbrance

Your character may carry a certain amount of gear without becoming encumbered. Each item of equipment has an **encumbrance value**, shown on the lists in **Chapter 9: Equipment**. You may carry 3 encumbrance points, +1 point for every level you have in the Physique skill; if you're riding a mount, its Physique skill gives you a **teamwork bonus** (page 202), and it can also carry gear separately in saddle bags, etc. If you're larger than Human-Sized (0), you may carry more: see page 192.

.....

Zabet has Physique 2, so may carry up to 5 encumbrance points without penalty. When she's riding Blue-Claw, her chelother's Physique 3 skill gives her a +1 teamwork bonus, meaning she can carry 6 encumbrance points herself; her mount can also carry its own gear (actually a total of 9 encumbrance points—see page 192 for how this is calculated).

Totalling her current equipment, she finds that her cavalry lance is encumbering, giving her a total encumbrance of 6. She decides to put it in a special holster on Blue-Claw, meaning that when she's on foot she doesn't have access to her lance, but only has an encumbrance of 4.

.....

Determining Your Character's Age and Size

Finally, jot down your character's age and size. Most characters are Human-Sized (0), but some non-humans may be Large (1): see page 51. Your homeland or kindred build indicates your character's lifespan; you can find rules for dealing with older characters in the *Chronicler's Guide*, but for now assume your character is between 20 and 35 years old, and simply write in the age you prefer.

.....

Sharma imagines Zabet is a young adult, 20 years old—she's had perhaps a year or two in the legion, but has really only just received her call to adventure. She's human, so Sharma writes Human-Sized (0) in the Size entry on her character sheet.

.....

YOU'RE DONE!

Congratulations—you've created your character, and are ready to play!



Homelands & Kindreds

This chapter presents homelands for the Venerable Autocracy of Sakara, and key jeniri and esteri kindreds in the Empire and surrounding lands. Use these for creating player characters and NPC allies or adversaries.

HOMELAND AND KINDRED PARAMETERS

Name and Epithet: Homeland names refer to regions, while kindreds have a Low Sakaraic name and one or more descriptive epithets. The P'Tek jeniri, for example, are also known as “Maggot Men”.

Mandatory Spend: Jeniri and esteri kindreds have special abilities (and sometimes constraints) that you **must** pick (and pay for!) when creating a character from that kindred. This entry indicates how many, and their AP cost (page 44).

Description: A description of the homeland or kindred. Kindreds have additional sections on personality, culture, language, magic and religion, and relations with the Autocracy.

Lifespan (Kindreds only): Thanks to magical care, human beings live 80-90 years on average. Other kindreds differ. You can create older characters (see the *Chronicler's Guide*), but we're assuming characters will usually be in their prime, of an age less than half the average lifespan. There's no roll for this; just pick the age you want.

Typical Occupations (Kindreds only): A handful of occupation builds showing what kindreds get up to. You don't have to choose these, but if you want a different occupation, check with your Chronicler.

Special Abilities (Kindreds only): Kindreds give you a **permission** to pick certain **special abilities**. Some are mandatory, meaning you **must** pay their AP cost during character creation; others are optional. You can buy optional kindred special abilities at any time, even after play begins.

Constraints (Kindreds only): You **must** take any constraints listed for your kindred. Each offsets 2AP of the cost of any special abilities you have (not stunts), and cancels the reduction in Refresh required by one special ability. See page 44.

Example Lands: Regions, cities, lands, etc, in the homeland or inhabited by the kindred. You can find these described in the *Guide to Future Earth*. You often use these in your **Origin** aspect (page 39).

Typical Blood Aspects: Typical cultural values for your homeland or kindred; write them directly on your character sheet, or use them as inspiration.

Typical Shadow Aspects: Typical cultural fears, prejudices, and other difficulties your homeland or kindred suffers from.

Native Language: You know this language as a **native language** (page 43). Some kindreds have more than one!

Typical Kindreds (Homelands only): Kindreds commonly living in your homeland. You can select these for your character, giving you **both** a homeland and kindred build. If you want to pick a different kindred, check with your Chronicler.

Typical Skills or Stunts: Typical things members of your homeland or kindred know how to do. You don't have to take all of these, but pick at least one.

Typical Temples: Gods worshipped by your homeland or kindred, in order of importance. You may initiate to one of these gods or enter their priesthoods (see pages 109 and 269); if you want to join a different temple, check with your Chronicler.

Typical Magic: Magic commonly practiced by your homeland or kindred, in order of importance. You usually also need a **power aspect** to use these magics, but may select a **standalone power stunt** (see pages 271 and 341) if you want.

Typical Communities: Members of your homeland or kindred often belong to communities (page 39) like these. You can create a relationship with any of them using your **relationship budget** (page 45), or derive a community build from them by mentioning them in one of your aspects (page 39). If you want to pick a different community, check with your Chronicler.

Family: Typical family structure for your homeland or kindred. You don't have to adhere to this—the Springtide Civilisations are a diverse place. See also “Family Structure, Gender, and Sexuality” on page 34.

Typical Equipment: Notable equipment or personal belongings for your homeland or kindred. You automatically have any of these you want, at no cost.

Typical Names: Example names used by your homeland or kindred. Pick one for your character, or use them for inspiration.

Social Class and Occupation

Social class is a big deal in the Springtide Civilisations, tending to determine your occupation, wealth, and **house** (page 38). Roll on the Social Class table provided, or pick an entry. Check with your Chronicler and other players first, though, as not all social classes play nice together. The Social Class tables have the following entries:

- **Social Class:** This is a **scale** (page 235); the numeric part is most important, but each also has a label specific to homeland or kindred. Note both down on your character sheet, ie “Upper Class (2)”.
- **Typical Occupation:** Example occupations and builds for the social class—see **Chapter 6: Occupations** for details. Check with your Chronicler if you want to pick a different occupation or build.
- **Typical House:** Select a house that matches your social class, or create a name for your house yourself. Not all kindreds have houses, though some have equivalents used when travelling in the Autocracy.
- **Resources Cap:** Not all occupations have the same access to wealth and resources; this entry indicates the maximum Resources skill level for a typical member of the class. You may not exceed this during character creation, but it no longer applies once you begin play.

A Note on Ethnicity

The ethnic variations our 21st century calls “races” have long since disappeared from Future Earth. So much time has passed that new variations have emerged, influenced by environment and way of life. The Springtide Civilisations are conservative and stratified, and bloodlines remain in the same place and perform the same activities for millennia, leading to startling physical heterogeneity. And that’s without counting the genetically variant jeniri, engineered for life on worlds beyond the planing machines, or the alien esteri, conversely adapted for life on Future Earth. People seek identities less in ethnicity and more in minute differences of social class. Some social classes are so exclusive they’ve become subspecies in their own right: the graceful and aristocratic astrigers (page 64) stand thirty centimetres taller than other humans, and the gravity in their ancestral palaces is below Earth-normal.

HOMELANDS OF THE VENERABLE AUTOCRACY

This section describes the regional subcultures of the Venerable Autocracy. Pick one if you’re human; some are also appropriate for non-humans.

Hivernian

“Hivernium” strictly refers to the whole peninsula north of Kados, but to the Sakari it mostly means the cold provinces of Elikan and Korudav. Resettled in historical times (if thousands of years ago) on lands taken by the entropics from Tlanik inhabitants during the Time of Snows, its culture mixes staunchness, adaptability, and fiery passion. Hivernians are fatalistic, always ready to defend themselves against the Entropic Horde.

Elikan and Korudav are melting pots. Leaning towards Yurazi standards of dress, food, and language, they prefer the martial deities Regos and Dafur; Hivernium has rarely been free of strife.

Example Lands: Elikan and Korudav provinces; Archaeopolis of Korudav; Archaeopolis of Elikan; Typhon and Calamis; Kartagen Port; Landuzi Valley; Timosian Properties.

Typical Blood Aspects: Loyalty to City / Province; Respect the Sword, Honour the Warrior; Hivernium Must Be Defended!

Typical Shadow Aspects: Illegitimacy of the Avatar; Fear of the North; Loathing of Entropy and Winter Dread; Rivals of the Flame Lord OR Rivals of the War Lord.

Native Language: Low Sakaraic.

Typical Kindreds: Human, Virikki, Tung Mai, Hsun.



TABLE 5-1: HIVERNIAN SOCIAL CLASS

ROLL OR CHOOSE	SOCIAL CLASS	TYPICAL OCCUPATION	TYPICAL HOUSE	RESOURCES CAP
-5 to -4	Outlaw / Slave (-3)	Farmer, Gladiator, Hedge Wizard, Physician, Rogue, Wilderlander	None; The Warrior in Chains	0
-3 to +0	Lower (0)	Canal People, Crafter, Entertainer, Farmer, Fighter, Hedge Wizard, Hsuntach Tinker, Hunter, Physician, Priest, Rogue, Sailor, Slaver	Beloved of Emeldias, Blue Sails, The Circus of Malikh, Golden Cage, Respectful Explorers, Steersmen of Palanqa, Warrior in Chains	2
+1	Middle (1)	Agent, Collegiate or Free Sorcerer, Fighter, Physician, Priest, Sailor, Scholar, Scientist	Chain of Heroes, Dromonds of Calamis, Engineers of Typhon, The Noctilucent Orb	4
+2	Upper (2)	Holy Warrior, Legionnaire, Merchant, Official, Physician, Priest, Scholar, Scientist, Sorcerer, Temple Guard	Argosic Scribes, Dexterous of Helium, The Mighty of Tlan, Paladins of Marmoris, Truth Crow, Umbran Coil	6
+3	Noble (3)	Holy Warrior, Legionnaire, Noble, Official, Priest, Scholar, Temple Sorcerer	The Blue Book of Nayarak, Fulminating Eye, Pylons of Eternity	6
+4 to +5	Aristocrat (4)	Courtier, Holy Warrior, Legionnaire, Noble, Official, Scholar, Sorcerer	Ardent of Nayarak, Golden Blade, Noble Sakari	No cap

Typical Skills or Stunts: Lore (Specialist: Hivernium, Archaeopolis of Korudav, Archaeopolis of Elikan, etc), Willpower.

Typical Temples: Dafur, Regos; the Gods of the Great Compact.

Typical Magic: Cantrips, divine magic, sorcery.

Typical Communities: House, temple, legion, guild, village, town, or city quarter.

Family: Sakari house and bloodline.

Typical Equipment: Clothing marked with symbol of house and / or deity.

Typical Names: (Male:) Dostinor, Dru, Ereginar, Gart, Heng, Karis, Kazimir, Lastar, Mikal, Pellegraine, Will, Yul; (Female:) Arastel, Deleen, Elen, Gresa, Jennisa, Kaloza, Stasia, Vilayet, Yulia, Zabet, Zara; (Bloodline:) Forminis, Karja, Lastap, Megalon, Tinimis, Valoren.

Yurazi

During the Time of Snows, before the Autocracy, migrants from frozen Yurasha settled the northern seaboard of the Sakari mainland, displacing indigenous peoples into the Heartlands to the south, as told in the *Chenta faKayalaf*. The humans of the Yurazi coasts are tall, with pale skin and straight hair ranging from white through gold, red, auburn, and dark brown. Eye colour runs from startlingly bright green to golden brown.

Yurazi of all kindreds believe life's a struggle against insurmountable odds, with no absolute good and evil to measure one's actions, where the ends justify the means and personal conscience and honour guide actions. They're conservative, believing their traditional virtues preserve the Autocracy.

The Yurazi coasts are colder than the Sakari Heartlands, and Yurazi dwell in well-insulated stone houses, in patrilineal families with two generations under the same roof. Clothing includes tunics, trews, kilts, and cloaks for married and independent folk, and shifts for unmarried dependents.

Yurazi cuisine, dialect, music, and figurative art are Sakari standards, as the capital, Glorious Kados, is here. There's a rivalry between Yurazi and Heartlanders over who speaks the better Sakaraic, plays the finer music, and so on.

Irgiddi Province, although south of the Kesh Mountains, is culturally Yurazi rather than Heartlander.

Example Lands: Glorious Kados, the Yurazi coasts, Irgiddi province.

Typical Blood Aspects: *Personal Code of Honour; Traditionalist.*

Typical Shadow Aspects: *Life Is a Struggle Against the Odds; No Absolute Good or Evil; The Ends Justify the Means.*

Native Language: Low Sakaraic.

Typical Kindreds: Human, Virikki, Hsun, Kesh.

Typical Skills or Stunts: Lore (Appraise, Specialist: Venerable Autocracy), Rapport (Haggle).

Typical Temples: Gods of the Great Compact.

Typical Magic: Cantrips, divine magic, sorcery.

Typical Communities: House, temple, legion, city quarter, guild.

Family: Tight-knit extended family focusing on bloodline.

Typical Equipment: Cloak braided with bloodline insignia, musical instrument or book of popular songs.

Typical Names: (Male:) Bikat, Jorj, Lotni, Ren, Treg, Tyshat; (Female:) Banta, Barya, Gatti, Hrenchen, Filpa, Fira, Lebeka, Meeda, Zazan; (Bloodline: "vit" +) Jatala, Kantss, Lammerfelt, Landin, Shteen, Voiferek.



TABLE 5-2: YURAZI SOCIAL CLASS

ROLL OR CHOOSE	SOCIAL CLASS	TYPICAL OCCUPATION	TYPICAL HOUSE	RESOURCES CAP
-5 to -4	Outcast (-3)	Crafter, Gladiator, Hedge Wizard, Rogue, Slave, Wilderlander	None; The Warrior in Chains.	0
-3 to +0	Lower (0)	Canal People, Crafter, Entertainer, Farmer, Hedge Wizard, Hsun Tinker, Farmer, Fighter, Physician, Sailor, Slaver	The Alaginmeisters of Alagir, The Earthen Amafor, The Felicitous Tumblers of Tanoc, The Golden Cage, Hookamon of Kados, The Irrepressible Penteconter, The Respectful Explorers, The Singers of Kayalaf	1
+1	Middle (1)	Agent, Holy Warrior, Legionnaire, Merchant, Physician, Priest, Scholar, Scientist, Sorcerer, Temple Guard	Argosic Scribes, Chain of Heroes, The Noctilucent Orb, The Shimmering Bridge, The Tollers of Ethereal Bells	3
+2	Upper (2)	Holy Warrior, Legionnaire, Merchant, Official, Physician, Priest, Scholar, Scientist, Sorcerer	Crimson Enlightenment, The Eldered of Irgiddi, The Mighty of Tlan, Paeanic Healing, Umbran Coil	5
+3	Noble (3)	Holy Warrior, Noble, Official, Priest, Scholar, Sorcerer, Temple Guard	Blue Book of Nayarak, The Eternal City, Fulminating Eye, The Munificent Wisdom of Tanoc	8
+4 to +5	Aristocrat (4)	Legionnaire, Noble, Official, Priest, Sorcerer	Ardent of Nayarak, Noble Sakari, Purple Sceptre, Watchers of Starport	None



Sakari Heartlanders (Mukhari and Tallanids)

The Sakari Heartlands are culturally distinct from Kados and the Middle Sea coasts, dominated by the Mukhari rural peasant culture, which predates even the Empire of Tlan, and the urbane Tallanid culture, imported by Nayaraki rulers millennia ago.

Mukhari

Mukhari culture is complex, but often appears superstitious and irrational. It's the way of the village, of wisemen and wisewomen, of propitiating the "little people", and of fairy stories told by the hearth. The Gods of the Great Compact are worshipped in debased forms: Emeldias and Entos as the gods of Growth and Sex; Ankadar as Anki the Judge; dread Belom as the Corpse-Lord.



Mukhari have large matrilineal families, living in circular thatched dwellings of wood, mud and wattle, or stone. As many as twenty adults and an equal number of children, three generations of a single bloodline, may live in a single roundhouse. Eating is communal, with an elders' plate, a common plate, and a children's plate, around which everyone sits cross-legged on the floor, eating with bare fingers or small pieces of tenafa bread.

Mukhari are kenek-ox herders, and Entos and Emeldias are depicted as a mated pair of giant oxen. Clothing is ox-hide and bone, dyed in yellow and blue checks and whorls. The Tallanids consider this "national dress" gaudy and tasteless.

Mukhari humans mostly have dark brown complexions, straight black or brown hair, and dark hazel eyes. They average 173cm tall. They speak strong local dialects of Low Sakaraic. Most live in the countryside; those in towns and cities work as market traders, brewers, tanners, and bakers.

Tallanids

Tallanids are the Heartland rulers and administrators, descendants of Nayaraki overlords and bureaucrats from ancient Tlan. Proud and sophisticated, aloof from their Mukhari subjects, they're status-conscious, with castes and ranks dictating clothing and linguistic registers. Religion focuses on the "Bright Trinity" of Staros, Regos, and Unthar.

Tallanid men sport coiffed beards with conical headdresses, long robes, and jewellery. Women favour long hair, heavy make-up, and diaphanous veils. Clothes are faddish, often overtly sexual. Tallanid humans are mostly pale-skinned, with dark hair and eyes. Each Heartland city prides itself on its distinctiveness, and outlying towns struggle to keep up with trends in the Autarchal courts.

Example Lands: Adjufa, Kanafas, Malia, and Ukar provinces.

Typical Blood Aspects:
(Mukhari:) *Adoration of the Good Earth; A Thing Shared Is a Thing Honoured; Deep and Ancient Culture Belies an Apparent Simplicity;*
(Tallanid:) *Complex Status Signaling in Word and Dress; Sensuous Clothing in the Latest Styles; We Must Determine Our Relative Rank!*



Typical Shadow Aspects: (Mukhari:) *Cleaving to the Communal; The Irresistible Temptation to Irrational Superstition; Propitiation of the Little Folk; The Earth Is Hungry For Sex and Blood;* (Tallanid:) *Haughty and Aloof; Blind-ed By Snobbish Disdain; Superiority Complex; Tendency to Overcomplicate.*

Native Language: Low Sakaraic.

Typical Kindreds: Human, Tung Mai, Hsun, Virikki.

Typical Skills or Stunts: (Mukhari) Devise, Lore (Specialist: Folklore); (Tallanid) Lore (Specialist: Etiquette and Dancing), Rapport (Performer).

Typical Temples: (Mukhari) Emeldias and Entos; Anki (Ankadar); the Corpse Lord (Belom); (Tallanid) The Bright Trinity (Staros, Regos, Unthar).

Typical Magic: (Mukhari) Natural magic; divine magic; (Tallanid) divine magic, some sorcery.

Typical Communities: (Mukhari) Bloodline, house, temple; (Tallanid) house, legion, sorcery school, temple.

Family: (Mukhari) Extended matrilineal family; (Tallanid) hierarchical network of interlinked families.

Typical Equipment: (Mukhari) Craft items, herd of livestock, use of common land; (Tallanid) elaborate clothing, expensive makeup and perfume, hereditary family property in city.

Typical Names: (Mukhari) (Male:) Kenul, Prokhul, Toshul; (Female:) Emali, Kesistimur, Tenafi; (Bloodline:) Ankisora, Higirra, Kenegina; (Tallanid) (Male:) Boriu, Doni, Hanatou, Kossep, Vilam; (Female:) Amaril, Chenda, Hepeiki, Yilara; (Bloodline:) Jufa-Kan, Himili-Maliy, Ukarast.

TABLE 5-3: HEARTLANDER SOCIAL CLASS

ROLL OR CHOOSE	SOCIAL CLASS	TYPICAL OCCUPATION	TYPICAL HOUSE	RESOURCES CAP
-5	Outcast (-3)	Gladiator, Rogue, Slave, Warrior, Wilderlander	None; The Warrior in Chains	0
-4 to -1	Mukhari Peasant (0)	Crafter, Farmer, Temple Guard, Wise Woman	Craven Earth, Toilers of Mukhar, The Touchers of Corpses	1
+0 to +1	Mukhari Artisan (1)	Entertainer, Holy Warrior, Physician, Priest, Sorcerer	Candle of Malud, Denebolas of Kan, The Rainbow Pennant, The Shrine Mothers, The Sisters of Ai-Mukh	2
+2 to +3	Tallanid Bourgeoisie (2)	Entertainer, Legionnaire, Merchant, Official	Diamond Opera, Gilded Changers of Adjuf, Platinum Blade, The Red Sea	4
+4	Tallanid Gentry (3)	Priest, Legionnaire, Sorcerer	The Blue Book of Nayarak, The Chroniclers of Kanafas, Eternal Brightening, The Mighty of Tlan, Nefast Tempore	6
+5	Tallanid Aristocrat (4)	High Priest, Noble, Sorcerer	The Inheritors of Nayarak, Keepers of the Divine Right, Purple Sceptre, Terchus the Eternal Plain, Vigilant Eye	No cap

Amadoradi

Amadorad Protectorate has been part of the Venerable Autocracy for less than a thousand years, and is still conscious of itself as a separate land. For millennia it was wilderness, on the border with the entropics, inhabited by a brave, fatalistic people who believed they were alive at the very end of the world, preparing for second, final war against the Reaver Gods and the Great Hegemonist. These beliefs still colour the Amadoradi worldview today. The Protectorate breeds great warriors and leaders of desperate causes—just as well, given their position on the frontline.

Amadoradi speak Ya-Kad, although many learn Low Sakaraic from childhood. Most Amadoradi humans have dark skins, dark and curly hair, thick eyebrows, and eye colour from grey through blue to green. Males favour heavy beards and thick robes in reds and browns. They worship Belorias, God of the Warriors of the Storm.

Example Lands: Amadorad Protectorate; Kadram Mountains; Jeneset Wilderness.

Typical Blood Aspects: *As Free As the Winds; Turbulent; Courage At the End of the World; The Ecstasy of the Storm.*



Typical Shadow Aspects: *Hatred of the Flame Lord; Loyalty to Duke Barayan; Our Friends in Ellib.*

Native Language: Ya-Kad; Low Sakaraic.

Typical Kindreds: Human, Che Kwa.

Typical Skills or Stunts: Lore (Specialist: Amadorad, Legends of the Storm), Survival (Tracking).

Typical Temples: Belorias.

Typical Magic: Natural magic, divine magic; limited sorcery.

Typical Communities: Clan, tribe, temple, fighting schools like the Thunder Berserkers (see the *Guide to Future Earth*).

Family: An extended family clan within a tribe, which includes all social classes.

Typical Equipment: Thick red and brown robes.

Typical Names: (Male:) Akim, Bannow, Barayan, Brelow, Dao, Nikus, Noyle, Varo, Veshtin, Vorias, Zekeel; (Female:) Ardess, Saberet, Seel, Siana, Torez, Vara, Xuxa, Zinga; (Clan: “san” +) Han, Porhay, Makalad, Samith, Tonwotti; (Tribe:) Doradi, Katarad, Mikeleeni, Pakhini.

TABLE 5-4: AMADORADI SOCIAL CLASS

ROLL OR CHOOSE	SOCIAL CLASS	TYPICAL OCCUPATION	TYPICAL HOUSE	RESOURCES CAP
-5 to -4	Outlaw (-3)	Crafter, Hedge Wizard, Rogue, Warrior, Wilderlander	n/a	0
-3 to +1	Rural (0)	Crafter, Entertainer, Farmer, Hedge Wizard, Holy Warrior, Hunter, Legionnaire, Warrior	n/a	2
+2	Townsmen (1)	Crafter, Legionnaire, Temple Guard, Warrior	n/a	5
+3	Priest (2)	Official, Priest, Sorcerer	n/a	5
+4 to +5	Noble (3)	Noble, Official, Holy Warrior, Legionnaire, Warrior	Windwalkers of Kadram	6

Khadisi

The trackless desert lands east of Sakara are dotted with ancient cities baked dry under the unrelenting sun, many in ruins and half-swallowed by sand. The westernmost is Khadis, the City of Skulls, easternmost city of the Venerable Autocracy. The City of Belom, desert nomads make pilgrimages across the savage wastes to sacrifice here.

Khadisi humans have more in common with the nomads of the Rabaq Hor and the Rabaq Nun than with the peoples of the Autocracy. Their grey skin darkens to black in the sun, while their features are sharp and pointed. A nictating membrane and slant to the eyes protects them from the sands, and their hair is black and their eyes orange: blue eyes are considered a curse, and blue-eyed infants are left to die in the deep desert.

Example Lands: Eastern reaches of Sakara; Deserts of Khadis; Foothills of Hagya; City of Skulls.



Typical Blood Aspects: *The Desert and the Dry Dead Beauty of Belom; Blessed is the Taker, May His Blade Cleanse the Way.*

Typical Shadow Aspects: *Haunted by the Great Taker.*

Native Language: Low Sakaraic.

Typical Kindreds: Human, Magigi.

Typical Skills or Stunts: Lore (Specialist: Belom, Khadis), Ride, Survival.

Typical Temples: Belom (The Great Taker).

Typical Magic: Divine magic, sorcery.

Typical Communities: House, bloodline, temple.

Family: Houses; tightly-knit bloodline family in cities, extended network of related bloodlines amongst desert nomads.

Typical Equipment: Voluminous clothing, leather or bone armour, composite bow, javelin, cambriother mount.

Typical Names: (Male: + “iks” + father’s name) Belek, Ganik, Xadom, Xlim; (Female: + “sala” + mother’s name) Bishimil, Hrana, Khete, Lal, Shadma.

TABLE 5-5: KHADISI SOCIAL CLASS

ROLL OR CHOOSE	SOCIAL CLASS	TYPICAL OCCUPATION	TYPICAL HOUSE (PEOPLE)	RESOURCES CAP
-5 to -4	(Outcasts) (-3)	Crafter, Gladiator, Rogue, Slave, Wilderlander	The Taken, The Warrior in Chains	1
-3 to -1	Desert Folk (0)	Crafter, Hedge Wizard, Physician, Slave, Warrior, Wilderlander	The Cambriother Caravanserai, The Golden Cage, The Red Sands of Yaganda	3
+0 to +1	City Folk (1)	Crafter, Entertainer, Legionnaire, Physician, Scientist, Sorcerer	The Builders of Walls, The Acrobats of Zhamra, Pilgrims of the Stones, Rabaraq Host	5
+2	Skull Priests (2)	Priest	Psalmody of the Beloved Dead, The Servants of the Skull	6
+3 to +4	Ancient Families (3)	Holy Warrior, Official, Sorcerer	The Blue Book of Nayarak, The Doom-Guards of Yami, Kazakhi Exiles, The Obsidian Shield of Khadis	6
+5	Aristocracy (4)	Legionnaire, Noble, Sorcerer	Eyes of Flame, The Grey, Noble Sakari, Purple Sceptre	7

Laigasi

The city and province of Laigas is famed for its Mameluke Legions, mounted on the huge and powerful Mameluke Leviathans. It's also a city of sorcerers, and worshippers of Unthar, Konfu, and Dafur.

Physically, Laigasi humans are similar to Aiforians (see below), with black skin, hair, and eyes. Men keep their hair in long, oiled, queues, and women sport elaborate coiffures and headdresses. Clothing is colourful and revealing, and upper class Laigasi sport intricate tattoos to indicate social rank.

Acknowledging their descent from the peoples of ancient Az Ein, Laigasi consider themselves a vital Imperial bastion against the Devourers of Qamraan.

Example Lands: The Qamraan Frontier; Archaeopolis of Laigas; Naishere Mountains; Shores of Lake Shanga.

Typical Blood Aspects: *A Bastion Against Evil in the East; Death Before Dishonour; Intricate Intrigue.*

Typical Shadow Aspects: *Ancestral Blood Rituals; Haunted by Ancient Obligations; Hubris and Vainglory.*

Native Language: Low Sakaraic.

Typical Kindreds: Human.

Typical Skills or Stunts: Lore (Specialist: Jungle, Laigas), Willpower.

Typical Temples: Dafur, Konfu, Unthar.

Typical Magic: Sorcery; divine magic.

Typical Communities: House, legion, secret society, sorcery school, temple.

Family: Tight-knit paterfamilias structure of ancient lineages.

Typical Equipment: Intricate social tattoos, colourful clothing; (women:) elaborate headdress and coiffure.

Typical Names: (Male:) Achin, Beyesey, Chidaddy, Choja, Devor, Eincherm, Hernugh, Jinack, Myshe; (Female:) Areta, Benjallum, Deborji, Gamhara, Heysoke, Jeitha, Metar, Neighbo, Thankuo, Toleesa; (Lineage: comes before personal name) Beffi, Bommeti, Hagvori, Haysi, Jeymi, Lee, Ravawi, Richevi, Tebbyo, Yonny.



TABLE 5-6: LAIGASI SOCIAL CLASS

ROLL OR CHOOSE	SOCIAL CLASS	TYPICAL OCCUPATION	TYPICAL HOUSE	RESOURCES CAP
-5	(Outcasts) (-3)	Gladiator, Rogue, Slave, Warrior, Wilderlander	None; The Warrior in Chains	0
-4 to -1	Peasants (0)	Farmer, Slaver	Craven Earth, Flint Mattock, Golden Cage, Planters of Jillaru, Soil Holy	1
+0 to +2	Artisans (1)	Crafter, Entertainer, Hedge Wizard, Physician	Healers in Yellow, Scarifiers of Shagreen	3
+3	Legionnaire (2)	Holy Warrior, Legionnaire	Embers of Jerra, Keepers of Qamraan, Leviathan Riders of Laigas, Burning Tusks	4
+4	Mandarin (3)	Official, Priest, Scholar, Sorcerer	Blue Book of Nayarak, The Fulminating Eye, Timekeepers of Kano, Verdigris JungledEEP	7
+5	Aristocrat (4)	Free Sorcerer, Holy Warrior, Legionnaire, Musician, Noble	Golden Blade, Singers of Shanga	No cap



Aiforians

The age-old cities of the south swelter in jungles, monolithic citadels of cyclopean black stone. Inhabited for tens of millennia, they trace their traditions back to ancient Az Ein. Uncaring or unaware of the perils in the north, their inhabitants tolerate the Autocracy, knowing that it, like all other empires, will pass.

Aiforian humans are mostly dark-skinned, with straight black hair and dark eyes. They favour shaven heads and voluminous but sombre robes. Aiforian society depends on its naked, collared slave class, and worship of Staros, Babisiya, and Entos is strong, with many slaves living in terror of sacrifice at their dark fanes. There's an aura of decay about Aiforia, in contrast to the brighter, energetic Laigas, and many suspect the corruption of the Great Hegemonist.

Darkness and madness dominate these brooding, stifling jungles, and Aiforia groans under the weight of its nightmarish history. Ruled by necromancers, legions of undead wait here in eternal readiness.

Example Lands: Provinces of Gini, Kan, and Shenekhel.



Typical Blood Aspects: *I Am Proud of My Place in the Ancient Hierarchy; Heat, Darkness, and the Power of Decay.*

Typical Shadow Aspects: *Haunted By the Deeds of My Ancestors; No One Escapes the Jungle Within.*

Native Language: Low Sakaraic.

Typical Kindreds: Human.

Typical Skills or Stunts: Deceive (Fast Talk), Provoke, Stealth.

Typical Temples: Staros, Babisiya, Entos.

Typical Magic: Divine magic, sorcery.

Typical Communities: Elemental cult, house, legion, secret society, sorcery school, temple.

Family: Stratified socially immobile extended families across multiple cities.

Typical Equipment: Aiforian *kaitesh* (polearm), dagger, dart; voluminous robes.

Typical Names: (Male:) Houseman, Liyun, Mammad, Papa-Gar, Slayman; (Female:) Alifa, Ama, Cheynaba, Hajatu, Roquaya, Satu, Zena; (Bloodline:) Jalloh, Jayen, Juffi, Kizeh, Teck-Consul, Toll, Toppa, Val, Zar, Zow.

TABLE 5-7: AIFORIAN SOCIAL CLASS

ROLL OR CHOOSE	SOCIAL CLASS	TYPICAL OCCUPATION	TYPICAL HOUSE	RESOURCES CAP
-5	Outcast (-3)	Gladiator, Slave	None; Warrior in Chains	0
-4 to -3	Low (0)	Entertainer, Farmer, Sailor	Acrobats of Zhamra, Eternal Swamps of Kizeh, Jungleblack, Planters of Jillaru, Rainbow Pennant	1
-2 to -1	Middle (1)	Agent, Merchant, Slaver	Brass Ruins, Golden Cage, Nocticulent Orb, Slavers of Qanat, Torturers of Shenekhel	5
+0 to +1	Upper (2)	Free Sorcerer, Holy Warrior, Legionnaire	The Beast of Tel-Khar, The Flamingo Riders of Gini, Kaitesh of the Rust Marsh, Lord of the Stone of Fire, The Viridian Scarab	5
+2 to +3	Noble (3)	Noble, Official, Priest, High Priest, Scholar, Scientist, Sorcerer-Adept	The Bright Halls of Alifa, The Patient Living, Terchus the Eternal Plain	7
+4 to +5	Aristocrat (4)	Noble, Sorcerer	The Glory of Az Ein	No cap

THE KINDREDS OF FUTURE EARTH

If homelands represent Future Earth's cultures and societies, then kindreds are the species of those belonging to them. "Most" people (maybe 60-80%) are human, and you can create a human character solely by using the homeland builds above.

To create a *non-human* character, though, you should also select one of the kindreds given below. This is either as well as or instead of picking a homeland—see below for why. Non-human characters have different abilities, and may face constraints in play. There are two types of non-human kindred: the *jeniri*, or Cousins of Humankind; and the *esteri*, or Not-Humans of Earth. They're dealt with separately below.

Humans

Future Earth's human beings aren't as homogenous as they are in our day. There are new ethnicities, with different skin tones, hair colours, and eye colours: the grey-skinned, orange-eyed Khadisi are quite stunning. But otherwise they're similar to modern-day humans. They live 80-90 years on average, thanks to magical healing and healthcare.

There are also at least two other human species sharing the world with homo sapiens. The **astrigers** and **parigers** form the aristocracy and nobility of the Venerable Autocracy. Astrigers marry only within their own class; parigers try to do the same, but also stem from liaisons between astrigers and non-astrigers. If you've created a human character using the homelands above who's an aristocrat, then they're an astriger rather than a standard human; if you've created a noble, they're a pariger.

Astrigers

Astrigers are over 2 metres tall and slender, long-lived (120 years or so), and run the gamut of human skin, hair, and eye colours. Incorporate a *Tall, Slender, and Youthful-looking-type* aspect into your Essence, Blood, or Origin aspects, and take the Extremely Gracile constraint (page 69); you're physically compelling, deft with *Graceful* weapons, but less capable with *Robust* weapons (page 179).

Parigers

Parigers are smaller and more robust than astrigers, but still taller and more slender than standard humans. They live a century or so. The Autocracy's nobility are parigers, and are fastidious about not reproducing with non-nobles. Snobbish and snooty, they don't otherwise have any special abilities.

THE JENIRI: THE COUSINS OF HUMANKIND

Jeniri are humanoid, but not interfertile with humans (this doesn't prevent romantic liaisons). To create a jeniri character, select one of the kindred builds below.

Some jeniri kindreds, like the Virikki, are integrated into Springtide Civilisations societies, and you can pick both a homeland and kindred when creating one; the "Typical Kindreds" section in the homelands writeups tells you when this is appropriate. Other jeniri, like the P'Tek Maggot Men, live apart, and don't use Autocracy homelands. Other kindreds can be either, depending on your character's story; the Magigi Red Giants live both within the Autocracy, hailing from a Sakari homeland, and also in their native lands in Hagya, using just the kindred writeup below on its own. Jeniri with an Autocracy homeland have a Pillar skill (page 158) to exercise influence within Autocracy society.

A kindred build gives you a pick-list of abilities just like a homeland. It also includes a mandatory spend requiring you to take certain special abilities and sometimes stunts during character creation. You must also take any listed constraints. See page 44 for more on special abilities and constraints.

Other Jeniri Kindreds

*There are many jeniri kindreds—this section details the most numerous. Others include the Stuyvosian Guard, the Dedaloi Devourers, the Atalaq shark people, and the Skarapai scorpion men. The mythical Helemor, dreaded servitors of the Great Hegemonist, were also said to be jeniri. Chroniclers can find information about all these and more in the **Chronicler's Guide**.*

Che Kwa

**The Stone Folk of Kadram, Kadrami,
The Ochre People**

Mandatory Spend: 2AP (2 special abilities,
1 constraint)

Che Kwa are ochre-skinned *jeniri* inhabiting the Kadram Mountains of northern Amadorad. They defend their Stone Age mountain stockades and cave villages against the Entropic Horde of the Sarag Wilderness, monsters they call the Shakh (“Chaos Beasts”) in their tongue. The Autocracy respects them for protecting the civilised lands of Hivernium, though recent Che Kwa bandit activity in Amadorad and northern Korudav has tarnished their reputation.

Personality and Description

The Che Kwa have been the frontline against the entropics for millennia. Yet, in contrast with the fatalistic Amadoradi, they’re given to laughter, and endlessly fascinated with tales of heroism against the Foes of Man. Trained to arms from childhood, they’re rare outside their frigid mountain fastnesses; most Sakari feel uneasy around these semi-naked, passionate cavemen, and the Che Kwa have little time for the complexities of Autocracy life.

Che Kwa have tough, dry, ochre skin, decorated with tattoos and piercings. They’re hairless apart from their faces, which are covered with copper-coloured fur, and go almost naked even in the coldest weather, finding hot temperatures intolerable. They wear fearsome wooden war-masks and intricate jewellery.

Lands and Relations

Che Kwa dwell in *jerefi* (wood and earth stockades and cave villages) high in the Kadram Mountains. Each is led by a *kajoush* hetman or shamanistic *vozsh*.

Relations with the Empire are good; the Autocracy has never coveted their frozen peaks, valuing the Che Kwa buffer against the entropics. Recent problems with raiders, however, have led to the transfer of the Legion of the Sword of Fire to Amadorad. Ignorant of the traditional respect paid to the Stone Folk, their treatment has been heavy-handed. The arrival of a Che Kwa hunter bringing furs to trade is now met with suspicion instead of joy.

Beliefs and Magic

Che Kwa revere elemental forces and totem spirits of natural phenomena; treat Che Kwa cults as less organised versions of Compact temples, except for Kichanda, Nom, Garigu, and Dombasa, which are elemental cults (see page 319).

Che Kwa war masks represent totem spirits, such as Dadalu the Winged Spear, Echingo the Bellow, Echilu the Beast, Achaka the Bringer of Death, and Kichanda the Burner, the latter valued for its Shakh-fighting powers. Renegade Che Kwa may revere Nom the Cold Killer, Dombasa the Night Hag, or even Qampu the Black Eater.

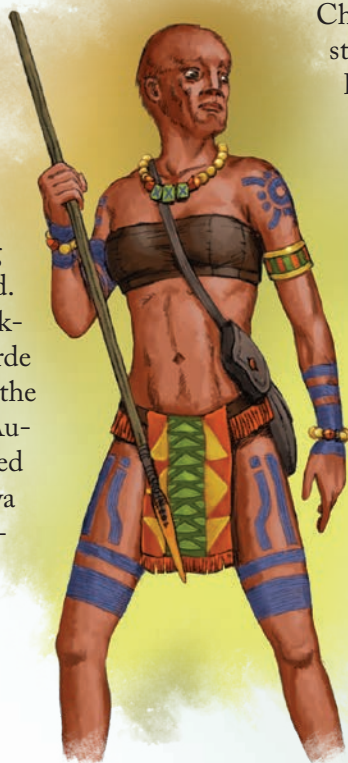


TABLE 5-8: CHE KWA SOCIAL CLASS

ROLL OR CHOOSE	SOCIAL CLASS	TYPICAL OCCUPATION	RESOURCES CAP
-5 to -3	Outlaw (-1)	Wilderlander	0
-2 to +4	Tribesman (0)	Crafter, Elemental Cult Magic User, Holy Warrior, Physician, Warrior, Wilderlander	1
+5	Chieftain (1)	Shaman, Holy Warrior, Warrior	2

Names and Language

Che Kwa have a personal name, plus a patronymic for men (derived from the father's personal name) and matronymic for women (derived from the mother's). Personal names describe characteristics noted in late childhood, or are drawn from cultural heroes; they're assigned during grueling puberty rites. Patronymics are formed by suffixing -dumu ("son of"), for example "Shudru Chalin-dumu", and matronymics by suffixing -mawe ("daughter of") for women, for example "Yinda Desimawe".

The Che Kwa language, Chekwa, is rhythmic, melodic, and has no known written form. Claims by shamans that strange inscriptions beneath the Kadram Range are an ancient, written form of Chekwa are unverified.

Adventurers

Che Kwa make excellent adventurers, though many in the Autocracy think they're all bandits. Many Che Kwa adventurers use fetishes containing bound elementals; see the Burners of Kichanda in the *Guide to Future Earth* as an example.

Lifespan: 80 years.

Typical Occupations: Elemental Cult Magic User, Holy Warrior, Warrior, Wilderlander.

Mandatory Special Abilities:

- **Climatic Adaptation (Cold Climes):** You never suffer from snow or desert blindness, and act at a +2 skill level on rolls to resist intense cold.
- **Integral Armour 1 (Tough Skin):** Your tough skin gives you -1 stress reduction (page 174), in addition to any armour you're wearing.

Optional Special Abilities:

- **Extra Sense (Entropy):** You can use Investigate or Notice to detect entropic energies, including whether a target has an Entropic Taint or is using the Entropy power skill (page 292).

TABLE 5-9: THE CHE KWA PANTHEON

NAME OF SPIRIT	TOTEM ANIMAL	SAKARI EQUIVALENT	POWER SKILL	BINDINGS
Echingo the All-Father	Tamagant	Regos	Command	Hellion
Dadalu the High One	Belur	Belorias	Turmoil	Sylph
Shiashu the Wise	Snow Snake	Konfu	Wisdom	
Olongu the Deep One	Sikkentor	Emeldias	Growth	Urthai
Achaka the Bringer of Death	Ylethu	Belom	Death	
Echilu the Wild Hunter	Shoten	Entos	Animality	Primal Beast
Kichanda the Burner	Elemental Force of Fire	Agni, Dafur	Change By Fire	Salamander
Nom the Cold Killer	Elemental Force of Water	Nim, the Cold God	Cyclicity	Undine
Garigu the Earth Shaker	Elemental Force of Earth	Malud, Madiz	Growth	Gnome
Dombasa the Night Hag	Elemental Force of Darkness	Bab, Babisiya	Darkness	Shade
Qampu the Black Eater	Force of Evil	Hegemonist and Reaver Gods	Void (Domination / Entropy)	Flay

Constraints:

- **Susceptibility (Heat):** Hot conditions cause you to overheat dangerously.

Example Lands: Kadram Mountains.

Typical Blood Aspects: *As Tough as Mountain Roots; Loyal to the Headman; Filial Piety; Stone Age; Outdoor Survival.*

Typical Shadow Aspects: *We Shed Our Blood to Keep the Shakh at Bay.*

Native Language: Chekwa.

Typical Skills or Stunts: Devise (Specialist: Stone Age tools), Learned Language (Ya-Kad, Low Sakaraic), Lore (Specialist: Kadram Mountains, Shakh), Survival.

Typical Temples: Che Kwa pantheon.

Typical Magic: Natural magic, elemental cults, shamanic bindings.

Typical Communities: Che Kwa pantheon cult; tribe; hunting societies like Deep Hunter; Elemental Cult warrior societies like the Scorchers and the Warriors of the Mask.

Family: Che Kwa *jeref* (“village”) and extended family group.

Typical Equipment: Short spear, stone knife, wooden armour (mask).

Typical Names: (Male:) Chalin, Cho, Kwamu, Mboko, Mgolo, Opo, Shudru; (Female:) Ayamala, Batyumuk, Desi, Eesha, Fayuti, Ksheni, Mzela, Yinda; (*Jeref* village:) Dark Stone, Flint Heart, Ice Home.

The Foul

Also known as the Telasti, the Foul are hostile esteri who the Kesh trade with, offering tamagant shell goods and delicate mechanisms in exchange for precious supplies of radium. They dwell in Telasti Vale in the distant Hagya Range.

Kesh

Cloud Riders

Mandatory Spend: 0AP (1 special ability, 2 constraints)

The frail-looking Kesh are famed for their *elenisor* flying steeds. They dwell high in the Kesh Mountains province in northern Sakara.

Personality and Description

Traditional reserve and suspicion of strangers often disguise the strength of Kesh feelings for family and friends. Nevertheless, some do leave their mountain homeland for employment in the Empire, often as mercenaries. Renowned warriors are gifted by their communities with an *elenisor* riding beast, with which they form a lifelong bond.

Kesh myth says the Cloud Riders originated on a lost low-G world known as *Alaqud*, “the High Peaks”. They’re average height, thin and frail in appearance, with hollow bones, making them lighter than humans. Their pale faces have delicate features, small mouths and noses, and large eyes; head hair is usually jet-black, worn long down the back. They have no facial hair.

Kesh don’t wear metal or alagin armour, but choose less cumbersome materials like bright blue *tamagant* chitin (page 176), often lacquered, painted with martial scenes, and inlaid with precious metals and gems. Hunters use the **Kesh hornbow**, and *elenisor* riders are equipped with the famous **radium rifles** (page 183).

Lands and Relations

Kesh consider themselves “in the Empire but not of the Empire”. Their association with the Autocracy goes back to its beginnings, but the Kesh know they’ve been in their mountain fastnesses for far longer, since the Armageddon of the Gods, when their mountains were gifted them by Ba-Laqu the Skylord. Proud and honourable, they view humankind’s capacity for casual duplicity with alarm.

The Kesh Mountains are an Imperial Province. The Pass of Jelefa is one of the Empire's major north-south routes, highly strategic, the only other being the circuitous coastal road via Palanqa. The provincial capital is the mountain city of High Yasif, whose autarch is Kesh. The city, however, is only one-third Kesh; most Kesh prefer their remote mountain eyries.

Beliefs and Magic

High Yasif has at least one shrine for each of the gods of the Great Compact, but the Kesh prefer Regos (called Ba-Laqu the Skylord) and Ankadar (Yamrai the Pact-Keeper). Belorias is propitiated as Grughna the Thunderbird.

Names and Language

Kesh have a personal name and an eyrie name. Outside Kesh lands, they generally add "of the House of the Cloud-Riders of Kesh" to satisfy the Sakari urge to identify an individual's house.

The Kesh tongue is whispering and sibilant, called *Alais* ("the Speech") by the Kesh and Keshaic by everyone else. They often learn Low Sakaraic.



Adventurers

Kesh warriors often serve the Autocracy as mercenaries, returning to claim their elenisor when they've attained sufficient glory. The Legion of the Cloud-Riders of Kesh is a permanent force and the Empire's only flying cavalry.

Kesh sorcerors travel seeking knowledge, and Kesh whose spiritual leanings go beyond the worship of Ba-Laqu and Yamrai travel the lowlands seeking enlightenment. Finally, uncommon Kesh who don't fit into Kesh society depart or are cast out to make their own way in the world.

Lifespan: 80 years.

Typical Occupations: Beast Handler, Legionnaire (Cloud-Rider of the Kesh), Priest, Sorcerer, Warrior.

Mandatory Special Abilities:

- **Heightened Visual Acuity:** You have immensely keen vision. Your ranged attacks increase in difficulty by only +1 per zone above R1 instead of +2 (page 211).

TABLE 5-10: KESH SOCIAL CLASS

ROLL OR CHOOSE	SOCIAL CLASS	TYPICAL OCCUPATION	TYPICAL EYRIE	RESOURCES CAP
-5 to -4	The Exiled (-3)	Hedge Wizard, Warrior, Wilderlander	n/a	0
-3 to -1	Low (0)	Farmer, Rogue, Wilderlander	Mother Asari, Shoshan's Rangers	1
+0 to +2	Middle (1)	Beast Handler, Physician, Priest, Scientist, Sorcerer, Warrior	Walkerfolk, Wing Whisperers of Siritha	2
+3 to +4	The Honoured (2)	Legionnaire (Cloud-Rider), Priest	Horayai Sky Riders, Servitors of the Skylord	5
+5	Nobility (3)	Holy Warrior, Noble, Priest, Sorcerer	Keepers of Yamrai, Radium Lords of Telesh	7

Constraints:

- **Extremely Gracile:** You act at a +1 skill level on rolls to appear elegant, charismatic, and attractive, and to physical actions where gracefulness is an advantage, but incur a *Physically Weaker* obstacle to physical actions requiring raw strength. In combat, you're better off with a rapier than a war axe (page 179).
- **Hollow Bones:** You're thin and fragile, lighter than your frame implies. Your base encumbrance level is 2 instead of 3 (page 192). Additionally, *Hollow Bones* may be invoked or compelled as an aspect.

Example Lands: The Kesh Mountains, High Yasif, the Pass of Jelefa.

Typical Blood Aspects: *In the Empire But Not of the Empire.*

Typical Shadow Aspects: *Unfathomable Cultural Considerations.*

Native Language: Alais (Keshaic).

Typical Skills or Stunts: Athletics, Empathy, Learned Language (Low Sakaraic).

Typical Temples: Ba-Laqu the Skylord (Regos); Yamrai the Pact-Keeper (Ankadar); propitiation of Grughna the Thunderbird (Belorias).

Typical Magic: Divine magic; sorcery.

Typical Communities: Fighting school (see the Cloud-Riders of Kesh in the *Guide to Future Earth*); sorcery school; temple.

Family: "Eyrie" extended family; often solitary when travelling in the Empire.

Typical Equipment: Keshite hornbow, elegant clothing with Cloud-Rider insignia.

Typical Names: (Male:) Helesh, Hufasha, Shoshan, Yishuf, Zilir, Zozott; (Female:) Furuahu, Horaya, Laissa, Losenna, Sufi, Zhash.

Maggot People

P'Tek, Children of the Worm

Mandatory Spend: 2AP (2 special abilities, 1 constraint)

Tales of maggot people have terrified human children for millennia. They're the Dwellers in Darkness, Children of the Worm, Burrowers Beneath—strange, alien, hostile. It's fortunate these unwholesome *jeniri* dwell in subterranean warrens far from human lands; they're a vast horde of fearsome cannibals, devoted to darkness.

Personality and Description

Maggot People have lived beneath Future Earth for aeons, though their legends say they hail from a world called *G'Tak*, "the Dark Place", a cold, high gravity planet orbiting a dim star. Savage and strong, they're as intelligent as humans, but with a "hive culture" built on a brutal matriarchal hierarchy where only the ruthless succeed. They dislike daylight and hot dry environments, and have senses adapted to their underground warrens. With an affinity for mechanisms, they manufacture fiendish traps, but are superstitious, fearing magic other than that of their worm-witches.

Maggot People are pallid and hairless, with small, yellow eyes and wormlike skin and mouth. There are several sub-kindreds. **Maggots** are most numerous, blind asexual burrowers. They may develop into male **drones**, female **worm-witches**, or asexual **worms**. Drones are large and cadaverous; light-sensitive, they only go aboveground at night, swathed in robes (underground, Maggot People rarely wear anything beyond battle harnesses and primitive armour). Worm-witches are large and fat. Worms are bloated, five metres long with vestigial arms and legs; only rudimentarily intelligent, they're used as dumb mounts by drone worm-riders. A fifth sub-kindred is the **mother** or **P'Tek cow**, sluglike breeders that worm-witches can develop into as a result of complex hormonal triggers, kept sequestered in underground cells. Drones and worm-witches can be created as characters (see below); cows, maggots, and worms are described in the *Chronicle's Guide*.

All P'Tek exude a resinous slime called **wormamber**. Some can even spit the stuff—it can be lethal if it blocks a target's breathing passages.

Lands and Relations

Maggot People lands are subterranean despotates ruled by queens, empresses, and shamanesses. With populations in the tens of thousands, it's fortunate they don't covet the surface world. They're damp, nightmarish places devoid of light, where bulbous surfaces of slick brownish wormmamber are the main construction material.

P'Tek lands include the Tyrant Queendom of Night beneath the Wastes of Kastalon in northern Hivernium, the Underdark of the Night Hags of Hagya on the Ellib border, and the Worm Pit beneath the Mountains of Aiforia. Tribal populations are known beneath the Naishere Mountains beyond the Autocracy's southeastern border.

There's trade of a sort between the Tyrant Queendom of Night and the Amadorad Protectorate, a bounty of the Wormgate Accord and conducted by a P'Tek temple of Vareltias in the City of Night. The Queendom's caravans use raqaraq and P'Tek worms to pull huge, stone-wheeled wagons laden with alcohol, gems, crossbows, and smaller siege engines, which the P'Tek trade for all-important alagin, precious items of copper, and even Ladabran steel.

Despite their hostility, Maggot People aren't continually at war with humans. Their lands are distant, hard to reach, with little to attract other kindreds. The P'Tek keep themselves to themselves, but woe betide any human they capture; their death will be long and unpleasant.



There've been times when the Maggot People have cooperated with other kindreds, but the Wormgate Accord has been the only occasion this has led to an alliance. During the Hivernian Campaigns against the entropics which led to the founding of the Amadorad Protectorate a thousand years ago, the Tyrant Queendom of Night fought alongside the Autocracy's legions. Thus the Queendom is the little-known "third signatory" to Amadorad, though many doubt the P'Tek will honour the treaty and come to the Protectorate's aid in time of need.

Individual P'Tek regard the Autocracy as soft, effete, and rich for the picking. Wilder parts of Korudav and Amadorad are thick with P'Tek raiders.

Beliefs and Magic

Most Maggot People worship the Cult of Darkness, revering Durgha, the Dark Mother, the P'Tek name for the goddess Babisiya. P'Tek worm-witches are often powerful priestesses of Durgha; other deities include Karaktum (Belom) and Barabanis (Vareltias). Renegade P'Tek may secretly worship Xados the Annihilator, Danisakh the Lady of Pain, the Gouger, and even the Great Hegemonist, although these gods are not tolerated even among the Maggot People.

TABLE 5-11: P'TEK SOCIAL CLASS

ROLL OR CHOOSE	SOCIAL CLASS	TYPICAL OCCUPATION	RESOURCES CAP
-5 to -4	Outlaw (-3)	Slave, Wilderlander	0
-3 to +0	Worm-tender (0)	Beast-Handler, Farmer	2
+1 to +2	Wormguard (1)	Warrior	3
+3	Worm-rider (2)	Holy Warrior	5
+4	Trader (Drone Priest) (3)	Priest, Trader	7
+5	Worm-witch (4)	Elemental Cultist, Noble, Priest	No cap

Names and Language

Maggot People names sound disharmonious to humans, although memorable for rhythm and rhyme. An individual has a personal name, and additional names referring to membership in a *gragul* (tribe) or *g'jazh* (clan). Names may be suffixed by titles like “of the Ground-Eater Clan of the Tribe of the Gaping Maw”, or “Dark Priestess of Durgha, Matriarch of All the Zhelaini of the Tribe of the Pallid Burrowers”.

Maggot People speak a language called “Darkspeech” by the Autocracy and “the Mother Tongue” by the P'Tek. Scholars say it's similar to the speech of *Umbrai* darkness demons, a staccato tongue of basso growls and high-pitched yelps and shrieks, suited for communication in deep caves and tunnels. Human traders of Vareltias dealing with the Queendom of Night sometimes understand Darkspeech, but few speak it.

Adventurers

You can play drones and worm-witches as characters, though Maggot People are rarely welcome in the Autocracy. P'Tek cultists of Barabanis are found along the Amadorad border. In the Aiforian Mountains, priestesses of Durgha may collaborate with the Night Hags of Babisiya.

Lifespan: Varies by sub-kindred. Maggots differentiate at the age of 5 or die; others live 50-80 years, except Mothers, who last about 40.

Typical Occupations: (Drone:) Beast Handler, Trader, Warrior, Worm-Rider (Holy Warrior); (Worm-witch:) Elemental Cultist, Priest, Trader.

Mandatory Special Abilities:

- **Enhanced Sense (Infrared Vision):** You see a heat map of objects, even in total darkness. You face no penalties to skills like Investigate, Notice, or physical movement or combat skills.
- **Exude (Wormamber):** Your skin is coated with cloying, sticky **wormamber**, which hardens like resin in *A Few Hours*. This can trap physical weapons, limbs, etc, touching your body: an attacker must make a Physique roll against your Physique to wrench his weapon or limb free when he strikes you. An attempt can be made every round, but the attacker is an *Easy Target* while doing so.

Optional Special Abilities:

- **Project (Wormamber):** You may spit wormamber at your target. On a successful Ranged Combat attack, you do no damage, but create a *Glued-Up*-type condition aspect which acts as an obstacle to all physical actions taken by the target until removed (which takes *Half an Hour* and a lot of mess...). On a special success, the condition aspect becomes an automatic consequence as the victim struggles to breathe. If the target doesn't remove the wormamber, it hardens like resin in *A Few Hours*.

Constraints:

- **Susceptibility (Daylight):** You're blinded by daylight and your skin quickly blisters and burns. This acts as an **obstacle** (page 201).

Example Lands: Wastes of Kastalon.

Typical Blood Aspects: *Huge and Pallid Maggot Man; Hideous Bloated Worm-Hag; Obey Me Without Question! Cleanse the Dark Places of Entropic Stain.*

Typical Shadow Aspects: *Habits Disgusting to Surface Dwellers, Subjugation to the Way of the Worm.*

Native Language: Durghat (Darkspeech).

Typical Skills or Stunts: (Drone:) Devise (Booby Traps, Disarm Traps), Notice (Keen Hearing, Sense Danger, Trap-Finding), Physique (Grappling); (Worm-witch:) Lore (Specialist: P'Tek Queendom), Physique, Provoke (Armour of Fear, Terrorise); (Special:) All P'Tek avoid the Command and Change By Fire power skills.

Typical Temples: Durgha the Dark Mother (Babisiya), Karaktum (Belom), Barabanis (Vareltias).

Typical Magic: Cantrips, divine magic, sorcery (no access to fire- or light-based magic).

Typical Communities: Clan, temple, tribe.

Family: Vast extended family “clan” descended from a single P'Tek Mother.

Typical Equipment: P'Tekian *gugri* (a short, thick, curved blade, normally made of tamagant shell).

Typical Names: (Male:) G'Tar-G'Tar, Jakabat, Zhabazh; (Female:) Banazhu, P'Zhen-T'Zhen, Ulegig; (Tribe—*gragul*;) Gaping Maw, Pallid Burrowers; (Clan—*g'jazh*;) Ground-Eater, Zhelaini.

Magigi

Red Giants

Mandatory Spend: 10AP
(4 special abilities, 1 constraint)

Red Giants are neither friendly nor inimical to humankind. Individuals live in the Autocracy, working as smelters and smiths, and adopt its customs easily.

Personality and Description

Magigi are three metres tall, red-skinned, with thickset frames and heavily ridged faces. Their love of heat and fire is legendary; their myths speak of a hot, volcanic world as their home. They're expert in extracting the Earth's few remaining metal deposits, and their lava pits and forges in the ruddy volcanic tunnels of the Hagya Mountains are spectacular.

Red Giants are stoic, patient, and enduring. Slow to anger, terrible in their fury, they're unflappable in pursuit of their goals. "As staunch as a Red Giant" is a compliment, "as stubborn as a Magigi" a frequent curse.

Although content in the company of other kindreds, Magigi aren't garrulous, even appearing sullen and self-absorbed. However, they rarely miss a trick: a Red Giant apparently ignoring you will be aware of everything you're saying and doing.

Lands and Relations

The Magigi homeland lies deep in the volcanic Hagya Mountains. They live close to lava flows in volcanic stone-walled citadels of 50-100 individuals known as *craals*. Each craal is led by a chieftain, but the Red Giants have no higher-level social or political organisation.

Most craals are self-sufficient, hunting, tanning, mining and smelting according to their needs. The more ancient and prestigious trade rare ingots of brass, tantalloy, red and white gold, and other metals with the Autocracy.

Craals have little interest in other lands. They regard the Autocracy with bemusement—it's far away, with little impact on their lives. The Empire welcomes Red Giants who come to work as smelters and smiths or enlist in its legions.

Individually, Red Giants distrust authority and centralised government, with little notion of helping those outside their communities. Some will even leave injured individuals encountered while travelling to perish where they lie.

Beliefs and Magic

Magigi worship Khadam the Firebringer, Lava Lord, and many have a **natural talent power aspect** (page 267) permitting them to use Change By Fire cantrips and power stunts. Monolithic temples to Khadam are found throughout Hagya in areas of volcanic activity. Magigi in the Autocracy equate Khadam with Dafur, although they also pay reverence to Khosht (see page 17).

Names and Language

Red Giants have two guttural-sounding names, plus an optional epithet. The first is their craal of origin; the second their personal name, derived from a list of cultural heroes. Gyachak of the Dakalub craal, a renowned bronze smelter, may be known as Dakalub Gyachak of the Hands of Bronze.

The Magigi language, *Ghadal* or "Firespeech", is rich and sonorous, a roaring, mumbling, grumbling tongue with moments of strange sibilance. It's hard for non-Magigi to master, though few Red Giants outside the Autocracy speak any Sakaraic.



Adventurers

Perhaps one in a hundred Magigi take up lives in the Venerable Autocracy. A few choose an adventurer's life; most become smelters or smiths, or join the legions. Although many Red Giants use Change By Fire cantrips and power stunts, they're disinclined to divine magic (rare are the Magigi that join the priesthood). Many study chemick (page 116).

Lifespan: 80 years.

Typical Occupations: Chemicker, Legionnaire, Metalsmith, Natural Talent Magic User, Priest.

Mandatory Special Abilities:

- **Enhanced Sense (Nightsight):** You see at night or in similar low-light conditions as if it was full day.
- **Larger Size (S1):** This special ability costs 4AP instead of 2AP. You are much larger than a normal human, and have a **Size** (page 235) of 1 instead of 0.
- **Metabolic Enhancement (Go Without Water) 2:** This special ability costs 4AP. Usually you may go without water for *Half A Day* before suffering 1 physical stress damage per period of *Half A Day*; you, however, may extend this to *A Few Days* in both cases.
- **Resist (Heat):** You act at a +2 skill level to resist heat and heat damage.

Optional Special Abilities:

- **Integral Armour 1 (Tough Skin):** Your tough skin gives you -1 stress reduction (page 174), in addition to any armour you're wearing.

Constraints:

- **Susceptibility (Cold):** You experience extreme discomfort, chills, shakes, and lethargy in cold conditions. This acts as an **obstacle** (page 201).

Example Lands: Hagya Mountains; in the Autocracy.

Typical Blood Aspects: *Rarely Misses a Trick; Wild Love of Fire and Flame.*

Typical Shadow Aspects: *As Stubborn As a Magigi; I Love To See Things Burn.*

Native Language: Ghadal (Firespeech).

Typical Skills or Stunts: Change By Fire, Notice, Physique.

Typical Temples: Khadam; Dafur, Khosht.

Typical Magic: Cantrips and power stunts; divine magic.

Typical Communities: Craal; (in Autocracy:) guild, legion, temple.

Family: Tight-knit nuclear family within craal structure.

Typical Equipment: Brass weapon, tanned hide armour.

Typical Names: (Male:) Dabyk, Gadak, Gyachuk; (Female:) Kaga, Olokho, Ukhta; (Craal name:) Dakalub, Khemegok, Xhraka.

TABLE 5-12: MAGIGI SOCIAL CLASS

ROLL OR CHOOSE	SOCIAL CLASS	TYPICAL OCCUPATION	RESOURCES CAP
-5 to -4	Outcast (-3)	Rock-Wizard (Natural Talent Magic User), Warrior, Wilderlander	0
-3 to -1	Hagyaman (0)	Hunter	1
+0 to +3	Craalsman (1)	Crafter (miner, smelter, smith), Legionnaire, Physician, Warrior	3
+4	Khadami (2)	Holy Warrior, Priest	5
+5	Noble (3)	Holy Warrior, Noble, Warrior	7

Virikki

Blueskins, People of the Mind

Mandatory Spend: 6AP (1 special ability, 1 stunt)

Tall, almost insectoid, the Virikki are at once the most alien and most human of the *jeniri*. They're an ancient people with profound psionic abilities, renowned as adventurous traders. Their love of philosophy and the sciences has shaped many other cultures.

Personality and Description

A typical Virikki stands over 2 metres tall, thin and spindly, with pale, aquamarine, almost scaly skin. Large dark eyes have a nictating membrane, hands are long and dexterous, and a small lipless mouth is filled with tiny sharp teeth. A hairless head bears a hard crest several centimetres high stretching down to the upper back.

Virikki are adapted to cold, arid climes, and would probably live further north, were it not for the Entropic Wastes that blight Yurasha. They swaddle themselves in light-coloured clothing to reflect sun and heat, and dwell in cool halls of stone. Their austere sensitivities are the model of good taste throughout the Empire.

Lands and Relations

Virikki are integral to the societies of the Springtide Civilisations, and they have no known homeland; they've "always been here". In cities and ports, trading houses like the House of the Unblinking Gaze are associated with the temple of Vareltias.

The Bantoor Waggon Trains of the Virikki travel the Springtide Civilisations, maintaining trade routes and facilitating communication. Many Virikki work as advisors, interpreters, and diplomats, and elite cadres main-

tain the Autocracy's Mirror Network, which uses ancient artefacts and Virikki psionics to communicate between far flung cities (page 352).

Beliefs and Magic

Virikki psionics determines their world view (see *The Impossible Heresy: Polemics on Virikki Reductionism*, 1260CV, by Polymath Yanisi Thedolos, preserved in manuscript in the Temple of Vareltias in Elikan). They acknowledge the gods of the Great Compact, but don't worship them. Their affiliation with Vareltias gives them no divine powers, but the Virikki seem content with their psionic doctrines.

Names and Language

Virikki naming conventions follow those of the Venerable Autocracy. Personal names are distinctive, ending in a vowel and having three syllables, one of which contains a double-vowel or consonant. Typical Virikki personal names include: Estaddi, Morfa'ayi, and Chaibayaan.

There are Virikki bloodlines and houses, including Tunguddi (a bloodline), Virigu (a bloodline and a house), and Unblinking Gaze (a famous Trader Prince house of the city of Elikan).

Virikki have no spoken language of their own; few extracts survive of *Viriji*, the ancient Virikki tongue. Instead they speak High or Low Sakaraic, and Virikki involved in trade or the Temple of Vareltias speak Eletas (page 151), a de facto common tongue when meeting Virikki of other lands. Virikki habitually pronounce consonants and vowels in certain words at double-length, adding a half-voiced short "i" sound after almost every word-ending consonant, giving a characteristic lilt to their speech ("Hell-lo, my friend-i, my na-ame is Estad-di..."). Those wishing to parody this speech pattern are advised not to do so in the presence of Virikki psionists.



Adventurers

Virikki adventurers tend towards cerebral roles; there are more Virikki psionics, merchants, scholars, and rogues than warriors. Many Virikki come from high-status houses, which may cause friction in an adventuring party.

Lifespan: 90 years.

Typical Occupations: Diplomat, Merchant, Psionist, Scholar.

Mandatory Special Abilities:

- **Climatic Adaptation (Cold Arid Climes):** You never suffer from snow or desert blindness, and act at a +2 skill level on rolls to resist intense cold and thirst.
- **Psionics:** You must take at least 1 Virikki Psionist stunt (see page 352).

Optional Special Abilities:

- **Extra Sense (Psionics):** You can use skills like Investigate and Notice to detect psionics, including identifying a psionic effect or a target currently using a psionic talent.
- **Heightened Awareness:** You're nervous and twitchy, constantly darting your eyes, ears, and tongue. You act at a +2 skill level on rolls of Notice, etc, relying on alertness and peripheral awareness.
- **Heightened Concentration:** You're oblivious to all else when you concentrate on a task. Act at a +2 skill level on any appropriate action when you concentrate for an additional round beforehand without interruption. For both rounds you incur an *Oblivious To All Else* condition aspect.

Example Lands: Seaports of Elikan; cities of Palanqa and Irgiddi Province; city of Laigas.

Typical Blood Aspects: *Trade and Communication Tie the World Together; Dislike of Hot Temperatures.*

Typical Shadow Aspects: *Cold and Cerebral; Inhuman Insectoid Creepiness.*

Native Language: Low Sakaraic, Eletas.

Typical Skills or Stunts: Investigate, Lore (Specialist: Beyond the Veil, Venerable Autocracy), Rapport.

Typical Temples: None (association with Vareltias).

Typical Magic: Virikki Psionics (page 352).

Typical Communities: Virikki Trader House.

Family: Detached but respectful relationships with parents and siblings.

Typical Equipment: Light-coloured swaddling and robes.

Typical Names: (Personal names:) Chaibayaan, Morfaayi, Nu'unburru, Ya'afalin; (bloodline:) Elenequ, Estaddi, Kinseggi, Penbarru, Tendrassi, Tunguddi; (bloodline and house:) Virigu.

TABLE 5-13: VIRIKKI SOCIAL CLASS

ROLL OR CHOOSE	SOCIAL CLASS	TYPICAL OCCUPATION	TYPICAL HOUSE	RESOURCES CAP
-5	Exile / Outcast (-3)	Psionist, Scholar, Sorcerer	Illuminated Exiles, Refuged of Tanoc	4
-4 to +0	Middle (1)	Merchant, Scholar	Polymaths in Green, Unblinking Gaze	7
+1 to +3	Upper (2)	Psionist	Percipient Eye, Virigu	7
+4 to +5	Noble (3)	Diplomat	Enlightened Eloquence, Viridian Seal	No cap

THE NOT-HUMANS OF EARTH

The *esteri* are an array of alien kindreds, as different from one another as they are from humankind, only grouped together in the minds of the peoples of the Springtide Civilisations. Roleplaying an *esteri* character can be a challenge; to create one, select a kindred build below.

The four *esteri* kindreds presented here are relatively well integrated into Springtide Civilisations societies. The Hsun Spider Folk play an essential role in the production, distribution, and maintenance of the metal-substitute *alagin*, vitally important to Future Earth's economies, and are found throughout the Autocracy. Tung Mai Mantis People and Ing Shu Sea People are found in most Sakari cities, especially along the coasts. Only the Paladoi are isolationist, dwelling in two major enclaves; but even they hold regular markets to exchange trade goods. It's not unusual to find *esteri* from these kindreds with a **Pillar skill** (page 158) to exercise influence within the Autocracy.

As with *jeniri*, when you choose an *esteri* kindred, you gain a build of abilities to select from, including a **mandatory spend** and frequent **constraints**.

Other Esteri Kindreds

Many other esteri kindreds exist on Future Earth; scholars theorise there are many as yet unknown to the Autocracy beyond the borders of the Springtide Civilisations. Known esteri include the mysterious "time dragons" of the Shalai Manifest, the Foul of Telasti Vale, and the gaseous Alatai, the Chimakis Bloodstars, and the ground-eating Qur, which may even be unknown kinds of demon.

Hsun

Spider Folk

Mandatory Spend: 8AP (2 stunts; 3 special abilities, 4 constraints)

The *Hsun* Spider Folk dwell mostly on the Isles of Zor off the Autocracy's western coast, but their itinerant Tinkers may be found anywhere. They make the strange, semi-organic artefacts known as *hsuntach* (page 350), and the vital metal-substitute *alagin*. Often unfathomable, they're a vital part of the world's status quo.

Personality and Description

Spider Folk are one of the largest kindreds, two and a half metres from head to thorax and over a metre high. Like enormous termites or crustaceans, they have six pairs of triple-jointed limbs; the four rearmost are used for walking or climbing, the foremost are manipulatory arm-analogues, and the intermediate pair fulfils either role. Hsun have no "head"; their torso ends in a flat area with a large, vertical mouth flanked by two arms. Sensory organs lie at the topmost joint of each limb, a sensitive membrane acting as ears and eyes: the Hsun "see" using a sonar-like sense, reading the echoes of the high-pitched drone (inaudible to humankind) produced by breathing apertures along their segmented backs. They swim comfortably on the surface of the seas around their island homes, and may dive for up to fifteen minutes.

Hsun colouration is vivid and individual, vibrant reds, blues, and greens in mottled or dappled patterns. With age, a copper hue predominates; elder Hsun glow with a brilliant metallic sheen.

Hsun chitin is light, strong, and buoyant, segmented so they can raise their forequarters and pivot 120 degrees to reach their backs, attaching harnesses for weaponry and other gear. Hsun warriors prefer crossbow-like weapons, especially the six-shot repeater known as the **Hsun bow**.

Hsun are long-lived—500 years isn't uncommon. Their insectoid appearance leads people to misconstrue them as a hive-like species, but they're individualistic, pre-occupied with expressing their creative powers. Hsun *make things*: organic creations of the Hsuntach Gardeners, mechanisms of the Hsun Artificers, the artefacts of the Hsun Shapers. Their tri-sexual reproductive habits, with “egg layers”, “egg fertilisers”, and “egg bearers”, elicit little emotional involvement, and may be the source of the Hsun fascination with creativity. The Hsun are the “Tinkers of the Gods”.

Lands and Relations

The Isles of Zor, called “the Isles of the Second Blessed”, are the main Hsun centre in the Springtide Civilisations, though rumours exist of huge Hsun lands in the Farthest East. Dengazi Port is the seat of the Exarch (“Duke”) of Zor, the human representative of the Autocracy, but the Isles are autonomous, governed by the Hsun Commissariat. Hsun settlements comprise spacious, oddly rounded, organic-looking dwellings, with a single “commissar” mediating between individual Hsun and their loose “government”. Dengazi hosts the “new” Palace of the Commissariat, built following the Ukar War (2800CV) and a meeting place for commissars and Autocracy officials. The jury is still out on whether this innovation will work.

Hsun mythology tells of their arrival on the Isles of Zor following a migration during the Time of Snows. Ever since, relations with humankind have been good. Genocidal battles have been fought with the Tung Mai to the south; the last, only seven hundred years ago, culminated in the Great Intercession formally integrating the Zorian Protectorate into the Autocracy. Since then, the Spider Folk have been enthusiastic subjects of the Autocrator, and the Protectorate has improved its supply of hsuntach and alagin.

Beliefs and Magic

Although individualistic, Spider Folk seek personal satisfaction in a social context. In the Hsun Commissariat, individual Hsun compromise their immediate freedoms to a loose form of government to ensure their greater liberty.

Many Spider Folk revere the Gods of the Great Compact, especially Khosht the Builder, who they depict as a Hsun. They're great hero-worshippers, and what look like temples are often shrines to great individuals from Hsun history and myth. The greatest is Adabris of Zor, who lead the migration during the Time of Snows.

Names and Language

Hsun names pay little attention to sex or genealogy. Personal names are assigned at birth by the three parents, drawn from a list of cultural heroes, place names, and even concepts, chosen for euphony and parental aspirations. The Autocracy transliterates these names into forms compatible with human speech; “A'a-hitap-ri'ish”, founder of the Zorian Isles, is known to humankind as Adabris. Likewise, “Pa'i-t'ch'kai-yai”, Commissar of the Dengazi Commissariat, holds the full Autocracy title of Pytochikyai, August Speaker of the Dengazi Commissariat, Master Gardener of the Vales of Tamur, 3rd Circle Seeker of the Glorious Continuative, and is commonly referred to as General Pyto.

Hsun communication is idiosyncratic. The sonic bursts of Hsun “speech” are a sophisticated language almost inaudible to humans, so Hsun and non-Hsun alike learn the sign language known as **hsunsign**. Also, the hsuntach **vo-calus** (page 253), resembling a two-tentacled octopus with a human-looking mouth on top of its head, worn over a breathing aperture, converts Hsun speech into clicks, whistles, and breathy groans within the human auditory range. Non-Hsun may learn to understand this, and Hsun may learn to understand human tongues; but **Voice of the Hsun** human or jeniri interpreters also translate Hsun utterances into human speech. In the Autocracy, Hsun Tinkers (page 117) are usually accompanied by such a Voice.



Adventurers

Spider Folk can make good (if unusual) adventurers. They're found everywhere, usually in the company of a Voice, and often working in the alagin and hsuntach trades; but they also seek knowledge, experience, and material gain to advance themselves in the eyes of their peers.

Lifespan: 500 years.

Typical Occupations: Hsuntach Scientist, Hsuntach Tinker, Zoic Healer.

Mandatory Special Abilities:

- **Enhanced Sense (360 Degree Vision):** You suffer no penalties when people sneak up on you, flank you, or attack from behind.
- **Integral Armour 2 (Segmented Chitin):** Your armoured chitin gives you -2 stress reduction (page 174). Any armour you wear in addition must be specially (and expensively) tailored.
- **Metabolic Enhancement (Go Without Air) 1:** Usually you may hold your breath for *A Minute* or so before suffering 1 physical stress per round; with this ability, you may do so for *A Few Minutes* before suffering 1 physical stress per period of *A Minute* or so.

Constraints:

- **Communication Restriction (Inaudible to Human Ears):** Your voice uses frequencies inaudible to humans. You may not use speech to communicate without some way of making it audible, and any interpersonal rolls you make face an *Inaudible to Human Ears* obstacle.

- **Difficulty Adapting to Human Scales:** Human equipment, houses, etc, are too small for you. You face an obstacle when using or interacting with them.
- **Easy Target:** You're large and lumbering; attacks against you act at a +2 skill level.
- **Inferior Position in Melee:** You're low-slung, and face an obstacle in melee combat against human and humanoid opponents, who may invoke this obstacle to gain a combat advantage against you.

Example Lands: Isles of Zor; throughout the Autocracy.

Typical Blood Aspects: *Individualistic and Constantly Creative; Hero Worshipper.*

Typical Shadow Aspects: *Dismisses Sex and Genealogy; One Step Removed From Communication.*

Native Language: Hsun, Hsunsign.

Typical Skills or Stunts: Devise (Mandatory Stunt: Zoic Science), Lore (Mandatory Stunt: Zoic Lore).

Typical Temples: Khosht.

Typical Magic: Rare, but may include divine magic.

Typical Communities: The Hsuntach Guild, Temple of Khosht.

Family: Unimportant for Hsun, although they group together in "houses" to satisfy Autocracy convention.

Typical Equipment: Halberd, Hsun bow (page 183), Zoic Vat Workspace.

Typical Names: Adabris, Dengis, Genbi, Jin, Pyto, Vorn, Zolli.

TABLE 5-14: SPIDER FOLK SOCIAL CLASS

ROLL OR CHOOSE	SOCIAL CLASS	TYPICAL OCCUPATION	TYPICAL HOUSE	RESOURCES CAP
-5 to -1	Hsun (0)	Artillerybeing, Hsuntach Tinker	Dream-Growers of Veriddy	3
+0 to +1	Healer (1)	Zoic Healer	The Waters of Falais	4
+2 to +3	Scientist (2)	Priest, Hsuntach Scientist	The Shaper Continuative	7
+4 to +5	Leader (3)	Noble, Official (Commissar, General)	The Vales of Tamur	No cap

Ing Shu

Sea People

Mandatory Spend: 12AP (5 special abilities)

Amphibious traders resembling giant octopoids, the Ing Shu contacted the Venerable Autocracy at the end of the Entropic Wars. They live in floating cities in the northeastern Middle Sea, and have a colony on Formen Isle.

Personality and Description

The curious Ing Shu delight in novelty and the exchange of goods and ideas. Their hermaphroditic, oviparous nature focuses their attention on community-building instead of procreation, and they're passionate hobbyists.

Instead of families, Ing Shu assemble in interest groups which the Autocracy calls "guilds", often equated to Sakari houses. Non-violent, they prefer flight to fight, but will act if this guild is threatened; they fight for pragmatic rather than ideological reasons.

An Ing Shu stands two and a half metres tall, with six robust pseudopods which act as arms or legs, topped by a sensory organ cluster—the Ing Shu "head". Six dark eyes detect radiation into the ultraviolet. They see well in low-light conditions, but have poor colour perception. At the base of each "eye" is a gill-like organ, a combined nose, tongue, and ear. Ing Shu have difficulty differentiating between human concepts of "hearing", "smelling", and "tasting": they may say "this food sounds funny", or "he tastes like a frightened man".

Ing Shu are ungainly on land but elegant in water. They use at least three pseudopods to move (preferring four), and four to climb (preferring five), giving them up to three limbs as "hands". An Ing Shu can wield a two-handed weapon plus shield, two one-handed weapons plus shield, or three one-handed weapons.



Lands and Relations

Legends relate the Ing Shu arrived on the Autocracy's shores before the crusades which began the Fifth Cyliad. Since then they've occupied Formen Isle and the Free City of Zarzis, the latter governed by a council of Ing Shu traders paying tribute to the Heptarchy of Chinis. They protect their trading interests with delegations in the Autocracy's main cities, and their organic-looking *sazheem* vessels track across the Middle Sea and the Empire's Tlanik coasts. There's some friction with the Bantoor Waggon-Trains of the Virikki, but the Ing Shu look mostly towards maritime trade.

The Ing Shu homeland lies along the marshy northeastern shores of the Middle Sea, where their amphibious cities float semi-submerged in the warm coastal waters. To most Sakari, though, Ing Shu lands are Zarzis and Formen Isle. Zarzis is the most open, Formen Isle more insular; Santantor Port is lively and cosmopolitan, but the island is a mystery, off-limits to non-Ing Shu.

Beliefs and Magic

Ing Shu labour tirelessly for their guilds. They're Machiavellian, little concerned with good and evil, and protect their markets, customers, and selves with ruthless efficiency. It's said Ing Shu routinely hire assassins, as long as their reputations don't suffer.

Ing Shu revere Vareltias, God of Trade and Communication. Their magic users prefer sorcery, however, avoiding spiritual and doctrinal entanglements.

Names and Language

The Ing Shu language is produced by their ear/nose/mouth sensory organ. Non-Ing Shu can learn to understand but not speak it (but see the power of Communication on page 285, and the Vareltias temple write-up in the *Guide to Future Earth*); instead, Ing Shu speak human tongues in a “buzzing” voice. Their names are long, poetic, prefixed with occupation or rank and followed by a guild indicator. Ship’s Captain Opalescent Dancer in the Sun of the Resplendent Maritime Traders’ Guild of Zarzis, for example, is a colourful member of the city’s Ing Shu upper echelons, while Grand Inquisitor Eyes That Pierce the Soul of the Protectors’ Guild of the Black Sepulchre is a feared member of Formen Isle’s secret police.

Adventurers

Curiosity, loyalty, and protectiveness for their chosen social group, and the desire for commercial gain, plus an often dubious morality, make Ing Shu good adventurers. Their difficulty understanding abstract ideologies may cause problems, though; Ing Shu are rarely “pure” enough for devotees of Dafur or Belom.

Lifespan: 50 years.

Typical Occupations: Agent, Merchant, Priest.

Mandatory Special Abilities:

- **Enhanced Sense (360° vision):** You suffer no penalties when people sneak up on you, flank you, or attack from behind.
- **Enhanced Sense (Nightsight):** You see at night or in similar low-light conditions as if it was full day.
- **Enhanced Sense (Underwater Vision):** You see underwater as if it was full daylight, as long as there’s some ambient light.

- **Environmental Adaptation (Amphibious) 1:** You may move freely in seawater. You suffer 1 point of physical stress damage per 24 hours you don’t immerse yourself in seawater (including if immersed in fresh water), which can’t be healed until you do.
- **Multiple Pairs of Limbs (1 additional pair):** You have one additional pair of usable limbs, which you can use to attack one additional target, even if you only have one attack skill (page 229). With the Melee Combat skill, you may wield additional weapons or shields; each adds its stress increase (SI) or stress reduction (SR), regardless of how many targets you attack or who attack you. You reduce reload penalties on ranged weapons by 1 round (page 183).

Example Lands: Free City of Zarzis, Formen Isle; floating cities of the northeastern Middle Sea.

Typical Blood Aspects: *Endlessly Curious; Natural Explorers; Let’s Talk and Trade!*

Typical Shadow Aspects: *Discretion is the Better Part of Valour; Uncertain Morality; Ruthless and Pragmatic.*

Native Language: Ing Shu.

Typical Skills or Stunts: Deceive (Cool Customer), Rapport (Negotiator), Resources (Trade and Transport).

Typical Temples: Vareltias.

Typical Magic: Sorcery; some divine magic.

Typical Communities: Guild; ship’s crew; adventuring party.

Family: No family unit; guild loyalty replaces this.

Typical Equipment: Harpoon, trident, shortsword, round shield; trinkets and trade goods.

Typical Names: Clutches Gold With Every Hand, Eyes That Pierce the Soul, Opalescent Dancer in the Sun, Tentacles of Gems, Wave Dancer.

TABLE 5-15: ING SHU SOCIAL CLASS

ROLL OR CHOOSE	SOCIAL CLASS	TYPICAL OCCUPATION / BUILD	TYPICAL GUILD	RESOURCES CAP
-5 to -3	Low (0)	Cargohand, Sailor	Servitors of the Dromond Sazheem	4
-2 to +2	Middle (1)	Physician, Trader	Tentacles of Typhon Balm	7
+3 to +4	Gentry (2)	Diplomat, Priest	The Manipulator Chameleons of Kados	No cap
+5	Noble (3)	Trader Prince	The Many-Tentacled Prince	No cap

Time Dragons

*Little is known about these most alien esteri. They call themselves **Shalai**, and live in only two places in the Autocracy, one of which is the Closed City of Ambara in the Helespere Mountains between Korudav and Elikan provinces. They're tall humanoids with finely scaled skin, but legend says they can take the form of huge, winged, reptilians. They have an uncanny relationship with time, appearing not to experience it like other peoples. The Temple of Unthar calls them The Manifest.*

Paladoi

Proteans, the Protean Herd

Mandatory Spend: 6AP (1 stunt; 1 special ability, 1 constraint)

Four-legged, two-armed, armadillo- or anteater-like beings, the Paladoi dwell in two enclaves in the Venerable Autocracy, off-limits to outsiders. Most people know them from their temporary markets outside towns and villages bordering these enclaves, where you can buy their mysterious artefacts.

Personality and Description

Paladoi have scaly skin and partial armour-plating, covered in ritual tattoos, with areas of long woolly coat. A knobbly bifurcated ridge runs down their backs, frequently picked at by birds. Resinous excrescences, including **mindstones** (page 254), form inside this trough. Paladoi have six limbs, four “legs” and two “arms” (although the middle pair can double as either), and anteater-like snouts, glistening dark eyes, and ancient, wise expressions. Males also have a horny head protuberance used for mating combat. They have a long thick tail which drags along the floor, but which they can lash out with if threatened. At first glance vegetarian, they “graze” high-protein insects and micro-fauna. Their bodies are two me-

tres long and about a metre high when walking, although they can rise up on their haunches. They're bisexual, with one sex bearing live young.

Paladoi live in nomadic “herds” of 100 to 1000 individuals known as **uleihu**. Individually mentally flexible and even mercurial, within an uleihu Paladoi quickly form a group mentality known as the **Paladoi Consensus**, which allows them to manifest psionic powers. An uleihu is led by a **hyamyu**, or “first”, an elder with deep Consensus experience. When arriving at a traditional grazing ground, an uleihu devolves into yirih family groups of up to a dozen individuals, including foals. Paladoi, with lifespans of 150 years, nevertheless mature quickly, leaving to form new yirih at ten years of age. Each uleihu maintains a levy of 50 **herdguards** (warriors), equipped with alagin arms and armour, although in times of great crisis the entire uleihu will turn out for war.

Paladoi equipment looks homespun, comprising natural fibres, carved wood, and ceramics. They work no metal, but trade for metal and alagin with the Autocracy.

Lands and Relations

Paladoi secrete crystals in their spinal troughs which are imbued with their psionic powers, and which can be used by non-Paladoi. These **mindstones** are the basis of Paladoi trade. Even though quantities traded are small, trade caravans are large, with at least a hundred individuals. The colourful tents of their temporary markets outside Sakari settlements are often larger than the settlements themselves.

The Paladoi homeland is the Plateau of Tadem, beyond the Autocracy's eastern border with Ellib. A kilometre high, it's forbidden to non-Paladoi, and legends abound of its marvels. At its base, a semi-permanent camp named Tadem Town comes and goes throughout the year. They also live in the **Protean Enclave**, west of Korudav Province. Founded at the start of the Fifth Cycliad, Protea has more contact with the Empire than Tadem.



TABLE 5-16: PALADOI SOCIAL CLASS

ROLL OR CHOOSE	SOCIAL CLASS	TYPICAL OCCUPATION	RESOURCES CAP
-5	Exile (-3)	Paladoi Glander, Psionicist, Wilderlander	1
-4 to -2	Herdmember (0)	Crafter, Farmer, Physician	2
-1 to +0	Herdguard (1)	Warrior	4
+1 to +2	Trader (2)	Merchant	4
+3 to +4	Vizier (3)	Paladoi Glander, Psionicist, Sorcerer	8
+5	Hyamyu (4)	Noble	No cap

Beliefs and Magic

The Paladoi Consensus ensures homogeneity of world-view; most Paladoi subordinate their individuality, their mindsets flowing and changing, to adapt to the common good. Anti-social individuals are pathological and, if the Consensus can't cure them, are exiled. The "Ritual of Excommunication" is a death sentence: no normal Paladoi can survive more than a few days outside the Consensus before the **Hyu'u-Nyei** or "Death of Loneliness" overtakes them. Paladoi foals are terrified by fairy tales of a "Dark Consensus" of evil fiends who survived Excommunication.

Within the Consensus, Paladoi are in telepathic communion, and some become powerful psionicists. Paladoi acknowledge the Gods of the Great Compact, but don't worship them; they pay respect to Vareltias for the Paladoi markets, and rare individuals also follow Emeldias or Eshtikar. Some study sorcery.

Names and Language

Paladoi in the Consensus require no spoken language. Nevertheless, one exists, called **Myu-Palada** ("No Consensus"), or **Blindspeech** or **Protean** in the Autocracy. It's used when communicating with non-Paladoi, or when outside the Consensus; to human ears, it's melodic, aspirant, with an equine quality. Humans can learn it, but rarely do; instead, Paladoi learn Low Sakaraic.

Paladoi names aren't gender-specific, but have a telepathic component which can't be rendered in mere speech. In Blindspeech or Low Sakaraic, Paladoi names seem prosaic—"Like a pressed flower", the Paladoi say. Examples include Raihu ("Sable-flank"), Winailu ("Fleet-Foot"), or Hyu'u ("Keeneyes"). Sakari may prefix these names with "herd-roles", and affix their uleihu (something the Paladoi would never do), forming names like "First Chieftain Nineihyu of the Uleihu of the Falling Hills". The Paladoi view this with amusement, calling it "painting the pressed flower".

Adventurers

A Paladoi adventurer is usually accompanied by at least nine other individuals, his yirihi family group, derisively referred to as a “Protean Flock” by the Sakari. For short periods of a week or so, a Paladoi may usually join a non-Paladoi expedition without suffering serious mental harm. There are also rare excommunicated Paladoi who can survive outside the Consensus: regarded by others of their kindred as insane, they can make challenging player-characters. Paladoi adventurers may spend their relationships budget on mindstones received from other Paladoi—especially on **memory stones** (page 254) when they expect to travel in non-Consensus lands.

Age: 150.

Typical Occupations: Caravaner, Paladoi Glander, Psionist.

Mandatory Special Abilities:

- **Integral Armour 2 (Carapace):** Your armoured carapace gives you -2 stress reduction (page 174). Any armour you wear in addition must be specially (and expensively) tailored.

Optional Special Abilities:

- **Integral Weaponry 1 (Tail Lash):** Unarmed Combat attacks with your thick muscular tail have a +1 stress increase. You may take this ability up to three times, each costing 2AP and adding +1 SI.
- **Multiple Pairs of Limbs (1 additional pair):** You have one additional pair of usable limbs, which you can use to attack one additional target in Unarmed Combat (only), even if you only have one attack skill (page 229). You reduce reload penalties on ranged weapons by 1 round (page 183).

Constraints:

- **Consensus Dependency:** Each day a Paladoi spends outside the Consensus (more than 100m away from at least 9 other fellow Paladoi), or at times of stress or danger outside the Consensus (like the start of a conflict), it suffers a mental stress attack. This **incremental hazard** (page 238) begins at Intensity 2, and is resisted by Willpower. Any damage caused may only be recovered when the Paladoi returns to the Consensus.

Example Lands: Plateau of Tadem, Protean Enclave.

Typical Blood Aspects: *In the Land of the Blind the Sighted Ones Are Kings; We Are the Consensus.*

Typical Shadow Aspects: *Isolationist; Need For Numbers; Nervous and Skittish; Protean Flock Dependency.*

Native Language: Paladoi Consensus, Blindspeech (Protean).

Typical Skills or Stunts: Psionic Talents of the Paladoi Consensus (Mandatory: Stream of Thought, optional: Gland Mindstone—see page 351); Empathy, Notice (Sense Danger), Rapport (Minions).

Typical Temples: The Paladoi Consensus; rare individual worship of gods.

Typical Magic: Paladoi Consensus psionics (page 350); rare sorcery or divine magic.

Typical Communities: Uleihu (herd), yirihi (family group), Protean Flock.

Family: Yirihi extended family.

Typical Equipment: No metalworking; fibres, weavings, wood, pottery with yirihi / uleihu decoration; Protean guard-lance, Protean combat tattoos, round shield; mindstones created by other Paladoi.

Typical Names: Bright Fringe, Carapace Gleam, Fleet-Foot, Foal of Protea, Keen-Eyes, Many Tattoos, Sable Flank, Strong-Tail.

Tung Mai

Mantis People

Mandatory Spend: 8AP (Tiridat Master, 4 special abilities) or 10 AP (non-Tiridat Master, 5 special abilities)

Tung Mai are bipedal, six-limbed crab- or insect-like esteri inhabiting the barren lands west of the Venerable Autocracy. Over the past millennium they've warred with the Empire twice, once invading and occupying Ukar and Moritan provinces, once—just two hundred years ago—ceding Ukar back to the Autocracy. They still occupy Old Moritan, and border skirmishes are common.

Personality and Description

Tung Mai are aggressive and chaotic, rarely gathering in numbers except for warfare, which they excel at. They make beautiful weapons from copper and obsidian, adorning their chitin with engravings, paintings, and inlaid gems, making a Tung Mai warrior a splendid sight. They wield the **Two-Tooth** (florid twin-obsidian bladed halberds), huge, obsidian-edged battle axes, and obsidian-barbed whips, often all at once with their four arms. They pause after conflict to devour choice parts of those they've slain.

Not all Tung Mai surrender to their chaotic natures; a mystical sect practises self-discipline in a martial art known as **Tiridat** or the **Six-Fold Way** (page 352). Practitioners often work as Imperial mercenaries.

Tung Mai are powerful. Roughly human-sized, they have a chitinous green to dark brown exoskeleton, with a crest from the forehead to the base of the neck. Their heads have eight eyes equidistant around the circumference, providing 360-degree vision, and a maw of hundreds of sharp teeth flanked by two vertical rows of mandibles. Their limbs have two joints, permitting agility, especially when climbing.

Bisexual hermaphrodites, Mantis People choose a specific gender when interacting with humans, although they may sometimes flip from one to the other. They breed casually, creating descent groups known as **chu taikh** (see below) instead of close-knit families.



Lands and Relations

Tensions with the Tung Mai have lessened and contact has reached unprecedented levels as traders and mercenaries arrive from their mysterious western lands to seek fortunes in the Autocracy. This “detente” reached its zenith in 2980CV (13 years ago), when Lord Jakai Tellisan, Autarch of Korudav, established the new Tung Mai Legion of Hahaggassh Bloodied of Charn to protect the Empire's northern frontier.

The Tung Mai ancestral lands are known as the **Barren Coasts**. This is a misnomer; their territories extend hundreds of leagues inland, encompassing warm temperate forests, grasslands, hills, and marshes, and even near-desert and subtropical rainforest in the south.

The Barren Coasts aren't a unified state; Tung Mai **chu taikh** (loosely translated as "communes") are small-scale and short-lived, forming in response to environmental pressure or the leadership of charismatic individuals. Tung Mai in the Autocracy often give their chu taikh name in place of the Sakari "house". Chu taikh usually comprise 50-1000 related individuals; as Tung Mai live up to 200 years, laying clutches of 30 eggs every 6-9 months (most don't survive to adulthood), a chu taikh's common ancestor may still be living among this number. Surviving clutch siblings often remain associated all their lives; those that leave are known as "unclutched".

Tung Mai hunt and herd insectoid and invertebrate livestock. Territories are jealously guarded; the largest chu taikh, with populations of 10,000 or more, approach the size and complexity of city-states. The oldest and most antagonistic is the Voracious Commune of the Many-Legged Glories of Chau Tu, often simply called the "Many-Legged of Chau Tu". A thousand years old, it doesn't have the mandibles it once had, particularly since its defeat in the Ukar War. It occupies Old Moritan, and is as belligerent as ever, although it's doubtful whether it could stand up to attack today.

Beliefs and Magic

Tung Mai "religion" doesn't fit with the neat pantheon of the Gods of the Great Compact. While Tung Mai acknowledge the Compact Gods, they hold them to be natural beings, and part of the created universe. Instead, they revere the **Ten Jau Tei** ("The Web of the World"), a philosophy that stresses the unfathomable interconnectedness of reality. Many Tung Mai have an affinity for the mystical principle of Fate, and may have that power skill. Rare Tung Mai study related sorcery. Some cultivate relationships with the Temple of Eshtikar, and even join. Tung Mai live as their hearts dictate.

Names and Language

All Tung Mai languages (of which there are many) combine buzzes, clicks, whistles, and other vocalisations combined with bodily attitudes and facial expressions, movement and position of mandibles, etc. Non-Tung Mai may learn to understand them, but never speak them (except maybe a handful of simple phrases); Tung Mai in the Autocracy learn Low Sakaraic.

Tung Mai are passionate about names, and have several, including: a clutch name, a birth name, a "coming-of-age" name, secret name, childhood nickname, a self-chosen name upon reaching adulthood at 50 years, a "group" name, current nickname, and so on. Often long and unpronounceable to humans, Tung Mai in the Autocracy abbreviate or modify these names to be more manageable (as in "Tse-Teu", "Ki'ik-Chu", and "Mkau-Tng-Wei"), or translate parts (as in "Ebon Spinner of the Jade Fire Clutch", or "Many Thinker, Archclimber of the Fifth Shield of P'Ch'Kei").

Adventurers

Over the past half-century relations with the Tung Mai have thawed, and Mantis Man Tiridat masters and legionnaires are now not uncommon in the Autocracy. Their chaotic, warlike natures ensure a steady flow of brave and outgoing adventurers.

Lifespan: 200 years.

Typical Occupations: Natural Talent Magic User, Ranger, Sorcerer, Tiridat Master, Warrior; (also, within the Autocracy:) Doomsinger or Doombringer of Eshtikar, Legionnaire of Hahaggassh Bloodied of Charn.

Mandatory Special Abilities (all Tung Mai):

- **Integral Armour 1 (Chitin):** Your chitin gives you -1 stress reduction (page 174), in addition to any armour you're wearing.
- **Multiple Pairs of Limbs (1 additional pair):** You have one additional pair of usable limbs, which you can use to attack one additional target, even if you only have one attack skill (page 229). With the Melee Combat skill, you may wield additional weapons or shields; each adds its stress increase (SI) or stress reduction (SR), regardless of how many targets you attack or who attack you. You reduce reload penalties on ranged weapons by 1 round (page 183).
- **Spider Climb:** You have thousands of tiny hooks on your hands and feet permitting you to climb sheer walls and along ceilings; any surface, no matter how smooth or precipitous, is climbable to you. This is effectively an aspect; it's automatically true, you can invoke it if needed, and it can be compelled.

Mandatory Special Abilities (non-Tiridat Masters only):

- **Battle Frenzy:** This special ability gives you a permission to go **berserk** in melee or unarmed combat (page 220) at will.

Optional Special Abilities:

- **Integral Weaponry 1 (Barbs and Claws):** Your Unarmed Combat attacks have a +1 stress increase. You may take this ability up to three times, each costing 2AP and adding +1 SI.

Example Lands: Lands of the Tung Mai, Old Moritan.

Typical Blood Aspects: *The Web of the World Connects Us All.*

Typical Shadow Aspects: *Battle the Rage Within.*

Native Language: Tung Mai tongue.

Typical Skills or Stunts: Athletics, Fate*, Physique, Unarmed Combat.

Typical Temples: The Ten Jau Tei.

Typical Magic: Natural talent magic and occasional sorcery associated with the principle of Fate.

Typical Communities: Chu Taikh (commune); (in the Autocracy:) Legion of Hahaggassh Bloodied of Charn, Tiridat Fighting School.

Family: Chu Taikh Descent Lineage.

Typical Equipment: Two-Tooth (florid double-bladed obsidian halberd), obsidian-edged battle axe, obsidian-barbed whip; obsidian *dati* throwing stars, Tung Mai equipment harness.

Typical Names: Banbak, Horsh, Hssht, Kaozh, Ki'ik-Chu, Kratkt, Many Thinker, Mkau-Tng-Wei, Plikt, Powyez, Sshay, Tse-Teu, Voomga; (clutch:) Chi, Pkt, Topkpe, Jat, Hish, Jade Fire, Jri; (Chu Taikh:) The Many-Legged of Chau Tu; The Spinners of Ngat; The Claw Dance Collective.

TABLE 5-17: TUNG MAI SOCIAL CLASS

ROLL OR CHOOSE	SOCIAL CLASS	TYPICAL OCCUPATION	RESOURCES CAP
-5 to -3	Exile (-3)	Legionnaire, Natural Talent Magic User, Sorcerer, Tiridat Master, Warrior, Wilderlander	0
-2 to +2	Unclutched (0)	Crafter, Legionnaire, Natural Talent Magic User, Priest, Ranger, Sorcerer, Tiridat Master, Warrior	5
+3 to +4	Chu Taikhat (2)	Crafter, Holy Warrior, Natural Talent Magic User, Priest, Sorcerer, Tiridat Master, Warrior	7
+5	Leader (4)	Holy Warrior, Priest, Sorcerer, Warrior	No cap



Your **occupation** represents what your character does to survive in his everyday life. You don't have to take an occupation, but they provide you with ready-made **permissions** to take skills, stunts, and abilities you might otherwise not have access to.

Each occupation below is subdivided into **builds** (page 36), representing versions of that occupation. Your character may be a merchant (an occupation), but is she a caravanner, a Virikki waggon trader, one of the canal people, or even a slaver? These are builds of the Merchant occupation, providing a tighter focus for your abilities.

When creating your character, use the abilities listed for your chosen build as a starting point. If you like, copy them onto your character sheet, taking them as your initial skills (page 42), ensuring you take at least 1 level in each skill indicated. This is great when you're learning the game—you get a character representative of his occupation. Later, you can use the builds as guidelines for making more customised choices.

Some builds have **prerequisites** (page 88). Some are appropriate for beginning characters; others are designed for specific kindreds, or have other requirements.

OCCUPATION PERMISSIONS

Occupations and builds often give you **permissions** to pick abilities you wouldn't otherwise have access to. For example, you must belong to the Priest occupation and select at least the Temple Priest build to use **miracles** (page 312). While exceptions to these permissions are always possible, we recommend you use them so as not to devalue the niches that occupations and builds occupy.

BUILDS AND PREREQUISITES

Some occupation builds are suited for more advanced characters, and come with prerequisites, usually skills and stunts you **must** have before you can pick that build. An example is a Temple Priest (page 110): people usually join the priesthoods as Novices, advancing to Temple Servitor before getting a promotion to Temple Priest. So, there are certain skills and stunts you must have on your character sheet *before* you can become a Temple Priest.

Sometimes you can still start play with such a build, by ensuring you pick the listed prerequisites. Sometimes, though, an occupation build may have too many prerequisites to fulfil at character creation; you'll have to play and advance your character's abilities (page 260) before you can select it. Note that this means it's fine to change occupation or build during play; you'll need to justify this by events in your game, so talk with your Chronicler if you want to do so.

Epic occupations need *really experienced* characters. Your Chronicler has more information about these!

Example Community Builds

*Remember the **community builds** we discussed back on page 39? Well, many of the occupation builds below mention them with reference to things like legions, temples, and guilds. This means, for example, that the "Legionnaire" occupation build in this chapter (page 98) is intentionally generic, and that you also have a second, community build you can add to that build which is based on the specific legion you belong to. So, the Legionnaire occupation build provides generic picks for typical abilities of legionnaires; but when you choose which legion you belong to, you also gain access to the corresponding community build for your chosen legion, providing you with a more detailed pick-list of abilities. The same holds true for other occupations belonging to communities like temples and guilds.*

*In this chapter, we provide **example community builds** for certain key occupations, so you can see how it's done and use them for your characters if you like. The **Guide to Future Earth** contains many more!*

OCCUPATION AND BUILD PARAMETERS

The occupation and build writeups have the following entries.

Prerequisites: The conditions you must meet before you can pick the occupation build. This could be a skill at a certain level, belonging to a certain temple, etc.

Essence: Typical Essence aspects for a member of the occupation build. Use these directly, or as inspiration for creating your own.

Shadow: Typical kinds of trouble your occupation build gets you into. For use directly, or as inspiration.

Pillar: Some occupation builds are found more frequently in one of the five **Pillars** of Sakari society (page 43). You **can** break the mould, but do so with care—you'll probably face prejudice and opposition. Generally you should take the Pillar skill specified for the occupation build you pick; if you later change occupation, you might have to pay AP to change your Pillar skill to match!

Skills: Skills your occupation uses all the time; you should have at least 1 level in each. They're described in **Chapter 8: Skills and Stunts**; those marked with an asterisk are **power skills**, described in **Chapter 13: Magic**.

Stunts: These stunts are advantageous to your occupation. You don't **have** to choose them, but you should take some.

Community Builds: Sometimes, a community build (page 39) is implied in an occupation build, and you needn't look elsewhere. For example, the Mahout build (page 90), which lets you steer a team of bantoor, implies you belong to a bantoor mahout community—a guild, say, or a team of mahouts who taught you. Either way, there isn't a separate "bantoor mahout guild" community build you need to reference. At other times, though, one or more community builds are also available to you to pick abilities from; examples include the priest or holy warrior community builds in the temple writeups (see **Chapter 13: Magic** for example), or the legion and fighting school community builds, examples of which are provided in adjacent text boxes below. You can also improvise community builds yourself (see the sidebar on page 89), and the **Guide to Future Earth** contains many more.

Relationships: Typical relationships a member of the occupation build develops. You have a **permission** to develop any of these relationships if you wish.

Equipment: The basic equipment you need to practice this occupation. You get all this stuff **for free**; note any items you want on your character sheet! Some items (like **zoans**—see page 248) may require spends from your relationships budget, although sometimes you can do this later during play (check with your Chronicler).

Improvising A Community Build On The Fly

*This chapter provides examples of community builds, and the **Guide to Future Earth** provides many more. You don't **have to** use these builds, though. Firstly, it's completely possible to create a character without using community builds; secondly, you can create your own community builds, even improvising them on the fly as you create your character.*

*For example, **Chapter 13: Magic** provides a community build for the temple of Lord Regos, the god of war. But what if your character comes from a homeland that prefers a different warrior god? Well, you can just say that this other warrior god is the same as that of Regos; but you can also improvise a temple community build, declaring that your temple provides different skills, stunts, and so on, to worshippers. Check with your Chronicler when doing this, as you're effectively defining part of the game world—but that's **absolutely cool** and a key part of playing **The Chronicles of Future Earth**.*

OCCUPATIONS LIST

Agent

You work for a secretive information-oriented “agency” undertaking unusual missions requiring intelligence and adaptability. While agencies may employ other occupations for a specific skill-set, you’re an insider, working permanently in its structure.

Permissions: You may acquire unusual equipment and belong to community builds providing rare abilities.

Detective

You’re skilled at ferreting out information, with a network of informers and clients you sell information to, and can draw on various contacts and communities. You’re “acquainted” with the nearest Vareltias temple (you’re both in the communication business...), and maybe also the Unthar temple (good for background info) and officials of the *Chelumetariat* (“Blood and Sword”) civil service. Ankadar’s lawkeepers think you’re an interfering nuisance—at best.

- **Essence:** *Keen-Eyed Sleuth; The World Must Know the Truth!*
- **Shadow:** *My Nose In Your Business; Never Off Duty.*
- **Pillar:** The Guilds 3.
- **Skills and Stunts:** Burglary (Breaking and Entering), Contacts (Ear to the Ground), Investigate (Lie to Me, The Power of Deduction), Notice (Body Language, Eye For Detail).
- **Community Builds:** Guild of Sleuths, secret society, Temple of Vareltias.
- **Relationships:** Local underworld and law enforcement figures, militias, guards, city watch.
- **Equipment:** Parchment and charcoal, cosh, jemmies, lockpicks, crowbar.

Crier

You're an itinerant newsteller relaying all the latest happenings in the Empire and abroad. You love gossip, juicy stories, stirring legends—and an audience! You go to great lengths for a big scoop, and love the open road, new places, markets, taverns... It's almost impossible to shut you up! You're at least an initiate of Jestis Speaker (see the *Guide to Future Earth*).

- **Essence:** *The Greatest Stories Ever Told; A Coin For Your Crier!*
- **Shadow:** *Instinctive Eavesdropper; I Should Keep My Big Mouth Shut!, Oh! The Humanity!*
- **Pillar:** The Priesthood 4.
- **Skills and Stunts:** Communication* (Speak to Community), Contacts (Rumourmonger, Spread the Word), Lore (Specialist: Folklore, Local Events & Urban Legends), Rapport (Carousing).
- **Community Builds:** Temple of Vareltias (Jestis Speaker).
- **Relationships:** Local information network (taverns, brothels, subculture figures), Temple of Vareltias.
- **Equipment:** A book of tales, personal parchments, inks and quills.

Special Agent

You work for a secret agency charged with the Empire's security (or that of the Venerable Autocrator), conducting espionage, counterespionage, assassinations, and other missions decidedly outside the law. You have unusual abilities and access to specialised gear.

- **Essence:** *Black Ops Specialist; Loyal Agent of the Autocrator's Hand.*
- **Shadow:** *Cold-Blooded Killer; Secrets To Keep.*
- **Pillar:** The Guilds 3.
- **Skills and Stunts:** Deceive (Instant Cover, Mind Games), Investigate (The Power of Deduction), Stealth (Ambush, Vanish).
- **Community Builds:** Secret society like the Autocrator's Hand.

- **Relationships:** Secret society, the *Chelumetariat* Bloom and Sword civil service, a temple like Ankadar.
- **Equipment:** Non-descript clothing; camouflage gear; an easily concealable weapon; 3 doses of Talasp blade venom (page 185); one or more cool mechanisms and hsuntach gadgets used in your job. You have 6AP to spend for free on gadgets (see the *Chronicler's Guide*), although zoan abilities, etc, must be paid for as usual. See page 248.

Beast Handler

You work closely with beasts, perhaps as a breeder, drover, or trainer.

Permissions: You own one or more animals, and can have them as a relationship, perhaps a steed or yoke of draught animals, giving you access to unusual abilities. Check with your Chronicler for the animals available to you.

Mahout

You drive, steer, ride, or otherwise direct the enormous beasts of burden of the Springtide Civilisations. Pick one—it could be a bantoor or mameluke leviathan (see page 186), a yoke of kenek oxen, or something even more exotic. You own at least one such beast, and can control and communicate with it; you can define it as a relationship. You may be an initiate of Entos, God of Beasts, or Vareltias, God of Trade and Communication.

- **Essence:** *Instinctive Animal Friend; Canny Keeper With a Taste For Coin.*
- **Shadow:** *Bestial Habits, Prefers Animals To People.*
- **Pillar:** The Guilds 3.
- **Skills and Stunts:** Lore (Specialist: Animal Lore, Specific Region), Physique (Grappling), Ride (Animal Handler, Animal-Drawn Vehicles); optionally the Animality* or Communication* power skill.
- **Community Builds:** Temple of Entos OR Vareltias.
- **Relationships:** A beast of burden or two; a mahouts' guild or informal brotherhood; local guild merchants; temple of Entos or Vareltias.
- **Equipment:** A beast of burden or two, tackle, a carriage, cart, or wagon; animal foodstuffs, a goad.

Animal Breeder

You breed a beast used in the Springtide Civilisations, either a beast of burden mentioned above; or horses, cambriothers, or ornithers; or even exotic and warlike beasts like chelothers or elenisors. You may be an initiate of Entos or Vareltias, or the temple of a key client (like Regos if you breed chelothers, etc), and may be familiar with other homelands or kindreds, like the Khadisi for cambriothers, the Kesh for elenisor, and can even access their builds—check with your Chronicler.

- **Essence:** *Chelother Master to the Autarch; Legend Among the Kesh.*
- **Shadow:** *Can't Pass a Suffering Animal By; She's Kept Me Up All Night Again.*
- **Pillar:** The Guilds 3.
- **Skills and Stunts:** Lore (Specialist: Animal Lore), Physique (Take the Blow), Ride (Animal Handler).
- **Community Builds:** Temple of Entos, Vareltias, or Regos (etc); homeland or kindred builds like Khadisi or Kesh.
- **Relationships:** Temple or legion (Eshtikar, Regos, Cloud-Riders, etc); animal breeders' guild; a noted priest, legion quartermaster, or unique client.
- **Equipment:** Breeding stock, and a place to do it in; riding gear and appropriate clothing.

Animal Trainer

You train animals and know their behaviour, and are a specialist in one species (bantoor, leviathans, horses, chelothers, cambriothers, ornithers, elenisor, etc). Maybe you're associated with a temple or legion, or an initiate, training animals for temple use. You may have a relationship with another homeland or kindred.

- **Essence:** *Animals Do What I Say; The Bantoor Whisperer of Bamak.*
- **Shadow:** *Irritating Tendency to Try and Train People; Never Give Up.*
- **Pillar:** The Guilds 3.
- **Skills and Stunts:** Lore (Specialist: Animal Lore), Physique (Grappling), Rapport (Carousing), Ride (Animal Handler).
- **Community Builds:** Temple or legion (Entos, Vareltias, Regos, etc); another homeland or kindred build.

- **Relationships:** A trained animal, maybe even a war-mount; temple or legion community; animal trainers' guild; experts or clients (or both).
- **Equipment:** A trained animal; riding gear; animal training equipment.

Crafter

Crafters are everywhere, a way for the low-born to achieve respectability. You're a specialist in your chosen craft, and may travel frequently—not all communities support all crafts. If you need rare materials, you have a reason for adventure!

Permissions: Given time and materials, you can make items for use or for sale, and start play with materials, tools, and facilities to make more. See the Devise skill (page 146) and **Chapter 9: Equipment**. If you become so expert that you want to try creating **artefacts**, then switch your occupation to **Scientist** (page 115).

Artisan

You create things society depends on—you're a potter, woodworker, painter, weaver, seamster, or similar. Depending on your Devise skill level, you're an apprentice, journeyman, or master, and belong to a guild which meets at least yearly at your nearest town (this can be a relationship or community build if you want unusual abilities). You may be an initiate of Khosht the Builder.

- **Essence:** *Master Potter to the High Priestess of Emeldias; Painter to the Patricians of the Protean March.*
- **Shadow:** *Gruff and Obsessive; I Could Stitch That Back On For You.*
- **Pillar:** The Guilds 3.
- **Skills and Stunts:** Devise (Always Making Useful Things, Better Than New), Lore (Specialist: Specific Craft), Physique (Tough As Nails).
- **Community Builds:** Artisanal guild, temple of Khosht.
- **Relationships:** Your guild, master, mentor, or even apprentice; your local community or nearest temple of Khosht.
- **Equipment:** Tools and workspace (page 147) required to practice your craft; a basic stock of items you made earlier.

Metalsmith

Future Earth is old, almost all its metal reserves long since exhausted, hence its dependence on the *alagin* of the Hsun Spider Folk. What metals remain deep in the earth are mined by the Magigi Red Giants. You're one of the rare few capable of extracting and smelting ores and fashioning things from their ingots. Your skills are prized by the Autocracy's legions. You may be an initiate of Dafur the Flame Lord.

- **Essence:** *Hot-Tempered Forgehand; Taciturn Digger of the Deep Earth.*
- **Shadow:** *Dreams of Paydirt; Metal Means More Than People.*
- **Pillar:** The Guilds 3.
- **Skills and Stunts:** Devise (Armourer, Specialist: Metalworking, Mining, Smelting), Lore (Specialist: Mineral Lore), Physique (Herculean Strength).
- **Community Builds:** Temple of Dafur; a legion.
- **Relationships:** Temple of Dafur; a legion; the loose association of metalsmiths the Autocracy calls "the Metalsmiths' Guild"; a Magigi smith, priest, or chieftain; a Magigi community; an apprentice or master helping you operate your forge, smeltworks, etc.
- **Equipment:** A metalsmith's workspace (page 147), including forge, hammer, anvil, bellows, ore, smelting furnace; a single metal item—probably a weapon, shield, helm, or cuirass.

Paladoi Glander

Although in theory any Paladoi can gland, you're a specialist in exotic **mindstones** (page 254), with multiple psionic abilities. If you can gland a **talent stone**, you're Glander elite.

- **Essence:** *Evangelist of the Mindstone Consensus; Purveyor of Protean Jewels.*
- **Shadow:** *Random Freak Out; In the Land of the Blind, the Mindstone Master Rules.*
- **Pillar:** The Guilds 3.
- **Skills and Stunts:** Devise (Artist), Provoke, Willpower (Fortress of the Will); Paladoi Mindstone Talents (Gland Skill, Gland Stunt, Gland Spell, Gland Talent, Gland Power); at least 1 psionic talent of the Paladoi Consensus (page 350).
- **Community Builds:** The Paladoi Consensus.
- **Relationships:** Protean Flock (page 83); one or more mindstones; a Sakari settlement where you regularly pitch market.
- **Equipment:** Glander's bag, tattoos, weavings.



Elemental Cult Magic User

You're a magical practitioner of an Elemental Cult (page 319). You're like a priest, except you have neither miracles nor avatars (page 310). In wilder lands, you're called a **shaman**; more civilised societies think of you as a **witch**.

Permissions: You have a **divine power aspect** (page 268) and at least one power skill, and may learn associated power stunts. You belong to an **Elemental Cult**, and may learn its cantrips and power stunts. You may summon one type of elemental, and possibly one type of demon.

Apprentice Shaman

You assist a shaman or witch, learning and performing less hazardous tasks for your mentor, who may have already bound a minor elemental for you. One day, when you've learned the essentials, you'll be a shaman yourself.

- **Essence:** *Shaman in the Making; Fearless Apprentice of Doctor Bone.*
- **Shadow:** *Leave Unsupervised At Your Peril; Scarred By Past Mistakes.*
- **Pillar:** Priesthood 4 within the Autocracy; no Pillar skill if an outsider or outcast.
- **Skills and Stunts:** Lore (First Aid), power skill (Change By Fire, Command, Cyclicity, Darkness, Growth, Turmoil, or Void).
- **Community Builds:** Elemental Cult.
- **Relationships:** Local village / tribal community, Elemental Cult, minor elemental summoned for you by shaman (you pay the AP cost).
- **Equipment:** Fetishes, body paints, summoning and binding paraphernalia.

Shaman

You're the religious and spiritual leader of an Elemental Cult community; in more civilised lands, you're called a **witch** instead. You're part-healer, part-soothsayer—and part summoner and dealer with mighty magical forces. You may summon and bind elementals for others, and probably have at least one bound elemental of your own.

- **Prerequisites:** You must have the appropriate power skill, Lore (First Aid), and Summon (Elemental) stunt.
- **Essence:** *Doctor Bone Soothes Your Soul! Witchmaster of the Cloven Coven.*
- **Shadow:** *Haunted By Invisible Furies; You're Only As Good As Your Last Soul-Cleansing.*
- **Pillar:** Priesthood 4 within the Autocracy; no Pillar skill if an outsider or outcast.
- **Skills and Stunts:** Lore (Specialist: Element, Folklore), Provoke, Rapport; power skill (Change By Fire, Command, Cyclicity, Darkness, Growth, Turmoil, or Void).
- **Community Builds:** Elemental Cult.
- **Relationships:** Local village / tribal community, Elemental Cult; multiple elementals you've summoned or can summon.
- **Equipment:** Sacred workspace; fetishes, body paints, summoning and binding paraphernalia.

Entertainer

You're a born performer, entertaining people with your art, from rowdy taverns to elegant astriger salons. You're probably low-born but, if not, you suffer a drop in Pillar by becoming an entertainer, and your friends and family continually ask you why you didn't get a proper job.

Permissions: You've a following of fans or clients who support you and pay your living, and you may also have the Passion power skill.

Circus People

Circuses travel the Springtide Civilisations, hawking weird wares and entertaining the masses with strange beasts, impromptu duels, dubious feats of “magic”, and the usual panoply of acts. Circus people are rarely rich, but are close-knit, jacks-of-all-trades, and always open to a little larceny or profiteering.

- **Permissions:** You may have the Unification of Opposites power skill, and may be an initiate of Payorian, Lord of Song, or Qal, God of Paradox.
- **Essence:** *Daredevil Trapeze Artist; Roll Up! Roll up! Come See the Greatest Show In Hivernium!*
- **Shadow:** *A Trail of Broken Hearts; Ran Away To Join the Circus.*
- **Pillar:** The Peasantry 1.
- **Skills and Stunts:** Athletics (Acrobat, Climber, Leaper), Burglary (Sleight of Hand), Deceive (Disguise, Fast Talk), Devise (Artist), Physique (Herculean Strength, Tough As Nails); Passion* (Pied Piper), Unification of Opposites* (Charm Person, Hilarity).
- **Community Builds:** A guild like the Circus of Malikh; maybe the temple of Payorian or Qal.
- **Relationships:** Your circus community, temple of Payorian or Qal, your circus followers, a local community or venue, a master performer (a strong man, etc), an exotic animal or even a monster.
- **Equipment:** Gaudy clothes, hoops and torches, brightly-coloured facepaints.

Courtesan

Courtesans of all genders, homelands, and kindreds are commonplace in the Venerable Autocracy, from escorts opening doors to the highest echelons of society, to gigolos and prostitutes of the deep Tentellenane tenderloins of the archaeopolises. You're one of these—pick your style and approach to fit your character concept and social class. You know people from all walks of life—in the Shimmering World, barriers and social conventions evaporate in the quest for pleasure.

- **Permissions:** You may be an initiate of Payorian, Qal, Emeldias, or even Minisia.
- **Essence:** *Dancer of the Veils of Qal; Seducer of the Great and Good.*
- **Shadow:** *Unattainable Paramour; You Want Help? It'll Cost You!*
- **Pillar:** The Peasantry 1 or The Guilds 3.
- **Skills and Stunts:** Contacts (Insider, Rumourmonger), Deceive (Acting, Cool Customer, Disguise, Instant Cover, Mind Games), Rapport (Carousing, Honey-Tongued, Performer, Seducer), Willpower (Fortress of the Will, Indomitable).
- **Community Builds:** A courtesans' guild, temple of Payorian, Qal, Emeldias, or Minisia.
- **Relationships:** The Shimmering World, local underworld, clients from all walks of life (legions, the Chelumetariat, other guilds), temples of Payorian, Qal, Emeldias, or Minisia.
- **Equipment:** Perfumes, facepaints, and sensual philtres, drugs, and unguents; a concealable weapon; exotic and tantalising clothing; a boudoir workspace.

Diviner of the Canal Folk

You're skilled with the Terchus Tarot, telling fortunes, revealing innermost secrets, pursuing your path to self-actualisation. You've a spooky sanctum on a canal boat where you receive clients and make your Delphic utterances.

- **Permissions:** You may be an initiate of Eshtikar.
- **Essence:** *Oracle of Unfathomable Wisdom; Cross My Palm and I'll Show You the Future!*
- **Shadow:** *Pompous and Portentous; The Cards Say No!*
- **Pillar:** The Peasantry 1.
- **Skills and Stunts:** Contacts (Ear to the Ground, Rumourmonger, The Weight of Reputation), Deceive (Cool Customer, Lies Upon Lies, Mind Games), Empathy (Body Language, Soul Healer, Succour), Fate* (Tell Fortune), Lore (Specialist: The Divinatory Heavens).
- **Community Builds:** Temple of Eshtikar; a narrowboat guild.
- **Relationships:** Canal People community, Temple of Eshtikar community, a Tolpai fate demon.
- **Equipment:** Terchus Tarot deck; horsehead staff; spooky appurtenances; incense, candles, lanterns; robes and veils with Eshtikari sigils and planetary signs; a concealable weapon; a narrowboat sanctum.

Musician

You're a singer, bard, or troubadour, playing solo or in an ensemble. Maybe you live in a town or city, maybe you travel from village to village, tavern to tavern. The Autocracy's musical traditions are sophisticated and ancient, domain of Payorian, Singer of the Gods.

- **Prerequisites:** You must take Rapport (Performer).
- **Permissions:** You may be an initiate of Payorian, and have a regular paying gig in one of his temples.
- **Essence:** *Star of the Show, Listen to the Singer Sing Follow Me!*
- **Shadow:** *Desperate For Adoration; Pearls Before Swine.*
- **Pillar:** The Peasantry 1, The Guilds 3, or The Priesthood 4.

- **Skills and Stunts:** Contacts (Ear to the Ground, Spread the Word), Empathy (Body Language, Succour), Lore (Specialist: Folklore, others), Passion* (Inspire / Remove Specific Emotion, Sing For Your Supper).
- **Community Builds:** Temple of Payorian.
- **Relationships:** Temple of Payorian, musical group, wealthy patron, musical venue, fan club.
- **Equipment:** One set of travelling clothes, one set of interesting stage clothes, some stage decorations, one musical instrument (page 189), sheaf of song sheets.

Farmer

The Autocracy's farmers vary enormously, mostly because they've hardly moved for millennia. From the rustic Heartlands Mukhari, through Irgiddi and Yurazi tenant farmers, to the semi-organised herders and gatherers of the farthest north, farmers are renowned for stolid traditionalism, bizarre local customs, and unintelligible dialects.

Herder

You're a free spirit, and your flocks or herds of bayuri sheep, kenek oxen, or other more exotic beasts consider you one of their own. You protect them from rustlers, poachers, and predators, and drive them to distant pastures or market.

- **Permissions:** You may be an initiate of Emeldias or Entos, and know a power stunt or two.
- **Essence:** *Animal Friend; There's Much To Be Learned From Beasts.*
- **Shadow:** *Eye-watering Odour; Only Happy With My Flock.*
- **Pillar:** The Peasantry 1.
- **Skills and Stunts:** Lore (Specialist: Animal Lore), Physique (Grappling), Ride (Animal Handler), Survival (Environment Expert, Tracking); optional Animality* (Totem Call), Growth* (Ease Birth).
- **Community Builds:** Temple of Emeldias or Entos.
- **Relationships:** Flock or herd, riding animal, local farming community, fellow herders, priests of Entos or Emeldias, local rangers.
- **Equipment:** A flock or herd of livestock, a riding animal, whips, crooks, and lassos, camping gear, hectares of grazeland.

Plantation Farmer

You're an overseer or manager in one of the Empire's slave plantations, supervising slaves tilling, planting, tending, and harvesting crops—spelt, rice, maize, wheat, and many fruits and legumes. It's a hard, physical life, wedded to the seasons, but a respected one.

- **Essence:** *Natural Organiser; Keen Eye For the Outdoors.*
- **Shadow:** *Can't Help Barking Orders; Obsessed With Weather and Seasons.*
- **Pillar:** The Peasantry 1.
- **Skills and Stunts:** Physique (Herculean Strength, Take the Blow), Provoke (Armour of Fear), Rapport (Overseer), Resources, Survival (Environment Expert), Willpower (Sleep When You're Dead).
- **Community Builds:** Temple of Emeldias.
- **Relationships:** Local Slavers' Guild, Temple of Emeldias, your plantation slaves, plantation owners.
- **Equipment:** Agricultural implements that double as weapons; ready source of slave labour; decent yeoman's house; rugged work-clothes and solid but tidy dress clothes; a knout.

Smallholder

You're the salt of the earth, a free man or woman tilling the soil and producing your own crops and livestock. Ruggedly self-reliant, stubborn, tough as old boots, sometimes you sell your surplus at market, but mostly you're on your farm, keeping it safe and productive.

- **Permissions:** You may be an initiate of Emeldias or Vareltias.
- **Essence:** *Ruggedly Resilient; Multi-Skilled Toiler of the Soil.*
- **Shadow:** *Doesn't Play Well With Others; Stubborn As a Pregnant Bayuri.*
- **Pillar:** The Peasantry 1.
- **Skills and Stunts:** Lore (Specialist: Animal Lore, Plant Lore), Notice (Keen Hearing, Sense Danger), Physique (Herculean Strength, Tough As Nails), Survival (Environment Expert), Willpower (Sleep When You're Dead); optional Growth* power skill (Bless Growth, Bless Harvest, Bless Planting).
- **Community Builds:** Temple of Emeldias or Vareltias.
- **Relationships:** Immediate household, close neighbours, local market and its Vareltias priest.
- **Equipment:** A modest smallholding, agricultural implements, seed and livestock, rough and ready weapons like spears and self-bows, maybe a family heirloom sword, shield, and helm for when things get serious.



Fighter

The Autocracy's rulers, for all their pomp, do little beyond celebrate their own magnificence, and large stretches of the Empire are near-wilderness, abandoned and decaying, infested with outlaws, bandits, and beasts. Only the entropics are kept at bay, and that's partly an accident of climate, partly the efforts of traditionalists battling in the Kadram Mountains. As a result, there's always a need for fighting men and women, and you're never short of work.

Permissions: You may join a legion, fighting school, or warrior society.

Assassin

Despite honour codes and the efforts of the Temple of Ankadar and its legions to uphold the God-Emperor's laws, many in the Autocracy resort to murder and assassination to further their ends, distancing themselves from such bloody acts by hiring professional assassins. No assassins' guild would ever be openly tolerated in the Autocracy, so secret societies fill the role, as well as a few military organisations like the Thin Knife Syndicate, which officially specialises in hazardous rescue missions.

You're such a specialist. You've a cover identity, maybe as a sword-for-hire or in a legion special ops company, but make no mistake: stealthy murder is your business. Maybe you choose your contracts carefully, maybe you've a code of honour and tell yourself you work for the common good; or maybe you don't give a damn, all spark of compassion long since extinguished by a bleak life of secretive bloodletting. Maybe only one more knife-twist, one more swish of a monofilament blade or hiss of a poisoned dart, separates you from the corruption of the Hegemonist.

- **Essence:** *Honour Code Assassin; Dealer of Exquisite Death.*
- **Shadow:** *Secret Murder Solves Everything; Dead Inside.*
- **Pillar:** The Guilds 3.
- **Skills and Stunts:** Devise (Booby Traps), Melee Combat (Bypass Armour, Killing Stroke), Ranged Combat (Critical Shot, Long Shot), Stealth (Ambush).

- **Community Builds:** A secret society of assassins, or a cover organisation like the Thin Knife Syndicate.
- **Relationships:** A secret society or cover organisation; a rival assassin; an allied assassin; regular clients like an Ing Shu guild.
- **Equipment:** Stealthy clothing, maybe of Cloth of Belom; half a dozen doses of Talasp Blade Venom; a garotte; throwing knives; a light crossbow.

Gladiator

You're an **oloriact**, fighting in the **oloriad** arena several times a week to cheering crowds in big cities, and on occasional holidays in smaller towns—Glorious Kados holds them every day. Some gladiators have been enslaved as punishment, and fight to buy their freedom; others are professional fighters.

Oloriacti belong to the House of the Warrior in Chains. If you're not a slave, you pay half your winnings to the house as a "management fee", and for training and upkeep. If you're a slave, the house doles you a pittance—maybe one day you can buy your freedom!

- **Essence:** *Every Fight Is a Performance; Buffed Up Professional Combatant.*
- **Shadow:** *Callous Before Suffering; Shadows and Dust.*
- **Pillar:** None, The Peasantry 1, or The Guilds 3.
- **Skills and Stunts:** Athletics (Charge!, Dazing Counter), Melee Combat (Bypass Armour, Cleave, Heavy Hitter, Two Weapons), Physique (Tough As Nails).
- **Community Build:** Oloriact Stable Fighting School.
- **Relationships:** An oloriact stable fighting school; the head of the school; an influential patron; your fan club.
- **Equipment:** An idiosyncratic weapon and armour combo, like alagin chain and trident, linothorax cuirass and net, etc; tattoos of punishment and the House of the Warrior in Chains.

Holy Warrior

Many temples employ specialist warriors. You're one such, belonging to a temple but spending your time training for battle instead of on priestly matters. You're still an initiate, though, with a power skill and access to temple cantrips and power stunts (page 269). Within the temple, you and your fellows form a body apart, with your own ranks and command structure. See your temple description for details of your holy warrior build (see page 321 for an example).

- **Prerequisites:** You must be an initiate with at least 1 power stunt, and have Melee Combat 3 or 4 and at least 1 Melee Combat stunt.
- **Essence:** *Awe-Inspiring Battle Priest; Fighting For the Holy Cause.*
- **Shadow:** *Constricted By Dogma; Religious Fanatic.*
- **Pillar:** The Priesthood 4.
- **Skills and Stunts:** Lore (Specialist: Sacred Lore), Melee Combat (Cleave, Riposte), Ride (Mounted Charge); power skill appropriate to temple.
- **Community Builds:** Your temple.
- **Relationships:** Demon weapon or armour, mount, temple.
- **Equipment:** Favoured weapon, basic suit of favoured armour, mount; see your chosen temple for details.

Legionnaire

You fight in a Sakari legion, known and respected throughout the Springtide Civilisations. Your life is regimented but rewarding, as you serve the cause and advance through the ranks. You can find an example legion you can belong to in the adjacent text box, with many more in the *Guide to Future Earth*.

- **Essence:** *Disciplined and Driven to Excel; I Owe Everything to the Legion!*
- **Shadow:** *Never Break the Chain of Command; Lost Without Orders.*
- **Pillar:** The Legions 2.
- **Skills and Stunts:** Melee Combat (Formation Fighting, Killing Stroke), Physique (Tough As Nails), Ride (Cavalry Charge, Mounted Charge).

- **Community Builds:** Your legion (see the Legion of Lord Regos, Indomitable community build in the text box below); a temple of the Great Compact.
- **Relationships:** Sidekick, mount, legion, temple.
- **Equipment:** Two favoured weapons, basic suit of favoured armour. See your specific legion for what these are.

Sample Community Build: The Legion of Lord Regos, Indomitable

Of major importance in Hivernium, the legion is charged with protecting the Empire's frontier against the entropics. It's also the legion of Jakai Tellisan, autarch of Korudav province, and is currently in a tense stand-off with the Legion of the Sword of Fire, the Dafuri legion the Emperor has recently appointed to take over its traditional garrison duties in Amadorad Protectorate. It's a legion which glorifies honour and nobility, and has a disproportionate number of astrigers and parigers in its ranks.

Legion Aspects: Wage War So the World Knows Peace; Guarantors of the Great Compact; Trust, Honour, and Vigilance.

Legion Skills and Stunts: *Melee Combat (Formation Fighting, Indomitable Defence Fighting Style, Killing Stroke), Notice, Willpower.*

- **Indomitable Defence Fighting Style:** *As long as you're fighting with legion gear and don't retreat, you can spend 2 shifts on a successful attack to create an Indomitable Defence aspect for your next defend action. On a special success, you get the aspect automatically.*

Legion Relationships: *You may take a chelother (page 245) as a mount.*

Legion Equipment: *Broadsword, cavalry lance, round shield, alagin scale hauberk, alagin plate greaves, leather vambraces, open helmet.*

Mercenary

The Autocracy frowns on mercenaries as glorified bandits. However, troubles in the northern provinces with the entropics have required the autarchs to bolster patrols, and cities in Hivernium and Amadorad Protectorate have seen a huge influx of mercenaries. For you, a fighting man or woman with your own equipment and a craving for coin and danger, it's a golden age!

- **Essence:** *Businesslike Killer; The Autarch Says I'm Not a Bandit!*
- **Shadow:** *I'll Fight Anything If the Pay Is Right; Loyalty For Sale.*
- **Pillar:** The Peasantry 1.
- **Skills and Stunts:** Contacts (Insider, The Weight of Reputation), Deceive (Cool Customer), Melee Combat (Killing Stroke), Provoke (Provoke Violence), Resources (Money Talks).
- **Community Builds:** Mercenary Company; possible temple.
- **Relationships:** Your mercenary company, a local temple, legion, or ruler; your mount; sidekick, allies, and minions.
- **Equipment:** Two well-used alagin weapons and a battered suit of well-maintained alagin armour; a riding animal.

Temple Guard

There's always an opening for a fighting man or woman in the guard companies protecting the temples of the Great Compact. It's often a routine existence, but you also accompany the priests on any perilous journeys.

- **Permissions:** You may initiate to the god and take the temple power skill and divine magical abilities. If sufficiently successful, you may eventually become a Holy Warrior.



- **Essence:** *Devoted Dafuri Dispatch Rider; Guardian of the Sacred Precincts.*
- **Shadow:** *Resentful of Those Boastful Paladins; What Do We Stand For Again?*
- **Pillar:** The Legions 2.
- **Skills and Stunts:** Contacts (Insider), Melee Combat (Cleave, Killing Stroke), Notice (Keen Hearing, Sense Danger); appropriate temple power skill.
- **Community Builds:** None additional unless you initiate to a temple.
- **Relationships:** Temple, temple guard company, priest, sidekick.
- **Equipment:** Two good quality alagin weapons; serviceable armour of SR-2 or less; a pellison and cloak with the temple insignia.

Warrior

You're from a background which eschews disciplined military training in favour of wild improvisation and individual derring-do. You're disinclined to fight in formation, instead hewing your way through massed foes. Many unruly non-human kindreds, like the P'Tek Maggot Men, produce formidable warriors.

- **Permissions:** You may join a warrior society, and initiate to gods like Belorias, Dafur, or Madiz.
- **Essence:** *Battle-crazed Berserker; Today Is a Good Day to Die!*
- **Shadow:** *I Fight Alone! Undisciplined Slaughter.*
- **Pillar:** The Peasantry 1.
- **Skills and Stunts:** Athletics (Charge!), Melee Combat (Cleave, Heavy Hitter, Hurling Weapon), Physique (Built Like A Brick Outhouse, Grappling, Tough As Nails).

- **Community Builds:** Warrior society, a temple (Belorias, Dafur, Madiz, etc) or elemental cult (Bab, Bel, Agni); non-human warrior societies like the P'Tek Wormguard.
- **Relationships:** Warrior society, temple or elemental cult, bound elemental, sidekick, riding animal.
- **Equipment:** Relatively light armour (SR-2 or less), a couple of simple favourite weapons—bows, swords, axes, maces; a riding animal.

Merchant

Trade binds the Autocracy together, and keeps communications open with the other lands of the Middle Sea. Merchants like the seafaring Ing Shu, the swift-sailed Merchants Maritime, the Virikki Trade Waggon, or the shunned Slaver Houses are vital for prosperity and cultural vibrancy.

Permissions: You can take a caravan, trading waggon, or merchant ship as a relationship or construct (see page 248).

Canal People

The Autocracy is criss-crossed with canals. The archaepopolises are remarkable for their extensive waterways, linking the ancient citadels with the precincts and new cities. All are home to the Canal People; dwelling in narrowboats of often prodigious size, gaudily decorated, half-home, half-shop, they're a subculture and mercantile occupation, hawking wares, transporting goods, and occasionally engaging in crafting and fishing.

- **Essence:** *Charming Navigator of the Ancient Canals; Jack of All Trades of the Waterways.*
- **Shadow:** *Clannish and Unwelcoming; A Fish Out of Water.*
- **Pillar:** The Peasantry 1.
- **Skills and Stunts:** Lore (Appraise, Specialist: Own City), Resources (Trade and Transport), Sailing (Belay That Order!).
- **Community Builds:** Optional initiate of Nimur or Vareltias.

- **Relationships:** Narrowboat crew or construct, temple of Nimur or Vareltias, headman, diviner, priest, guards of the Canal People community; a draught animal.
- **Equipment:** A narrowboat; lanyards and gaff; bantoor.

Paladoi Caravaneer

You're a non-human Paladoi, travelling beyond the Consensus to trade mindstones with the Blind. Accompanied by your Protean Flock, you may have one or more mindstones yourself, and be able to gland a memory stone when needed—but your focus is trade and profit.

- **Essence:** *Charismatic Face of the Protean Market; Speaker to the Blind.*
- **Shadow:** *Lost When Separated From the Yiribi; Dismissive of the Non-Consensus.*
- **Pillar:** The Guilds 3.
- **Skills and Stunts:** Learned Language (Literacy), Lore (Appraise, Specialist: Mindstone Lore), Resources (Money Talks, Trade and Transport), Willpower (Indomitable).
- **Community Builds:** None unless affiliated with an Autocracy temple.
- **Relationships:** *Yiribi* and *uleihu*; key Paladoi on your expedition; one or more Paladoi Glanders; Autocracy communities and leaders on your route; non-Paladoi merchants; draught animal.
- **Equipment:** Paladoi caravan of 10 to 100 individuals with waggons and draught beasts; rich jewellery and skin, fringe, and carapace paints; one or more mindstones (particularly a memory stone); a walking staff usable as a weapon.

Slaver

You're a slaver of the rich yet low status House of the Golden Cage, which operates slave markets and caravans. Skilled in the whip, lasso, and net, your skills are more dubious than other merchants. You may be an orator, or skilled in locks and devices of confinement and containment. Constantly hunting "merchandise", you range beyond the Autocracy's borders—to the Qamraan Jungles, Wilderness of Ellib, the Rabaq Hor and Rabaq Nun wastes. You're rarely religious, but may be an initiate of Minisia, Babisiya, Lord Vile, or even the Hegemonist.

- **Essence:** *Cruel and Grasping Slave Master; Flashy Trafficker In Downtrodden Souls.*
- **Shadow:** *Always On the Hunt For Merchandise; People Are Chattel; Wealth Without Status.*
- **Pillar:** The Peasantry 1.
- **Skills and Stunts:** Lore (Appraise), Provoke (Armour of Fear, Pressgang, Torturer), Resources (Money Talks, Trade and Transport).
- **Community Builds:** Temple of Minisia or an elemental cult, if you're an initiate.
- **Relationships:** Local Slavers' Guild; regular buyers; mercenaries and caravan guards; a brutal overseer.
- **Equipment:** Whip, ropes, manacles; coffle of miserable souls; mount, wagon, and draught animals.

Trader

You're a trader, maybe a Virikki waggoneer, an Ing Shu, or from another walk of life. You're skilled in sourcing and appraising goods, and bargaining and dealing. You often know weapons and hand-to-hand fighting, too: transporting valuables around the Middle Sea is rarely humdrum.

- **Essence:** *Hawker of Exotic Wares; The Delight of Pocketing Coin.*
- **Shadow:** *Can't Ignore a Bargain; That's Not Worth the Sack You Bought It In!*
- **Pillar:** The Guilds 3.
- **Skills and Stunts:** Rapport (Broker, Negotiator), Resources (Money Talks, Trade and Transport), Ride (Animal-Drawn Vehicles, Animal Handler); Gift of Envoy (Pillar stunt).
- **Community Builds:** The Waggoneers; temple of Vareltais if you're an initiate.

- **Relationships:** Waggoneers, a trade guild, a caravan or ship's crew, a temple of Vareltais, key members of your entourage, including caravan guards, a riding animal.
- **Equipment:** Space in a trade waggon or on a sailing ship or canal barge; a riding animal; trade goods; good quality travel and dress clothing; light armour and a small one-handed melee weapon.

Mystic

You're a **mystic**, someone who looks not to sorcery, artefacts, or the gods, but to the latent powers of the body and mind. Scholars argue whether humans naturally tap these powers, or whether they derive from the gods, the powers of entropy, or even the jeniri or esteri. Some are more gifted than others; but even the most ordinary human can embark on this path.

Permissions: You may use Mysticism **disciplines** (page 345). They're often the preserve of the Virikki, Tung Mai, and Paladoi, but you may be a rare representative of another kindred, including humans.

Martial Artist

There are many types of martial artist. Tempered by years of training, meditation, and self-abnegation, you develop amazing levels of skill and body mastery.

- **Permission:** You may acquire talents of the **Body Mastery** Mysticism discipline (page 347).
- **Essence:** *Meditative Artist of Martial Marvels; Ninja With an Alien Mind.*
- **Shadow:** *Beyond the Body's Limits; Like A Coiled Spring.*
- **Pillar:** The Peasantry 1, The Legions 2, or The Guilds 3.
- **Skills and Stunts:** Athletics (Dazing Counter), Unarmed Combat (Martial Arts), Willpower (Hard-boiled); talents of the Body Mastery discipline (page 347).
- **Community Builds:** Martial arts fighting school (see the Tiridat Fighting School sample community build in the text box overleaf).
- **Relationships:** Martial arts fighting school or mentor, legion.
- **Equipment:** Minimal—robes or combat harnesses; half a dozen throwing darts, stars, or knives; perhaps a quarterstaff.

Sample Community Build: The Tiridat Fighting School

The fighting school of the Mystical Order of Tiridat, the "Six Fold Way", taught by the Tung Mai (page 352). The stunts below are used unarmed or with Tung Mai weapons (see below). Students may also learn Body Mastery talents (page 347).

Fighting School Aspects: Whirlwind Tiridat Master; The Six Fold Way Demands Discipline!

Fighting School Skills and Stunts: Athletics, Melee Combat, Ranged Combat, Unarmed Combat (Martial Arts); Tiridat combat stunts (below).

- **Acrobatic Combat:** Use Athletics instead of Unarmed Combat in HTH range (R-1) combat. Your Unarmed Combat skill acts like an additional combat skill for the purposes of teamwork bonuses (page 202), multiple target attacks (page 229), and multiple defences (page 230).
- **Arrowcut:** Requires Acrobatic Combat. When defending against missiles in Acrobatic Combat, your Melee and Unarmed Combat skills count as additional combat skills for multiple defences (page 230) and teamwork purposes (page 202).
- **The Six Fold Way:** Requires Whirling Defence. You may include all your combat skills in your attack roll via teamwork, even if they're of different types (Melee Combat, Ranged Combat, Unarmed Combat). You may divide your result among a number of targets equal to your number of limbs, regardless of how many skills you bring to bear. A human may strike 4 targets; a Tung Mai may strike 6. If you're using Acrobatic Combat, your Athletics is considered a combat skill.
- **Whirling Defence:** Requires Acrobatic Combat. Ignore multiple defence penalties (page 230), whether at HTH range or not.

Fighting School Relationships: Mentor, superior or head of fighting school, master of mysticism.

Fighting School Equipment: One Tung Mai weapon for each level of Melee Combat skill (choose from: obsidian-edged battle axe, obsidian-barbed whip, or Two-tooth obsidian halberd); dati throwing stars if you have the Ranged Combat skill; Tung Mai equipment harness.

Psionist

You've developed the mental powers known as **psionics**. Most common folk can't tell these from magic; they're rare, found mostly among Virikki and Paladoi. Some argue humans aren't capable of *true* psionics, but that doesn't explain the rare humans who practice the art. Perhaps you have jeniri or esteri blood...

Permission: You may pick disciplines and talents from the **Psionics** branch of mysticism (page 352). See below for restrictions.

- **Essence:** *Mysterious Mind Master; Adept of Infinite Mentalism.*
- **Shadow:** *Wanders the Paths of the Mind; Mental Static.*
- **Pillar:** The Guilds 3.
- **Skills and Stunts:** Lore (Specialist: Psionics Lore), Notice (Body Language), Willpower (Fortress of the Will); talents and associated skills from the Awareness, Body Mastery, Sensitivity, Sympathy, Telekinesis, and Telepathy disciplines (may be restricted by kindred).
- **Community Builds:** The Chancery of Mirrors, Paladoi Consensus, Virikki Psionists.
- **Relationships:** Your psionist community; key practitioners.
- **Equipment:** You may have a personal focus like a crystal, talisman, amulet, or even body tattoo.

Natural Talent Magic User

You've a natural talent **power aspect** (page 269) and at least one power skill, and an instinctive ability to manipulate magic. Many natural talents have other occupations.

Permissions: A natural talent power aspect; one or more power skills; you may pick another "main" occupation.

Casual Magic User

You carry your talent lightly, using your power skill and its cantrips and perhaps a power stunt or two to give you an advantage in everyday life.

- **Essence:** *I Know a Trick or Two; Instinctive Master of Magical Principles.*
- **Shadow:** *I've No Idea What I'm Doing; That Wasn't Supposed to Happen!*
- **Pillar:** As main occupation.
- **Skills and Stunts:** Deceive (Cool Customer), Willpower (Indomitable); one power skill.
- **Community Builds:** None specific.
- **Relationships:** A magical mentor; your local community.
- **Equipment:** None specific.

Hedge Wizard / Wise Woman

You keep your natural magical abilities low-key or secret. You've never been formally trained, but maybe you had a hedge wizard or witch as a mentor.

- **Essence:** *Hubble, Bubble, Let the Fire Folk Fly! Mumbler of Mysterious Magics.*
- **Shadow:** *Half-Remembered Incantations; Superstition Ain't the Way.*
- **Pillar:** The Peasantry 1.
- **Skills and Stunts:** Deceive (Fast Talk, Lies Upon Lies), Rapport (Indomitable); one or more power skills.
- **Community Builds:** None specific; you may be flirting with one or more magical communities, who may teach you a thing or two.

- **Relationships:** Your local community; an apprentice or mentor.
- **Equipment:** Paraphernalia you've invented or inherited from your mentor.

Undiscovered Talent

Young or old, you're gifted, undiscovered, and untrained. Maybe you'll attract the attention of temples, sorcery schools, or darker forces...

- **Essence:** *Power Beyond Imagining; Seventh Son of a Seventh Son.*
- **Shadow:** *Dad Says I Should Stop Now! Terrified By What's Happening To Me.*
- **Pillar:** As main occupation.
- **Skills and Stunts:** Deceive (Fast Talk), Notice (Sense Danger), Willpower (Fortress of the Will); one or more power skills.
- **Community Builds:** One of more magical communities inviting you to join, some with dodgy agendas.
- **Relationships:** Your family or local community; a mysterious magical community; a representative from that community.
- **Equipment:** None specific; possible gear from the magical community trying to recruit you.

Official

The Springtide Civilisations teem with mandarins, civil servants, servitors of byzantine bureaucracies. You're a cog in the machine of state, skilled in intrigue and hierarchies. Self-effacing in your duties, you wield real power, pulling levers to direct the juggernaut of government.

Prerequisites: You must be literate, with the Lore skill or Learned Language (Literacy) stunt.

Permissions: Regardless of social class, the state is behind you; your Pillar skill is The Lords 5, sitting directly above your peak level 4 skill in your skill pyramid at no extra cost.

Administrator

You're a functionary in the convoluted Imperial Administration, part of the *Chelumetariat* civil service. You wrestle with the centripetal tendencies of the nobility, using chains of bureaucracy to control them and maintain the Empire's cohesion. You know **exactly** how things have always been done, and delight in correcting rulers and nobles.

- **Essence:** *Power Behind the Throne; The Silent Sinecure Parries the Sword!*
- **Shadow:** *I Like Rules! This Is How It's Always Been Done!*
- **Pillar:** The Lords 5.
- **Skills and Stunts:** Contacts (Insider, Spread the Word), Deceive (Lies Upon Lies, Mind Games), Resources (Bail Out, Money Talks).
- **Community Builds:** The Imperial Administration; you may be an initiate of Ankadar.

- **Relationships:** The Imperial Administration, particularly with the Bureaucracy community skill; a local autarchal, plutarchal, or chelarchal court; the local temple of Ankadar; key movers and shakers in the above; a bound Servitor of Law; a body servant.
- **Equipment:** Administrator's Seal and Rod of Office; superb robes with the floral insignia of the Imperial Administration.

Diplomat

You're the Bloom in the Bloom and the Sword of the *Chelumetariat*, responsible for negotiating with foreign powers. You ensure Imperial policy is consistent in dealings with other nations, and handle troublesome lords of the Sword who believe they know better how the Autocracy should be run.

- **Essence:** *My Dear Fellow, Let me Arrange That For You! Silver-tongued Diplomat Making the Wheels Go Round.*
- **Shadow:** *Just One More Negotiation; You May Think That, I Couldn't Possibly Comment.*
- **Pillar:** The Lords 5.
- **Skills and Stunts:** Empathy (Lie Whisperer, Like an Open Book), Notice (Body Language, Read the Crowd), Rapport (Carousing, Honey-Tongued, Negotiator), Resources (Money Talks); Gift of Envoy (Pillar stunt).
- **Community Builds:** The Imperial Administration; possible initiate of Ankadar or Vareltias (Jestis Speaker).
- **Relationships:** The Imperial Administration, Temple of Ankadar or Vareltias, key foreign dignitaries, mandarins of the Bloom, potentates of the Sword; a personal servant.
- **Equipment:** Floral diplomatic robes, Diplomat's Baton.



Leader

You're a manager, demagogue, overseer, headman, or chieftain, occupied with the day-to-day management of "the Sword" (the hereditary Lords of the Chelumetariat) in their tussles with "the Bloom" of the Imperial Administration civil servants. Very often, members of the Sword have other occupations as legionnaires, priests, etc, but you're a career bureaucrat, able to meet Imperial Administration attacks head-on.

- **Permissions:** You may be an initiate of Dafur or Regos.
- **Essence:** *Champion of the Chelumetariat; Makes Management Look Effortless.*
- **Shadow:** *Tendency to Micromanage; The Buck Stops With Me!*
- **Pillar:** The Lords 5.
- **Skills and Stunts:** Provoke, Rapport (Commander-In-Chief, Demagogue, Minions, Overseer, Servitors), Resources (Money Talks, We're Hiring!), Willpower (Fortress of the Will, Indomitable).
- **Community Builds:** Sword of the Chelumetariat; temple of Dafur or Regos.
- **Relationships:** Sword of the Chelumetariat, temple of Dafur or Regos, local dignitaries of the Sword or the Bloom (the Imperial Administration); a bound Agnapai fire demon or Serapai demon of war.
- **Equipment:** Ceremonial weapons and armour, a good alagin service weapon and field armour, robes of office, riding beast, a seat of office in the Palace of the Chelumetariat.

Patrician

You're one of the Autocracy's nobility or aristocracy who's disinclined to join a legion, temple, sorcery school, or become a leader or official in the *Chelumetariat* (see above) — and who can't think of anything better to do. Many nobles are less indolent and have other occupations, but not you.

Prerequisites: You must be from the Noble (4) or Aristocrat (5) social class.

Permissions: Your Pillar skill (page 158) is automatically The Lords 5.

Courtier

You spend your days in the local Chelumetariat court, intriguing and hob-nobbing with the great and good. You side with the Bloom or the Sword, dicking for position and generally causing trouble. You may be an initiate of Ankadar, Dafur, or Regos—or Babisiya or Belorias, or another god of the Great Compact if you're inclined to more disruptive behaviour.

- **Essence:** *Graceful Guide of the Autarchal Court; I Have the Ear of the Vizier Herself!*
- **Shadow:** *I Mustn't Gossip, But...; Stabbed in the Back; Back-Stabber.*
- **Pillar:** The Lords 5.
- **Skills and Stunts:** Contacts (Insider, Rumourmonger), Deceive (Cool Customer, Mind Games), Provoke (Okay Fine!, Provoke Violence, Spread Hate Speech), Resources (Money Talks).
- **Community Builds:** None specific; possibly a temple of the Great Compact.
- **Relationships:** The *Chelumetariat* Imperial Administration; local legions or temples; local dignitaries; a body servant.
- **Equipment:** Ceremonial gear from the Bloom or Sword; lavish apartments from your lord or patron; fine clothing and jewellery.

Dilettante

Disinclined to engage in intrigue and backstabbing in the local court, your wealth lets you dabble in whatever you like, even if your natural indolence means you never get far. Still, you may have accumulated some expertise to surprise those around you.

- **Essence:** *Friends With the Province's Greatest Sorcerer; I Pay For All the Botanical Expeditions Over the Kadram Wall!*
- **Shadow:** *Delusions of Adequacy; I Can't Be Bothered Putting the Hours In.*
- **Pillar:** The Lords 5.
- **Skills and Stunts:** Devise 1 (Specialist: Obscure craft), Lore 1 (I've Read About That!), Rapport (Carousing), Resources (Money Talks).
- **Community Builds:** Temple, guild, legion, or sorcery school, depending on your field of interest.
- **Relationships:** A temple, guild, legion, or sorcery school; ranking dignitaries from the same; a circle of like-minded dilettantes; a body servant. You may have even talked someone into giving you a bound demon or elemental.
- **Equipment:** Varies widely, but good quality clothing and lavish apartments cluttered with the accoutrements of your interest.

Idle Rich

So little seems worthwhile—your days are filled with boredom, punctuated by parties, gossip, intrigue, affairs, and fads for fashions and favourites which break the monotony of luxurious indolence. Your skills are mostly interpersonal—why exert yourself on practical matters when you can get someone to do it for you?

- **Permissions:** You may be an initiate of Minisia or Pline.
- **Essence:** *Dedicated Follower of Fashion, I've Time and Money For Whatever I Want!*
- **Shadow:** *Languorous Inactivity; Oh, For Something to Pass the Day!*
- **Pillar:** The Lords 5.

- **Skills and Stunts:** Contacts (Ear to the Ground, Rumourmonger), Rapport (Carousing, Drinks For All My Friends, Seducer), Resources (Bail Out, Money Talks).
- **Community Builds:** None specific; a nodding acquaintance with the temple of Minisia.
- **Relationships:** A local coterie of idle rich; your current court favourite; your best (and worst) friend; a riding animal; a guru; a body servant.
- **Equipment:** Clothing in the latest fashions, perfumes, face-paints, and jewellery. What else do you need?

Tearaway

The life you were born into seemed so restrictive, you said hang it all and gave yourself to debauchery and mayhem. Maybe you like brawling, terrorising your inferiors, and getting caught in depraved orgies; or maybe you've decided the whole system stinks and you couldn't care less if it collapses around your ears.

- **Permissions:** You may be an initiate of Payorian, Qal, or Madiz.
- **Essence:** *Let's Get 'Em! I Know What This Situation Needs...*
- **Shadow:** *I Don't Give a Damn What You Think; Let It All Burn; Broken Moral Compass.*
- **Pillar:** The Lords 5.
- **Skills and Stunts:** Deceive (Disguise, Fast Talk), Provoke (Okay Fine!, Provoke Violence, Spread Hate Speech), Resources (Money Talks, We're Hiring!).
- **Community Builds:** None specific; perhaps the temple of Payorian, Qal, or Madiz.
- **Relationships:** A gang of ne'er-do-wells, cabal of cynical conspirators, a ringleader, an illicit and dangerous lover, a stoic body servant, a riding animal.
- **Equipment:** Soiled but luxurious clothing, vast amounts of alcohol and drugs, musical instruments and expensive but poorly maintained weapons, jewellery in need of polishing.

Physician

Healing magic and medical know-how mean people often enjoy long and healthy lives, if disaster, disfavour, or misfortune don't intervene. Every community needs someone to minister to the sick or injured, from itinerant healers and bonesetters to skilled surgeons with magical powers and ancient artefacts.

Permissions: You may choose healing stunts and magics (see pages 148, 153, 309, and 331), and your Contacts and Resources rolls can gain access to healing zoans and pereprae.

Healer

You may not be a priest of Konfu, but you're almost certainly an initiate. The temple has taught you a few stunts.

- **Prerequisite:** You must have a divine **power aspect** (page 268).
- **Essence:** *Tender of the Sick and Wounded; Natural Healer on a Sacred Path.*
- **Shadow:** *No Violence! What the Heart Wants, the Head Can't Do!*
- **Pillar:** The Priesthood 4.
- **Skills and Stunts:** Empathy (Succour), Lore (First Aid, Healer), Wisdom* (Heal Wounds).
- **Community Builds:** Temple of Konfu.
- **Relationships:** Temple of Konfu; local healers.
- **Equipment:** Splints and unguents, swabs and bandages; 3 doses of healing accelerator salve.

Herbalist

You're a natural talent healer, associated with a rural community or living in the wilderness. You're visited by those needing help, who pay in kind, often with ingredients. For rarer ingredients, you forage far and wide—you rarely have the money to buy them.

- **Permission:** You may have a natural magic **power aspect** (page 267), and may learn Chemick and have a Chemick Workspace (see the *Chronicler's Guide* for more on Chemick).

- **Essence:** *Natural Sympathy For Growing Things; The Great Gardener Has a Remedy For Everything!*
- **Shadow:** *I Never Studied; Obsessive Fungi Collector; Pungent Odour of Plants and Berries.*
- **Pillar:** The Peasantry 1.
- **Skills and Stunts:** Devise (Distill Essence), Lore (First Aid, Specialist: Chemick Lore, Plant Lore), Wisdom* (Heal Wounds).
- **Community Builds:** Maybe a loose association with the Temple of Konfu.
- **Relationships:** A local community; local healer or priest of Konfu; local wilderlanders or people who needed your help; wilderness denizens, including non-humans and maybe a friendly "monster"; a mentor or apprentice.
- **Equipment:** Herbalist's Kitchen (like a Chemick Lab); a pouch of 18 doses of healing plant ingredients you can define as needed; 3 doses of every chemick recipe you know.

Midwife

Associated with the temple of Emeldias, you minister to those giving birth. You're a respected professional in the communities you serve, and are called to tend births in homes of ranking dignitaries, who owe you favours.

- **Permission:** You may have a natural magic or divine **power aspect** (see pages 267-8). You may be an initiate of Emeldias or Konfu.
- **Essence:** *Midwife to the Autarch! Respected In Every Household.*
- **Shadow:** *Bossy and Domineering; Leave the Poor Wee Thing Alone!*
- **Pillar:** The Peasantry 1 or The Guilds 3.
- **Skills and Stunts:** Empathy (Succour), Growth* (Control Fertility, Ease Birth), Lore (First Aid), Rapport (Best Foot Forward), Wisdom* (Heal Wounds).
- **Community Builds:** Temple of Emeldias or Konfu.
- **Relationships:** Temple of Emeldias or Konfu, local community, local priestess of Emeldias or priest of Konfu; a Protectress of Emeldias; local dignitaries owing you favours.
- **Equipment:** Clean cloths, bowls, and towels, a healing (midwives') kit.

Sorcerer-Surgeon

You're devoted to studying harm, disease, and injury, and wiping them out using sorcery. Your bedside manner is rather calculating, but *understanding* is your goal.

- **Prerequisite:** You must have a sorcery **power aspect** (page 268).
- **Permission:** You've access to sorcerous healing spells (page 331), and may choose a divine **power aspect** (page 268)
- **Essence:** *A Bitter Pill Is Always Effective; The Strengths and Weaknesses of the Body.*
- **Shadow:** *Never Mind the Pain! Fascinating—But It'll Have To Come Off!*
- **Pillar:** The Guilds 3.
- **Skills and Stunts:** Devise (Always Making Useful Things), Lore (First Aid, Healer), Wisdom* (Heal Wounds); sorcery spells and spell effect stunts.

- **Community Builds:** A sorcery school of healing; Temple of Konfu.
- **Relationships:** A sorcery school of healing, a temple of Konfu, a mentor or apprentice; a local community; local dignitaries owing you favours.
- **Equipment:** A sorcery grimoire, robes emblazoned with healing sigils, a healer's kit.

Zoic Healer

Whether you're Hsun or not, you've studied hsuntach and the growing of **zoans**—artificial life form prostheses (page 248).

- **Permission:** You may spend AP to learn Zoic Science stunts and capabilities, focussing on healing (page 147). You may create hsuntach artefacts (page 350).
- **Essence:** *Adopted By the Hsun; Uncanny Knack With Hsuntach.*
- **Shadow:** *A Zoan Solves Everything! Lost In Alien Thought Processes.*
- **Pillar:** The Guilds 3.
- **Skills and Stunts:** Devise (Zoic Science), Lore (First Aid, Zoic Lore); Hsuntach Capabilities (each costing 2AP, eg: Enhanced Sense (Nightsight), Heightened Visual Acuity, Regeneration, Resist (Luminosity)).
- **Community Builds:** The Hsuntach Guild; Zoic Science.
- **Relationships:** The Hsuntach Guild, your hsuntach mentor, a local community; a local merchant; local dignitaries owing you a favour; an apprentice; a Zoic Vat workspace (page 147).
- **Equipment:** Zoic Vat; you may spend AP to acquire zoans, including from other hsuntach experts.



Priest

You're a member of the priesthoods of the gods of the Great Compact, running temples, conducting worship services, and learning awesome divine powers. The higher in your temple's hierarchy you go, the greater the power you wield. This section provides basic builds for priests; use them together with the priest character build for your god (see page 321 for an example).

Prerequisites: You must have a divine **power aspect** (page 268).

Permissions: You may learn divine magic (see below and page 310).

Novice

You're a minor, outer member of a temple, learning its skills and stunts. You mostly have duties, and few privileges.

- **Permissions:** You may cast general cantrips with your power skill, but not temple cantrips; you may buy or improvise general power stunts, and may improvise (not buy) your temple's power stunts. See page 269.
- **Essence:** *Novice With Natural Understanding; Learner of the Ways of the Gods.*
- **Shadow:** *Muddled Doctrines; Hides From Responsibility.*
- **Pillar:** The Priesthood 4.
- **Skills and Stunts:** Deceive (Fast Talk), Lore (Sacred Lore), Notice (Sense Danger), Stealth (Face In the Crowd); your god's power skill.
- **Community Builds:** Your temple; see page 320 for an example.
- **Relationships:** Your temple; your superior at your temple; your local community; your best friend and ally.
- **Equipment:** Novice's robes, a holy symbol.

Temple Servitor

You're an **initiate** (page 269) working full-time in your temple, with greater access to divine magic than a novice. You lead a less constrained life than full priests, frequently being sent on missions and temple business.

- **Prerequisite:** You must buy at least one power stunt associated with your god's mystical principle (page 278).
- **Permissions:** You may use general and temple cantrips, and improvise or buy general and temple power stunts.
- **Essence:** *I Have the Ear of the Paladin! Temple Servitor of the Lord of War.*
- **Shadow:** *Sorry, I Don't Have Time! Picked For the Worst Missions.*
- **Pillar:** The Priesthood 4.
- **Skills and Stunts:** Investigate (Eavesdropper, The Power of Deduction), Lore (Bureaucracy, Rituals, Specialist: Sacred Lore), Resources (Money Talks); your god's power skill and power stunts.
- **Community Builds:** Your temple; see page 320 for an example.
- **Relationships:** Your temple; your supervising priest; your local community; a novice assistant; your best friend and ally; a bound demon.
- **Equipment:** Servitor's robes, holy symbol; equipment appropriate to a priest of your god (see page 321 for an example).

Temple Priest

You're a full priest in a temple of the Great Compact, working full-time in your god's service. You have leadership and administrative skills.

- **Prerequisites:** You must have at least 3 skills and 3 stunts of your priesthood (see page 321 for an example). As part of your appointment ceremony, you must incarnate your **avatar** (page 310), buying its aspect and power skill using **advancement points** (page 260). You may acquire your god's **miracle** at the same time, but you don't have to.
- **Permissions:** In addition to using temple cantrips and power stunts, you may incarnate your god's **avatar** (page 310) and acquire **miracles** (page 312).
- **Essence:** *Blessed Priest of Emeldias; Leader of the Faithful of Belorias.*
- **Shadow:** *Intractably Dogmatic; Overwhelmed By Avatar Incarnation.*
- **Pillar:** The Priesthood 4.
- **Skills and Stunts:** Lore (Bureaucracy, Rituals, Specialist: Sacred Lore), Provoke (Armour of Fear), Rapport (Overseer, Servitors), Resources (Money Talks); power skill, power stunts, and miracle(s) of your god.
- **Community Builds:** Your temple; see page 320 for an example.
- **Relationships:** Avatar, demon, temple; your high priest; temple servitors or other underlings; the Temples of the Great Compact community.
- **Equipment:** Robes of office, holy symbol.

High Priest

You're the leader of a temple of the Great Compact, a person of importance in the local and religious community. You're removed from the divine magic side of things, having to deal with intrigue, politics, and administration; you rarely get to head out on perilous missions any more, but you do get to boss people around a lot.

- **Prerequisites:** You must have all the skills and at least 6 stunts of your temple priesthood, and know at least one miracle. You must have at least one bound demon if your temple provides them. You must know your temple's Sacred Lore, and have invested at least 18AP in a temple community relationship and 8AP in the Temples of the Great Compact community (see the *Chronicler's Guide*).
- **Essence:** *Debauched Leader of the Qali Orgies; Respected High Priestess of the Winter Woman.*
- **Shadow:** *Always Watch Your Back; No Time For Magic.*
- **Pillar:** The Priesthood 4.
- **Skills and Stunts:** Contacts (Ear to the Ground, The Weight of Reputation), Lore (Bureaucracy), Provoke (Armour of Fear, Terrorise), Rapport (Commander-in-Chief, Negotiator, Overseer, Minions), Resources (Bail Out, Money Talks); power skill, power stunts, and miracle(s) of your god.
- **Community Builds:** Your temple.
- **Relationships:** Your temple; the local Chelumetariat; the Temples of the Great Compact community; one or more bound demons; a body servant; a Holy Warrior bodyguard; temple servitors; local dignitaries; a legion affiliated with your temple.
- **Equipment:** Lavishly decorated robes of office, extravagantly bejewelled holy symbol.

Sorcerer-Priest

You're a priest, but also study the sorcery associated with your god's mystical principle (page 279). You're maybe the only sorcerer-priest in your temple. You view petitions from temple sorcerers (page 121) to inspect the Sacred Grimoires with jealous skepticism.

- **Prerequisite:** You must have a sorcery **power aspect** and a divine **power aspect** (page 268). You must have fulfilled the prerequisites for becoming a temple priest (see above).
- **Permissions:** You may learn sorcery spell effect stunts and sorcery spells (see page 324). In addition to using your god's temple cantrips and power stunts, you may also incarnate their **avatar** (page 310) and learn their **miracles** (page 312).
- **Essence:** *Guardian of Payorian's Song Grimoires; Master Sorcerer of Staros's Secrets.*
- **Shadow:** *Pulled From Pillar to Post; So Much To Learn, So Little Time!*
- **Pillar:** The Priesthood 4.
- **Skills and Stunts:** Lore (Rituals, Specialist: Demon Lore, Sacred Lore); temple power skill; sorcery spells associated with that power skill.
- **Community Builds:** Your temple.
- **Relationships:** Your temple, a sorcery school with similar interests, a bound demon, your high priest, temple servitors, a body servant, bodyguard.
- **Equipment:** Priestly robes, holy symbol, sacred grimoire.

Rogue

You live by your wits, on society's margins, often beyond the law. Not above cheating, fraud, or larceny, you may be a true criminal, or just an opportunist who needs a little moral flexibility to get the job done. You're always on the look-out for that bit of good luck to make your fortune, and bend and break the rules to help it come your way.

Burglar

You're a criminal: you break into buildings and steal people's stuff. So far you've been lucky or skillful enough to avoid the Autocracy's impalement stakes...

- **Essence:** *Brutal Breaker and Enterer; Steely-Nerved Cat Burglar.*
- **Shadow:** *I Can't Leave Any Witnesses; We Can Take Just One More Treasure Chest!*
- **Pillar:** The Peasantry 1.
- **Skills and Stunts:** Burglary (Breaking & Entering, Casing), Devise (Disarm Traps), Stealth (Slippery Target).
- **Community Builds:** Maybe a secret society or dubious temple, like Babisiya, the Void Cult, or the Great Hegemonist.
- **Relationships:** Underworld figures, including those fencing goods you've stolen; a gaggle of ne'er-do-wells in dark taverns in dubious districts; some thoroughly unpleasant cultists; maybe a Night Vision zoan (page 252); and even a darkness demon or elemental.
- **Equipment:** Burglar's tools, a set of non-descript clothing, a set of dark clothing; a concealable weapon.



Cutpurse

You rob people, sneakily, picking pockets and cutting purses. What you do is punishable by mutilation and death, but the immense wealth of the Great Cities means you're undeterred. There's a steady supply of candidates for the Empire's impalement stakes, but you're not one of those. Not yet.

- **Essence:** *Light-Fingered Loot Lifter; You've Got to Pick a Pocket Or Two.*
- **Shadow:** *Always Moving On; No Honour Among Thieves.*
- **Pillar:** The Peasantry 1.
- **Skills and Stunts:** Burglary (Always a Way Out, Sleight of Hand), Deceive (Fast Talk, Hey! What's That?), Stealth (Face in the Crowd, Vanish).
- **Community Builds:** Maybe a secret society or dubious temple like Babisiya, the Void Cult, or Great Hegemonist.
- **Relationships:** Underworld figures, including those fencing goods you've stolen; a gaggle of ne'er-do-wells in dark taverns in dubious districts; some thoroughly unpleasant cultists; maybe a darkness demon or elemental.
- **Equipment:** Non-descript clothing, cloak with hidden pockets, a concealable weapon.

Gambler

Living by your wits is an addiction—but you can handle it. There are games of chance everywhere in the Autocracy, some legal, others definitely not. You calculate the odds, and will retire after your big win. Any day now.

- **Essence:** *Compulsive Card Sharp; Eshtikar Smiles On Me!*
- **Shadow:** *My Luck'll Change If I Hold the Distance; Owes a Few Too Many Bad Guys.*
- **Pillar:** The Peasantry 1 (usually).
- **Skills and Stunts:** Burglary (Sleight of Hand), Deceive (Cool Customer, Fast Talk, Hey! What's That?), Rapport (Carousing), Stealth (Face in the Crowd, Vanish).

- **Community Builds:** Maybe the Temple of Qal or Eshtikar.
- **Relationships:** A gambling house; local loan shark; someone who owes you; local temple or priest of Qal or Eshtikar.
- **Equipment:** Dice, knucklebones, a deck of marked cards, a concealable weapon.

Tomb Robber

The necropolises of the Springtide Civilisations are filled with treasure, and no one's quite sure when "removing" it constitutes legitimate archaeology or just plain theft. That grey area is where tomb robbers thrive; part-scholar, part-thief, you belong to the Ward of Devisers of the Guild of the Respectful Explorers of Antiquity.

- **Essence:** *Canny Undercity Explorer; Archaeologist With a Taste for Treasure.*
- **Shadow:** *Maybe I Broke the Law Once... OK, Twice...; That Moral Grey Area Gets Everywhere...*
- **Pillar:** The Peasantry 1 or The Guilds 3.
- **Skills and Stunts:** Burglary (Breaking & Entering, Casing), Devise (Disarm Traps), Lore (Specialist: Archaeology, Ruins), Notice (Eye For Detail, Trap-Finding).
- **Community Builds:** The Respectful Explorers of Antiquity (see the text box on page 113).
- **Relationships:** The Respectful Explorers of Antiquity; an artificer of Khosht; a chronicler of Unthar; dubious underworld types finding buyers for the things you "recover".
- **Equipment:** Tomb robber's tools, short sword, buckler shield, dagger, inconspicuous clothing, linen armour, quilted gambeson.

Sample Community Build: The Respectful Explorers of Antiquity

More accurately, this is the community build of the Ward of Devisers, the part of the Tomb Robbers' Guild that specialists in identifying and disabling ancient traps and snares. You can find other Respectful Explorers community builds in the Guide to Future Earth. The symbol of the Tomb Robbers is the lamp and the crown, and they're found wherever there are rumours of ancient treasure caches or newly-discovered pereprae.

Guild Aspects: A Jewel in a Tomb is No Jewel At All; Don't Take Another Step!

Guild Skills and Stunts: *Contacts (Fences and Favours), Devise (Booby Traps), Lore (Specialist: Folklore, History, Pereprae, Ruins).*

- **Fences and Favours:** *Use Contacts instead of Resources to find accommodation, sell treasures liberated from ruins, or acquire treasure maps, pereprae codices, and so on.*

Guild Relationships: *Expert archaeologist; guild-master; fence; travelling trader.*

Guild Equipment: *Tomb robber's tools, one or more dismantled traps, an untried treasure map.*

Sailor

You're a salty seadog. Sakari merchants ply the waves seeking out opportunities, and they always need people like you. Many lands also maintain sizable navies, including the fabled Moon Fleet of Oron which protects the Autocracy's northern coasts.

Permissions: You may take the crew of a sailing ship or other water vessel as a **relationship** or **community**, or the vessel itself as a **construct** (see page 248).

Pirate

Many pirates hail from Alagir, the City of Pirates, but any sea-going ne'er-do-well can aspire to the name. You live dangerously, battling the briny deep and the defenders of cargoes you'd like to seize. Ashore, perilous water-front alleys and taverns present mortal challenges.

- **Essence:** *Death-Defying Swashbuckler; Have At Ye, Ye Dogs!*
- **Shadow:** *I Trust No One, No One Trusts Me; Recovering From a Keel-Hauling; Wanted In Every Port.*
- **Pillar:** The Peasantry 1.
- **Skills and Stunts:** Athletics (Acrobat), Melee Combat (Hurled Weapon, Riposte), Sailing (Belay That Order! Ramming Speed!).
- **Community Builds:** Secret society of pirates.
- **Relationships:** Your ship's crew, the captain; corrupt priest of the temple of Nimur; the Atalaq shark people.
- **Equipment:** A cutlass and dagger, doublet or leather armour, an exotic pet, stolen rutter, garish clothing, maybe an eyepatch, wooden leg, or hand hook, or the zoic equivalents if you can afford the AP.

Sailor

You're an honest Jakai Tar on a merchant or naval vessel, working hard for decent pay and a chance to see the world.

- **Permissions:** You may be an initiate of Nimur.
- **Essence:** *Honest Seadog of the Middle Sea; Veteran of the Tlanik Ocean Expedition.*
- **Shadow:** *A Lover In Every Port; Mutinous Tendencies; I Spends It As Quick As I Earns It!*
- **Pillar:** The Peasantry 1.
- **Skills and Stunts:** Athletics (Climber), Lore (The Springtide Civilisations), Notice (Sense Danger), Sailing (Damage Control).
- **Community Builds:** Legion of Nimur, Temple of Nimur.
- **Relationships:** Ship's crew, captain; your favourite dockside tavern; a docker's gang; a friend in the legion or the temple of Nimur; a lover in every port.
- **Equipment:** A cutlass and dagger, loose fitting clothing, an exotic pet, rutters of far-off seas, strange wares from faraway places.

Steersman

You're steersman of a Canal People narrowboat, fending off, traversing locks and weirs, and manoeuvring your lumbering vessel. You're skilled at repairs and defending against raiders who'd rob your mobile market bare.

- **Essence:** *Steersman of the Golden Talasp; The Finest Pilot of Elikan Waters.*
- **Shadow:** *It's Not That I Can't Swim, But...; Obsessively Superstitious.*
- **Pillar:** The Peasantry 1.
- **Skills and Stunts:** Physique (Herculean Strength), Rapport (Overseer), Sailing (Belay That Order!).
- **Community Builds:** None specific.
- **Relationships:** Canal boat crew; local diviner; temple of Varelthias.
- **Equipment:** Gaffes, draught animals, rutters, a crossbow, hand axe, leather armour.

Scholar

You love studying, and books and scrolls. Fortunately they're plentiful in the Autocracy—as are people trying to figure out what they mean.

Librarian

You're less interested in reading your books and scrolls than in finding the perfect way of organising them. You can lay your hands on any work in your collection almost immediately. Now where did you last see that map?

- **Permission:** You may be an initiate of Unthar.
- **Essence:** *Fanessa the Memorious of Lamann's Gift; I Can Find Anything In These Books!*
- **Shadow:** *Obsession For Categorising; Lost in the Stacks.*
- **Pillar:** The Guilds 3.
- **Skills and Stunts:** Lore (Bureaucracy, I've Read About That!), Resources (Money Talks), Willpower (Fortress of the Will).
- **Community Builds:** Temple of Unthar.
- **Relationships:** Your library; temple of Unthar; local priest; an interested patron.
- **Equipment:** Ink-stained robes, spectacles or zoic eyes, quills and paper, a book containing your latest index.

Sage

You want to know *everything*, and you won't stop until you do! You're a fount of knowledge, even if the water's sometimes muddy, and people come from far and wide to consult you. You put two and two together and leap to astounding conclusions, although your sense of personal danger is subordinated to your desire to go questing for missing tomes...

- **Essence:** *Authority on the Gimmertree Cycles; Only Connect!*
- **Shadow:** *Oblivious to Danger; Not Distracted But Thinking!*
- **Pillar:** The Guilds 3.
- **Skills and Stunts:** Investigate (The Power of Deduction), Learned Language (Literacy), Lore (I've Read About That!, Shield of Reason; Multiple Specialities).
- **Community Builds:** Sages' guild, maybe temple of Unthar.
- **Relationships:** A temple associated with your specialisations; a wealthy interested patron; mentor or student.
- **Equipment:** Hefty grimoires, an armful of scrolls; dusty robes; quills and paper; an intricate collection of obscure items.

Teacher

You've learned a lot, and have dedicated your life to passing it on to others. Patient, empathetic, insightful, you've a rapport with those who want to learn. Occasionally you abandon your students mid-sentence and head off on some perilous mission.

- **Essence:** *Natural Mentor To All Who Wish To Learn; Teacher Must Also Be Student.*
- **Shadow:** *I'm Sorry, Do You Think I'm Patronising? Stand In the Corner and Think About What You've Done.*
- **Pillar:** The Guilds 3.
- **Skills and Stunts:** Empathy (Body Language, Lie Whisperer), Lore (Rhetoric; one or two Specialties), Rapport (Demagogue).

- **Community Builds:** Specific school; temple of Unthar; another temple of the Great Compact associated with your specialist subjects.
- **Relationships:** Your school; favourite student or nemesis; other teachers; temple associated with your specialist subjects.
- **Equipment:** A grimoire, register of students, teacher's gown and headwear, a crook, a wax tablet, paper or blackboard and chalk, a blackboard wiper / makeshift missile weapon.

Voice of the Hsun

You love languages, and especially the bizarre “tongue” of the Hsun Spider Folk, to which you’ve devoted your life. Privy to secret conversations, professional etiquette forbids you from discussing—oh, all right then, if you insist...

- **Permission:** May be an initiate of Jestis Speaker (aspect of Vareltias, God of Communication).
- **Essence:** *Expert Linguist Floating in Alien Thoughts; Trusted Confidante of the Spider Folk.*
- **Shadow:** *A Passion That Dare Not Speak Its Name; I Talk But My Words Aren't My Own.*
- **Pillar:** The Guilds 3.
- **Skills and Stunts:** Communication* (Communicate Without Error, Mindspeech), Learned Language (Literacy), Notice (Body Language, Eye For Detail, Keen Hearing).
- **Community Builds:** Temple of Vareltias (Jestis Speaker).
- **Relationships:** Your Hsun Speaker, Hsun clients, Temple of Vareltias; as many zoans as you can manage.
- **Equipment:** A personalised lexicon, ink and quills.

Scientist

You're a practitioner of a Lost Science: Chemick, Mechanisms, Hsuntach, or Pereprae (see the *Chronicler's Guide*). You don't understand the principles, but have rote-learned procedures handed down over millennia to create, repair, and maintain these extraordinary artefacts. Innovation and experimentation are frowned upon, even forbidden (these things explode, you know...), but if you

could only understand why and how it all works, you could unlock a world of power...

Permissions: You have know-how, background, permission, and facilities to repair, maintain, and sometimes create **artefacts**. See the builds below for exactly what you can do. You may also acquire certain artefacts directly from your temple or guild in exchange for your starting **treasure** (page 49).

Artificer

Artificers are the priesthood of the Temple of Khosht the Builder, Architect of the Gods. If you want to deal with the ancient **pereprae**, you must be a member of that temple; only they have the archives, equipment, and safeguards to properly handle these dangerous devices.

- **Permissions:** You can maintain and repair **pereprae**. You can learn to repair, maintain, and create **mechanisms**, and create **chemick** if you wish. You may acquire certain artefacts using your starting treasure (see below).
- **Essence:** *Obsessively Distracted Tinkerer; Technological Supremacist.*
- **Shadow:** *Artefacts Before People; I'm Not Responsible For What You Do With My Creations.*
- **Pillar:** The Priesthood 4.
- **Skills and Stunts:** Devise (Always Making Useful Things, Constructs), Lore (Specialist: Mechanisms Lore, Pereprae Lore), Resources; Realisation of the Will* (Actualise, Reveal Artefact); you may learn Mechanism stunts and capabilities and Chemick stunts and capabilities (see the *Chronicler's Guide*).
- **Community Builds:** Temple of Khosht.
- **Relationships:** Temple of Khosht, fellow artificers, contacts in the Temple of Unthar and Guild of Respectful Explorers of Antiquity.
- **Equipment:** Silver- and sand-coloured robes, set of compasses (holy symbol); artificer's tools; you may spend your starting treasure to acquire Common or Uncommon mechanisms and pereprae directly from the temple of Khosht.

Chemicker

You're an expert in Chemick (see the *Chronicler's Guide*), the brewing of unguents, potions, philtres, and other substances. Most chemickers don't have a power skill, but you might be one of the rare students who've developed one as you've progressed along the Chemicker's path of self-knowledge.

- **Permissions:** You may be affiliated with the temple of Qal, or with Khosht or Konfu. You begin play with a workspace, a basic stock of ingredients, recipes, and chemick preparations (see below).
- **Essence:** *Reckless Researcher of the Rebuilt Laboratory of Qal; Master Chemicker of the Grimoires of Khosht.*
- **Shadow:** *Easily Side-Tracked By Ingredients; This Probably Won't Explode.*
- **Pillar:** The Guilds 3.

- **Skills and Stunts:** Devise (Combine Essence, Distil Essence), Lore (Specialist: Chemick Lore), Realisation of the Will* (Actualise; *from Khosht: Reveal Artefact*), Unification of Opposites* (Force Brew; *from Qal: Unravel Chemick*), Wisdom* (*from Konfu: Awaken Property, The Silent Song*).
- **Community Builds:** Temples of Khosht, Konfu, or Qal.
- **Relationships:** The Chemickers' Guild; Temple of Khosht, Konfu, or Qal; local supplier of chemick ingredients; assistant or mentor.
- **Equipment:** Chemick Lab workspace and 18 doses of Common, Uncommon, and Rare ingredients you can define as you need to create new chemick. You begin play knowing a number of chemick recipes equal to your total Lore skill points (see Table 6-1: How Many Chemick Recipes Do I Know?). You've already prepared doses of each, which you carry with you; when you first use one, make a retroactive Chemick roll to see if the brew was prepared correctly, and how many doses you actually have. You can find full rules for Chemick in the *Chronicler's Guide*.

TABLE 6-1: HOW MANY CHEMICK RECIPES DO I KNOW?

LORE SKILL LEVEL	NUMBER OF RECIPES KNOWN
1	1
2	3
3	6
4	10



Hsuntach Scientist

You're probably one of the Spider Folk, or maybe a rare non-Hsun studying the deeper arts of **hsuntach**. Unlike hsuntach tinkers, your emphasis is on creating and repairing hsuntach items. See page 350 for more.

- **Prerequisites:** You must know the Zoic Science and Zoiculture stunts (page 350).
- **Permissions:** You may be an initiate of Khosht the Builder. You may create hsuntach items at the difficulties given in the Artefacts chapter in the *Chronicler's Guide*, as long as you know the requisite **capabilities**. You automatically know design plans for all Common items of hsuntach, and may start play with any such item as long as you pay the AP cost.
- **Essence:** *Inventor of the Senator Zoan; More Hsun Than the Hsun.*
- **Shadow:** *The Body Is a Machine; I Must Commune With My Hsuntach Garden!*
- **Pillar:** The Guilds 3.
- **Skills and Stunts:** Devise (Zoic Science), Lore (Zoic Lore); Shaping, Zoiculture; Hsuntach Capabilities (eg Absorb Energy, Enhanced Sense, Heightened Capability, Integral Armour, Integral Weaponry, Smaller Size, Symbiosis); possibly Realisation of the Will*.
- **Community Builds:** The Hsuntach Guild; possibly the Temple of Khosht.
- **Relationships:** Hsuntach Guild, Temple of Khosht, Voice of the Hsun, local client base, local dignitary who owes you a favour.
- **Equipment:** Zoic Garden workspace; one or more zoans or other hsuntach items of your own if you pay the AP cost.

Hsuntach Tinker

Like a rustic hsuntach scientist with an emphasis on repairing and creating alagin items like weapons and armour. In a city, you specialise in producing raw alagin for craftsfolk and armourers; in rural areas, you're a jack-of-all-trades, producing and repairing alagin but also making weapons, armour, and even simple zoans (page 248). Tinkers are usually Spider Folk.

- **Prerequisites:** You must know the Zoic Science stunt.
- **Permissions:** You may create alagin and create and repair alagin items. You may learn hsuntach capabilities, and produce simple **zoans** if you know the required capabilities.
- **Essence:** *Alagin Crafter Extraordinaire; Everybody's Favourite Spider Folk.*
- **Shadow:** *I Shoulda Been a Hsuntach Scientist! Protect My Vat With Your Life!*
- **Pillar:** The Guilds 3.
- **Skills and Stunts:** Devise (Armourer, Zoic Science), Lore (Zoic Lore); may acquire hsuntach capabilities, but they aren't necessary for hsuntach repair or creating alagin items.
- **Community Builds:** The Hsuntach Guild.
- **Relationships:** The Hsuntach Guild; other tinkers; regular clients on your route.
- **Equipment:** Zoic Vat workspace; one or more items of hsuntach if you pay the AP cost.



Mechanician

You're skilled at repairing, maintaining, and creating devices, gadgets, traps, constructs, and **mechanisms**, technological items which work using clockwork, muscle power, and other simple power sources.

- **Permissions:** You may be a member of the Ward of Devisers of the Respectful Explorers of Antiquity (page 113), or affiliated with the temple of Khosht the Builder. You may learn mechanism **capabilities**, and may repair, maintain, and create known mechanisms, and even invent new ones if you know the requisite capabilities. You automatically know **design plans** for Common and Uncommon mechanisms (see the *Chronicler's Guide*).
- **Essence:** *Engineer of the Aquatic Assassins; Natural Tinkerer.*
- **Shadow:** *Distracted and Scatterbrained; Mechanistic World View.*
- **Pillar:** The Guilds 3.
- **Skills and Stunts:** Devise (Always Making Useful Things, Booby Traps, Constructs, Gadgeteer), Lore (Specialist: Mechanisms Lore), Resources; you may learn Mechanism capabilities (costing 2AP each, eg: Control (Mechanism), Integral Armour 1-6, Integral Weaponry 1-6, Mechanical Senses (Hearing, Sense Vibration, Vision), Power Source (Chemick, Clockwork, Manatine Energy), Project (Acid, Fire, Flamelance Energy), Special Attack (Mighty Bash), Stress Increase 1-6).
- **Community Builds:** The Ward of Devisers of the Respectful Explorers of Antiquity (see page 113); the Temple of Khosht.
- **Relationships:** The Respectful Explorers of Antiquity; Escorts, Devisers, or Thaumaturgists of the Respectful Explorers; customers purchasing your wares or paying for your repair and maintenance skills; an assistant or mentor; the Temple of Khosht.
- **Equipment:** Mechanician's Workshop; Mechanician's Toolkit; you may spend your starting treasure on any Common or Uncommon mechanisms, probably representing an item or items you've made yourself.

Slave

You're a slave, owned by a master or mistress or forced to labour on the Empire's slave plantations, or in even worse jobs. Your life may be terrible or not too bad; you may be unskilled or have valuable abilities.

Most slaves in the Springtide Civilisations are born into it, and Ankadar's Protocols of Slavery give them basic protections. But some are enslaved as punishment, and the fire of freedom burns bright in them, however much the overseers try to stamp it out. The most troublesome end up in the Oloriad arenas.

Labourer

You're a menial labourer, digging ditches, building walls, and toiling on public works. It's brutal and exhausting, but you've survived this far and are tough and strong. You don't belong to any Sakari House.

- **Essence:** *Massively Muscled Manhandler; As Strong As You're Stubborn.*
- **Shadow:** *Brawn Not Brains; Riddled With Hidden Injuries.*
- **Pillar:** No Pillar skill.
- **Skills and Stunts:** Devise (Constructs), Physique (Herculean Strength, Tough As Nails), Willpower (Sleep When You're Dead).
- **Community Builds:** None specific.
- **Relationships:** Your fellow slaves; your overseer; your best buddy; a sympathetic freeman or woman.
- **Equipment:** You own nothing, not even the rags you wear. Your work implements could be used as weapons.

Renegade

Some people have always opposed slavery, but in these strange days at the end of the Fifth Cycliad, something new has appeared—an anti-slavery movement, which you’ve been drawn to with a passion. You’re a slave, but you know it’s wrong and are determined to do something about it, even if that means you might end your days on an impaling stake. Maybe you’ve absconded and are living in secret, maybe you’re agitating for revolt among your fellow slaves; either way, you terrify the daylighters out of conservative folk.

- **Essence:** *Give Me Freedom Or Give Me Death! Rebel With a Cause.*
- **Shadow:** *Hatred of Authority; Wanted In Every Town and Village.*
- **Pillar:** No Pillar skill.
- **Skills and Stunts:** Provoke (Pressgang, Provoke Violence, Spread Hate Speech), Rapport (Demagogue, Join Us!, Minions), Stealth (Face in the Crowd).
- **Community Builds:** None specific; maybe an illicit affiliation with the Temple of Pline, Qal, or Madiz, or a secret society.
- **Relationships:** Local bandits or outlaws, smallholders, sympathetic members of the temple of Pline, Qal, or Madiz.
- **Equipment:** Serviceable melee and ranged weapons you’ve made yourself or stolen; scabbled together leather armour; simple tools and camping gear.

Scribe

You do the writing and admin for a rich household, and are valued for your literacy and bureaucratic competence. Your life isn’t bad, despite your lack of freedom, and you’re considered to be part of the house of your owners.

- **Essence:** *Paper-Pusher For the Umbran Coil; Renowned For Your Coruscating Cursive.*
- **Shadow:** *Magnificently Myopic; Drowning In Paperwork.*
- **Pillar:** No Pillar skill.
- **Skills and Stunts:** Devise (Artist), Lore (Bureaucracy), Notice (Keen Hearing), Rapport (Best Foot Forward).

- **Community Builds:** None specific; perhaps an affiliation with the temple of Ankadar, Emeldias, or Unthar.
- **Relationships:** Your owners; sympathetic members of the local Chelumetariat and temples; a mentor or assistant.
- **Equipment:** Decent robes marked with the insignia of your owners’ house; quills and paper.

Servant

You’re a body servant to a free person with one of the appropriate occupations given here—maybe a priest, sorcerer, official, etc. You handle their everyday needs, run errands, and so on. You’re considered part of your owner’s house.

- **Essence:** *Body Servant of Shaktakal the Sorcerer; Maidservant to the Earth Lady of Elikan.*
- **Shadow:** *Agonisingly Self-Effacing; Not a Self-Starter.*
- **Pillar:** No Pillar skill.
- **Skills and Stunts:** Deceive (Fast Talk, Instant Cover, Lies Upon Lies), Empathy (Nose For Trouble), Willpower (Sleep When You’re Dead!).
- **Community Builds:** None specific, although you may have learned something from your owner’s occupation build.
- **Relationships:** Your owner—create this person in some detail, using another occupation here, as it can inform your own skills and available builds.
- **Equipment:** Decent clothing with the insignia of your owner’s house; everyday equipment for caring for your owner.

Tutor

You're literate, patient, affable, tasked with the education of your owners' children, who you might like or who may plague your life. You're respected for your knowledge, and your life isn't too bad. You're considered part of your owners' house.

- **Essence:** *Slave Tutor of Lord Tanalus's Heir; Unexpectedly Erudite.*
- **Shadow:** *Sharp-tongued and Irascible; Plagued By Ankle-Biters.*
- **Pillar:** No Pillar skill.
- **Skills and Stunts:** Empathy (Lie Whisperer, Like an Open Book), Lore (Specialist: one subject), Willpower (Fortress of the Will).
- **Community Builds:** None specific, although you may have learned something from your owner's occupation build.
- **Relationships:** Your owners; their children; a scholar who mentors you in your chosen field.
- **Equipment:** Decent clothing with the insignia of your owners' house.

Sorcerer

There are many types of sorcerer. Maybe you're a pious researcher of temple libraries, a sorcery school student, or a solitary practitioner plumbing the secrets of summonings, necromancy, and the strange worlds Beyond the Veil.

Permissions: You may acquire power skills and learn sorcery (page 323), beginning with a number of spells equal to your skill level in **each** power skill you know. IE, if you have the Change By Fire power skill at level 4, you know 4 Change By Fire spells to begin with; if you also know Destruction at level 2, you know 2 Destruction spells as well.

You may have learned to speak and read High Tlanik, in which many sorcerous texts are written; or even the forbidden Ancient Nayaraki, as perilous grimoires often use it, including the Banned Sorceries of Blasted Demos. See page 151.

Apprentice

You study sorcery under an adept, *mystikai*, or temple sorcerer (pick one) of great skill. You have room and board, and access to formidable grimoires, in return for which you undertake errands, menial tasks, and sometimes hazardous missions searching for artefacts, ingredients, and rare spells.

- **Essence:** *Student of the Emerald Sorceress; Survivor of the Apprentice Massacres.*
- **Shadow:** *Insatiable Curiosity; Dazzlingly Unfounded Confidence.*
- **Pillar:** The Guilds 3.
- **Skills and Stunts:** Lore (Rituals, Shield of Reason, Specialist: Demon Lore), Willpower (Sleep When You're Dead); power skills and sorcery spells based on your mentor's knowledge.
- **Community Builds:** The sorcery community your mentor belongs to.
- **Relationships:** Your mentor—create them with some care, as your access to grimoires and community builds depends on them; perhaps other apprentices, your family, or a best friend; a demon or elemental summoned and bound for you by your mentor.
- **Equipment:** Simple robes emblazoned with sigils; a basic grimoire with your spells; a staff and / or concealable weapon.

Adept Sorcerer

You're an expert in a sorcery school (page 342). You may be involved in intrigue, bureaucracy, and administration, or may be holed up concentrating on the true business of magic. You have no time for divine magic's vagaries: the precision of sorcery is your passion.

- **Essence:** *Incantatrix of the Towers of Typhon; Master of the Thirteenth Veil Grimoire.*
- **Shadow:** *Dreams of Dweomer Dominion; No Victory Without Risk.*
- **Pillar:** The Guilds 3.
- **Skills and Stunts:** Contacts (The Weight of Reputation), Lore (I've Read About That, Rituals, Shield of Reason, Specialist: Demon Lore), Willpower (Fortress of the Will, Indomitable); power skills and sorcery spells appropriate to your sorcery school.

- **Community Builds:** A sorcery school (see the Elementalists of Zor example sorcery school on page 342).
- **Relationships:** Your sorcery school; one or more apprentices; a fellow or mentor in your sorcery school; your personal nemesis; one or more bound demons or elementals.
- **Equipment:** Robes with your sorcery school insignia and symbols of your power skills, spellcasting paraphernalia, grimoire.

Free Sorcerer (Mystikai)

You're a mistrusted *mystikai*, an outcast belonging to no school, temple or other organisation. You eke out a life of obsessive sorcerous study, a dabbling eccentric at best, a sinister necromancer at worst. You have great freedom to choose spells, but you've acquired every one at great effort or expense. Many *mystikai* mount expeditions on the merest rumour of an ancient grimoire, or resort to more questionable measures.

- **Essence:** *Lone Voyager Beyond the Veil; Necromancer of the Garapur Night Vault.*
- **Shadow:** *Doomed Dabbler in Domination; Nightmares of Pitchforks and Torches.*
- **Pillar:** The Guilds 3.
- **Skills and Stunts:** Lore (I've Read About That, Rituals, Shield of Reason, Specialist: Demon Lore), Resources (Money Talks), Willpower (Indomitable); whatever power skills and beginning sorcery skills you want.
- **Community Builds:** Usually none.
- **Relationships:** One or more bound demons or elementals; the Respectful Explorers of Antiquity (for rumours of sorcerous caches); a fellow *mystikai* you sometimes trade spells with; your sorcerous nemesis; an apprentice.
- **Equipment:** Your grimoire; a tome of sorcerous lore you're studying; a hidey-hole like a tower, cave, or lonely manse; a quarterstaff and / or concealable weapon; sorcerer's robes; a disguise for venturing outdoors; sorcerous and summoning paraphernalia.

Temple Sorcerer

You're no priest, but have an arrangement with one or more temples to study in their libraries, in exchange for money or services. You're interested in summonings and bindings of temple demons, and the knowledge they impart.

Note that you don't simply hop from temple to temple learning their choicest spells; gaining the trust of a temple's High Priest costs you dearly, and you're **very** cautious about betraying their trust, as you know that can have fatal consequences.

- **Prerequisite:** You must spend 8AP on a **relationship** aspect (page 248) with a temple to be permitted to learn its spells.
- **Permissions:** You may learn the sorceries of a temple you have a relationship with, and may have learned other spells from your mentor.
- **Essence:** *Beloved of the Book-Bearers of Belom; Mistress of the Growth Grimoires.*
- **Shadow:** *Blackmail Hostage; May My Split Loyalties Never Come To Light!*
- **Pillar:** The Guilds 3.



- **Skills and Stunts:** Contacts (Insider), Lore (Bureaucracy, Rituals, Specialist: Demon Lore, Sacred Lore), Rapport (Best Foot Forward, Carousing), Willpower (Indomitable); power skills as desired, plus some general sorcery spells; sorcery spells specific to the temple you've a relationship with.
- **Community Builds:** None specific.
- **Relationships:** A temple, one or more bound demons or elementals; an apprentice or mentor; your nemesis; dignitaries at the temple you've a relationship with.
- **Equipment:** Sorcerous paraphernalia; sorcerous robes emblazoned with sigils and symbols of the temple you've a relationship with; a grimoire containing your spells; a quarterstaff and / or concealable weapon.

Wilderlander

You're a skilled individual outside Autocracy society, in the wilderness, living off your knowledge of the natural world. You've little truck with civilised ways, only visiting to trade or negotiate for essentials. You belong to a Sakari house, but probably haven't seen your relatives for years.

Hunter

Although the Autocracy relies on agriculture, hunters are everywhere. Aristocrats give themselves over to this passion, and the trappers of Amadorad, Ellib, and the Autocracy's wilder marches rely on hunting for their livelihoods. Some are initiates of Entos. Which are you?

- **Essence:** *Ride Out, The Moon Is Full! The Wild Hunter of Sheal.*
- **Shadow:** *Obsessed With the White Chantha; Taciturn Loner.*
- **Pillar:** The Peasantry 1.
- **Skills and Stunts:** Ranged Combat (Critical Shot, Long Shot), Stealth (Ambush, Vanish), Survival (Tracking); Animality*.

- **Community Builds:** Temple of Entos.
- **Relationships:** A totem animal or animal friend, riding beast, fellow hunter, herbalist, or healer; local worshipper of Entos; a friend in town who'll help you out.
- **Equipment:** A bow and melee weapon, leather armour, a wooden round shield or buckler; camping gear; a cave, cavern, bivouac, or tent in the wild; practical clothing in natural colours.

Ranger

You're a solitary individual, close to nature, cut off from society because you're on a mission. You love the natural world and know it's your duty to protect it; dark powers threaten the forests, the overhunted heaths need their warden. You're self-sufficient, and probably hard to get on with.

Rangers include the Wildermen of Ellib, the Tung Mai Jegesh, Walkers of the Kesh, the Dedaloi Dark Claw, and the Cambriother Nomads of the Khadisi.

- **Permissions:** You may be an initiate of Entos or, rarely, Belorias, Emeldias, or Eshtikar.
- **Essence:** *Protector of the Ambara Eastmarch; Warden of the Crystal River Cataracts.*
- **Shadow:** *Hunted By the Dedaloi Eaters; Skinwalker Dreamings.*
- **Pillar:** The Peasantry 1.
- **Skills and Stunts:** Devise (Always Making Useful Things), Physique (Tough As Nails), Ranged Combat (Critical Shot, Long Shot), Survival (Environment Expert, Know Direction, Tracking); possible power skill.
- **Community Builds:** Secret society; possibly a temple.
- **Relationships:** Local communities and tribes, wise men and wise women, secret society.
- **Equipment:** Camping gear, traps and snares, bow, hide or leather armour.



Aspects & Fate Points

Aspects make your game sing. An aspect is a short descriptive phrase that says something important about a character, location, situation, or even campaign. We identify aspects by capitalising and italicising them: *Convenient Code of Honour*, *The World Is Too Old To Change*, and *None Shall Pass!* are all aspects.

TYPES OF ASPECT

Aspects belong not just to characters, but to other parts of the game. We've mentioned **invoking** aspects on page 28, and we'll talk more about using and creating them below. First here's an overview of the types of aspect you can find.

Character Aspects

Chapter 3: The Basics and **Chapter 4: Creating Your Character** show how every PC has six **character aspects**: Origin, Essence, Shadow, Blood, Doom, and Companion. NPCs, including monsters, may have some or all of these, too.

You can **invoke** or **compel** your character aspects whenever you want to. To invoke another character's aspects, you must know the aspect first, either because it's obvious, or because you've made a roll to discover it—something called a **manoeuvre** (page 200).

Location Aspects

Places in the game can have aspects just like characters. They're usually permanent features like *Thick With Undergrowth* and *Dank With Mist* for a jungle, or *A Teeming Press of Jostling Bodies* for an Imperial city street. Many are obvious, existing implicitly in the Chronicler's descriptions or players' minds: a location aspect needn't always be explicitly mentioned for it to be invoked. You can improvise location aspects when you need them—they're a great way to interact with your environment!

.....

Let's look more at the example from page 33. The PCs have been reconnoitring a burning homestead spotted on their journey across Mornan Plain after leaving Korudav. It's night, and Zimiri wants to approach the fire without being spotted, but has only rolled a result of 1 with their Stealth 1 skill. Chris asks if they can invoke an implied Deeper Darkness and Shadow aspect for the night-time conditions, especially since anyone close to the fire will have their night-vision compromised by the flames. Sarah agrees; Chris pays a fate point, and Zimiri's Stealth roll result rises from 1 to 3.

.....

Some location aspects aren't as obvious, and require the players to do something before they can be used. A Notice or Investigate roll may reveal a location aspect that was hidden from view, for example; and, as you'll see below (page 126), revealing an aspect like this gives you a free invoke!

.....

Zimiri approaches the burning homestead without being spotted. Sarah describes fiery timbers and leaping shadows engulfing the top floor. But Zimiri's intuition is tingling, and Chris asks for a Burglary roll to discover any hazards or dangers before entering.

*This kind of Burglary roll is called a **manoeuvre** (page 200). Chris rolls +0 on the Cosmic Fate dice, and adds Burglary 4 (Zimiri's peak skill) for a result of 4—success! Sarah reveals the roof of the house has been weakened by the fire—any violent activity inside could bring the whole thing crashing down! Zimiri has discovered a hidden aspect—We're Walking Into a Deathtrap!—and, because it was discovered on a manoeuvre, their first invoke of it is free!*

.....

See "Using a Declaration To Create a Location Aspect" (page 134) for another cool way of creating a location aspect.

Situation Aspects

Situation aspects are like location aspects, but are more temporary, affecting the current "situation" the PCs are in. They're easily affected by character actions. A great example of a situation aspect is *The House Is On Fire!* implied by the example above; others include *This is a Tense Stand-Off...* or *A Howling Gale and Pouring Rain*. Situation aspects last just as long as it makes sense for them to do so, and usually no longer than the current **scene** (page 26).

Here's the cool thing about situation aspects: **you can create them using a manoeuvre**. You get to name the aspect yourself (you need your Chronicler to agree), and if you succeed you get the first invoke for free, just like when discovering hidden aspects. You can even let someone else invoke an aspect (even for free!) that you've created, "giving" them the invoke, as long as you can describe how that works.

.....

Fast-forwarding the burning farmhouse scene above, the rest of the party has approached and Sarah has described shapes moving around the ground floor—entropics! Vitas asks if Varnas could use his Radium Pistol to shoot some essential timbers in the burning roof to bring the whole thing down on the monsters inside. Sarah likes the idea, and says it's a manoeuvre using the Devise skill (page 146). Vitas rolls for Varnas and succeeds! The timbers break and the roof collapses, sending fiery shards into the ground floor and creating a Fiery Inferno situation aspect.

.....

Consequences

As mentioned on page 24, **consequences** are what you suffer if you take too much **stress**. They're equivalent to wounds, mental trauma, social stigma, or even grievous financial harm—and they're aspects. That's right: when a character is injured, the consequence they suffer is an aspect which anyone can invoke to cause trouble for the injured character—and the first invoke after the consequence has been inflicted is free!

.....

An entropic comes hurtling out of the collapsed burning house, shrieking and on fire! It's taken a Horrendous Burns consequence from pushing through the flames (more on that later—see page 240), and Varnas wants to shoot it with his Radium Pistol. He succeeds with 3 shifts, and freely invokes the Horrendous Burns consequence for a +2 bonus, pushing his shifts up to 5—enough for a special success (page 197)!

.....

Condition Aspects

Sometimes a character is affected by a temporary **condition** that doesn't constitute a wound or other consequence. These circumstances can be positive or negative, and are represented by **condition aspects**. They're generally temporary, but, depending on their nature, may or may not disappear on their own. Magic is a notable source of condition aspects, making a target *Drowsy*, *Clumsy*, *Shining With Incandescent Light*, *Recklessly Foolhardy*, and so on; but they can also be things like positional advantages or disadvantages in conflicts, like *Knocked Down*, *Stunned*, *Taken Aback*, *Got the Drop On My Foe*, etc. Your Chronicler will tell you if you need to take an action to remove a condition aspect, or if it'll disappear on its own (usually after one **scene**).

.....

Zabet Karja and Ukhta the Fire Warrior rush into the fray as the entropics exit the burning farmhouse. As a Magigi, Ukhta is resistant to heat, but Zabet has no such advantage. Before they charge, Ukhta takes a manoeuvre action to use the "Withstand Ice and Fire" cantrip of her Change By Fire power skill (page 282) to boost Zabet's fire resistance, making a dice roll to place a Fireproof! condition aspect on her. Zabet can invoke that once for free if threatened by the flames.

.....

Relationship Aspects

When you buy a relationship for your character (page 44), you can spend 8AP to give it an aspect. Even though the aspect belongs to the target of the relationship, in game terms it's yours, on your character sheet, and you can invoke (and even compel) it however you want as long as you can narrate how. This can give your character access to some cool abilities.

.....

Zabet has a relationship with Blue-Claw, her chelother steed. She's going to charge into the fray on chelother-back, using its Trample special ability (page 245) and invoking its Sudden Excess of Violence aspect to boost her headlong attack.

.....

Game Aspects

Remember how every PC has the same two **game aspects** on their character sheet? Well, they're usable like any other character aspect. They're like glorified location aspects, except that they affect the whole game world rather than just your current location.

.....

Zabet's charge is stymied by a mysterious explosion from the burning farmhouse. Her chelother is momentarily panicked, and she must make a Ride roll to keep control. Sharma, Zabet's player, rolls poorly, but argues that because The World Is Going To Hell In A Handcart! (one of the two game aspects of the Autocrator's Hand example campaign), her chelother has seen worse and can keep it together even under hard combat conditions. Sarah agrees; Sharma pays a fate point, and re-rolls the dice...

.....

Aspects Describe Reality!

Though the examples in this chapter describe using fate points and manoeuvres to get game mechanical advantages from aspects, it's important to emphasise that, in narrative terms, aspects **are always true**. In other words, they describe reality, and that reality applies even if you don't explicitly make use of the aspect in play.

Let's say your character has a Breathes Underwater aspect. If he needs to spend time underwater longer than he could hold his breath, it's fine, as he can breathe underwater—the aspect says so. You don't need to do anything to take advantage of what an aspect says, when all you're doing is narrating a scene or describing what your character does.

Sometimes you try something uncertain or risky, and your Chronicler asks you for a dice roll. That's when you can make use of the aspect rules mechanics.

How ASPECTS WORK

We introduced the basic aspects rules on page 28, but let's look more closely. First, let's summarise: when you've rolled the dice and aren't happy with the result, and an aspect has a bearing on your current situation, you can explicitly take advantage of it to try and improve things. To do so, you **invoke** that aspect. The simplest way to invoke an aspect is to pay a **fate point** (page 28) and describe how that aspect improves your situation. You need your Chronicler to agree your description makes sense, but otherwise the invoke takes effect.

Let's continue the battle on Mornan Plain. Varnas the Artificer is advancing behind Zabet and Ukhta, and rolls badly (a -3!) on his Ranged Combat roll to shoot his Radium Pistol at a hideous chimera that leaps out of the burning farmhouse. Varnas's player, Vitas, wants to invoke Varnas's Hivernium Must Be Defended At All Costs! aspect to improve his situation.

Sarah asks Vitas to explain how this aspect helps Varnas. Vitas says "Well, this is clearly a time when I'm desperately trying to defend Hivernium against attack! I'm going to dig deep and try and dispatch this foul creature!"

Sarah agrees the invoke makes sense, and Vitas subtracts 1 from Varnas's 5 fate points. He now has 4 fate points. We'll see how the invoke helps Varnas below.

You've seen in the examples above that sometimes you can invoke an aspect without spending a fate point, and that the most common way to get such a **free invoke** is by making a **manoeuvre action** (page 200). You make a dice roll to **create** an aspect or to make use of an existing aspect, and the act of succeeding in the manoeuvre "powers" that aspect for a single free invoke. If you roll a **special success** on the manoeuvre, you get **two** free invokes of the aspect.

Zimiri Tegus sees Varnas is in trouble. Chris, Zimiri's player, suggests Zimiri try and distract the chimera by charging at it, yelling and screaming, hoping the distraction will give Varnas a better shot.

Sarah says this is a Provoke manoeuvre, and Chris rolls for Zimiri's Provoke 1 skill. The roll succeeds, and creates a Confused and Distracted aspect which the chimera is now suffering from. Because Zimiri created that aspect using a manoeuvre, they get a free invoke of it. In this case, Zimiri can give that free invoke to Varnas, meaning the latter gets an extra chance to make good his bad dice roll.

So, what actually happens when you succeed in invoking an aspect? There are three benefits you can choose from:

Invoking an Aspect for a Bonus

You can invoke an aspect to get a +2 bonus on a dice roll you've just made. You can even pass this bonus to another character for a dice roll they've just made, as long as you can explain how you're helping.

Varnas could use his invoke of Hivernium Must Be Defended At All Costs! to improve his Ranged Combat roll from -3 to -1. Unfortunately that's still a poor result, but if he'd rolled, say, +1 instead of -3, this would be an option.

Invoking an Aspect for a Re-Roll

You can invoke an aspect to re-roll a dice roll you've just made.

This is an option for Varnas's invoke of Hivernium Must Be Defended At All Costs!—the -3 result would be difficult to make good, but rolling the dice again might do the trick.

It's also an option for Zimiri's manoeuvre creating the Confused and Distracted aspect on the chimera. Chris could explain that the chimera is so confused and distracted by Zimiri's crazy approach (successful Provoke roll) that it can't properly dodge Varnas's Radium Pistol attack. This would be enough to justify Vitas's re-rolling Varnas's Ranged Combat attack.

This use of an invoke could have been a good choice for Zimiri's Confused and Distracted aspect, if Varnas had succeeded in his attack roll. The chimera would have had to roll to dodge Varnas's attack, and Chris could have described how Zimiri's action to confuse and distract the chimera increased the dodge roll difficulty by +2. Unfortunately, as Varnas's attack roll failed, this isn't an option.

But here's a different example: let's say that Ukhta the Magigi Fire Warrior had used her Change By Fire power skill to cause a fire on the ground before the chimera to suddenly flare up. That could be a manoeuvre creating a Roaring Fire obstacle; if the chimera had wanted to attack Varnas, then it would first have to spend a round to make a difficulty 2 roll to cross the fiery obstacle. That's a good delaying tactic, and the Chronicler might even decide a failure would mean the chimera taking damage from the fire!

Invoking an Aspect for an Effect

On a successful invoke, you can explain how an aspect causes someone a problem, or even how an aspect performs or otherwise triggers an action in its own right. An aspect used like this either makes its own dice roll with a +2 bonus, or provides a difficulty 2 **obstacle** (page 201) which other characters must overcome, or adds +2 to an existing difficulty. Often, it's the Chronicler who invokes an aspect this way, but not always—you can do it to make your opponent's life more difficult, too.



Narrating With Ellipsis...

Invoking an aspect can cause a reversal of fortunes for your character—what looks like failure can become success. You can prepare for this by describing your character's actions appropriately; instead of saying, when you roll a -3 on your attack roll, "I fire my Radium Pistol at the entropic and... oh no! my shot misses!", you can hedge your bets by leaving the conclusion of your sentence hanging with an ellipsis ("..."). So, you could say "I fire my Radium Pistol at the entropic, which lurches to one side, and my aim feels wide...!" That gives you chance to incorporate the results of your invoke before tying up the description. If your invoke succeeds, you could conclude with "... and I grab the grip with my other hand, remembering Hivernium must be protected at all costs, grit my teeth, pull the trigger, and... success! The radium bullet slams into the beast!"

It's a small trick, but it can tie the invoke mechanic into your descriptions so that dice rolls never feel totally final until the invoke dust has settled!

.....
For example, Varnas has the shadow aspect Dark Rumours Stain the Aura of This Friend To All People. The night before the battle above, he's trying to get information from some frightened locals in a roadside inn on Mornan Plain. He's about to make a Rapport roll, when Sarah, the Chronicler, proposes compelling his aspect to say that a ripple of panic passes through the assembled villagers as they mutter and stare at Varnas in horror, before chasing him into the street!

But why would you ever do this? Well, it might seem counterintuitive to choose to get your character into trouble, but it's part of what's known as the **fate point economy** (page 133) and the main way of regaining fate points in play. You want compels—they're good for wild and action-packed games!

The Chronicler isn't the only person who can compel your character; you can do it yourself, and other players can, too! You can also compel NPCs. It costs a player a fate point to compel another character.

Compelling your character has the following benefits:

- You, as a player, get to influence the direction your game takes, with your character in the spotlight. Maybe you've some cool ideas for what to do next?
- Whenever you, the Chronicler, or anyone else compels your character, you receive a fate point, earning back the points you've spent and letting you make more invokes.

The Chronicler might sometimes see moments when your aspect might lead to a fun, exciting, or even amusing compel, and hold up a fate point to see if you want to accept it. You never **have** to accept a compel, but don't automatically say no—after all, you **want** your character to have action-packed adventures, and you want those fate points! Play to your character's weaknesses as well as your strengths!

Compelling an Aspect

When an aspect looks like it might cause you trouble, you can deliberately choose to let your character get into that trouble. This is called **compelling an aspect**. Compelling is a special kind of invoke—one that causes you problems!



How To Compel an Aspect

To compel an aspect, you must first explain why that aspect is relevant, then come up with a proposed complication which the aspect causes. You can negotiate the details with the Chronicler, or with the player affected by the compel, who then has two choices:

- To accept the compel, and receive a fate point;
- To pay a fate point and prevent the compel from happening.

Once you accept a compel, it happens **regardless of what anyone does**. You can't accept the complication proposed by a compel, receive the fate point, and then try to mitigate or avoid it; **accepting a compel means the complication happens**.

If you pay a fate point to prevent the compel, you must describe how you avoid it. This can be as simple as saying the complication never happened; but often it's interesting to describe what your character did to avoid the complication. Again, you don't have to roll to avoid the complication; paying the fate point does all that for you.

Types of Compel

Sometimes it can be tricky to come up with cool compels on the fly. To help, we've identified two types of compel, together with "mad-lib"-style wordings to structure them. Here's how to use them.

Decision-Based Compels

A decision-based compel results from a decision a character made because of an aspect they have. Fill in the gaps on the following mad-lib to create a typical decision-based compel:

You have _____ aspect in _____ situation, so it makes sense that you'd decide to _____. This goes wrong when _____ happens.

.....
For example, Varnas has the aspect Hivernium Must Be Defended At All Costs!, so it makes sense that he'd decide to loudly call for a crusade when rumours break of entropic marauders on Mornan Plain during an audience with the Autarch. This goes wrong when the Autarch takes his call as an offer to volunteer, and orders Varnas to lead an expedition immediately!

Note that the complication here isn't the decision the character makes, but **the way things go wrong afterwards**. This is crucial: it's the complication that occurs **as a result** of the character's decision that makes it a compel. Often the decision part is obvious, and probably something the player might have been thinking of anyway.

Hands Off My Character!

A player is always in charge of his character and what he says and does. The Chronicler, or another player, can propose a decision-based compel, but if the player doesn't want to accept it, the Chronicler shouldn't force the issue by demanding a fate point. Instead negotiate the compel until you find a wording the player's happy with, and derive the complication from that instead. If you can't find a mutually acceptable compel, drop it.

Event-Based Compels

An event-based compel happens to a character when his surroundings unilaterally respond to an aspect in a way that complicates his life, regardless of what he does. Fill in the gaps on the following mad-lib to create a typical event-based compel:

You're in _____ situation and have _____ aspect, so it makes sense that, unfortunately, _____ would happen to you. Curse your fate!

.....
Ukhta the Fire Warrior is travelling among the Che Kwa and has the Expert Legionnaire Smith of Dafur aspect, so it makes sense that, unfortunately, the tribal shamaness of Kichanda would recognise you as a hated Dafuri and have you taken captive. Curse your fate!

Once again, it's the complication that results **after the event** that's the point of the compel—Ukhta being taken captive. Event-based compels are a great tool for the Chronicler, and a cool way to have the world react to the PCs in unexpected ways that tie into their aspects. They're great for players, too, who get rewarded simply for being there.

Compelling With Location, Situation, and Game Aspects

You can use location, situation, and game aspects for compels. As they're external to characters, they're almost always event-based compels.

.....
For example, because the jungle is Thick With Undergrowth and Dank With Mist, it makes sense that, unfortunately, you won't be able to force your way through to Laigas before the Dedaloi Eaters find you. Curse your fate!

Retroactive Compels

Sometimes your character fulfils the conditions of a compel without one being formally on the table—and without any fate points having changed hands. You've been roleplaying your aspects and got into all kinds of trouble, or maybe another player has done the same.

Shout out! The Chronicler can treat this like a compel after the fact, and retroactively award a fate point. Remember—you want to keep those fate points moving!

Tips on Creating Aspects

So far we've simply characterised aspects as short phrases that say something cool and interesting about your character, or a location, situation, etc. Here are some guidelines for maximising the usefulness of aspects in play.

Bold and Confident Wording

Aim for a strong, clear wording for your aspects. It's tempting to be vague—maybe you think it'll be more useful that way—but avoid it like the plague. Instead, fill your aspect with crunchy detail, commit to what you want to say, and don't waffle. It doesn't matter if your aspect contains details that feel inappropriate when you invoke it; those details can provide you with narrative gold.

For example, *Boastful Strong-Man* might feel like a very applicable aspect, but it's pretty bland. It says little about your character, the nature of your strength, and so on. But an aspect like *I Can Beat Any Of You At Madizi Boulder Throwing!* suddenly takes on a lot more colour; we now know the character is competitive, maybe constantly challenging his fellow PCs to prove themselves, and it introduces an element into the game world—maybe that the temple of Madiz hosts games where people prove their strength by throwing boulders! Is that universal in the Autocracy, or some local thing? Does the character have a relationship with the Madizi, or the games, or the place where they're held? There's so much more to this aspect than the original weak version—yet it can be invoked for the same thing, as well as a whole lot more!

Double-Edged Aspects

Remember, you don't just want to spend fate points—you want to get them back, too, by being compelled and even compelling yourself. Think of ways an aspect can cause problems for your character, as well as being advantageous, and build that into the wording.

For example, you could have *Lover Of Magical Grimoires* as an aspect. Not bad—you can think of a number of invokes right away. But compels? Not so obvious. Now, reword the aspect to *My Head's Always Buried In a Magical Grimoire*, and the negative sides become obvious—maybe your character gets distracted, misses things, seems ignorant or dismissive of others because, well, he's too busy reading! You can still invoke for the same advantages, but you can see a clear way to win back fate points via compels, too.

Say More Than One Thing

It's tempting to focus on just one thing when you phrase an aspect. That's okay, but you only have a limited number of aspects to play with, and you want to invoke (and compel) them as much as possible. Also, often you'll be asked to incorporate elements into your aspects, such as a nod to the fact that you can tap into magical power (page 271), certain personality traits because you have a power skill affecting your character (page 279), references to communities so you can use their builds (page 46), and so on. So, it's worth taking time to refine their wordings.

Let's take *Survivor of the Garapur Earthquake* as an aspect. It's pretty good—it contains narrative setting and history elements, suggests you're good at survival, implies there may be other survivors. But it could carry more weight. If we re-word it to *Destructive Survivor of the Garapur Earthquake Sorcery School Massacre*, then we have a lot more detail: why is your character destructive? Does it represent the influence of your Destruction power skill on your personality? Is there an Earthquake Sorcery School in Garapur? Or was the sorcery school affected by an earthquake? Did the massacre happen in the school, or was it caused by the school? These are all cool questions which can be addressed in play, and which can also be used to justify the aspect acting as a **sorcerous power aspect** (page 268), **and** as a **community aspect** giving you access to a sorcery school community build (page 46).

Include Story Hooks

We've seen elements of this in *I Can Beat Any Of You At Madizi Boulder Throwing!* and *Destructive Survivor of the Garapur Earthquake Sorcery School Massacre*. It's a key part of the Fate Core System that players can help create the world their characters inhabit, adding cool setting details which can be explored in play. You can go crazy with this—invent names of people, events, rare, valuable, or important items, places you can visit, and so on. Your Chronicler might advise tweaks—this isn't a license to contradict elements she considers important to your game—but a good Chronicler will take note of the cool stuff you've mentioned in your aspects to create drama in your game.

Sarah's intrigued by the Garapur Earthquake Sorcery School Massacre mentioned in Ukhta's shadow aspect. She introduces a grimoire penned by a mysterious sorcery school obsessed with the earthquake magics of the god Madiz as a treasure found in the Mornan Plain farmhouse where the party have been fighting entropics, and decides one of the monsters looks like a sorcerer who was transformed into a ravaging entropic thrall. Ukhta is no sorcerer (as far as we know), but how will she react to the sorcerer-thrall and the grimoire? Will she recognise either? Is there a secret past here worth exploring?

Vary the Feel

The fact that your six character aspects are different in nature—your Origin, Essence, Shadow, Blood, Doom, and Companion—means they'll naturally tend to be distinct. But you can also vary the circumstances in which you can invoke them by ensuring they don't all follow the same format. For example, if **all** your aspects mention historical events and not places, or your attitude to another character rather than your physical characteristics, you'll be restricted in your invokes. Try and keep your aspects varied in feel and applicability.

Ukhta has Destructive Survivor of the Garapur Earthquake Sorcery School Massacre, so she's good for invokes to emphasise her destructive nature and possible latent sorcerous power, and also there's a cool mystery around the sorcery school. When she comes to create her Origin aspect, she decides to mention a special item instead: Bearer of the Magma Anvil of Ur-Craal. This gives her a physical item she's carrying relevant to her skills as a smith, and a possible person or place—Ur-Craal. She can invoke this under different circumstances from her Shadow aspect.

SPECIAL CASES

So far we've looked at the core uses of aspects. Here are some cool additional things you can do with them.

Boosts

Boosts are ephemeral aspects, like situation aspects but lasting only for one, single invoke—things like *Superior Combat Position*, *Momentarily Off-Balance*, *Flat-Footed*, *Quick Flash of Light*. You gain a boost when you don't succeed well enough in a manoeuvre to create a full aspect (see page 200), or sometimes as an additional bonus when you succeed at an action in a special way (page 199). Invoking a boost doesn't cost a fate point.

Critical Aspects

If you roll a **critical success** (page 197) on a manoeuvre (page 200) to create an aspect, then the resulting aspect is a **critical aspect**—a kind of “super-aspect” that’s more powerful than normal. Give it a suitably super-sounding name, and whenever you invoke it, you get a massive +4 bonus instead of +2. Removing a critical aspect is a difficulty 4 manoeuvre rather than difficulty 2, although usually it still just lasts for a scene.

.....
Let's say Zimiri had critcalled when rolling Provoke to distract the entropic earlier. In that case, instead of Distracted and Confused, the condition aspect would be a critical aspect like Panicked and Terrorised, and any invokes would provide a huge +4 bonus instead of +2.

Perfect Invokes

Sometimes an aspect is **exactly** right for your situation. Maybe you're *The Finest Lutist in Old Hespín*, and you're in a Hespín alehouse before an expectant audience with your favourite lute in your hand. At such a time, you can make a **perfect invoke** of that aspect. Spend a fate point, but don't roll the dice: instead, you gain an automatic result equal to your skill score +3.

Aspects That Are Already Obstacles

Invoking for effect (page 127) can *create* **obstacles** (page 201), or turn existing aspects into obstacles. But some aspects are obstacles already, and automatically make certain of your actions (or someone else's actions) harder by +2, or provide a difficulty of 2 which you must spend an action to overcome before you can do what you were intending to do. No roll to invoke an obstacle needs to be made, nor does a fate point need to be spent for its difficulty 2 or +2 modifier to apply; you simply have to take an action to overcome it. Your Chronicler has final say. Examples of obstacles include aspects like *Crates and Barrels Scattered Over the Floor*, *Blazing Fire*, etc.

Characters who want to specifically invoke an obstacle for another purpose must still pay a fate point or make an appropriate manoeuvre (page 200). For example, while a *Blazing Fire* obstacle might automatically require a difficulty 2 dice roll for an opponent on the other side to cross, if you want to take advantage of that fire to boost your chances of intimidating or scaring away that opponent, you need to specifically invoke it, making a manoeuvre or paying a fate point.

Note that if you use the Devise skill (page 146), or if you have a stunt, you can create a more powerful kind of obstacle called a **block** or **barrier** (page 201).

Invoking and Compelling Your Doom

There's one exception to the rules for invoking and compelling aspects: your **Doom** aspect, which describes the profound and mighty destiny which the universe has in store for you. Whenever your Doom is in play, it's a big deal.

When you invoke your Doom, you don't add +2, nor do you need to pay a fate point. Instead, you incur a **consequence** (page 13), and get a huge +4 bonus on your roll. **This may increase your total bonus beyond your bonus cap** (page 195). The consequence you incur is usually mental in nature, representing your inner anguish and turmoil, but it may be physical. It must remain on your character sheet for at least the whole of the next **scene** (page 26), even if **treated** (page 233). The invoke must be in keeping with your Doom—you'll often invoke your Doom at moments of great desperation!

.....
A final gaggle of entropics has cornered Zabet Karja on her chelother. She's already taken a minor consequence, Half-Blinded by Blood, and a moderate consequence, Gaping Shoulder Wound, and is terrified she may have been infected by the mutating Gift of Gumazhdu. Her friends are nowhere to be seen, and the leering chaos beasts circle, slavering madly. Zabet prepares herself for her last stand.

This is a perfect moment for her to invoke her Doom, We Stand To The Last Against The Entropic Horde! She rears her chelother, raises her broadsword above her head, and screams her Doom as she rides straight at the entropics, slashing from side to side. She incurs a severe consequence (the only consequence slot she has left), which she names Mindless With the Terror of Contagion, and adds +4 to the result of her attack dice roll, which may exceed her bonus cap.

Minutes later, the party drags Zabet's chelother to a halt as it emerges from the aftermath of the fiery farmhouse battle. Zabet is wounded, and screaming madly about the contagion she thinks she feels coursing through her veins. But is she correct?

The Chronicler may also have an NPC invoke your Doom, again for free. The NPC in question incurs an automatic consequence, and gets a +4 bonus on its roll.

.....
Ukhtha is retreating from the burning farmhouse, as a cloaked figure, its clothes rippling with mutations, steps into the light of the flames and reaches out to her, rasping "Will you flee from your lord's fiery embrace?"

Sarah is invoking Ukhtha's Doom, which is Let The World Exult in the Embrace of the Flame Lord, giving Rika (Ukhtha's player) a fate point and taking a huge +4 bonus on the sorcerer-thrall's attempt to grapple with the Magigi and potentially infect her with the Gift of Gumazhdu. Ukhtha is taken aback—the thrall has touched a nerve at the heart of her Doom, and the temptation to burn the creature with Dafur's flames is strong. The entropic takes a consequence as its robes catch fire (Sarah and Rika agree this is from Ukhtha's own Change By Fire power skill), but Ukhtha now has to resist a determined attack from the chaos mutant!

The Chronicler can propose a **compel** (see above) of your Doom, and you can even propose one yourself. You gain a +4 bonus for a single use in the current or next scene, and incur a compel of great magnitude related to your Doom. In this case, you don't incur a consequence: the nature of the compel itself is enough.

.....
The party is tending its wounds, listening to the flickering flames, thinking the battle is over, when a shuddering hulk raises itself from the embers, roaring with pain. A huge bull chimera, advancing on the party!

At this point, discretion would be the better part of valour. But Sarah holds up a fate point with a grin on her face, proposing a compel of Zabet's We Stand To the Last Against the Entropic Horde! Surely Zabet isn't going to shirk her Doom, cringe before her destiny? Surely she's going to run headlong into battle with this final beast, using the massive +4 bonus from this compel of her Doom. Sarah holds out the fate point, waiting...

THE FATE POINT ECONOMY

Fate points are a key disposable resource of *The Chronicles of Future Earth*—a "currency" you can spend and earn. You have a certain number of fate points shown on your character sheet which you can spend during play. Once you've spent all of them, they're gone, but you get them all back again the next time you play. On your character sheet, **Refresh** indicates your maximum number of fate points, and **Fate Points** indicates your current fate points remaining.

You already know about using fate points to invoke aspects. However, you can also spend a fate point to do the following:

- To **improvise a stunt**, which lets you make a single use of a stunt you don't have. See page 138.
- To make a **declaration**, describing a minor tweak to reality (see below).

As mentioned above, you can regain fate points during play by **compelling an aspect** (page 128). This can even let you accumulate more fate points than your Refresh; you get to keep these into your next session of play.

Paying a Fate Point to Make a Declaration

You can pay a fate point to describe how an aspect has caused a minor change in reality, or revealed a feature of reality you weren't previously aware of. That's right: this lets you, the player, take charge of the game's narration for a moment, to describe a small "something" that works to your advantage. You need your Chronicler to agree, but **declarations** can be powerful.

.....
If you have an Armed To The Teeth aspect, you can pay a fate point to declare you have a dagger stuck down your boot that you've never mentioned before...

Using a Declaration to Create a Location Aspect

Declarations can be useful in combination with location aspects. For example, you can declare a scene element which you can then invoke as a location aspect, similar to how you use a manoeuvre to create a situation aspect. The first invoke of such a location aspect is included in the declaration spend. The Chronicler has to agree the declaration is feasible.

.....
Before embarking on the mission of the Autocrator's Hand, Zimiri Tegus is in a bar-fight in Korudav. They're halfway up the stairs, looking for a way to launch themselves at the bar-room toughs lined up against them. Chris asks if there's a chandelier or any kind of chain lantern hanging from the ceiling they could swing on. Sarah hasn't described this, but doesn't mind either way, and smiles and shrugs.

Chris pays a fate point to declare there's a great wooden chandelier hanging on chains from the barroom ceiling, and Zimiri promptly launches into the air, swinging into the assembled toughs. Chris rolls for the attack, and adds a +2 bonus (at no extra cost) for the invoke of the new Great Wooden Chandelier location aspect they've just declared on the scene.

Chronicler Fate Points

The Chronicler has her own pool of fate points which she can spend on NPC actions and invokes of PC aspects by NPCs. This pool contains one fate point per PC in the scene, and regenerates at the start of every scene.

.....
In the battle of Mornan Plain scene, the entropics have cool aspects and abilities Sarah wants to use, and would also like them to invoke some of the PCs' aspects. As all five of the PCs are present in the scene, she has a pool of 5 fate points she can use for this purpose.

Note that this pool is specifically for invokes by the Chronicler's NPCs. The Chronicler can compel the PCs' aspects as much as she likes: the fate points they gain don't come from the Chronicler's pool.



The Metagaming Thing

Fantasy roleplaying is highly immersive, and some players don't like gaming without that immersion, preferring to play "through their character's eyes", avoiding things that require them to look at their character from outside.

*To dial up the immersiveness in **Fate Core** (and consequently dial down the meta), try the following:*

- *You can only compel another character or aspect if it's the direct result of your own character's words and actions.*
- *Always roleplay aspect invokes from your character's point of view—you have to describe how your actions, or words, or thoughts give you the benefit of an invoke.*
- *Remember that aspects are always true, even when you're not invoking them. If you're Hugely Strong, then describe yourself that way, even when you're not invoking the aspect.*
- *Conversely, remember that invoking an aspect is a way of ramming home that truth in rules terms. You get your re-roll or bonus not because you're Hugely Strong (you're that anyway...), but because you're squeezing out that extra bit of awesomeness to really make it count.*
- *View fate points as a measure of your character's awesomeness—his luck, inner chutzpah, heroic potential, ability to affect events just by being **him**.*
- *Don't declare a story detail unless you can justify it by your character's actions (ie, you're using a fate point instead of making a manoeuvre action). "Sure, I brought a healing kit!" is fine; "Hey, there's a great wooden chandelier in this room!" isn't. (Note that according to the normal rules as written the chandelier-thing is fine—this is just a suggestion if you want to dial down the metagaming aspect of fate points and invokes.)*

Let's (Not) Talk About Aspects

*Aspects are everywhere in **The Chronicles of Future Earth**. So much so, that often you don't have to refer to them explicitly at all. The word "aspect" is just a term to indicate you've created an in-game effect to which certain rules apply. Don't let this restrict your options: an aspect can do much more than just give you a +2 bonus or a re-roll.*

For example, when you cast a spell, the effect of that spell may be to create a wall of fire, accelerate someone to faster speeds than humanly possible, or give someone superhuman strength. When you describe these effects in play, go to town with those descriptions; but bear in mind that they're actually aspects, no matter how many words you use. You don't have to slap a label on the table if you don't want to—sometimes that can be distracting—but the fact that the result of a skill roll (even a magical one) is (even notionally) an aspect has the following consequences:

- *You can describe your actions and the effects of this spell as much as you like.*
- *If you want to gain some kind of bonus or other rules mechanical effect from the skill roll, you get **one** such bonus for free (or two on a special success); subsequent bonuses **either** cost you a fate point, or you need to spend an action to make the skill roll again.*
- *You can get a +2 bonus or re-roll a dice roll based on the effect.*
- *The effect may create an **obstacle** (page 201).*
- *The effect may create a **hazard** (page 237) with an appropriate +2 difficulty or skill, or a +4 on a critical success.*



Skills & Stunts

All characters have **skills**—broad areas of activity they're competent in. Skills include innate abilities like Physique and Willpower, knowledge-based expertise like Devise and Lore, trained competencies like Ranged Combat, and—for magic-using characters like priests and sorcerers—**power skills** like Turmoil and Change By Fire (see **Chapter 13: Magic**). Skills are the basis for the dice rolls which govern everything your character does in the game involving challenge and chance.

Every skill has a **level**, usually between 1 and 4, sometimes higher; the higher the level, the more skillful your character is. Your beginning skills are organised by level on a **skill pyramid** (page 42), indicating what your character is more or less proficient at. In *The Chronicles of Future Earth*, even beginning characters are pretty awesome; if you don't have a skill in this chapter on your character sheet, you can still make a dice roll with that skill as if you had it at level 0. You're that good!

THE FOUR ACTIONS

Skills are described in terms of four game actions you can do with them—**overcome**, **manoeuvre**, **attack**, and **defend**—and the contexts in which they're used. These actions are detailed in **Chapter 10: How To Do Things**, but to summarise:

☞ **Overcome:** Where you surmount a hindrance or challenge to succeed at a task.

☞ **Manoeuvre:** Where you modify your surroundings to put yourself in an advantageous position, by creating new aspects or discovering existing ones and invoking them for free.

☞ **Attack:** Where you harm someone in a conflict—physically, mentally, emotionally, socially, or financially.

☞ **Defend:** Where you stop someone harming you, getting past you, or creating an aspect to use against you.

Some skills also have special effects, like giving you more physical, mental, social or wealth stress boxes or even consequences.

What the four game actions mean in descriptive terms depends on the skill you're using. An attack action with the Ranged Combat skill might mean notching an arrow in a bow and loosing it at a foe, while an attack action with the Provoke skill might mean shouting at a foe or more subtly bullying them.

ABOUT STUNTS

Stunts are special things your character can do which change the way his skills work in limited ways. They can indicate special training, like Healer or Law Lore (stunts for the Lore skill); or personal talents, like Keen Hearing or Sense Danger (stunts for the Notice skill). Some stunts give you **relationships** (see **Chapter 11: Relationships**), representing sidekicks or an interest in a construct like a ship or castle (examples include Minions, a Rapport stunt, and Trader, a Resources stunt). This chapter describes the stunts associated with your character's non-magical skills.

Power Skills and Stunts

*There's one other type of skill (with associated stunts) which may be appropriate for your character: **power skills** (and their **power stunts**). These are magical abilities, and not every character has them; consequently, while every character is assumed to have skill level of 0 in every (non-power) skill listed in this chapter, even if that skill isn't on his character sheet, the same **is not true** for power skills; if a character doesn't explicitly have a power skill on his character sheet, he does not have access to that skill at any level, and may not take actions based on it in play.*

*If it's important, non-power skills are sometimes called **mundane skills** to differentiate them from power skills. Power skills and stunts are described separately in **Chapter 13: Magic**.*

While many characters share the same skills, stunts are more individual, a way of differentiating one character from another. You can even **invent stunts** based on the

guidelines below. We provide example stunts in every skill description, including many expressing facets of the *Chronicles of Future Earth* game world. The stunts below are generally available to all characters (although some may have **prerequisites**). However, some are only available to characters belonging to certain groups like legions, priesthoods, and even kindreds, what's known as a **permission**.

.....
As explained on page 43, Zabet Karja is a legionnaire of the Legion of Lord Regos, Indomitable. This gives her access to the Legionnaire occupation build and the community build for the Legion of Lord Regos (both on page 98), both of which provide special stunts. Zabet uses 4AP of her beginning stunt budget to buy the Indomitable Defence Fighting Style stunt from her Legion of Lord Regos community build, a stunt only available to legion members.
.....

You don't always have to use a stunt; just because Zabet has the Indomitable Defence Fighting Style stunt doesn't mean she can't also just use her Melee Combat skill to fight aggressively and ignore her defence!

Stunts and Refresh

As explained in **Chapter 7: Aspects and Fate Points**, taking a stunt reduces your character's Refresh by one. When you create a character, you get 20AP to spend on stunts; each stunt costs 4AP, so you could begin with up to 5 stunts. See page 44.

Other Types of Skill

*A defining principle of the **Fate Core System** is that **everything can be a character**. In **The Chronicles of Future Earth**, this includes communities like legions and temples and constructs like castles and ships, and many other things. Sometimes these entities use different skills from characters; for example, a legion community might have a Physical Combat skill, indicating how well it attacks and defends itself. You can find much more about communities and constructs and the skills they use in the **Chronicler's Guide**.*

Improvising Stunts

If needed, you can **improvise** (“borrow”) a **stunt** you don’t have on your character sheet by spending a fate point (see page 133). This lets you use that stunt for a single action. It’s important when using magic (page 268). You must have a skill level of at least 1 to improvise a mundane skill stunt; for temple power stunts and mystical stunts, you must also have a permission, like belonging to a specific occupation build (page 87).

CREATING STUNTS

You can pick ready-made stunts from the skill descriptions below or from examples throughout this book (sometimes you need a **permission**). If you can’t find a stunt to fit your need, you can create your own.

To do so, think about what you want the new stunt to do. Discuss it with the Chronicler; it’s possible that what you want is already provided by a legion, temple, organisation, or even non-human kindred, and the Chronicler may declare that only members of that community or kindred have the required **permission** to have a stunt doing that.

Assuming no such restriction exists, or if you have the required permission, here’s what a new stunt can do.

Add a New Action to a Skill

A stunt can add an action to a skill which it can’t normally do, for use in limited situations. The action can be one that’s already available to another skill, meaning one skill can substitute for another in limited circumstances, or it can be unique to the stunt.

.....
The Ambush stunt (page 167) lets you use your Stealth skill to make physical attacks, as long as your target isn’t aware of your presence.

Act at a Higher Skill Level for One Action

A stunt can let you act as if you had a higher skill level under limited circumstances. This can represent a specialisation, or a circumstantial bonus. The circumstance should be narrower than what’s normally allowed by the action, and should apply to a single action, or at most two, undertaken with the skill.

Usually this kind of stunt lets you act at a +2 skill level, or gives you 2 additional **shifts** (page 197) after the roll has succeeded (depending on the desired effect of the stunt). You can also use this kind of stunt to represent any effect worth 2 shifts as an additional benefit of succeeding at the skill roll, like a difficulty of 2, the equivalent of a 2-point hit, a mild consequence, or an aspect that’s difficulty 2 to remove.

.....
The Fast Talk stunt (page 144) lets you act as if your Deceive skill was +2 levels higher when you try to breeze past someone by talking at them rapidly and confusing them.

Add or Remove a Hero or Doom Die

A stunt can add or remove a Hero Die or a Doom Die (page 193) under specific circumstances, increasing or reducing the probability of a critical success or critical failure. Often stunts like this have a prerequisite, as they can be powerful.

The stunt can apply to your own action, or, in certain circumstances, that of another character like an opponent.

.....
The Critical Shot stunt (page 162) gives you an extra Hero Die on your Ranged Combat attack and manoeuvre skill rolls when you’re trying to hit small targets or vital areas.

Create a Rules Exception

You can use a stunt to make a single exception to the rules under narrow circumstances. **Chapter 10: How To Do Things** deals with the circumstances under which skills can be normally used; stunts can break those rules, letting your character stretch what's possible. The only restriction is that a stunt can't change the core rules for aspects and fate points (see **Chapter 7: Aspects and Fate Points**).

.....
The Riposte stunt (page 156) lets you inflict a 2-stress hit back on your attacker whenever you roll a special success (page 197) on a Melee Combat defend action, instead of gaining a boost.

Other rules exceptions include (but aren't limited to):

- A stunt can increase the critical range on the Cosmic Fate Dice under limited circumstances by 1 point, meaning a critical failure may happen on a roll of 1 or 2, or a critical success on a roll of 5 or 6.
- A stunt can mandate a special effect on a **combined skill roll** (page 194). This is similar to using one skill in place of another, but this time you need to bring both skills into play at the same time.
- A stunt can allow a manoeuvre with a skill other than Devise (or a power skill) to create a **block** or **barrier** (page 201) instead of an obstacle.
- A stunt can mandate a specific extraordinary effect on a special success, or on a critical success or failure.

.....
The Better Than New stunt (page 146) lets you improve an item you're repairing if you roll a special success, resulting in a new aspect with a free invoke.

Stunts—Special But Not Overwhelming

The circumstances for using a stunt should be narrower than the normal use of the skill it modifies. A stunt should be limited enough that it feels special when you use it, but not so limited that you can hardly use it at all. If a stunt replaces **all** a skill's actions, it's not limited enough. Here are a couple of ideas:

- Restrict the stunt to a specific action or couple of actions (ie only manoeuvre actions, or attack and defend rolls).
- Limit the situations when the stunt can be used (only when you're using weapons of Ladabran steel, only when you're in a temple or on a ship, etc).

Try and use both of the above—restrict the stunt to a specific action under limited circumstances. If you think that might be too narrow, read through the suggested contexts for the skill the stunt belongs to: if you can see at least one context where your stunt is relevant, you're probably fine; if not, adjust the stunt slightly to make sure it can crop up.

You can also:

- Limit the stunt to only being used once in a certain period of game time, ie once per conflict, scene, or session.
- Require that the stunt cost a fate point to use.

Requiring a fate point to use a stunt is appropriate if the stunt is powerful, doesn't easily fit into any suggested restriction (for example, adding a new skill action or a bonus), or significantly affects conflicts (page 207).

.....
The Bypass Armour stunt (page 155) lets you pay a fate point whenever you roll a special success Melee Combat attack to bypass any armour your opponent is wearing.

Stunt Families

Sometimes you'll want more detail about a particular training or group of special abilities, for example to represent an occupation (like a priest), type of mystical power (like psionics), or even a fighting school. You can group related stunts together in a **stunt family**.

To do this, select one stunt as a "gateway stunt"—the introductory stunt that's the prerequisite for the other stunts in the family. Then create a group of stunts related to or deriving from the gateway stunt, either adding to its effects or branching out into discrete specialties. Here's how you can group them:

Stacked Stunts

The simplest stunt family contains stunts which are successively more effective.

- **If the previous stunt added an action**, narrow the new stunt's context further, and let it act at a +2 skill level in that new context. Follow the rules in "Act At a Higher Skill Level for One Action" above.
- **If the previous stunt let you act at a +2 skill level**, give an additional 2-shift effect to the same action.
- **If the previous stunt allowed a rules exception**, increase the exceptionality, if appropriate.

Your second stunt may end up effectively replacing the first. This is fine; view it as a single super-stunt costing 2 points of refresh.

.....
The Booby Traps stunt of the Devise skill (page 146) requires you to already have the Disarm Traps stunt. If you want to take the Gadgeteer stunt, you must already have Booby Traps.

Branched Stunts

A branched stunt relates to the original in theme or subject matter, but represents a new effect. If stacked stunts expand a stunt or skill vertically, branched stunts expand them horizontally.

If the gateway stunt added an action, a branched stunt might add another action, or provide an increased skill level to a different action, or create a rules exception. The effect isn't derived from the gateway stunt, but is complementary to it.



Friclefaren

This lets you highlight different elements of a skill, differentiating characters with the same skill by giving them different specialties.

.....
The Carousing stunt (page 162) is about being affable and gregarious. It has several branches: Drinks For All My Friends, which is about making lots of people like you; Honey-Tongued, which is about being an expert negotiator; and Join Us!, which is about recruiting a community to your cause.

THE SKILLS LIST

Here's the list of skills and example stunts. Many highlight features of the Springtide Civilisations, and each skill description includes game actions where you can use it. If you can't use a skill in a particular game action (Investigate isn't used to make attack actions, for example), that action isn't listed—although stunts may be used to provide exceptions.

TABLE 8-1: THE SKILLS LIST

Athletics	Pillar
Burglary	Pilot
Contacts	Provoke
Deceive	Ranged Combat
Devise	Rapport
Empathy	Resources
Investigate	Ride
Learned Language	Sailing
Lore	Stealth
Melee Combat	Survival
Notice	Unarmed Combat
Physique	Willpower

Cultural Context

The Springtide Civilisations are a mix of ancient, conservative, and often quite closed cultures, where people have done things in certain ways for millennia, and where new ideas only penetrate with difficulty. Your character belongs to a culture—usually to one or both of a homeland and kindred (page 51)—which determines your customs, beliefs, attitudes and behaviours.

What your character can do with a skill often depends on that cultural background. A Magigi Red Giant from the barrens of Hagya uses the Devise skill differently from an Artificer of Khosht.

*When you use a skill in a cultural context very different from your own, **and where the skill use is clearly culturally dependent**, you face an **obstacle** (likely a +2 difficulty) to your rolls. If the cultural context is so different as to be potentially dangerous to you, you must roll an extra Doom Die instead.*

.....
 Paco's character Six Tentacles Bearing Treasure ("Six" for short) is an Ing Shu trader priest from Formen Isle. If it's attempting to win over a Che Kwa chieftain in the Kadram Mountains, it'll face an obstacle to its Rapport roll. If it's trying the same with a P'Tek Maggot People delegation in the Kastalon Wastes, it'll probably incur an additional Doom Die instead. Try not to fumble!

Cultural context isn't necessarily a permanent feature. If you're a rustic Amadoradi barbarian, you may initially face an obstacle on your Rapport rolls with the Belorias priesthood in Kados. But, after a season or so, the Chronicler may let you roll Empathy or Lore to remove the obstacle, and interact with the priesthood at your normal skill level.

Athletics

Athletics represents your character's physical movement ability: running and jumping, climbing, tumbling, and other acrobatic feats. It doesn't automatically include swimming, other than splashing around doing doggy paddle to keep your head above water.

🏆 Overcome: Make physical movement actions like running, jumping, climbing; move between **zones** (page 209) in a conflict if you're facing opposition, including **obstacles**, **blocks**, and **barriers** (page 201), and other characters; participate in **contests** (page 203) or **challenges** (page 206) involving such activities, like chases and races.

🏆 Manoeuvre: Jump to higher ground, run faster than an opponent, or perform dazzling acrobatics to confuse or evade opponents.

🏆 Defend: Dodge attacks in physical combat against close hand-to-hand attacks or ranged attacks from missile weapons; avoid others making manoeuvres against you, and prevent others from moving past you if you're in a position to physically do so.

Stunts

♦ Acrobat

Act at a +2 skill level in Athletics overcome actions to make impressive acrobatic moves like tumbling, rope swings, balancing on tightropes or narrow ledges.

♦ Charge!

Requires Athletics 2 or better

Make an Athletics roll to rush a non-adjacent target **and** attack them with an unarmed or melee attack in the same action. The target must be 2 **zones** (page 209) away. You keep any weapon-related bonuses. You may only charge if your movement is unrestricted by any aspect, obstacle, barrier, block, or character.

♦ Climber

Act at a +2 skill level in Athletics overcome actions to perform expert climbs. You have climbing gear.

♦ Dazing Counter

On a special success with an Athletics defend action against an opponent's Unarmed Combat or Melee Combat attack, you automatically counter with a nerve punch or stunning blow. Your opponent incurs a *Dazed* condition aspect with a free invoke instead of you gaining just a boost (page 202).

♦ Leaper

Act at a +2 skill level in Athletics overcome and manoeuvre actions to perform high or long jumps.

♦ Sprinter

In a conflict, move two zones for free in a single round instead of one, provided there are no restrictions to your movement.

♦ Swimmer

You're a powerful swimmer and can do a lot more than just doggy paddle. Use Athletics for movement actions in aquatic environments.

Burglary

This "thiefly" skill lets you steal things, pick pockets and locks, break and enter, cover your tracks, and so on. You can use it to case a joint and figure out a place's defences, including likely locations of guards, traps, and alarms. It doesn't replace Investigate, which you use to find things, but it's often complementary.

🏆 Overcome: Steal things and infiltrate places, pick locks, find a way around a trap you've discovered with Investigate, cut someone's purse or pick their pockets, and cover your tracks afterwards.

🏆 Manoeuvre: Case a joint or identify protective measures in an area—where guards and traps might be, chokepoints or blindspots, and any vulnerabilities for breaking and entering. Examine places which have already been broken into to understand how it was done, and analyse evidence left behind, either in plain sight or which you've discovered with Investigate.

Stunts

♦ *Always a Way Out*

Act at a +2 skill level in Burglary manoeuvres to escape from a location.

♦ *Breaking & Entering*

Act at a +2 skill level in Burglary manoeuvres to break into a secure location.

♦ *Casing*

Act at a +2 skill level in Burglary manoeuvres to examine a location, either visually or using maps, descriptions, etc, to make a plan for breaking and entering or a similar mission.

♦ *Sleight of Hand*

Use Burglary instead of Deceive when doing sleight of hand to fool someone or distract their attention when palming coins, passing someone a note, or causing someone to look at the wrong place, person, or object.

♦ *Thieves' Network*

Use Burglary in place of Contacts when on thieflly or underworld business.

Contacts

Contacts is the skill of carousing, knowing and getting to know people, making social connections and networks. On your home turf, it's the people you already know; on new turf, it's your ability to find the right people to talk to, know what's going on, and analyse how local society operates.

🛡️ Overcome: Overcome obstacles relating to finding someone; whether by hoofing it around the neighbourhood, carousing in bars, or identifying the right local fishwife or beggar to talk to, you track people down or otherwise get access to them.

🗺️ Manoeuvre: Know the right person to talk to for something you need, including creating story details on the fly, like "My local legion contacts tell me that *Shaper Katcho* is the best Hsun Tinker in the whole of *Sapedra*—we need to find him". Create situation aspects representing the "word on the street" about individuals,

objects, or locations, based on what your contacts tell you. This is more reputation than fact, like *Murderous Smuggler of Stolen Mindstones* or *Trader Prince of Supreme Integrity*; whether the target lives up to it is irrelevant—people often have misleading reputations. Use your contacts network to plant or get information.

🛡️ Defend: Defend against people creating social aspects against you, as long as you describe how your contacts network helps you. Prevent people from using Contacts or Deceive to drop out of sight, "hit the mattresses", or otherwise go off-grid. Interfere with Investigate attempts to find you.

Stunts

♦ *Ear To The Ground*

Use Contacts instead of Notice for initiative in places where you have an operating contacts network—you get a tip-off that an attack is coming. You can also use this to get the heads-up that something big is going down on your turf.

♦ *Insider*

Understand and navigate bureaucracies and communities because you know people on the inside who can help you. Use Contacts instead of the Lore skill's Bureaucracy stunt (page 153) for overcome or manoeuvre actions related to getting inside assistance.

♦ *Rumourmonger*

Act at a +2 skill level in Contacts manoeuvres to plant positive or negative rumours about a person, place, or object.

♦ *Spread the Word*

Use Contacts to make Assimilate manoeuvre actions when targeting part of a community as a sub-community (see the *Chronicler's Guide*). You incur the usual scale penalties (page 236) for interacting with the target community.

♦ *The Weight of Reputation*

Requires an appropriate aspect

Use Contacts instead of Provoke in manoeuvres relating to the fear generated by the sinister reputation you've cultivated for yourself and your shady associates.

Deceive

Deceive is the skill of lying to and misdirecting people. It lets you hide your true thoughts and emotions, causing the person interacting with you to have a false opinion of you and/or what you're saying.

🎭 **Overcome:** Bluff your way past someone or give a false impression. For minor NPCs this is an overcome roll, but for PCs or major NPCs it requires a **contest** (page 203); the target opposes with Empathy. Winning could justify placing a condition aspect on your target, if buying into your lie helps you in a future scene. Decide if a disguise is effective (whether on yourself or someone else); you need time and the appropriate gear. Do small tricks of prestidigitation and misdirection.

🎭 **Manoeuvre:** Create momentary distractions, cover stories, or false impressions; feint in a fist fight, putting an opponent *Off Balance* and setting you up for an attack. Do the "What's over there?" trick to give you a *Head Start* when you run away. Establish an *Important Temple Dignitary* cover story for when you're visiting a shrine in an outlying village. Trick someone into revealing an aspect or other information.

🛡️ **Defend:** Defend against attempts to discern your true motives using Empathy, or throw off Investigate attempts with false information.

Stunts

♦ Acting

Act at a +2 skill level in Deceive overcome actions to convince people you're a specific person.

♦ Cool Customer

Act at a +2 skill level in Deceive manoeuvres to bluff an opponent.

♦ Disguise

Use Deceive to create a quick disguise out of materials to hand in a matter of moments. If you have proper disguise materials and sufficient time—say, *Half an Hour* or so—you act at a +2 skill level when you do so.

♦ Fast Talk

Act at a +2 skill level in Deceive overcome actions to breeze past someone. You bewilder them into temporary inactivity by talking at them rapidly.

♦ Hey! What's That?

Requires Fast Talk

Act at a +2 skill level in Deceive manoeuvres to momentarily distract someone, as long as the distraction involves saying something.

♦ Instant Cover

Requires Fast Talk

Act at a +2 skill level in a Deceive manoeuvre to invent an instant cover story, completely on the fly. If you subsequently make any Deceive overcome actions in public, you automatically have a situation aspect representing that cover story which you can invoke for the rest of the scene; the first invoke is free.

♦ Lies Upon Lies

Act at a +2 skill level in Deceive manoeuvres against a target that has already believed one of your lies this session.

♦ Mind Games

Use Deceive to make mental attack actions, as long as you can make a clever lie part of the attack.

♦ One Person, Many Faces

Whenever you meet someone new, you can spend a fate point to declare you've met them before under a different name and identity. Create a situation aspect representing that identity, and use Deceive instead of Rapport when interacting with that person.

Social Skills and Other Characters

Many social skills let you change another character's emotional state, or make them accept some fact in the story (like believing one of your lies).

A successful social skill use does **not** allow you to force another character to act against his nature or how the player controlling the character sees him. Another player whose character is affected by one of your skills may describe how their character responds. They can't negate your victory, but they can choose what it looks like.

This means you may successfully *Provoke* a character by screaming at him, intending to scare him into hesitation. But if the player controlling that character doesn't imagine him reacting that way, you should work out an alternative—maybe you make him so angry that he's unbalanced by his rage, or maybe you embarrass him in public. You still create your aspect, but your target's player retains control of their character.



Devise

Devise represents your practical ability to build, break, and fix stuff. It's used when repairing and creating artisanal and mechanical objects, including items of **equipment** (page 172) and **artefacts** (page 363), but stunts let you extend this to include larger-scale items like ships and castles, known as **constructs** (see the *Chronicler's Guide*). The object must be fashioned by you. Devise isn't a knowledge skill, but the ability to put that knowledge into practice. It automatically gives you the tools needed for basic uses of the skill, and stunts and other permissions can give you access to **workspaces** (page 147).

🛠️ **Overcome:** Create, maintain, repair, and even destroy simple artisanal objects and mechanical devices, including **mechanisms** (page 365) and weapons and armour (page 174), assuming you've the time and tools you need. Devise actions are often part of more complex situations, making it a popular skill for **challenges** (page 206). For example, if you're just fixing a broken cartwheel while travelling, neither success nor failure is interesting—you should just succeed and move on. But if you're trying to repair a crossbow while a ravaging entropic is closing on your position...

🔧 **Manoeuvre:** Work on creating or modifying an object, creating useful aspects like *Rugged Construction* or *Alagin-Plated*, or a vulnerability you can exploit, including quick and dirty sabotage efforts like *Sawn-Through Axle* or *Loosened Armour Strap*. You can jury-rig devices, for example rigging a *Makeshift Pulley* to get yourself up the outside of a tower. You can spend a scene to create a **block** or **barrier** (page 201).

🔪 **Attack:** You won't usually use Devise for attack actions, unless you're in a conflict specifically about using devices (perhaps involving catapults, cranes, deadweights...). Usually, weapons you create with Devise are used with other skills—someone who makes a bow still needs Ranged Combat to attack with it.

🛡️ **Defend:** As with attack actions, you won't usually use Devise to defend, unless you're somehow using it to control a mechanism or other device that you block an attack with.

Stunts

♦ *Always Making Useful Things*

You don't have to spend a fate point to **declare** (page 134) you've the proper tools for a job, even in extreme situations (like being imprisoned and separated from all your stuff).

♦ *Armourer*

You're a trained armourer, acting at a +2 Devise skill level to create and repair *alagin* weapons and armour (page 174), providing you've access to materials and can spend the required time. You have access to an *Armoury Workshop*.

♦ *Artist*

You may create artworks; each time you take this stunt, choose a type—painting, sculpture, music, writing, etc. Act at a +2 Devise skill level to create such artworks; the shifts generated indicate their value in an appropriate marketplace. You've access to an artist's *Atelier* workspace.

♦ *Better Than New*

On a special success overcome action to repair an item, give it a new equipment aspect (page 172) with a free invoke, reflecting the improvements you've made, instead of a boost.

♦ *Booby Traps*

Requires Disarm Traps

Act at a +2 skill level in Devise actions to create traps and similar mechanisms, including resetting traps you've disarmed. This lets you use Devise to make attack or manoeuvre actions against opponents: make your roll when setting the trap; the victim must try to defend against this at the moment the trap is tripped. If the victim had no idea the trap was there, they roll at skill level 0 or have only a straight 0 result, at the Chronicler's discretion. Weapons like blades, spears, crossbows, etc, incorporated into your trap use their stress increase (page 178) as normal. You have access to a *Mechanician's Workshop* (page 147).

♦ *Combine Essence*

Requires Distil Essence

Used in **chemick**, the mystical science combining chemistry, herbalism, and alchemy. You can imbue a potion, etc, with multiple property aspects from more than one ingredient, at a difficulty of 2 per property aspect. (See the *Chronicler's Guide* for more on chemick.)

◆ Constructs

Use Devise to repair and create **constructs** (page 248). You may only work on constructs with an artefact type you're already competent with, or general equipment and mechanisms by default.

◆ Disarm Traps

Act at a +2 skill level in Devise actions to disarm a sophisticated trap you've already identified, rendering it permanently harmless. Without this stunt you're limited to disarming things like simple snares and tripwires.

◆ Distil Essence

Lets you imbue a chemick preparation with a single property aspect from an ingredient at a difficulty of 2. You have access to a *Chemick Lab* workspace. (See the *Chronicler's Guide* for more on chemick.)

◆ Gadgeteer

Requires Always Making Useful Things, Booby Traps

Act at a +2 skill level in Devise actions to create or repair gadgets, including **mechanisms** (page 365) and traps. You have access to a *Mechanician's Workshop*.

◆ Master Armourer

Requires Armourer

You're a master armourer, probably quite sought after. Roll an extra Hero Die on Devise rolls to make and repair alagin weapons and armour. You can also make and repair Ladabran steel weapons and armour (page 179).

◆ Specialist

You have the specialist knowledge to create and repair specific classes of device or item, including glassblowing, smelting, smithing, clockmaking, etc; pick one when you choose this stunt, and act at a +2 skill level in Devise actions to repair or create such items. Without this stunt you may attempt to make basic items of the specialist type, but nothing noteworthy or complex. For example, you must be a Glassblowing Specialist to make the casings for Radium Bullets, as well as being an Armourer. (Note that the Kesh don't need Glassblowing for this purpose—it's automatically included in the **cultural context** (page 141) of their Armourer stunt.)

◆ Zoic Science

Create and especially repair **hsuntach** (page 364), the mysterious living technology of the Hsun Spider Folk (page 76), including repairing damaged alagin weapons and armour, and creating simple **zoans** (page 248). Non-Hsun may learn this stunt, but require a permission like *Friend of the Spider Folk* or *Apprenticed to a Hsun Tinker*. You have access to a *Zoic Vat* workspace.

Workspaces

*Workspaces and workshops give you advantages when you're undertaking Devise actions. You can find out much more about using them in the **Chronicler's Guide**.*

Empathy

Empathy lets you assess another person's mood and emotions by observing and interacting with them. It's usually restricted to your own kindred; Empathy rolls on different *jeniri* kindreds face a +2 difficulty, and a +4 difficulty on different *esteri*, although your Chronicler may disallow some attempts outright if you're totally unfamiliar with them. Sometimes your cultural background may allow you to read other kindreds without difficulty increases—see "The Springtide Civilisations and Cultural Context" on page 141.

Empathy is also used to help people recover from mental consequences; kindred penalties apply here, too. It's also a key skill for some **mysticism** disciplines (page 345).

🌀 **Overcome:** Detect a change in someone's attitude or intent. With a period of peace and quiet (usually at least *An Hour*) you can help someone recover from mental stress and mild mental consequences (page 235).

🌀 **Manoeuvre:** Read a target's emotional state, assessing existing aspects and creating new ones, as long as you have interpersonal contact, including gauging psychological weaknesses to use in mental attacks. If the target knows you're trying to read them, they can defend with Deceive or Rapport.

🌀 **Defend:** Defend against Deceive, seeing through lies to someone's true intent, and against others performing social or mental manoeuvres against you.

Stunts

◆ *Esteri Empathy*

Requires Jeniri Empathy

You're experienced with one *esteri* kindred (page 76), and can use Empathy on them with no difficulty increase, including treating mental consequences. If you want to use Empathy on other *esteri* kindreds in this way, you must take this stunt for each separate kindred; mark them on your character sheet as "Hsun Empathy", "Ing Shu Empathy", and so on.

◆ *Jeniri Empathy*

You're experienced with *jeniri* kindreds (page 64) in general, and can use Empathy on any and all *jeniri* kindreds at no increase in difficulty, including treating mental consequences.

◆ *Lie Whisperer*

Act at a +2 skill level in Empathy actions to detect lies, whether aimed at you or someone else. This bonus stacks with Like An Open Book.

◆ *Like An Open Book*

Act at a +2 skill level in Empathy manoeuvres to assess someone's emotional or mental state, including whether they're lying, purely by watching them. You don't have to interact with them, but must observe them interacting with *someone*. You can do this at distance, as long as you can see detail like facial ticks and physical gestures. This stunt stacks with Lie Whisperer.

◆ *Nose For Trouble*

Use Empathy instead of Notice to determine initiative in a conflict, as long as you've observed or spoken to those involved for a few minutes during the same scene.

◆ *Soul Healer*

Requires Succour

Use Empathy for treatment rolls of any consequence representing mental damage, regardless of the cause.

◆ *Succour*

Act as a +2 skill level in Empathy treatment rolls of mental stress and mild consequences representing mental damage.

Investigate

Investigate lets you find stuff out, discovering hidden things, deliberately scrutinising objects, places, and information, searching for anything unusual, or particular pieces of information or specific objects or clues. Includes searching a room, a scene, riffling through a book or scroll looking for a reference, eavesdropping, keeping a lookout, researching, carefully examining a passageway, doorway, or chest for traps.

🕵️ **Overcome:** Discover information that's difficult to uncover; analyse a room or scene where a significant event has taken place for clues, search a ship's hold for contraband or stowaways, examine a featureless corridor for hidden panels or secret doors.

🕵️ **Manoeuvre:** Find out almost anything about any person, location, or object, as long as you take the time, creating aspects representing anything your character could reasonably unearth, including: eavesdropping on a conversation, checking if a rumour is true, shadowing someone, riffling through the many scrolls in a temple library looking for a particular detail.

Stunts

◆ *Eavesdropper*

Discover or create one additional aspect on any Investigate manoeuvre to eavesdrop on a conversation. You don't get an extra free invoke, but may choose which of the two aspects to apply your free invoke to.

◆ *Lie To Me*

Use Investigate instead of Empathy to defend against Deceive. What others discover through gut feeling and intuition, you learn through careful observation of body languages and minute changes in expression.

◆ *The Power of Deduction*

Once per scene, spend a fate point on an Investigate roll to discover or create one aspect per shift on the scene or person you're observing. You only receive one free invoke from this roll.

◆ *Trapster*

Act at a +2 skill level in Investigate actions to find traps when you're specifically searching for them, whether they're natural, mechanical, or even magical. On a special success, you can work out how to circumvent the trap; on a critical success, you can even disarm it. On a fumble, of course, you trip the trap!

Learned Language

This skill represents a single non-native language you've learned to speak and understand. Using a learned language doesn't always require a skill roll; your skill level indicates roughly how well you can understand and be understood.

- **Skill level 1:** You know very basic phrases, and struggle to express detail; it's obvious you're a non-native speaker. You must make a skill roll to understand anything said to you.
- **Skill level 2:** You have basic proficiency with the language, forming your own sentences with a vocabulary sufficient for most daily topics. It's still obvious you're a non-native, and you still make a skill roll when someone's speaking to you about anything unusual.
- **Skill level 3:** You have basic fluency with the language, speaking and understanding with ease; on a successful skill roll you can even pass yourself off as a native speaker. You don't have to roll to understand conversations, although you might miss some complex details and nuances—make a roll to catch those.
- **Skill level 4:** You have advanced fluency with the language, speaking it effortlessly and with some style and elegance. You often sound native. You don't need to roll to speak and understand, unless you're hearing a very heavy dialect.
- **Skill level 5 and up:** You're a native speaker-equivalent, expressing yourself flawlessly and with excellence. The only time you need roll is if someone is trying to catch you out.

Here's the key use of Learned Language skills: if you attempt an interpersonal skill roll (Deceive, Empathy, Provoke, Rapport, etc) in a learned language, your applicable level in those skills is **capped** by your learned language skill level. Yes, that means if you have Shuashi Common 2, then your haggling rolls with that bunch of Shuashi merchants in Elikan seaport will be capped at level 2, even if your Rapport skill is higher.

See the Communication power skill (page 285) and Vareltias temple writeup (in the *Guide to Future Earth*) for more about communication in other languages.

🕒 **Overcome:** Roll to understand a conversation or utterance, remember a difficult word you're looking for.

🕒 **Manoeuvre:** Explain the language to another person, decipher an utterance or text in the language, impress someone with your knowledge of the language.

Stunts

◆ *Literacy*

You can read and write the learned language. If the language has a complex written form, or if you're trying to read a related language (see "Language Families" in the text box), you have to make a Learned Language roll to read a text with this stunt; you may not read the written form of a complex related language at all. For most languages, however, this stunt is enough to allow you to read without requiring a roll. See Table 8-2: Languages of the Springtide Civilisations, for more.

Note that you're automatically literate in your own language if you have the Lore skill; you don't need this stunt.

◆ *Advanced Literacy*

Requires Literacy

Some languages have complex written forms, combinations of alphabets, pictograms, and even (in the case of esteri) olfactory and gestural components which are incorporated into "written" texts. With this stunt, you don't have to make a Learned Language skill roll to understand the written form. You can make a skill roll to read the written form of a complex *related* language.

Language Families

Some languages are related, some closely, some distantly. Knowing a language lets you understand and be understood in a related language, at two levels below your corresponding Learned Language skill for a closely-related language, or three levels below for a distantly-related one. See Table 8-2: Languages of the Springtide Civilisations.

You can do the same for languages related to your native language. You can make yourself understood at an equivalent skill level 3 for a closely related language, or skill level 2 for a distantly related one. You must learn closely or distantly related languages as Learned Languages if you want to improve above that level.

Languages of the Springtide Civilisations

The people of the Springtide Civilisations speak languages very different from our own, as far removed from us in time as we are from the era of the Neanderthals. No words or grammatical structures survive in any recognisable form from the languages of twenty-first century Earth. Yet the languages of Future Earth don't exist in a vacuum; they have antecedents and language families, their vernaculars filled with archaisms and holdovers from ages so ancient they put our own meagre linguistic histories to shame.

In the forgotten, unimaginably distant past, a world language became an interstellar one. Its heyday was brief; the Earth which emerged from the ensuing Armageddon of the Gods was fragmented, its shards spinning off and diverging, culturally and linguistically. Only the self-styled Lords of the Commonality and their immediate inheritors, the Masters of Jiva, kept alive the ancient words, some of which survive (in greatly mutated form) in the place names and personal names of today.

It's to the language of Ancient Tlan that one must look for the ancestor of the languages of the Springtide Civilisations. Prior civilisations rose and fell—the Glory of Az Ein, the Empire of the Sky Raiders, the Middle Sea Empires—leaving only obscure references, an idiom here, a syntactical structure or morpheme there. But Ancient Tlanik, the nearest to a world language the Earth has known since the Helemoriad, left more: Tlanik culture set standards for literature, verse, prose, history, oratory, penmanship, and backed them up with a majestic grammar and lexical base, so that, even twenty millennia after its fall, one still hears the cadences of High Tlanik orators in the songs of Payorian, the writings of Tlanik botanists in the names of herbs, plants, and foods. You can still read Tlanik writings today, on monuments and in manuscripts copied by Unthar's scribes.



TABLE 8-2: LANGUAGES OF THE SPRINGTIDE CIVILISATIONS (1/2)

LANGUAGE	RELATED LANGUAGES	COMMENTS
Ancient Languages		
Ai-Mukh	Distant: Mukhari	Tongue of the Sky Raiders; glyphs are partly understood. Complex Written Form.
Ancient Az-Ein		Tongue of the Empire of Az Ein; there are many Az Ein loanwords in Sakari.
Gestalat	Distant: Liya-Jiva	A Forbidden Tongue, also known as Hegemonic and occasionally as Helemori, the almost mythical tongue of the Great Hegemonist and his followers. The language has strange phonic powers of suggestion, persuasion, and domination, and even reading it is perilous. Complex Written Form.
Liya-Jiva	Distant: Gestalat	Tongue of the legendary Lords of the Commonality, incomprehensible now.
Mukhari	Close: Tel-Khar, Distant: Ai-Mukh.	Tongue of the Torture Empire.
Nayarak	Close: Ancient, Classical, High	A Forbidden Tongue, language of the Wizards of Nayarak. Ancient Nayarak, Classical Nayarak, and High Nayarak exist, all closely related. Sorcerous texts are often written in these languages. Complex Written Form.
Tel-Khar	Close: Mukhari	Tongue of the Middle Sea Empire.
Tlanik	Close: High Tlanik, Classical Tlanik	Tongue of the Empire of Tlan. High Tlanik and Classical Tlanik are closely related.
Modern Languages		
Sakaraic	Distant: High Tlanik Close: Low Sakaraic, High Sakaraic	Descended from High Tlanik, with admixtures of Az-Ein-derived tongues. The language of the Venerable Autocracy; both High Sakaraic and Low Sakaraic exist.
Eletas		The language of Vareltias, created to knit the world together. A “common tongue” for the Springtide Civilisations, spoken mostly by merchants, travellers, and diplomats.
Chinisek	Close: Kazakh	Language of Chinis.
Kazakh	Close: Chinisek; Distant: Shuashi	Language of Kazakhland.
Shainubian		Language of Shai Nub.
Shuashi	Distant: Kazakh	Language of Far Shuash.
Ya-Kad		Language of Amadorad.

TABLE 8-2: LANGUAGES OF THE SPRINGTIDE CIVILISATIONS (2/2)

LANGUAGE	RELATED LANGUAGES	COMMENTS
Jeniri and Esteri Languages		
Chekwa		Language of the Che Kwa.
Durghat	Distant: Umbraic	“Mother Tongue” of the maggot people, also called Darkspeech. Staccato, growling tongue, punctuated with yelps and shrieks, carrying well underground. There are three dialects.
Ghadal		Known as Firespeech; the rich, sonorous, growling, and occasionally sibilant tongue of the Magigi.
Hsun		See page 77: non-Hsun can only learn to understand, not speak it (see, however, the “Voice” power stunt in the <i>Guide to Future Earth</i>). Complex Written Form.
Hsunsign		Sign-language used in communication with the Hsun. See page 77.
Ing Shu		Buzzing language of the Ing Shu. Non-Ing Shu can only learn to understand, not speak it (but see the “Voice” power stunt in the <i>Guide to Future Earth</i>).
Keshaic		Known as Alais, “The Speech”, the whispering sibilant language of the Kesh.
Myu-Palada		Also known as Blindspeech or Protean, the aspirant, melodic, and occasionally equine tongue of the Paladoi. It has a telepathic component.
Tung Mai		Multiple closely-related languages spoken by the Tung Mai, combining buzzes, clicks, whistles, and other vocal elements with body language and “facial” expressions. Non-Tung Mai may learn to understand, but not speak these languages (but see the “Voice” power stunt in the <i>Guide to Future Earth</i>).
Umbraic	Distant: Durghat	Language of the Umbrai, demons of darkness.
Viriji		Ancient tongue of the Virikki, long-dead.



Lore

Lore is the skill of knowing, and applying your knowledge to answer questions. Where you use Investigate to discover information by analysing the world, you use Lore to bring information you already know to mind. You also use Lore to work out what the information you know or have learned actually means or implies. Lore relates to your education and general knowledge, as well as your reasoning capacity—your ability to manipulate information and draw conclusions from it. You use Lore to remember a fact, decipher a script, answer a question about history, or perform acts of very minor healing. Simply having at least 1 level in the Lore skill means you're literate in your native language.

🛡️ **Overcome:** Understand or figure out an answer to a question, whether based on information you know or logical reasoning. Decipher a text, remember a historical detail, know the correct way to behave in a temple service, or identify a public figure. Use Lore when treating physical stress or mild consequences representing physical wounds (page 234).

🔍 **Manoeuvre:** Know, research, or figure out a detail or obscure piece of information, or add one to the setting.

Stunts

♦ Appraise

Act at a +2 skill level in Lore overcome and manoeuvre actions to determine the value of an item.

♦ Bureaucracy

Act at a +2 skill level in Lore actions to navigate the byzantine bureaucracies of the Springtide Civilisations: the Autocracy's *Chelumetariat*, the dealings of the Trader Princes, the intrigues of the priesthods.

♦ First Aid

Act at a +2 skill level in Lore treatment rolls of physical stress and mild consequences representing physical wounds. See the Wisdom power skill (page 308) and the temple of Konfu in the *Guide to Future Earth* for information on magical healing.

♦ Healer

Requires First Aid

Use Lore in treatment rolls of any consequence representing a physical wound. Note that this doesn't include **extreme consequences** (page 216).

♦ I've Read About That!

You're something of a polymath, and have read pretty much every book you've ever had your hands on. For a fate point, use Lore in place of **any other skill** for one roll or round, as long as you can justify having read about the action you're attempting.

♦ Law Lore

Requires a permission from the Temple of Ankadar

You're familiar with Ankadar's Book of the Law, whose edicts hold the world together. You may make rulings on legal matters, and may be a member of Ankadar's temple, perhaps even a judge. Use Lore instead of Provoke, Rapport, etc, when pronouncing judgements.

♦ Linguist

You have a natural facility with languages, human or otherwise. Act at a +2 skill level in Lore actions to analyse or decipher a language, or boost your Learned Language rolls.

♦ Rhetoric

Use Lore to make attack actions in debates and similar conflicts, inflicting mental (or possibly social) stress.

♦ Rituals

Cast complex spells and similar magics more easily by using time-consuming support rituals. Act at a +1 skill level in actions with power skills, per step on the time ladder you spend preparing to make that power skill roll, at the cost of 1 point of physical stress damage. The first step is *An Hour*, the minimum time required for ritual magic use. Magic users who have one or more Correspondences available (see page 343) may invoke these as situation aspects during ritual magic; the **bonus cap** (page 195) applies.

◆ *Shield of Reason*

Use Lore to defend against Provoke, as long as you can justify your ability to overcome your emotional response through knowledge and reasoning.

◆ *Specialist*

Choose a specialist field of lore, and act at a +2 skill level in related Lore actions. There are many possible fields, including:

- **Animal Lore:** Knowledge of animals, including monstrous ones. The stunt stacks with Chemick Lore if you're looking into the chemick properties of animal-derived ingredients.
- **Chemick Lore:** General knowledge of chemick, including basic properties of ingredients found in the natural world.
- **Demon Lore:** Knowledge of the many demons of the Springtide Civilisations. You may roll to identify a demon by sight and assess its key aspects and abilities.
- **Entropic Lore:** Knowledge of the types, abilities, and habitats of the entropics—the chaos hordes of Frozen Yurasha.
- **Esteri Lore:** Knowledge of matters pertaining to all esteri species. Taking this stunt a second time lets you specify a single esteri species; the two stunts stack.
- **Folklore:** General knowledge of the Autocracy's myths and legends, including local tales. This can help you identify places, creature abilities, magical powers, and more. Taking this stunt a second or subsequent time lets you focus on a particular culture of the Autocracy (both stunts stack), or a culture of another land.
- **History Lore:** Knowledge of the confused and contradictory annals and chronologies that constitute "historical archives" in the Springtide Civilisations.
- **Jeniri Lore:** General knowledge of matters pertaining to all jeniri species. Taking this stunt a second time lets you specify a single jeniri species; the two bonuses stack.
- **Law Lore:** Knowledge of the legal codes of Ankadar the Law Lord, including the Book of the Law of the Venerable Autocracy.

- **Mechanisms Lore:** Knowledge of the many types of mechanism, their design and construction principles, and sometimes even history.
- **Mindstone Lore:** Knowledge of the principles and uses of the Paladoi mindstones, including their types.
- **Mineral Lore:** Knowledge of minerals and elements, including artificial compounds. This stunt stacks with Chemick Lore if you're looking into the properties of mineral-derived ingredients.
- **Pereprae Lore:** Knowledge of the types, functions, and nature of the ancient artefacts known as **pereprae** (page 365).
- **Plant Lore:** Knowledge of plants, including monstrous, edible, and poisonous ones. This stunt stacks with Chemick Lore if you're looking into the properties of plant-derived ingredients.
- **Psionics Lore:** Knowledge of the mysterious powers of psionics (page 352), including disciplines, talents, and those who use them.
- **Ruins Lore:** Knowledge of ancient ruins, including how old they are, who built them, what their purpose may have been, and typical hazards and denizens.
- **Sacred Lore:** Knowledge of temples and gods, their mythologies, priesthoods, and powers. Taking this stunt a second time lets you concentrate on the doctrines of a specific temple; the bonuses stack.
- **Zoic Lore:** Knowledge of zoans and the creations of hsuntach. See page 350.

◆ *Tactics*

Use your knowledge of battles and combat to create a tactical plan for a combat of any scale, from a simple duel to a clash of armies. Make a Lore manoeuvre roll; the resulting aspect may be used during the subsequent conflict by any member on your side.

Melee Combat

Melee Combat represents your ability to fight at close quarters (in the same **zone**—see page 209) using weapons. Simply having this skill means you have a basic weapon like a blade, hand axe, club, etc; the weapon doesn't give you any special bonuses or advantages, but just lets you use this skill to inflict physical stress damage on foes. If you want a more significant weapon, you must acquire it as an item of **equipment** (page 170).

🏹 **Overcome:** Show off your melee weapons prowess in a contest or demonstration; participate in a regulated *oloriad* bout, legion training session, or ritual combat.

🛡️ **Manoeuvre:** Perform strikes to stun, dirty moves, attempts to trip; create an attack or defence formation; assess another combatant's fighting style, spotting strengths and weaknesses you can exploit, including areas unprotected by armour. See page 220 for more.

⚔️ **Attack:** Make physical attack actions (page 218) with melee weapons. You must be in the same **zone** as your opponent.

🛡️ **Defend:** Defend against attack actions and manoeuvres made with the Melee Combat or Unarmed Combat skills, or prevent an action by violently interposing yourself. You can't use Melee Combat to defend against Ranged Combat attacks unless you have a stunt like Arrow Strike (below).

Stunts

♦ Arrow Strike

Your blindingly fast melee weapon attack can strike arrows in flight; you may use Melee Combat to defend against ranged weapon attacks. You may only strike missiles aimed at you or another target in your zone. You may defend against attacks from weapons like flamelances (page 183) but, if you're using an alagin weapon, it's destroyed by deflecting the attack.

♦ Backup Weapon

Whenever an opponent is about to succeed in a *Disarm*-type manoeuvre against you, spend a fate point to declare you have a backup weapon. Instead of you incurring a condition aspect, your opponent gets a boost instead, representing the momentary distraction you suffer having to switch weapons.

♦ Bypass Armour

On a special success, you may pay a fate point to bypass any armour the target is wearing on your current attack. Any damage you inflict isn't affected by the stress reduction (page 174) of the target's armour, nor may that armour be used to absorb consequences. Note that this only works against armour worn by a target; you may not use it to bypass a target's natural or magical armour (thick skin, carapace, a magical spell of shielding, etc).

♦ Cleave

When your attack takes out (page 216) your current target, you may immediately apply any unused shifts in an attack on a secondary target, who gets a roll to defend. So, if you get 9 shifts, and 4 shifts take your opponent out, you immediately attack another available target with a +5 result.

♦ Formation Fighting

Act at a +2 skill level in Melee Combat defend actions when fighting in formation with fellow combatants, all of whom must have this stunt and be using the weapons of your fighting style, which also determines the minimum number needed for your formation to be effective, and may provide additional benefits. See the Legion of Lord Regos, Indomitable writeup on page 98, and the Military Organisations, Guilds, and Secret Societies chapter of the *Guide to Future Earth*, for more.

♦ Heavy Hitter

Reduce shifts by 1 on a Melee Combat special success and gain an additional full situation aspect with free invoke. On a critical success, you may also inflict an automatic consequence instead of calculating damage, if you choose.

♦ *Hurled Weapon*

Throw a melee weapon to attack a target in an adjacent zone. You incur a *Disarmed* condition aspect, but no one may invoke it for free.

♦ *Killing Stroke*

Once per scene when you inflict a consequence on an opponent, you may spend a fate point to increase that consequence's severity by one step. If the opponent was already going to take a severe consequence, then it must take a severe consequence **and** another consequence, or be **taken out** (page 216).

♦ *Riposte*

On a special success Melee Combat defend action, you may choose to immediately inflict a 2-shift hit on your opponent instead of receiving a boost (page 202). The opponent's armour may absorb the damage.

♦ *Two Weapons*

Requires 2 Melee Combat skills on your character sheet (page 229)

You may wield one weapon in each hand. Assuming you have two arms, this means two one-handed weapons. You increase your damage by your second Melee Combat level, up to the maximum stress increase (SI) of your second weapon. Because you have at least two Melee Combat skills, you may also spread your attack among multiple targets (page 229).

Notice

Notice is the overall perception skill, representing your ability to pick out details at a glance, by overhearing, seeing, or otherwise using your senses. It's much quicker than Investigate, requiring less effort, but provides more superficial information. It's the skill for spotting things when you're not specifically searching, and is also used for **initiative** in physical combat (page 212).

🕒 **Overcome:** Notice something unusual, hear a faint sound, spot movement out the corner of your eye. Often used reactively, the Chronicler may call for a Notice roll when succeeding or failing would result in something cool happening, rather than you having to specifically try and notice things left, right, and centre.

🕒 **Manoeuvre:** Spot details that stand out in a crowd, find a *Handy Escape Route* through a chaotic battle in city streets, notice external details about people (use Empathy for internal details), either as existing or new aspects. A Notice roll could say you spot *A Patch of Writhegrass* on the path, which could cause your pursuers' cambrioters to suddenly panic and veer off the track.

🕒 **Defend:** Defend against Stealth attempts to ambush you, or discover you're being observed.

Stunts

♦ *Body Language*

Use Notice instead of Empathy to learn a target's aspects through observation. Notice attempts incur a +2 difficulty when reading *jeniri*, and a +4 when reading *esteri*; appropriate Jeniri Lore and Esteri Lore stunts, etc, may offset this.

♦ *Eye For Detail*

With your fantastic powers of concentration and prodigious memory, you can recall any place you've been to in detail, sometimes noticing things you didn't before. For a fate point, make a Notice (or sometimes Investigate) roll to look over a place, no matter how long ago you left.

♦ *Keen Hearing*

Act at a +2 skill level in Notice actions to detect sounds.

♦ *Read The Crowd*

Requires Body Language

Use Notice to make Assimilate manoeuvres when targeting part of a community as a sub-community. You incur the usual scale penalties (page 236) for interacting with the target community. See the *Chronicler's Guide* for more on communities.

♦ *Sense Danger*

You've an uncanny ability to know when you're in danger. Your Notice skill roll ignores all obstacles or other impeding conditions, such as from darkness, distractions, concealment, etc, when someone or something intends to harm you.

◆ *Trap-finding*

You've a knack for knowing when there's a trap ahead of you. Act at a +2 skill level in Notice actions to accidentally come across traps. For deliberately searching for traps, use the Investigate skill.

Physique

Physique is the raw physical power skill; how strong you are, your toughness and endurance. It also provides you with additional physical stress boxes (page 48) and even extra consequences.

🛡️ **Overcome:** Take actions requiring brute force, often to overcome a situation aspect or physical obstacles or barriers like locked doors, portcullises, etc. You may need a contest to smash, break, or bypass a reinforced obstruction. Resist poisons or diseases; participate in arm-wrestling matches and tests of strength, marathons, stamina tests, or other endurance-based contests or challenges.

🤼 **Manoeuvre:** Perform manoeuvres in physical conflicts, often related to wrestling and grappling, to create condition aspects like *Pinned* or *Arm-Lock* or to discover a target's physical weaknesses like *Wrenched Shoulder*, etc.

👊 **Attack:** Physique isn't used for attack actions—see Unarmed Combat (page 168) instead.

🛡️ **Defend:** Defend against an opponent's movement if you're blocking access. Physique isn't used to defend against attack actions—see Unarmed Combat (page 168).



Special: Physique gives you additional physical stress boxes and consequence slots (page 48). Physique 1 or 2 gives you a 3-point stress box; Physique 3 or 4 gives you a 3-point and a 4-point stress box; and Physique 5 or above gives you an additional mild consequence slot as well as the 3-point and 4-point stress boxes.

Stunts

◆ *Built Like a Brick Outhouse*

You're terrifyingly muscular and incredibly intimidating. You can use Physique instead of Provoke.

◆ *Grappling*

Act at a +2 skill level in Physique manoeuvres to wrestle or grapple.

◆ *Herculean Strength*

You're incredibly strong; act at a +2 skill level in Physique actions to perform feats of strength, lift heavy weights, and so on. You may carry 3 additional encumbrance points (page 192).

◆ *Piledriver*

Requires Herculean Strength

Your amazing strength helps you fight! Make a **combined skill roll** (page 194) of Physique and Melee Combat or Unarmed Combat when you simply stand in front of your opponent and pound away; if you succeed, gain a +1 **stress increase** (page 178) on the damage you inflict. On a special success, gain a +2 stress increase, and on a critical success, gain a +3!

◆ *Take the Blow*

Use Physique to defend against Melee Combat or Unarmed Combat attacks made with punches, kicks, or bashing weapons. You always take 1 point of physical stress damage on a tie.

♦ *Tough As Nails*

Once per session, pay a fate point to reduce a moderate physical consequence to mild, or erase a mild physical consequence completely. The effect is immediate.

♦ *Unkillable!*

Poison of any kind seems to have no effect on you! Act at a +2 skill level in Physique actions to resist poisons, gases, toxins, venoms, etc.

Pillar

Pillar is a social influence skill specific to the Venerable Autocracy. Your Pillar is like a caste, although not as fixed or immobile. There are five “pillars”, said to hold up Sakari society: the Lords, the Priesthood, the Guilds, the Legions, and the Peasantry. Every Sakari belongs to one of these by virtue of their occupation (or the occupation of their parent or partner if they’re a dependent). Pillar is distinct from social class, but there’s a strong correlation: someone born to a family of rural farmers might be considered lower class and naturally a member of the Peasantry pillar, but by joining a legion they can become a member of the Legions pillar, even though their birth remains humble.

Your Pillar skill represents your ability to draw on the influence, authority, and networks of your occupational peers. The Guild, Legions, and Peasantry are supposed to defer to the Priesthood and the Lords, for example, regardless of birth, although a low-born priest attempting to pull rank on a wealthy middle-class guildmember may find herself in a nightmare of social entanglements!

🛡️ **Overcome:** Establish you have precedence in an occupation-oriented social situation; brush past guards or social gatekeepers.

🏰 **Manoeuvre:** Give a tone to a social gathering, like *A Stiff Military Bearing Cramping Everyone’s Style* or *This Tavern Is For the Salt of the Earth*.

👁️ **Attack:** Make someone seriously out of place by pointing out their deficiencies by not belonging to your Pillar (“This dance is an old barracks room favourite, you’ll pick it up, Master Priest!”) in social, mental or wealth conflicts.

🛡️ **Defend:** Laugh off a social faux pas; brush off the social, mental or wealth attacks of a person trying to snub or humiliate you or attack the integrity or honour of your Pillar.

Special: Your Pillar gives you additional status stress boxes and consequence slots (page 48). The Peasantry 1 and The Legions 2 give you a 3-point stress box; The Guilds 3 and The Priesthood 4 give you a 3-point and a 4-point stress box; and The Lords 5 gives you an additional mild consequence slot as well as the 3-point and 4-point stress boxes.

Stunts

♦ *Gift of Envoy*

Requires Jack-of-all-Trades and an aspect or occupational permission

You’re familiar with the social conventions of other cultures, and can use your Pillar skill in social interactions in their societies.

♦ *Jack-of-All-Trades*

You’re a social chameleon, familiar with the values, lingo, and behaviours of different pillars. You face no obstacle in Pillar overcome or manoeuvre rolls to exploit your knowledge of a different pillar.

♦ *The Ties That Bind*

Use your Pillar skill instead of Resources when trying to get items, favours, or other resources-based advantages from fellow Pillar members.

♦ *Withering Aura*

You can cut someone with a glance; gain an extra Hero Die on status attacks using your Pillar skill.

What If I Don't Have a Pillar Skill?

Foreigners, outsiders, and outcasts from Sakari society are not considered to belong to any Pillar. In such cases, you act as if you had a Pillar skill of 0; you may not even be regarded as relevant in Pillar-oriented interactions. Depending on the situation, the Chronicler may give you a temporary Pillar skill associated with your perceived occupation; a warlord of Hagya may be treated as a legionnaire, an Ing Shu trader from beyond the Middle Sea as a guildmember, and so on.

Pilot

This rare skill isn't usually available to beginning characters; under certain circumstances, you may acquire a permission to learn it during play. It's like the Sailing skill, but used for handling exotic mounts and vehicles, and especially elenisors, flyers, juggernauts, crawlers, and so on. It involves a completely separate—although related—set of principles to the Sailing skill, although under some circumstances the Chronicler may allow Sailing stunts to be used with this skill, and even for characters to gain teamwork bonuses from their Sailing skill when attempting to use Pilot.

Like the Sailing skill, Pilot doesn't specifically represent command knowledge, but rather the practical aspects of aerial and exotic vehicle navigation, including knowledge of terrain and meteorological conditions, trim and orientation, and positioning using sextants, the stars, and piloting rutters. Having this skill means you have access to an exotic vehicle or mount—usually something pretty small, unless your homeland, kindred, or other community says otherwise.

☞ Overcome: Use Pilot like Athletics when guiding an aerial mount or vessel or other exotic vehicle through difficult conditions (adverse weather conditions, difficult terrain like gorges, canyons, dense forests, etc), as well as shaking pursuit or catching up with pursued vessels (which may be a challenge or contest).

⚙️ Manoeuvre: Determine the best course between two points, learning terrain features as aspects; declare you know a *Convenient Shortcut* or *Safe Route* as appropriate; perform fancy manoeuvres with your vessel (“Hard about and maintain hovering position!”).

⚔️ Attack: Ram another target, whether on the ground or water or in the air. Your vessel or mount also takes any stress damage you inflict.

🛡️ Defend: Avoid damage to your vessel or mount in physical conflicts, prevent opponents from manoeuvring against you, or stop someone getting past you in a similar-sized vessel or smaller.

Stunts

✦ Aerial Cavalry Charge

Requires Aerial Charge

When you make a Charge, use Pilot instead of Provoke to terrify the living daylights out of your target; any in your formation with this stunt may provide teamwork bonuses.

✦ Aerial Charge

On a successful Pilot roll, rush a target 2-3 zones away **and** make a Melee Combat, Ranged Combat or Pilot attack action **in the same round**.

✦ Aerial Mount Handler

Use Pilot instead of Empathy, Lore, or Rapport when dealing with aerial mounts.

✦ Belay That Order!

Once per session, for a fate point, re-roll any action taken by your vessel, acting at a +2 skill level in the new roll. This must be done immediately after the first action has been rolled but before the reaction of any target has been determined.

✦ Damage Control

During scenes where your vessel is actively taking damage, you may use Pilot for stress and mild consequence treatment rolls (page 233).

♦ *Hell For Leather*

Coax more speed out of your mount or vessel than normally possible. In a contest where speed is the primary factor (like a chase or race), a tie on your Pilot roll is considered a success.

♦ *On Your Tail*

Act at a +2 skill level in Pilot actions to pursue another target, or when trying to shake off pursuit.

♦ *Ramming Speed!*

Ignore 2 stress points of damage when ramming another target. If you ram for 4 stress damage, your vessel only takes 2 points itself.

♦ *Sense Location*

Your sense for where you are in the world borders on the supernatural. You've probably travelled extensively, following the ancient trade routes, occasionally heading into the wild. Act at a +2 skill level in Pilot manoeuvres to know (within fifty kilometres) where you are anywhere in your own homeland (likely the Venerable Autocracy). If you're somewhere else, a special success lets you draw useful conclusions about your location, even if you can't say exactly where you are. At night, you can invoke *The Sea of Stars* for a bonus, and can even figure out something meaningful about your location when you're off the beaten track.

♦ *She'll Hold Together!*

Requires Damage Control

Once per session, for a fate point, you may reduce the severity of a consequence your vessel has taken by one step. This takes an action.

Provoke

Provoke represents your ability to elicit negative emotional responses from others—intimidating, goading, or otherwise causing them to feel fear, anger, shame. You need to be in a situation where this kind of provocation makes sense, where you know which buttons to press—perhaps a tense social environment (a high-stakes audience with a high priest or autarch), or a hair-trigger stand-off between antagonistic parties. The situation could have developed during play, or could result from either a situation aspect, an aspect you've created (say with a skill like Rapport or Deceive), or one you've learned using Empathy. Targets must be able to feel emotion, and usually resist with Willpower.

🗡️ **Overcome:** Get someone to do what you want in an emotionally uncontrolled way; intimidate someone for information, annoy them so they lash out, scare them into fleeing (often used against minor NPCs or when it isn't worthwhile to play out a full conflict). Against PCs or important NPCs, you'll probably use the contest rules.

🎭 **Manoeuvre:** Impose condition aspects on your target representing momentary emotional states like *Cowed*, *Enraged*, *Unbalanced*.

👊 **Attack:** Inflict mental stress representing emotional harm, intimidating or angering your target and making them lose their composure.

Stunts

♦ *Armour of Fear*

Use Provoke to defend against Melee and Unarmed Combat attacks until the first time you take damage. You can force your opponent to hesitate, but once it becomes clear you're not invulnerable, you lose the advantage.

♦ *Okay Fine!*

Use Provoke instead of Empathy to learn a target's aspects by bullying them until they give themselves away. If the Chronicler thinks you could learn a particular aspect in this way anyway, you also act at a +2 skill level.

◆ *Pressgang*

Force a targeted community to hive off a sub-community, using Provoke to make Assimilate overcome actions. You incur the usual scale penalties (page 236) for interacting with the target community. See the *Chronicler's Guide* for full rules for communities.

◆ *Provoke Violence*

On a successful Provoke manoeuvre against an opponent, you become the target of that opponent's next relevant action, drawing its attention from another target.

◆ *Spread Hate Speech*

Use Provoke to make Assimilate manoeuvre actions when targeting part of a community as a sub-community. You incur the usual scale penalties (page 236) for interacting with the target community. See the *Chronicler's Guide* for full rules for communities.

◆ *Terrorise*

Requires Armour of Fear

On a successful mental stress attack with Provoke (screaming in an enemy's face is always popular...), you also create an **obstacle** (page 202) to any movement actions to approach you or any attack actions against you. This stunt can be used even after you've taken damage.

◆ *Torturer*

Act at a +2 skill level in Provoke manoeuvres or attacks as long as you're using torture implements effective against a physically restrained target.

Ranged Combat

Ranged Combat represents your skill with weapons which project missiles, like bows, crossbows, and flamelances. The skill automatically gives you a simple missile weapon like a sling or self bow.

☞ **Overcome:** Show off your marksmanship in a contest or demonstration; participate in a regulated *oloriad* bout, legion training session, or ritual combat.

☞ **Manoeuvre:** Perform trick shots, force someone to keep their head down as you send barrages of missiles their way, disarm a target, or impair a vehicle or riding animal. You can also create condition aspects based on your assessments of an opponent's weaknesses, such as predictable defensive movements or areas that are unprotected by armour, or your knowledge of ranged weapons, like placing a *Bowstring Susceptible to Dampness* aspect on an opponent's bow.

☞ **Attack:** Make physical attacks with ranged weapons **up to one or more zones away** (see page 209).

☞ **Defend:** Usually you don't use Ranged Combat for defend actions—instead, you use Athletics to get out of the way of ranged weapon attacks. However, with some ranged weapons it's possible to lay down a kind of covering fire, which may constitute a defend action for your allies or oppose someone else's movement action (although it could easily also be a manoeuvre like *Hail of Arrows* or *Flamelance Barrage*).



Stunts

◆ Critical Shot

You can hit small targets or vital areas with uncanny accuracy. If you take 1 round to aim, you gain an extra Hero Die on your ranged weapon attack or manoeuvre.

◆ Formation Fighting

Act at a +2 skill level in Ranged Combat defend actions when fighting in formation with your fellow combatants, who must have this stunt and be using the weapons of your fighting style. Your fighting style also determines the minimum number needed for your formation to be effective, and may provide additional benefits. See the Legion of Lord Regos, Indomitable writeup on page 98, and the Military Organisations, Guilds, and Secret Societies chapter of the *Guide to Future Earth*, for more.

◆ Long Shot

You can hit targets at a much greater range than should be possible. Increase the maximum range of any ranged weapon you're using by +1.

◆ Rapid Fire

You loose arrows or other missiles from ranged weapons with amazing rapidity, targeting a number of opponents up to your Ranged Combat skill level with a single attack, as per the multiple target rules (page 229). You also act at a +2 skill level in any Ranged Combat covering fire or suppressing fire manoeuvres. This stunt cannot be used with crossbows, unless the crossbow has been specifically fashioned for rapid fire.

Rapport

Rapport represents making positive connections to people and eliciting positive reactions, winning people over, persuading, impressing, and even seducing them. It's the skill of being liked and trusted—the charisma and being-nice-to-people skill. Rapport may be an intimate interpersonal skill, but it may also be used in more formal social situations, where it may be affected by the social class (page 236) and Pillar (page 158) of the participants.

🌀 **Overcome:** Charm or inspire others, or establish a good relationship; get someone to ignore the social niceties of Pillar and social class, and just relate to you as a fellow person; charm your way past a guard, convince the palace servitor to take you into their confidence, or become the man or woman of the hour in the local tavern. For minor NPCs this is a straight overcome action, but for major NPCs and PCs it may be a contest.

🌀 **Manoeuvre:** Create a positive mood on a target or scene, or come across as affable, likeable, and sympathetic, which may be useful in subsequent Pillar skill rolls (page 158); get someone to confide in you out of genuine trust; or pep talk someone into having *Elevated Confidence*, stir a crowd into *Joyful Fervour*, or make someone *Talkative* or *Helpful*.

🌀 **Defend:** Defend against attempts to make you look bad or sully your reputation, or sour a mood you've created.

Stunts

◆ Best Foot Forward

Twice per session, you may turn a boost you receive on a Rapport roll into a situation or condition aspect with a free invoke instead.

◆ Broker

Use Rapport to conduct trading negotiations, buy and sell cargoes, and so on, including at the scale of constructs and communities (see the *Chronicler's Guide*) without incurring scale penalties.

◆ Carousing

You're gregarious and affable, life and soul of any social gathering of your Pillar or social class. Act at a +2 skill level in Rapport overcome actions when mixing with "your own kind". See page 226 for ideas on how to handle carousing attempts in unfamiliar social milieux.

◆ Commander-in-Chief

You're a natural leader, capable of commanding thousands. Use Rapport for community and construct actions (see the *Chronicler's Guide* for more) relating to armies, fleets, and mass battles.

◆ *Demagogue*

Act at a +2 skill level in Rapport actions to communicate to a large audience. This is a zone effect (page 230).

◆ *Drinks For All My Friends!*

Requires Carousing

On a successful Rapport overcome action in relaxed social situations, you also create a situation aspect describing how the general attitude turns in your favour, usable for the rest of the scene.

◆ *Haggle*

If your Resources skill is no lower than 2 levels below the opposition, use Rapport instead of Resources to acquire things from outlets and individual merchants.

◆ *Honey-Tongued*

Requires Carousing

Sometimes affability borders on unctuous deceit. With this stunt, you're still genuine and friendly, but you are so diplomatic that you barely ever put a foot wrong. Most people love you; but sometimes (like when you fumble) people might think you're so nice it can't be true. You can add an additional Hero Die when persuading or negotiating with others of your social milieu.

◆ *Join Us!*

Requires Carousing, Demagogue, or Performer

You can persuade members of a community to join your endeavour as a sub-community, using Rapport to make Assimilate overcome actions. You incur the usual scale penalties (page 236) for interacting with the target community. See the *Chronicler's Guide* for full rules for communities.

◆ *Minions*

Once per session, when using Rapport to command a minor NPC group, you may "attach" them to yourself for the rest of the scene, so that they stand between you and damage. Any hits done to you fill their stress boxes first, and your attacks receive a teamwork bonus based on the number of minions attached (page 202).

◆ *Negotiator*

You're skilled in trade and diplomatic negotiations, and may use your Rapport skill for community actions. See the *Chronicler's Guide* for full rules for communities.

◆ *Overseer*

You command groups to accomplish tasks, whether military, diplomatic, ritualistic, or workers on large-scale projects. Once per scene, make an overcome action against the difficulty of the command situation, and convert any shifts into a bonus point pool which those you're commanding may use in actions you've commanded them to do (attacking, moving, using magic, etc).

This is usually a difficulty 1 action, but may increase if the command situation is tough; the action may also face a rolled difficulty of the Willpower of an unwilling group. If you also have the Commander-in-Chief stunt, you may use this in army and fleet conflicts.

Note that this stunt is also affected by differences in social class and Pillar.

◆ *Performer*

You're a performance artist like a musician, actor, or dancer. Use Rapport in zone effect actions affecting everyone in your zone, plus 1 zone per skill level above 1.

◆ *Seducer*

You're sexually attractive to a ludicrous degree; act at a +2 skill level in Rapport overcome actions to seduce your target of choice. Most importantly, you may ignore differences in Pillar or social class which stand in your way.

◆ *Servitors*

You may make a Rapport roll to approach your community to request teamwork assistance AP lending for group workings, summonings, etc (page 313), without incurring scale effects. A simple success gets you the maximum number of servitors you can handle (page 314).

Interpersonal Skills and the Social Milieu

Social interactions in the Springtide Civilisations are influenced by the social class (page 38) and Pillar (page 158) of those interacting. Sometimes, people from different social strata can't be friends, or can't interact in open, and genuine ways, without the weight of tradition and propriety dictating how and even whether they should.

*Be aware of differing social classes and Pillars when characters use interpersonal skills like Deceive, Empathy, and especially Rapport. Sometimes what looks like a Rapport roll may instead have to be played as a Pillar skill roll, perhaps with a Rapport-generated manoeuvre providing a situation or condition aspect. Other times, differing social classes may impose **scale effects** so significant that interaction is practically impossible (page 236).*

Depending on the context, if you want to use pure Rapport, then you probably need to get your target to one side, away from his or her social milieu, where you can try to relate to them just as another person. Indeed, Rapport rolls are sometimes precisely the way you can break down this barrier of formality and ritualised interaction.

Resources

The Venerable Autocracy is a complex society, and your ability to have a materially comfortable lifestyle isn't measured simply by how much gold or treasure you have. A High Priestess of Regos in the Imperial Capital may own very little, but her lifestyle is one of almost unimaginable opulence, her every material need catered for by a vast network of servitors and suppliers. Even a humble agriculturalist in the Timosian Properties may never see more than a few silver pieces a year, but nevertheless his bloodline, house, and community provide for his needs.

The Resources skill measures this. It measures how opulent your lifestyle is, and how well you can draw on your community for material support. It affects your wealth stress track (see below), and sits parallel to your wealth stress track and any treasure or coin you have. See page 170 in **Chapter 9: Equipment** for more.

🕒 **Overcome:** Avoid or bypass a problem when throwing money at it would help, including bribery, auctions, and bidding wars (which might be challenges or contests). You can also take *A Few Hours* (or longer, depending on context) to spend or reallocate your resources to help others recover from mild **social consequences** (page 235); more serious consequences require more significant interventions (see the Bail Out stunt below).

🔄 **Manoeuvre:** Roll Resources against an item's price to purchase it, bringing to bear your money, community support, creditworthiness, and access to material resources to exchange what's needed for the item you desire. This gives you an aspect representing the item. Resources manoeuvres can also grease the wheels and make people more friendly, whether that involves bribes or just buying drinks.

⚔️ **Attack:** Make attacks in wealth conflicts (page 227).

🛡️ **Defend:** Defend in wealth conflicts (page 227).

Special: Your Resources skill gives you additional wealth stress boxes and consequence slots (page 48). Resources 1 or 2 gives you a 3-point stress box; Resources 3 or 4 gives you a 3-point and a 4-point stress box; and Resources 5 gives you an additional mild consequence slot as well as the 3-point and 4-point stress boxes.

Stunts

♦ Bail Out

Use Resources to help another person recover from moderate or severe social consequences.

♦ Money Talks

Use Resources instead of Rapport when trying to influence people. Constraints due to Pillar and social class likely still apply.

♦ Trade And Transport

You have access to a caravan or trading ship capable of transporting trade goods. You understand the ins and outs of trading, and can use your Resources skill for trading actions (see the *Chronicler's Guide*).

◆ We're Hiring!

Requires Money Talks

Your largesse can induce members of a community to join your endeavour as a sub-community for as long as you continue to pay them. Use Resources to make Assimilate overcome actions; every AP you gain costs you 1 point of wealth stress or 1 treasure point. The recruitment lasts as long as the “current endeavour”, then must be made again or the sub-community departs back to its origins. You incur the usual scale penalties (page 236) for interacting with the target community. See the *Chronicle's Guide* for full rules for communities.

Buying Things

Buying things is described fully in Chapter 9: Equipment. To buy an item, make a Resources manoeuvre against its price; if you succeed, you acquire that item (if it's important, you actually gain the item as an aspect, with a free invoke as usual, but often that's not relevant in play). You may burn wealth stress (page 171) and use treasure or coinage for bonuses on this roll. Indeed, if you've acquired enough treasure or coinage, you can simply exchange it for the item—but you don't have to, you always have the option of making the roll (except in very unusual circumstances, as determined by your Chronicler).



Ride

You can ride one of the land-based riding beasts of the Springtide Civilisations. Having this skill means you already have an appropriate mount, usually a horse, unless your homeland, kindred, or other community provides you with something different. Broadly speaking, this skill works like Athletics, except that its capabilities are those of your mount rather than you.

🐾 **Overcome:** Get your steed to make physical movement actions like running, jumping, climbing, etc; or move between **zones** (page 209) in a conflict if you're facing opposition from an aspect, obstacle, block, barrier, or other characters. Compete in contests or challenges involving such activities, like chases and races.

🐾 **Manoeuvre:** Get your steed to jump to higher ground, run faster than an opponent, or (as long as the steed is capable) perform surprising or disorienting movements to confuse or evade opponents.

🐾 **Attack:** Get your steed to ram, buffet, or trample a target. If the target is the same **size** (page 235) as your mount, you take the same amount of damage you inflict, which you may share between you and your mount. If the target is smaller than your mount, you take no damage. You may not ram, buffet, or trample targets which are larger than your mount. See also “Mounted Combat” on page 257.

🐾 **Defend:** Avoid hand-to-hand or ranged weapon attacks directed against you or your mount in a physical conflict; prevent others making manoeuvres against you; stop someone getting past you and your mount if you can physically do so.

Stunts

◆ *Animal-Drawn Vehicles*

You're skilled in handling vehicles drawn by draught animals, including war waggons and chariots (page 248). Without this stunt, you may just make simple movements—essentially guiding a vehicle over simple terrain to a destination. With this stunt, you know about the capabilities of various vehicles, may make manoeuvres to assess weak spots and strengths, exploit those capabilities in physical combat, and generally take all Ride actions with a vehicle.

◆ *Animal Handler*

You may use Ride instead of Empathy, Lore or Rapport when dealing with draught animals.

◆ *Cavalry Charge*

Requires Mounted Charge

This is a type of formation attack; although you can do it alone, you can also make a cavalry charge with other riders, all of whom must have this stunt. When you make a Mounted Charge attack (below), you may also use your Ride skill instead of Provoke to terrify the living daylights out of your target or targets. Use the highest of your Ride skills; other riders may provide teamwork bonuses (page 202). Targets resist with Willpower if they're on foot, or a combined roll of Ride and primary Willpower (page 194) if mounted.

◆ *Hell For Leather*

Coax more speed out of your mount than is normally possible. In a contest where speed is the primary factor (like a chase or race), a tie on your Ride roll is considered a success.

◆ *Mounted Charge*

Make a Ride roll to rush a non-adjacent target and attack them with a Melee Combat or Ride attack in the same action, depending on whether it's you or your steed making the attack. The target must be 2 or 3 **zones** (page 209) away. You keep any weapon-related bonuses. Your mount may only make a mounted charge if its movement is unrestricted.

◆ *On Your Tail*

Act at a +2 skill level in Ride actions to pursue another rider or shake off pursuit.

Sailing

Sailing is the skill of handling waterborne vessels, from a simple one-person skiff to a huge multi-decked sailing ship with a crew of a hundred or more. It's not specifically command knowledge, but the practical aspects of water navigation, from knowing about tides and currents to methods of depth determination, using and maintaining sails and rigging, and determining position using sextants, the stars, and piloting rutters. Having this skill means you have access to a boat or ship—usually something pretty small, unless your homeland, kindred, or other community says otherwise. See the *Chronicler's Guide* for much more about sailing vessels.

☞ **Overcome:** Use Sailing like Athletics when guiding a water vessel through difficult conditions (rough seas, rip tides, strong currents, adverse weather conditions, reefs and rocks), as well as shaking pursuit or catching up with pursued vessels (which may be a challenge or contest).

☞ **Manoeuvre:** Determine the best course between two points, learning sea and coastal features as aspects; declare you know a *Convenient Shortcut* or *Safe Route* as appropriate; perform fancy manoeuvres with your vessel ("Hard about and furl the mainsail!").

☞ **Attack:** Ram another waterborne target, although your vessel also takes any stress damage you inflict.

☞ **Defend:** Avoid damage to your vessel in physical conflicts, prevent opponents from manoeuvring against you, or stop someone getting past you in a similar-sized vessel or smaller.

Stunts

◆ *Belay That Order!*

Once per session, for a fate point, re-roll any Sailing roll taken by your vessel, acting at a +2 skill level on the new roll. This must be done immediately after the first action has been rolled but before the reaction of any target has been determined.

◆ *Damage Control*

During scenes where your vessel is actively taking damage, you may use Sailing for stress and mild consequence treatment rolls.

◆ *Ramming Speed!*

Ignore 2 stress points of damage when ramming another vehicle. If you ram for 4 stress damage, your vessel only takes 2 points itself.

◆ *Sense Location*

Your sense for where you are in the world borders on the supernatural. You've probably travelled extensively on the seas and waterways of the Springtide Civilisations, mostly hugging the coasts but occasionally heading into the big blue. Act at a +2 skill level in Sailing manoeuvres to know to within a hundred kilometres where you are anywhere in the Middle Sea or along the coasts of the Venerable Autocracy. If you're elsewhere, a special success lets you draw useful conclusions about your location, even if you might not know exactly where you are. At night, you can invoke *The Sea of Stars* for an additional bonus, and even figure out something meaningful about your location when deep inland.

◆ *She'll Hold Together!*

Requires Damage Control

Once per session, for a fate point, reduce the severity of a consequence your vessel has taken by one step. This takes an action.

Stealth

Stealth is the ability to operate unseen, creeping around and avoiding detection, hiding, sneaking, and leaving no trace. The skill of thieves, ambushers, spies, and assassins, it's a physical ability; social and interpersonal stealth, etc, is best handled using the Deceive skill.

🕵️ **Overcome:** Get past a situation requiring you to not be detected, like sneaking past guards, hiding from view, or avoiding leaving traces as you rifle through a room, library, or series of objects.

🕵️ **Manoeuvre:** Position yourself for ambushes, or avoid them; be *Like a Shadow* when sneaking past guard posts and sentry boxes; or *Leave a Calling Card* when you've broken into a secure location and got out again.

🛡️ **Defend:** Foil Notice or Investigate attempts to seek you out or track you down.

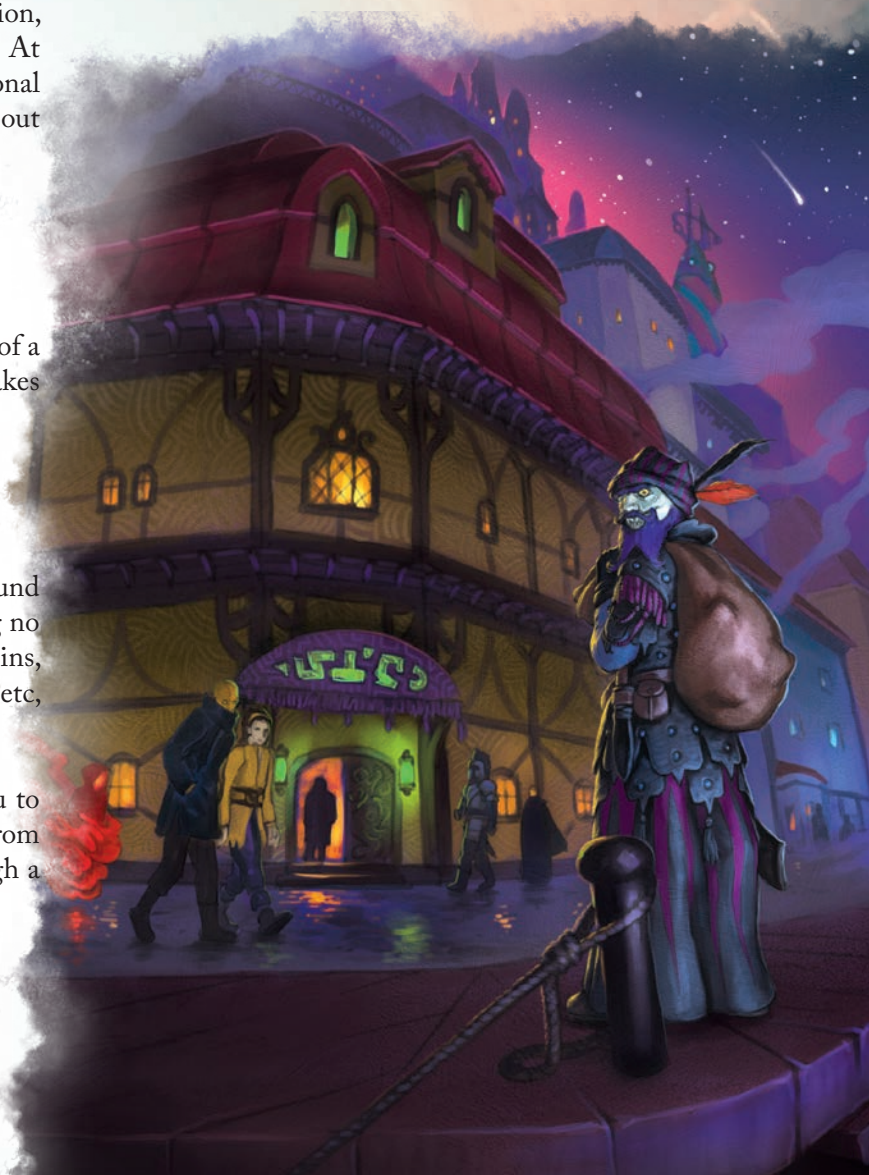
Stunts

◆ *Ambush*

Use Stealth to make physical attacks, as long as your target is unaware of your presence; their defend result is considered to be 0.

◆ *Face in the Crowd*

Act at a +2 skill level in Stealth actions to lose yourself in a large crowd.



♦ *Follow My Lead*

Stealth isn't really a teamwork skill, but this stunt lets your Stealth roll include 1 additional person per level of skill.

♦ *Slippery Target*

As long as you remain in darkness or shadow, whether natural or magical, use Stealth to defend against Ranged Combat attacks from at least 1 zone away.

♦ *Vanish*

Once per scene, spend a fate point to vanish while in plain sight, placing a *Vanished* aspect on yourself. While you're *Vanished*, opponents may not make attack actions or manoeuvres against you, unless they first succeed at a Notice overcome roll (meaning they have to use their action in a round to try). The aspect goes away as soon as you invoke it, or someone makes the overcome roll.

Survival

Survival is the skill of living off the land, knowing how to survive and move around in natural environments, what the principal dangers of that environment are, as well as making camp, not getting lost, hunting, and so on. It's primarily a knowledge skill, but implies also the practical application of that knowledge. Survival is frequently used when **travelling in the wilderness**: see the *Chronicle's Guide*.

🏕️ **Overcome:** Make Camping rolls to see how well you set camp and pass the night, etc; cross a perilous stretch of wilderness without mishap.

🏠 **Manoeuvre:** Make Provisioning rolls to see how well you live off the land; declare details about the local environment like *Hidden Oases*, *Secret Springs of Unpolluted Water*, etc; set animal traps and snares, alarms and trips around camp.

🛡️ **Defend:** Defend yourself against actively damaging environmental hazards like forest fires, volcanic eruptions, storms, flash floods, tornadoes, etc.

Stunts

♦ *[Environment] Expert*

Select a specific environment, and act at a +2 skill level in all Survival actions relating to that environment. You can be a Desert Expert, Jungle Expert, Forest Expert, Mountain Expert, and so on.

♦ *Know Direction*

You've an uncanny sense for knowing where the sun is in relation to the time of day and season and deducing the direction you're facing or moving in. Act at a +2 skill level when making navigating rolls when knowing or heading in the right direction is an important factor.

♦ *Tracking*

Use Survival instead of Investigate or Notice when attempting to follow a target you can't see by tracking its spoor.

Unarmed Combat

Your ability to fight at close quarters (in the same **zone**—see page 209) using your natural weapons: hitting people with fists and kicks, throwing them, martial arts, and so on. This skill also covers the natural attacks (teeth, claws, etc) of animals.

🥋 **Overcome:** Show off your martial arts prowess in a contest or demonstration; participate in a regulated sporting or ritual bout.

🥋 **Manoeuvre:** Perform special moves like dirty tricks, attempts to disarm, to assess an opponent's fighting style, to spot weaknesses you can exploit, like physical weaknesses or areas unprotected by armour. See page 220 for more examples.

🥋 **Attack:** Make unarmed hand-to-hand physical attack actions at range R0 or R-1 (page 232); you must be in the same **zone** (page 209) as your opponent.

🥋 **Defend:** Defend against attacks or manoeuvres made with Unarmed Combat or Melee Combat, and any action where interposing yourself could prevent it from happening. You can't use Unarmed Combat to defend against Ranged Combat attacks.

Stunts

◆ *Heavy Hitter*

On a special success Unarmed Combat roll, reduce your shifts by 1 to gain an additional full condition aspect with 1 free invoke, instead of the usual boost.

◆ *Killing Stroke*

Once per scene, when you force an opponent to take a consequence from an Unarmed Combat attack, pay 1 fate point to increase the severity of that consequence by one step. If your opponent was already going to take a severe consequence, he must either take that severe consequence and another consequence, or be taken out (page 216).

◆ *Martial Arts*

You're the student of a martial arts style of unarmed combat—choose a name for it, such as the famed Tung Mai martial art of Tiridat (page 352). Act at a +2 skill level in combat manoeuvres (page 220) using Unarmed Combat.

Willpower

Willpower represents your mental fortitude, and is used to resist attempts to force you to change your mental state, whether mundane (from Provoke, etc) or magical. Willpower is a key skill for **psionics** (page 352). It also affects your mental stress track.

🧠 **Overcome:** Solve puzzles and riddles or decipher codes that require no specific knowledge but just the willpower to battle through them; overcome obstacles which are a matter of time, willpower, and brute mental force, including games of mental concentration.

🧘 **Manoeuvre:** Put yourself into states of deep mental concentration or focus to help with other tasks.

👊 **Attack:** Usually you can't use Willpower to make attacks. However, some abilities, like psionics (page 352), let you do precisely that.

🛡️ **Defend:** Defend against mental attacks from Provoke, and potentially other sources if you're psionic (page 352).

Special: Your Willpower skill gives you additional mental stress boxes and consequence slots (page 48). Willpower 1 or 2 gives you a 3-point stress box; Willpower 3 or 4 gives you a 3-point and a 4-point stress box; and Willpower 5 gives you an additional mild consequence slot as well as the 3-point and 4-point stress boxes.

Stunts

◆ *Fortress of the Will*

Act at a +2 skill level in Willpower defend actions against Provoke and Willpower attacks to cause mental damage or control.

◆ *Hard-Boiled*

Once per session, ignore a mild or moderate consequence for the rest of the scene; it can't be compelled against you or invoked by your opponents. At the end of the scene, the consequence returns, but worse; a mild consequence becomes a moderate consequence, and a moderate consequence becomes severe.

◆ *Indomitable*

Act at a +2 skill level in Willpower defend actions against Provoke attacks related to intimidation and fear.

◆ *Rage Against the Night*

Requires Hard-Boiled

Once per session, ignore a severe consequence or taken out result for the rest of the scene. At the end of the scene, your severe consequence becomes an extreme consequence (page 216); if you were already on track to be taken out, you're taken out and incur an extreme consequence (just in case you survive...).

◆ *Sleep When You're Dead!*

Use Willpower instead of Physique to resist fatigue, exhaustion, or sleep deprivation.



Equipment

Your character may own and use **equipment** to help him perform tasks: weapons, armour, and things like accommodation, foodstuffs, and clothing.

You begin play with any equipment you need to use your skills and stunts, plus any additional gear listed in your homeland, kindred, and occupation builds. Note your equipment on your character sheet, and cross-reference items on the tables below to see how they work in play.

Sometimes you'll want other gear: trail provisions when heading into the wilderness, a better weapon, replacement armour when yours gets trashed in combat. If you lose a key item, you may be unable to fully use a skill or stunt until you repair or replace it. This chapter shows you how.

ACQUIRING EQUIPMENT

Acquiring equipment can just mean handing over a stack of coins at your local emporium, but equally it can mean calling in favours, exerting influence, asking friends, family, temple, legion, or even your village or local community to give or loan you the things you need.

Such activities are governed by the Resources skill (page 164): you can make a Resources roll to acquire an item. You can **burn status or wealth stress** (page 215) for bonuses when doing this, representing favours called in, savings raided, assets liquidated, and so on. In the Springtide Civilisations, economic relations are ritualised, and people can go their whole lives without ever resorting to money.

Still, trade exists, legions get paid, and tomb robbers return from undercities laden with treasure; these things are handled by coin. The highest denomination in the Venerable Autocracy is the golden **templar** (or **T**), also called a **tharius**. A templar is a huge amount of money—you can buy a flamelance for 32 templars. It's also the unit for measuring “treasure”, when it's called a **treasure point** (also abbreviated **T**). See the “Coinage” textbox below for more.

AVAILABILITY OF EQUIPMENT

Not every item of equipment is available everywhere. If you're in a remote mountain village with a handful of inhabitants, you probably can't conjure up three broadswords, seven scale hauberks, and an elenisor, no matter how wealthy or well-connected you are. Equipment has a **scarcity** rating, ranging from Common, through Uncommon, Rare, Extremely Rare, to Unique.

You can generally find whatever gear you want in an **archaeopolis**—the largest type of city in the Venerable Autocracy. Even then, an item that's Rare or above will require tracking down—check with your Chronicler. In small villages, you may have trouble finding even Uncommon items. Failing a Resources roll may mean the item you want isn't available at any price. Most items in this chapter are Common.

BUYING EQUIPMENT DURING PLAY

If you want a new item of equipment during play, and the item is available, you can buy it by rolling Resources against the item's **treasure point value** as a difficulty. If you like, the treasure point value represents an item's price in golden templars. You can burn wealth stress for bonuses (page 215), and also spend any treasure you have for a +1 bonus for every templar that treasure is worth. So, you can spend 20 silver shields (equivalent to 2 templars) for a +2 bonus on your Resources roll. You do this **after you've rolled the dice**: you don't need to use money if you roll well, nor do you lose it if you roll really badly; but you can spend treasure to make up the difference to turn a failed roll into a success.

In fact, you can just spend treasure points directly to buy an item, instead of making a Resources roll. This avoids the risk of failures or (worse!) fumbles. If you've accumulated treasure worth 32 templars, you can spend it directly to buy a flamelance (assuming there's one available). Usually, though, you'll roll Resources and spend treasure as required to make up the difference.

Between sessions of play, your Chronicler may require you to spend treasure points to buy equipment anyway, assuming it makes narrative sense; this lets you start play by saying you've got new gear!

Coinage

*There are many denominations of coin in the Venerable Autocracy. These include the golden **templar** (T), also called a **tharius**, after *Thar*, an aspect of the god *Vareltias the Trader Lord*, which is worth 10 silver **shields** (S), a large coin, two of which will buy you a nice dagger. A silver shield is worth 10 silver **dinars** (D), a fingernail-sized coin which represents a day's pay for a labourer. One dinar is worth 10 copper **minims** (M); one of which will buy you a measure of cheap wine or a loaf of bread. That's pretty much the smallest denomination (well, there are half- and quarter-minim pieces, if you're really hard up...).*

So that means:

1 templar = 10 shields = 100 dinars = 1000 minims

In daily life, most people rarely use coins—they're more for traders, travellers, legionnaires and temples. For most, resources are shared by the community, following ancient privileges and traditions. For travelling folk, though, money is one fragile way of coping with the dislocation from your support network.

Most equipment in this chapter is priced in silver shields (abbreviated “S”). Simply divide by 10 and round up to find the equivalent value in templars or treasure points.

How Equipment Works

Equipment gives you a **permission** to act in certain ways. Sometimes you have it automatically; sometimes it's significant enough to mention on your character sheet; and sometimes it's a big deal, letting you do things you couldn't normally do.

Equipment is also **temporary**, meaning it might get lost, damaged, or simply run out. Your Chronicler may sometimes declare you've lost a piece of equipment, or it's damaged, reducing your ability to act until you repair or replace it. This can happen, for example, when you incur a **serious cost** (page 200).

Default Equipment

The first thing equipment does is allow you to use your skills and stunts **in normal ways**. If you have the Melee Combat skill, you automatically have a single small weapon (maybe a knife or singlestick, or a tree branch you're using as a club). It doesn't give you any bonuses; you can just use your skill. Likewise, if you have the Ranged Combat skill, you automatically have a self bow or maybe a set of throwing knives, or maybe just a lump of rock you've picked up ready to throw at someone. Under certain circumstances you may lose even these items as a consequence of combat or other action, or they may be damaged, giving you a consequence penalty until you make a **treatment roll** (page 233) to repair or replace them (quick—find another rock!).

Equipment As Aspects

The second thing equipment does is allow you to describe your actions **in special ways**. You probably can't normally use your Athletics to climb a sheer castle wall; but if you have some rope, maybe you can. Equipment like this influences the actions you can describe. You don't automatically have this kind of equipment; you must go out of your way to acquire it. Your occupation, homeland, kindred, or an aspect may give it you as a starting piece of equipment; otherwise you'll need money or a Resources roll.

In rules terms, a Resources roll to acquire an item is a **manoeuvre** (page 200), meaning the item you get is actually an **aspect**. Don't sweat this too much; often it doesn't matter. But the aspect is implicit in the item, and you can invoke it, as well as just describing your actions using that item appropriately (because **aspects are always true**—see page 125). So, that rope lets you try to climb the castle wall (using Athletics in a special way), and for a fate point it can also give you a re-roll or a bonus. If you have a weapon other than a default weapon, you can invoke it for an attack bonus, and so on.

.....
For example, you need a Lockpick Set to pick locks. If you're pressed for time, you can pay a fate point to invoke that item for a bonus or re-roll on a Burglary skill roll to pick a lock. If you've plenty of time, you can try a separate Burglary manoeuvre using the Lockpick Set, to create a situation aspect you could invoke for free on your subsequent Burglary roll to pick the lock.

Equipment With Capabilities

Third, equipment can have **capabilities**—especially weapons and armour. Capabilities are like special abilities, but are limited in scope and power; they're described in the corresponding sections below. Capabilities can be aspects, bonuses, or other advantages. If an item has capabilities, you can use them automatically when you possess that item—you don't have to spend AP to acquire them. Capabilities include **stress increases** (or SI) for weapons and **stress reductions** (or SR) for armour. Unless otherwise specified, equipment capabilities are subject to the **bonus cap** (page 195).

Equipment With Constraints

Some items come with **constraints**. These may act as aspects (often as obstacles), or may impose other penalties. You're subject to an item's constraints when you use that item. Example constraints include *Two-Handed* and *Clumsy and Difficult to Manoeuvre*.

EQUIPMENT DURATION

Equipment can have a **duration** or lifespan; armour takes damage, weapons may have ammunition. An item may even be single use: once it's been used, it's spent, and you have to replace or repair it. If an item has been acquired with a Resources roll, then it hangs around as long as it makes sense for it to do so. If you've run into the market and thrown some money at a merchant and leapt on a racing ornither to chase the fleeing cambriother, then you have an ornither; but maybe that's not something you're really interested in including in your subsequent adventure in the undercity, so it just sticks around for that scene. Alternatively, after years of searching, you've finally acquired your own flamelance, had it lovingly restored by the rust artificers at the Temple of Khosht, and now you don't want to let it out of your sight. In that case, it can stick around on your character sheet more or less permanently (although it's still fair game for Chronicler plot material and damage as required).

Cementing Equipment

By its nature, equipment can be a volatile commodity, and may be lost as part of an adventure. Sometimes, though, you might consider an item to be especially important to your character—maybe it's part of who he is as a person, and something you don't want to lose access to just because of a bad dice roll or other whim of fate.

If this is the case, consider incorporating a mention of that item into one of your aspects. For example, if you're Habren the Brave, Bearer of the Fire Sword, then it's pretty clear that the Fire Sword is special to your character, and shouldn't get snapped in two when you accidentally step on it when dismounting your chelother. Incorporating an item of equipment into an aspect lets your Chronicler know that item isn't up for casual disposal—she may still place it in peril sometimes, and it won't be completely immune, but it's a way of protecting it narratively.

MATERIALS

The Earth is old, and most accessible ores have been mined out long ago. Metal items are rare and expensive, and far from the norm; instead, the peoples of the Springtide Civilisations have come up with other things to make equipment from.

Alagin

Happily, there's a replacement for metal. The Hsun Spider Folk "grow" a form of natural fibre glass, an organic horn- or shell-like material known as **alagin**, which can be formed into tools, including weapons and armour.

Alagin isn't as hard or durable as iron and steel, and degrades quickly; weapons lose their edge or break, armour dries and cracks and becomes useless. But it's very malleable, often into fanciful shapes. Common, lightweight, and repairable by **hsuntach tinkers** (page 117), most items you'd imagine being iron or steel are actually alagin.

Metal

While the Magigi provide limited quantities of brass and copper ingots from their deep, hot mines, and Khosht's artificers magically salvage metal from the corroded strata of the undercities, there's another source of metal available to the Venerable Autocracy: the mysterious world of Ladabran, accessible only via planing machine beneath the Autocrator's Palace in Glorious Kados. It's furiously expensive but, if you can afford it, you can have yourself a priceless Ladabran steel blade, or even—riches of riches!—a suit of steel plate armour!

In the Venerable Autocracy, metal items are **at least** 10 times as expensive as alagin equivalents, and often swathed in protective sorceries. They're also more durable, and usually inflict or absorb more damage, or provide other advantages (including social ones—Ladabran steel is flashy!). You'll need excellent contacts to even be allowed to bid on Ladabran steel weapons and armour.

Other Materials

Wood, stone, bone, and leather are also used to make equipment. Soft and durable *talasp* hide is popular, and other exotic materials too; the hollow-boned Kesh make armour from the shell of the gigantic insectoid *tamagant*! Such materials may have capabilities or constraints—see below.

A Note on Pricing

The prices in this chapter are guidelines, calculated using the formulas in the artefacts chapter of the Chronicler's Guide.

ARMOUR

Most Sakari armour is finely quilted, linen or sometimes silk; or alagin plate or scale. Leather is *bayuri* sheep, *kenek* ox, or *talasp* hide. Alagin armour degrades with use, although sorcery or *hsun* tinkers can fix this.

When you acquire armour, you may choose a helm to go with it. You may also wear a helm without armour.

Armour Parameters

Name

We've (somewhat arbitrarily) organised armour into "suits", representing the ensembles most people probably choose. You can customise these—check with your Chronicler.

Stress Reduction (SR)

Armour reduces or "absorbs" some or all of the stress you'd otherwise suffer when taking damage (see page 214): a -1 **stress reduction** (SR) reduces a 3 shift hit to 2 shifts. Armour can reduce stress from multiple attacks in a single round. SR isn't affected by the bonus cap (page 195).

Consequences

Sometimes armour can absorb more than just stress; some can take **consequences** (see pages 215 and 219) on your behalf, representing damage to your armour. When armour takes consequences, those consequences can be invoked to represent things like gaping gaps in your protection, loose plates which trip you up or otherwise disadvantage you, and so on. Armour consequences don't get better on their own; you must **repair** the armour to get rid of them (page 146).

In Table 9-1: Armour, note that "1" means the armour can take 1 mild consequence, "2" means 1 mild and 1 moderate consequence, and "3" means 1 mild, 1 moderate, and 1 severe consequence.

Notes

Useful information about the armour, including any **Capabilities and Constraints** (see below).

Price

The base selling price of the armour, in silver shields (S). Divide by 10 and round up to get the **treasure point value** (page 171).

Enc

The **encumbrance rating** of the armour when worn. See page 192.

Armour Capabilities and Constraints

We've presented armour capabilities and constraints together; some provide bonuses, others act as aspects or constraints for those wearing the armour.

☉ Carrying a Shield

Offers **half cover** (page 221) against Ranged Combat attacks, or **full cover** if you're performing a **full defence** (page 213).

✗ *Clumsy and Difficult to Manoeuvre*

You can't move much, and have difficulty parrying. Incur +1 Doom Die on rolls requiring agility and on defend rolls in melee combat.

✗ *Difficult to Sprint*

You can't move faster than a brisk jog with this armour, and incur +1 Doom Die on any rolls requiring agility.

⊙ *Excellent Protection*

Your armour has few gaps and easily deflects attacks. You may invoke this as an aspect on your defend actions.

✗ *Flimsy*

Your armour is especially susceptible to the **Break Weapon or Shield** and **Tear Away Armour** combat manoeuvres (page 222), and you face an **obstacle** when using Melee Combat to defend against them.

⊙ *Good Protection Against Bludgeoning Attacks*

You may increase your armour's SR by 1 when reducing stress from bludgeoning attacks.

✗ *Head Partially Protected*

An opponent who targets your head in a **Precise Attack** (page 223), or pays a fate point on a successful attack, faces only an SR -1, or an SR of 0 if your original SR was -1, and you can't use any of your armour's consequences to offset damage.

✗ *Heavy and Noisy*

You face an **obstacle** (page 201) on any dice rolls involving stealth or agility.

⊙ *Highly Decorated*

Your armour is highly polished, chased with precious metals, inlaid with gems, etc, giving you a +1 bonus on dice rolls to cow or impress.

✗ *Hot and Heavy*

This armour is exhausting to wear. You may fight in it or undertake similar extremely strenuous activity (running, etc) for a number of rounds equal to your Physique skill, after which you incur 1 point of physical stress damage per round due to overheating and fatigue. You may regain the stress lost at a rate of 1 point per round spent resting.

⊙ *Ladabran Steel*

Your armour automatically absorbs 1 additional consequence. Additionally, any non-critical consequences it sustains from alagin, stone, or wooden weapons, or from unarmed attacks, may be repaired immediately after combat on a successful Devise roll. See page 146.

✗ *Light Protection*

This armour is ineffective against missile weapons, zone effect attacks, and attacks by two-handed weapons or opponents of Size 1 (Large) or greater.

⊙ *Lower Body Protection*

Your feet and legs have SR-3 protection, and you can walk over sharp or otherwise hazardous surfaces without problem.

✗ *Limited Vision and Hearing*

Acts as an aspect; any rolls to see or hear things face an **obstacle**.

✗ *Susceptible to Bludgeoning Weapons*

Any successful attacks by bludgeoning weapons against this armour cause it to crack, splinter, and shatter, causing an automatic consequence or, if the armour can take no further consequences, reducing its SR by 1. Armour reduced to SR 0 is broken beyond repair.

✗ *Unarmoured*

This acts as an aspect, and may be invoked or compelled by your opponent.

✗ *Unprotected Arms, Head, Legs, or Torso*

An opponent who targets your arms, head, legs, or torso (as appropriate), or pays a fate point to invoke this constraint for effect, can ignore your armour's SR and consequences.

TABLE 9-1: ARMOUR (1/2)

ARMOUR	STRESS REDUCTION	CONS	NOTES	PRICE (S)	ENC
Full Body and Partial Armour					
Partial armour requires you to wear vambraces, greaves, boots, etc, to avoid the <i>Unprotected Arms</i> and <i>Unprotected Legs</i> constraints; not wearing at least partial armour incurs the <i>Unprotected Torso</i> constraint. Full body armour avoids both. You still need a mask, helm, or other headgear to avoid the <i>Unprotected Head</i> constraint.					
Doublet	n/a		Partial armour.	4.5	0.5
Hides or Heavy Robes	n/a		Full body armour. <i>Hot and Heavy</i> .	5	1
Bone Armour	-1	1	Full body armour, optionally including the head. <i>Susceptible to Bludgeoning Weapons</i> constraint.	11	2
Leather or Linen Armour	-1		Full body armour. <i>Unprotected Head</i> constraint.	10	1
Wooden Armour	-1		Full body armour, except <i>Unprotected Arms</i> constraint. Used by the Che Kwa. Uncommon.	22*	2
Lamellar Cuirass	-2		Partial armour. Hundreds of boiled leather plates laced together, often lacquered.	23.5	1.5
Linothorax Cuirass	-2	1	Partial armour. Front and back plates of stiffened glued linen or leather boiled in wax.	40.5	1.5
Tamagant Shell Armour	-2	2	Full body armour. Usually worn by Kesh elenisor riders (page 68). Uncommon.	138*	1
Scale Hauberk	-3		Full body armour except <i>Unprotected Legs</i> . <i>Good Protection Against Bludgeoning Attacks</i> . Hundreds of solid alagin plates, laced together and fastened with a backing.	55	2
Chain Hauberk	-3	1	Full body armour except <i>Unprotected Legs</i> . Solid ring-shaped links woven to form a long shirt. Very flexible but also a <i>Heavy and Noisy</i> constraint.	68	3
Plate Mail	-3	2	Partial armour. Disc and square solid plates laced together and fastened onto a backing. <i>Highly Decorated</i> .	107	3
Plate Cuirass	-3	3	Partial armour. Solid front and back plates connected by leather straps. Usually moulded in the form of an idealised human torso. <i>Highly Decorated</i> . <i>Difficult to Sprint</i> constraint.	138	3

* ½ price if bought at source.

TABLE 9-1: ARMOUR (2/2)

ARMOUR	STRESS REDUCTION	CONS	NOTES	PRICE (S)	ENC
Masks, Helms, and Headgear					
You must wear wear a mask, helm, or headgear to avoid the <i>Unprotected Head</i> constraint.					
Conical Helmet			<i>Head Partially Protected</i> constraint. Pointed helmet often decorated with plumes and feathers.	5.5	0.5
Full Helmet			<i>Excellent Protection</i> , but <i>Limited Vision and Hearing</i> and <i>Hot and Heavy</i> constraints. Close-fitting helmet with elongated cheek pieces, throat protection, and nose guard.	10.5	0.5
Open Helmet			Same as the conical helmet, but with added plate cheek pieces. Provides full protection for the head.	6.3	0.75
Wooden Mask			Often worn by the Che Kwa. <i>Limited Vision</i> constraint. <i>Intimidating</i> .	19*	0.5
Shields					
Buckler Shield	-1		<i>Light Protection</i> and <i>Flimsy</i> constraints.	9.75	0.25
Round Shield	-2		Carrying a Shield.	31.5	0.5
Tower Shield	-3		Used in Formation Fighting; <i>Carrying a Shield</i> , but <i>Clumsy</i> and <i>Difficult to Manoeuvre</i> constraint.	52	1
No Armour	n/a	n/a	If you don't wear any armour at all, you incur an <i>Unarmoured</i> constraint.	n/a	n/a
Arm and Leg Protection					
If your arms and legs aren't protected, you incur <i>Unprotected Arms</i> and <i>Unprotected Legs</i> constraints respectively.					
Armoured Boots	n/a		<i>Lower Body Protection</i> . Solid thick leather boots reinforced with alagin plate, studs, and heavy soles.	10.5	0.5
Leather Vambraces	n/a		Boiled leather bracers protecting the forearm, sometimes reinforced with strips of plate.	4	0
Plate Greaves	n/a		<i>Difficult to Sprint</i> . Boiled leather or alagin plate.	5.5	0.5

* ½ price if bought at source.



WEAPONS

Pretty much anything can be a weapon if you think hard enough, but the items here have been crafted to kill. You may start with a weapon by virtue of having corresponding skills, stunts, homeland, kindred, or occupation; pick one as appropriate from the table below. You may also spend treasure or make Resources rolls to acquire other weapons.

Weapon Parameters

Name

A broad-brush descriptor for a particular type of weapon. There are many variations—especially if you want your weapon to have additional **capabilities** (see below).

Stress Increase (SI)

Most weapons help you deal more damage, represented by an increase in the stress you inflict **on an already successful attack**, ie you must have achieved at least 1 shift on your attack roll to apply your weapon's stress increase (SI). The SI is not affected by the bonus cap.

Range

For ranged weapons, this describes the distance in **zones** (page 209) a potential target may be from the attacker and still be targeted with the Ranged Combat skill. See page 161.

Notes

Useful information about the weapon, including any **Capabilities and Constraints** (see below). May include the weapon's **Size**: by default, most weapons are Size -2 (Very Small); otherwise it'll be mentioned here.

Price

The weapon's base selling price in silver shields (S). Divide by 10 and round up to get the **treasure point value** (page 171).

Enc

The weapon's **encumbrance rating** (page 192) when carried.

Weapon Capabilities and Constraints

Alagin is grown by the Hsun, and can be formed into elaborate shapes, enabling interesting weapon capabilities. You can have fun making up your own; here are some examples, together with other capabilities and a constraint or two.

☉ Armour Catcher

Your weapon has hooks, snags, saw-teeth, etc, designed to catch on clothes or armour and allow it to be pulled off, or to unbalance or immobilise the target. Gain a +1 bonus on combat manoeuvres like **Knockdown**, **Tear Away Armour**, etc (page 222). You may add this capability to a melee weapon for +18SS.

☉ Basic Weapon

You automatically get one of these weapons by virtue of having the Melee Combat or Ranged Combat skill. If you lose it, you'll have to replace it, but that's usually pretty easy.

☉ Entangling

You can entangle a target, restricting its movements, using a Melee Combat manoeuvre. On a success, you create an *Entangled*-type condition aspect on the target which acts as an obstacle to all physical actions until removed. You may also create an *Entangled*-type consequence on any attacks with this weapon.

☉ Exotic Shape

Creates off-putting vibrations in your opponent's weapon when you parry. On a special success defend roll, your opponent faces an **obstacle** (page 201) on his next attack roll. You may add this capability to a bladed weapon for +18SS.

☉ Extreme Reach Weapon

Your weapon is very long, and attacks at R1 (page 209), as well as representing an **obstacle** to a target's attempts to close to HTH range (page 232). If you use this weapon in a confined area, or at R0, you face an obstacle on your attack rolls. It may not be used to attack targets at R-1.

☉ *Fiery Bolt*

On a special success attack action, or a successful manoeuvre, you may place an *On Fire* condition aspect on your target. If relevant, this is an incremental hazard beginning at Intensity 2 (page 238).

☉ *Graceful Weapon*

Lightweight and designed to be used with agility more than pure strength. This may be invoked as an aspect, but gives you an automatic +2 bonus on your attack roll if you have the Extremely Gracile constraint (page 69).

☉ *Haft-Bar Prevents Closing*

If you hit a target with a special success, your target may not attempt to close range until he has rolled an Athletics manoeuvre to remove himself from the weapon's haft. During the same time, you may not attack another target, but your attack on your current target always succeeds with at least 1 shift.

☉ *HTH Weapon*

The opposite of a *Reach Weapon*, this weapon is designed to be used close up. It may attack at R0 or R-1 (page 211).

☉ *Ladabran Steel*

Your weapon is shiny, sharp, deadly—and priceless, costing at least 10 times its alagin equivalent! Invoke this as an aspect to **ignore alagin**, take zero damage from alagin weapons, slice clean through alagin armour, or gain a bonus on **Break Weapon** and **Tear Off Armour** combat manoeuvres against alagin weapons and armour. Generally speaking, steel weapons only degrade or shatter in combat against other metal weapons.

✕ *Limited Ammunition*

Your weapon relies on separate ammunition for use, and you're only carrying so much. Your attacks use the **Ammunition** rules on page 221.

☉ *Mounted Weapon*

Your weapon is designed for use in **mounted combat** (page 257).

☉ *No Underwater Penalty*

Your weapon may be used underwater with no penalty.

☉ *Parallel Blades*

Your weapon has twin parallel blades, inflicting terrible wounds with a *Hard to Heal* aspect on any consequence. You may add this capability to a blade or axe for +18SS per enc.

☉ *Rapid Fire*

The ranged weapon may attack more than once in a given round. This counts as two capabilities: first, gain a +2 bonus on your attack; and second, attack up to 3 adjacent targets in a single round (but incur an *Out of Ammunition* condition aspect when you do—see page 221).

☉ *Reach Weapon*

Your weapon is long, representing an **obstacle** to the target's attempts to close to HTH range (R-1—see page 211). Attacks against targets at R-1 face an obstacle.

✕ *Reload*

When a missile weapon runs out of ammunition, **and you have some on your person**, your next attack faces an **obstacle** (page 201) as you reload your weapon before attacking. See page 221 also.

☉ *Robust Weapon*

Heavy and massive, designed to be used with strength more than dexterity. This may be invoked as an aspect or with a Physique manoeuvre, unless you have the Extremely Gracile constraint (page 69), in which case your attacks face an **obstacle**.

✕ *Slow and Heavy*

This weapon always attacks last in the initiative order. May also be invoked as an aspect.

☉ *Steady Missile*

Your weapon's projectile moves in a straight line towards its target, giving you a +1 bonus on attack rolls and a +2 bonus on aiming manoeuvres.

☉ *Strike Around Shield*

You may invoke this as an aspect to ignore a target's shield on your attack.

TABLE 9-2: MELEE WEAPONS (1/2)

WEAPON	STRESS INCREASE	NOTES	PRICE (S)	ENC
Dagger	+0	<i>HTH Weapon, Graceful Weapon.</i> Includes the Dafuri sacrificial <i>agnath</i> .	7	0
Knife	+0	<i>HTH Weapon.</i> Includes the P'Tekian <i>gugri</i> . Basic weapon.	2	0
Hand Axe	+0	May also be thrown. Basic weapon.	2.75	0.25
Lasso	n/a	<i>Entangling</i> only; does no damage. May affect targets in an adjacent zone.	5.5	0.5
Net, Barbed	Special	<i>Entangling</i> only; does no attack damage, although a barbed net does 1 point of physical stress damage per round to any target trying to free itself.	19	1
Net, Unbarbed	Special	<i>Entangling</i> only.	3	1
Singlestick	+0	A basic club or truncheon. Basic weapon.	0.1 or free	
Stone Knife	+0	Che Kwa, <i>HTH Weapon</i> . Uncommon.	4*	0
Whip	+0	Does damage; <i>Entangling</i> . Tung Mai whips have obsidian barbs (SI+1, Price 39s*).	2.5	0.5
Quarterstaff	+1	Alagin-shod. For the higher price, this can be a <i>Graceful Weapon</i> . <i>Two-Handed</i> .	7 (12)	1
Shortsword	+1	Impaling weapon.	5.5	0.5
Throwing Axe	+1	Ranged weapon but may be used in melee.	4.75	0.25
Battle Axe	+2	Cutting weapon. Those of the Tung Mai have obsidian edges (price 41s*).	10.5	0.5
Cutlass	+2	Slashing weapon.	10.5	0.5

* ½ price if bought at source.

☉ Sword-breaker Hooks

Your blade has wedges, notches, and hooks designed for catching an attacking blade and twisting and snapping it, or disarming the target. Gain a +1 bonus on **Break Weapon** or **Disarm** combat manoeuvres (page 222). You may add this capability to a blade, axe, or hafted weapon for +18SS.

✕ Two-Handed

This constraint requires you to use two hands to wield this weapon.



TABLE 9-2: MELEE WEAPONS (2/2)

WEAPON	STRESS INCREASE	NOTES	PRICE (S)	ENC
Mace	+2	Bludgeoning weapon.	10.5	0.5
Rapier	+2	<i>Graceful Weapon.</i>	16.5	0.5
Short Spear	+2	May be thrown as a javelin (see below). Impaling weapon.	10.5	0.5
Dafuri Flamberge	+3	A “flame-bladed sword”. <i>Exotic Shape.</i>	23.5	0.5
Broadsword	+3	Includes scimitars. Slashing weapon.	16.5	0.5
Hammer	+3	Wooden haft. Bludgeoning weapon.	16.5	0.5
Long Spear	+3	<i>Reach Weapon.</i> Impaling weapon.	25	1
Morningstar / Spiked Mace	+3	<i>Reach Weapon.</i> Bludgeoning weapon.	25	1
Aiforian Kaitesh	+4	<i>Reach Weapon, Two-Handed.</i> A halberd-like weapon, customized with <i>Armour Catchers</i> and <i>Swordbreaker Hooks</i> .	104*	1
Heavy Mace	+4	<i>Slow and Heavy.</i> Bludgeoning weapon. <i>Two-Handed.</i>	26.5	1.5
Military Flail	+4	Strike Around Shield. Two-Handed.	33	1
Protean Guard Lance	+4	<i>Haft-Bar Prevents Closing; Mounted Weapon; Reach Weapon; Two-Handed.</i> Uncommon.	107*	1.5
Scythe	+4	<i>Reach Weapon, Two-Handed.</i> Slashing weapon. <i>Cumbersome</i> agricultural versions are half-price.	33	1
Two-Tooth	+4	<i>Reach Weapon, Two-Handed.</i> The florid, double-bladed, obsidian halberd of the Tung Mai.	120*	1.5
Bastard Sword	+4 / +5	May be used <i>Two-Handed</i> , in which case it has SI+5. Slashing weapon.	32.25	0.75
Cavalry Lance	+5	<i>Mounted Weapon.</i> Impaling weapon.	45	2
Maul / Great Hammer	+5	<i>Two-Handed.</i> Bludgeoning weapon.	34.5	1.5
Pike	+5	<i>Difficult to Manoeuvre, Extreme Reach Weapon.</i> Impaling weapon.	45	2
Great Axe	+6	<i>Slow and Heavy. Two-Handed.</i> Cutting weapon.	43.5	1.5
Great Sword	+6	<i>Reach Weapon, Slow and Heavy, Two-Handed.</i> Slashing weapon.	53.5	1.5

* ½ price if bought at source.

TABLE 9-3: RANGED WEAPONS (1/2)

WEAPON	STRESS INCREASE	RANGE ¹	NOTES	PRICE (S)	ENC
Thrown Weapons					
A thrown weapon may be used only once before you must make a manoeuvre action, if possible, to retrieve it.					
Bolas	n/a	2	<i>Entangling</i> only; does no damage.	3.5	0.5
Hand Axe	+0	1	May also be a melee weapon.	2.75	0.25
Throwing Knife	+0	1	Graceful Weapon.	2.3	0.1
Throwing Axe	+1	1	Impaling weapon.	4.75	0.25
Throwing Star / Dart	+1	1	Most throwing stars are obsidian Tung Mai <i>dati</i> . Half a dozen. Uncommon. Frequently poisoned.	60*	0.3
Javelin	+2	2	May be wielded on foot as a short spear.	10.5	0.5

1: See page 209 for ranged weapon ranges.

* ½ price if bought at source.



HEAVY WEAPONS

Includes siege warfare weapons and larger weapons in general, including turret-mounted **pereprae** (page 365). Heavy weapons act **at scale** (page 236), having a harder job targeting individuals but doing more damage if they hit. Some are **constructs** (page 248) and require a crew.



TABLE 9-3: RANGED WEAPONS (2/2)

WEAPON	STRESS INCREASE	RANGE ¹	NOTES	PRICE (S)	ENC
Missile Weapons					
All missile weapons have the <i>Limited Ammunition</i> constraint, except for the Hsun Bow. All have the <i>Two-Handed</i> constraint, except for the Radium Pistol.					
Self Bow	+0	2	Impaling weapon.	2.3	0.3
Sling	+1	2	Comes with a pouch of bullets.	4.1	0.1
Kesh Hornbow	+2	3	Uncommon. Impaling weapon. <i>Graceful Weapon</i> .	36*	0.3
Short Bow	+2	2	Impaling weapon.	9.5	0.5
Hsun Bow	+3	2	<i>Rapid Fire</i> . A repeating crossbow and a mechanism. Impaling weapon. Uncommon. See page 78.	120*	1
Light Crossbow	+3	2	Attack every round with a <i>Reload</i> obstacle, or every 2 rounds without. Impaling weapon. A mechanism.	31	0.5
Long Bow	+3	3	Impaling weapon.	16	1
Radium Pistol	+3	3	<i>Steady Missile</i> . A mechanism. Uncommon.	154*	0.1
Radium Rifle	+3	4	<i>Steady Missile</i> . A mechanism. Uncommon.	260*	0.5
Composite Bow	+4	3	Impaling weapon.	22.5	0.5
Flamelance	+4	2	<i>Fiery Bolt</i> , <i>Steady Missile</i> . A mechanism. Uncommon.	314*	1
Harpoon	+4	1	Attack every round with a <i>Reload</i> obstacle, or every other round without. <i>No Underwater Penalty</i> . Impaling weapon. A mechanism. Uncommon.	83*	0.5
Heavy Crossbow	+5	3	Attack every other round with a <i>Reload</i> obstacle, or every 2 rounds without. Impaling weapon. A mechanism.	43	1
Arbalest	+6	3	Attack every other round with a <i>Reload</i> obstacle; or every 2 rounds without. Impaling weapon. A mechanism.	55.5	1.5

1: See page 209 for ranged weapon ranges.

* ½ price if bought at source.

TABLE 9-4: HEAVY WEAPONS

WEAPON	SIZE	STRESS INCREASE	RANGE	NOTES	PRICE (S)
Ballista	1	+3	5	<i>Limited Ammunition.</i> A giant crossbow mechanism, fires every round. 2 crew.	127
Battering Ram	2	+6	0	6-10 <i>Vulnerable</i> crew.	263
Catapult	1	+4	4	A siege engine. 2 crew.	124
Chemick Fire Projector	1	+6	4	2 or 4 crew. May fire every round. Rare. <i>Limited Ammunition.</i>	3150
Dragonel	2	+6	2	Fixed emplacement firing flamelance energy in a zone effect. 3 crew.	n/a
Gravity Cannon	3	+6	3	Fixed emplacement. Makes a SI+6 zone effect attack against an area 3 zones wide. 3 crew. Fires every 3 rounds.	n/a
Radium Cannon	1	+5	2	<i>Limited Ammunition.</i> Fires radium shells. Uncommon. Crew 2.	1755
Trebuchet	2	+6	3	<i>Limited Ammunition.</i> Fires every other round. Usually powered by a counterweight. 4 crew.	263

POISONS

Poisons and similar preparations may be acquired from the shops of the Autocracy's **chemickers**. For more on poison and chemick, including brewing your own preparations, see the *Chronicle's Guide*.

A Note on Doses: if you roll Resources to purchase a chemick preparation during play, you normally acquire 1 "dose". However, a special success gets you 3 doses, and a critical gets you 6.

Notes on Poisons

Paralysing Philtre: Waft the philtre at a target in your zone, who must roll a skill like Athletics, Physique, or a power skill like Turmoil (to blow the smoke away!) to defend against an Intensity 3 attack (page 237) causing physical stress; any consequences measure increasing paralysis. You may attack with the philtre for up to 5 rounds before it runs out.

Sleep Gas: Take an action to break the glass vial, filling a zone with sleep gas. **Any** subjects in the zone must roll a skill like Athletics, Physique, or a power skill like Turmoil (to blow the gas away!) to defend against an Intensity 4 attack (page 237) causing physical stress; any consequences measure increasing sleepiness. The gas remains in the zone for 3 rounds unless dispersed.

Systemic Poison: If swallowed or injected, this becomes an **incremental hazard** (page 238) doing physical stress damage. You defend with your Physique skill. It's deadly, but slow-acting.

Talasp Blade Venom: If introduced to a wound, this becomes an **incremental hazard** (page 238), rapidly doing physical stress damage. You defend with your Physique skill.



TABLE 9-5: POISONS

NAME	INTENSITY AND TYPE	DELAY	DURATION	FIRST CONSEQUENCE	COST (S)
Paralysing Philtre	3, paralysing poison	Immediate	5 rounds	<i>Clumsy</i>	80
Sleep Gas	4, gas	<i>A Few Seconds</i>	3 rounds	<i>Groggy</i>	80
Systemic Poison	1, lethal, ingested	<i>Several Minutes</i>	Every <i>Half an Hour</i> until treated or you make a critical defend roll.	<i>Blackened Lips, Stomach Cramps</i>	60
Talasp Blade Venom	1, lethal poison, injected	None	1/round until treated or you make a critical defend roll.	<i>Wracking Pain</i>	40

LIVESTOCK, STEEDS AND TRANSPORT

This section provides example steeds and transport; acquiring these generally requires a permission. Often you'll get a permission by belonging to an occupation or having an appropriate build. Failing that, you can use Resources and treasure to buy one; this replaces the need for the permission, but otherwise the result is identical; you have an aspect representing the steed or vehicle. Strictly speaking, a steed obtained this way in an NPC; and a vehicle is a **construct**, possibly with a **crew** (see the *Chronicler's Guide*).

If you simply want to describe actions with that steed or vehicle, that's all you need, maybe sometimes invoking the aspect for a bonus or re-roll. However, you can also cement the steed or vehicle crew as a **relationship** (page 248) and make use of its abilities more directly.

FOOD AND DRINK

This section provides an introduction to the sort of food and drink found in the Venerable Autocracy. It can be a key part of social interactions and influence attempts, and helps you heal and survive, especially in the wild (see page 168 and the *Chronicler's Guide* for more).

Some Sakari Foodstuffs

Asari: *A rice-like Kesh grain used for baking yesel bread. You can eat it, too.*

Bayuri: *A wool-bearing herd animal the size of a cow, somewhere between a giant goat and sheep. Used in Sakari cooking anywhere north of the Heartlands.*

Jeniri Havas: *Distilled jeniri liqueurs are popular throughout the Autocracy. The Virikki version gives you mental clarity and wild staring eyes; the Magigi version burns!*

Khalub: *Boiled wheat mixed with raisins, pomegranate seeds, herbs, and a sprinkling of roasted flour and sugar. The Sakari street food.*

Ketel: *A wheat-like grain, a Hivernian staple.*

Lamas: *A traditional Hivernian dish—cabbage preserved in vinegar and brine.*

Man Shu: *Apricot brandy. Hivernium's too cold to produce this, so it's a luxury there.*

Pelati: *Long-grain rice, a staple south of the Heartlands.*

Tenafa: *Coarse dark Mukhari flatbread.*

Yesel: *Strong-tasting bread, originally made by the Kesh but now popular everywhere.*

Yokarat / Okarat: *A hot beverage, an infusion of pepper, cumin, and anise.*

TABLE 9-6: LIVESTOCK, STEEDS, AND TRANSPORT

NAME	NOTES	ENC CAPACITY	COST (S)
Horse	A riding horse. By default, you can't use it for mounted combat.	6	18
Bantoor	A huge beast of burden like a cross between a styracosaurus and an elephant. Commonly used to pull Virikki trade waggons.	18	150
Chelother	A fanged, clawed horse-like beast (page 245). You may use it in mounted combat (page 257) with SI+3.	9	590*
Cambriother	A bipedal reptilian riding beast (page 246). You may use it in mounted combat (page 257) with SI+3.	8	350*
Elenisor	It flies, meaning you can use it in mounted combat—in the air! It has SI+4. See page 247.	7	1100*
Mameluke Leviathan	The gargantuan war beast of the Laigasi.	23	1000*
Ornither	A flightless bird with iridescent plumage (page 246). Elegant and fashionable!	6	54
Tharoconter Trade Galley	A construct carrying up to 32 people.	n/a**	852* + 160 / week.
War Waggon	A construct and an armed and armoured troop transport with 3-10 crew.	n/a**	810* + 160 / week.

* half-price if acquired from source.

** see "A Note on Pricing" on page 174.

TOOLS

Generally you face an obstacle if you attempt the tasks the following tools are designed for without tools; in extreme cases, your Chronicler may forbid you from attempting the task at all. Happily, you generally get the appropriate tools when you belong to the corresponding occupation or take a relevant skill; this table provides the price for replacement tools.

ACCOMMODATION

Accommodation replaces the need for a **Camping roll** (see the *Chronicler's Guide*), and you heal normally.

TABLE 9-7: TOOLS

NAME	NOTES	COST (S)
Artificer's Tools	Magnifying glass, files, pliers, pincers, clamps, screwdrivers, etc.	80
Burglar's Tools	Jimmies, lockpicks, prisms, glass cutters, etc.	30
Healer's Kit	Wads, unguents, splints, bandages, etc.	5
Mechanician's Toolkit	Files, clamps, cables, grease, etc.	15
Tomb Robber's Tools	Rope, pole, lockpicks, jimmies, Codex of Infamous Inscriptions, etc.	40

TABLE 9-8: FOOD AND DRINK

NAME	NOTES	COST
Aiforian Fireamber, shot	Only 5 minims for the full bottle, if you think you're tough enough!	½ m
Amadoradi Vidaka, bottle	The water of life! This keeps the cold out. This is a blend—if you want the pure distillation, it's twice the price.	5 m
Heartlander Wine, bottle		1 m
Hivernian Ale, tankard		¼ m
Hivernian Cider, tankard		½ m
Ing Shu Chow Gum, chow	You just chew and chew on this and never feel hungry. You won't eat for a week!	1 d
Jeniri Havas, flask	There are many variations on these potent distillations, some highly hallucinogenic. The price starts here and goes up.	5 m
Keshite Icewine, glass	Special import! This stuff just doesn't freeze, but wow is it cold...	2 m
Paladoi Brilliants, line	An assortment of mindstone shards, ground fine for inhaling. It'll keep you going all night long.	10 S
Yurazi Pyranta Weed, pipe	Relaxing and convivial. Fill your pipe!	¼ m
Meagre Meal	A bowl of unhulled <i>asari</i> rice, or a crust of <i>yesel</i> bread and gruel.	1 m
Cheap Meal	Khalub, lamas, pelati, etc.	5 m
Standard Meal	A plate of cooked food, including meat, usually local recipes, with bread, rice, or pasta, and beer or wine.	5 d
Superior Meal	A meal of two or three courses, with lots of meat, maybe including at least one local delicacy, with several sweetmeats and types of drink or powders.	2 S
Banquet	Minimum 10 people, and unavailable in communities smaller than a large town or city. The full "Imperial Banquet" has at least 20 dishes on the table—one for each of the Gods of the Great Compact—featuring delicacies from all over the Venerable Autocracy, and includes intoxicating drinks, pills, and powders. You'll need a day or two to recover from this one!	20 S+
Trail Provisions	Enough for 1 week. Enc 2.	5 S
Trail Fodder	Your mount needs to eat too! Enc 4.	5 S

CLOTHING AND LIFESTYLE

Clothing marks out not only the Pillar you belong to, but also your social class, in materials, styles, permitted decorations, and even colours. You're expected to maintain a certain lifestyle based on your social class and Pillar—

going to certain events, spending time and resources entertaining, having your accommodation decorated *just so*, and so on, as indicated on Table 9-10: Clothing and Lifestyle. The table also indicates how much that costs. For each period you fail to "keep up appearances", you incur a point of status stress, which can't be recovered until you've made good.

TABLE 9-9: ACCOMMODATION

NAME	NOTES	COST
Common Room Floor, per night	Most inns and taverns have one, even if it's just a flopproom.	1 m or free
Dormitory, per night	You might be sharing space with 12 or more individuals. Watch your belongings!	5 m
Shared Room, per person per night	Usually 2 or 4 to a room.	2 d
Private Room, per night		5 d
Superior Room, per night		5 S
Luxury Suite, per night	Can usually sleep 2 in comfort, plus a side-room for a couple of body servants.	50 S+
Stabling, per night	Per animal. Provide your own feed. Enough for your steed to recover normally.	2 m
Feed and Stabling, per night	Per animal.	1 d
Superior Feed, Grooming, and Stabling, per night	Per animal. Includes healers who can treat your steed if necessary.	2 S

TABLE 9-10: CLOTHING AND LIFESTYLE

SOCIAL CLASS*	SUMPTUARY RESTRICTIONS	REPLACE	BASE PRICE (S, X PILLAR)
-3 (Outcast)	You dress in homespun or even rags, and live on the streets or in a shack or lean-to out in the wilderness. You beg, borrow, or steal what you need, or make it yourself.	Yearly	1
0 (Lower)	You make most of your own clothes, though maybe you trade for the cloth. You live in a simple country farmhouse or city tenement, and eat plain food. Entertainment is home-made, or down the local hostelry. You love public festivals and <i>oloriads</i> !	Yearly	10
1 (Middle)	You live in your own house or apartment, decorated with decent taste—not too ostentatious. You go to some stuffy social events, but occasionally enjoy slumming it. Your clothes are made for you or occasionally bought off the peg. Your home may have two or three slaves who do the cooking and cleaning.	Yearly	20
2 (Upper)	You may have a couple of well-decorated houses—one city, one country—each with its complement of slaves. Your clothes are tailor-made, and you avoid the riff-raff and hob-nob with your betters. You have a family bench in the local <i>oloriad</i> arena.	Monthly	30
3 (Noble)	You have several fine apartments in one or more cities, plus a family seat in the country, all staffed with slaves and tenants. You dress in fine silks, but are careful not to go overboard!	Monthly	40
4 (Aristocrat)	Palatial accommodation, multiple properties in cities, country estates, etc, staffed with many servants. You entertain lavishly and go to the best parties. Your clothing is the finest silk, and you change several times a day.	Monthly	50

*General social class is given in brackets. Your Homeland or Kindred may redefine this.

MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

Certain stunts (like the “Performer” Rapport stunt, page 163) and certain occupations (like the “Musician” build, page 95) automatically mean you have a musical instrument, otherwise you’ll have to acquire one. Either way, pick one from Table 9-11: Musical Instruments when you do, or invent your own. You can probably play in one or more of the Autocracy’s musical modes, opening doors to interesting social contexts. Playing in the wrong mode will get you strange looks, and maybe worse!

The following instruments are standard items made by craftsfolk “off the peg”—we’ve named them after their closest modern-day equivalents. Expert crafters can craft instruments with **capabilities** (page 172), and some musicians (especially the Harpers of Payorian—see the *Guide to Future Earth*) bind demons into their own, giving them extraordinary powers!

Musical Modes

The numerous Sakari musical modes are each a combination of notes, intervals, and styles, each with a distinct social flavour—courtly, popular, folk, peasant or proletarian, even martial or sacred. Some musical instruments are used in all modes, others are specific to one, and still others have different forms. As a performer (page 163), you know one mode for each level of Rapport skill you have—pick from the list below.

Payorian claims all musical instruments and modes, although he favours Chatram country folk, Hidack urban folk, Lyda chamber music, and Shanshi water music. He loathes Kiyo Plainchant, considering it to be the antithesis of music.

TRADE GOODS

If you’re a trader (page 101), you can purchase items in bulk at less than their normal selling price, and sell them for a profit elsewhere. Items are traded in **units**; the price on Table 9-13: Example Trade Goods is a generalised selling price for Hivernium, adjusted for scarcity and distance from point of origin. Detailed trading rules can be found in the *Chronicler’s Guide*.

Zoans

*There’s another common type of equipment in the Springtide Civilisations—the **zoans**, living prostheses created by hsuntach tinkers (page 117). Because of the way you acquire and use zoans, they’re described in **Chapter 11: Relationships**—see page 248.*



TABLE 9-11: MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

INSTRUMENT	MODES	NOTES	COST	ENC
Bone Pipes	Alu, Banishez, Chatram, Famul, Hidack	The Khadizi play desert laments on these.	1 d	n/a
Bones	Chatram, Dambu, Famul, Hidack		5 m	n/a
Bullroarer	Kiyo, Thamish, Vellor		1 d	n/a
Cymbals	Banishez, Daragai, Filaun, Thamish		5 S	0.5
Didgeridoo	Kiyo, Vellor	"The Drone of the Cosmos".	5 S	1.5
Drums	Banishez, Chatram, Dambu, Famul, Filaun, Hidack, Thamish	Includes "drumming stones" of the P'Tek.	10 S	3
Fiddle	Chatram, Hidack, Shanshi		20 S	0.5
Finger Cymbals	Banishez, Daragai, Vellor		1 S	n/a
Guitar	Chatram, Hidack		20 S	1
Harp	Chatram, Hidack, Lyda, Shanshi		10 S	1.5
Hurdy-Gurdy	Chatram, Hidack, Kiyo, Vellor		30 S	1
Lyre	Chatram, Lyda, Shanshi		5 S	0.5
Oud	Banishez, Lyda		20 S	1
Piano	Lyda	Often decorated with painted scenes.	50 S	12
Plainchant	Kiyo	Not an instrument!	n/a	n/a
Qanoun	Shanshi	A cross between a harp and shamisen.	40 S	1
Reed Pipes	Alu		5 m	n/a
Sitar	Banishez		100 S	1.5
Sorna Oboe	Lyda		40 S	0.5
Trumpet	Filaun	Made of brass, sometimes chased with gold.	50 S+	0.25
Voice	Alu, Chatram, Dambu, Daragai, Filaun, Hidack, Kiyo, Shanshi, Thamish, Vellor	Not an instrument!		n/a

TABLE 9-12: MUSICAL MODES

MODE	DESCRIPTION	TEMPLES	MAIN INSTRUMENTS
Alu	Air music	Belorias, Bel	Bone Pipes, Reed Pipes, Voice
Banishiez	Courtly music		Bone Pipes, Cymbals, Drums, Finger Cymbals, Oud, Sitar
Chatram	Folksy country music	Payorian, Qal	Bone Pipes, Bones, Drums, Fiddle, Guitar, Harp, Hurdy-Gurdy, Lyre, Voice
Dambu	Darkness music	Babisiya, Bab	Bones, Drums, Voice
Daragai	Fire music	Dafur, Agni	Cymbals, Finger Cymbals, Voice
Famul	Funereal death music	Belom, Babisiya	Bones, Bone Pipes, Drums
Filaun	Aether music, martial music for battles and oloriads	Regos, Dafur, Madiz	Cymbals, Trumpet, Drums, Voice
Hidack	Urban street and bar music	Payorian	Bones, Bone Pipes, Drums, Fiddle, Guitar, Harp, Hurdy-Gurdy, Voice
Kiyo	Void music, music of eternity	Pline, Staros, Vile	Bullroarer, Hurdy-gurdy, Plainchant, Didgeridoo, Voice
Lyda	Noble chamber music	Minisia, Payorian, Staros	Harp, Lyre, Oud, Piano, Sorna Oboe
Shanshi	Water music	Nimur, Payorian	Fiddle, Harp, Lyre, Oud, Qanoun, Voice
Thamish	Earth music	Emeldias, Dafur	Bullroarer, Cymbals, Drums, Voice
Vellor	Magical, mystical, sorcerous music; Beyond the Veil	Qal, Pline, Unthar	Bullroarer, Finger Cymbals, Hurdy-gurdy, Didgeridoo, Voice



TABLE 9-13: EXAMPLE TRADE GOODS

TRADE GOOD	UNIT	ORIGIN	SCARCITY	NOTES	PRICE
Asari Rice	Bushel	Local	Common	3 enc.	1 S
Bayuri Wool	Bale	Local	Common	3 enc.	5 d
Brass	Ingot	Hagya Mountains	Rare	Roughly 1 enc.	50 S
Gold	Ingot	Hagya Mountains	Rare	3 enc.	4000 S
Hessian	Roll	Local	Common	2 enc. Cloth ready for tailoring. Roughly 1 x 50 metres.	10 S
Havas	Small Barrel	Nearest Jeniri community	Common	5 enc.	10 S
Icewine	Cask	Kesh Province	Uncommon	3 enc.	20 S
Ladabran Steel	Ingot	Kados	Rare	1 enc.	100 S
Pyranta Weed	Bushel	Yurazi provinces	Uncommon	3 enc.	30 S
Silk	Roll	Sakari Heartlands	Rare	1 enc. Roughly 1 x 5 metres.	50 S

CARRYING GEAR

Usually you won't worry about how much gear your character's carrying—if it sounds reasonable, then you can carry it. Sometimes, though, it's important to drill-down. For example, if you're in the wilderness or hostile undercity, and need to extract an ancient but bulky treasure, what you can carry and for how long could be crucial.

In this chapter we've given **encumbrance ratings** (abbreviated **ER** or **enc**) for items of equipment. **Enc** isn't strictly weight—it's how bulky and cumbersome an item is. When you equip your character, total the encumbrance ratings of all your gear.

A Size 0 (Human-Sized) character can carry 3 enc without difficulty, +1 enc for each level you have in the Physique skill. This is your maximum encumbrance (**max enc**). This increases by +3 per point of Size you are above 0, and you may also get teamwork bonuses from relationships like bound demons, etc, who can carry gear for you (page 202).

If you're below Size 0 (Human-Sized), reduce your max enc by -3 per point of Size. This means that Size -1 (Small) characters may carry no bulky items unless they have the Physique skill.

Every enc you carry above your max enc is an **obstacle** (page 201) to your physical actions, and you also incur an *Encumbered* consequence (**not** a condition aspect). If you exceed your max enc by 3 points, this becomes an *Over-encumbered* consequence, and you may take no physical actions other than stumbling around, facing obstacles to **all** actions (physical, mental, and otherwise). If you wish to lift more than that, you must make a Physique roll against the total enc value; fumbling or succeeding at a cost causes physical consequences.

Making and Repairing Things

*Your characters can make and design their own equipment in **The Chronicles of Future Earth**, including powerful items like mechanisms, zoans, and chemick preparations. See the **Chronicler's Guide** for more!*



How To Do Things

We introduced the core game rules in **Chapter 3: The Basics**. Now let's look at them in more detail.

THE CORE DICE MECHANIC

The core dice mechanic of *The Chronicles of Future Earth* is straightforward: you roll **dice**, and add **modifiers** to get a **result**, which you then compare to a target number called a **difficulty**. You must roll higher than the difficulty to fully succeed; a tie is a marginal success. Rolling lower than the difficulty means you've failed at what you were trying to do.

How to Roll the Cosmic Fate Dice

The core dice mechanic uses two six-sided dice, preferably of different sizes or colours. One is called the **Hero Die** (we recommend a fiery orange-gold colour) and one is called the **Doom Die** (we recommend a mysterious purple hue). Roll both dice, and subtract the Doom Die from the Hero Die, giving a result between -5 and +5. This is called **rolling the Cosmic Fate dice** or **making a Cosmic Fate roll**. Sometimes you may roll more than one Hero or Doom Die—see pages 236 and 310.

Modifiers

You add **modifiers** to your Cosmic Fate roll before comparing it to the difficulty. Most commonly, you add your level in one relevant skill; for this reason, Cosmic Fate rolls are often called **skill rolls**.

Skill Level Modifiers

The descriptions in **Chapter 8: Skills and Stunts** indicate the circumstances each skill can be used in. Select the skill you think appropriate (your Chronicler must agree), and add its level to your dice roll.

Sometimes you'll have a **stunt** which is appropriate to your roll. For example, if you're rolling your Lore 1 skill to find out if you know the capabilities of a weird animal you've encountered, and you also have the "Animal Lore" stunt, then you can use that stunt in your roll. Generally, specialisation-type stunts like this let you act as if your skill was +2 levels higher; in this case, you'd roll as if you had Lore 3.

Combined Skill Rolls

Sometimes you have to perform two different skills at exactly the same time. This is called a **combined skill roll**. In a combined skill roll, one skill is essential to successful use of the other, and is called the **primary skill**. A good example is attacking someone from horseback; your riding ability is essential to a successful attack. In this case, if you don't succeed in your Ride skill, you can't use your combat skill (usually Melee Combat in this case, but not always), and so Ride is designated the **primary skill**. See "Fighting From the Saddle" (page 257) for more.

In a combined skill roll, roll the dice **once only**, lowering your primary skill level by 1 point **for the purposes of this roll only**. Each skill in the combined skill roll may be trying to beat different difficulties; check if the single dice roll lets each skill roll succeed against the respective difficulties, and adjudicate accordingly.

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*Remember Zabet Karja's battle against the entropics in **Chapter 7: Aspects and Fate Points** (page 123)? She's in mounted combat (page 257) on her chelother there, making a combined skill roll of Ride and Melee Combat, with Ride as primary. She rolls the Cosmic Fate dice once only, and adds the same result to both her Melee Combat 4 skill for her attack roll, and to her Ride skill, adjusted from 3 to 2, to keep control of her chelother while she attacks. The difficulty of the Melee Combat roll is the defend roll of the entropics she's attacking, while the Ride roll is difficulty 2 (modified by the Gaggles of Shrieking Entropics obstacle she's riding into, a total 4). She needs to succeed on her Ride roll for the Melee Combat attack to be possible.*

.....

You should only use combined skill rolls when there's a simultaneous dependency between the two skills. If you need to succeed at one skill **before** the second, that's just a normal use of two skills, requiring two rolls. It's the difference between climbing a tree to shoot an arrow from it (two consecutive rolls), and swinging on a chandelier while attacking with a sword (a combined skill roll of Athletics and Melee Combat).

Unskilled Rolls

Most PCs have a default level of 0 in mundane skills, so aren't considered unskilled. That's not the case for **non-player characters** (or **NPCs**—see the *Chronicler's Guide* for more) trying to use skills they don't have, nor for PCs using **power skills** (page 279). In such cases, your Chronicler may disallow the attempt entirely, or allow an **unskilled roll**.

In an unskilled roll, you roll 2 Doom Dice instead of 1, and treat your skill as if it was level 0.

Other Modifiers

Other modifiers may be added to your dice roll, including:

- **Capability Bonuses:** Some capabilities (like from equipment) may give you a bonus to a dice roll (see page 172).
- **Aspect Bonuses:** An aspect may give you a +2 bonus when invoked. See page 126.
- **Teamwork Bonuses:** Other characters helping you in a task may give you bonuses. See page 202.
- **Burning Stress:** You may burn **stress points** (page 215) to indicate you're making an extraordinary effort, and gain bonus points in return.

The Bonus Cap

The maximum total bonus you can add to a skill roll is equal to your own applicable skill level +1. This includes aspect invokes, which means if you don't have a given skill then your aspect bonus is only +1, instead of the usual +2.

Note that the +2 effective skill level you get when using a specialisation-type stunt is **not** included in the bonus cap. This is because a stunt used like this lets you act **as if you effectively had a higher skill level in one limited area of action**. If you have Lore 1 and the Animal Lore stunt, you effectively have a skill level of Lore 3 when rolling to know about animals. And, yes, in this case this **does** mean that your bonus cap on rolls to know about animals is +4, not the usual +2 it would be for other Lore rolls.

The logic behind the bonus cap is that your skill level limits how much external assistance you can take advantage of. If you can't play a musical instrument beyond a couple of chords, no amount of encouragement and on-the-spot advice from experts is going to turn you into an instant virtuoso.

This logic also helps identify situations where the bonus cap may not apply, like when an **obstacle** (page 201) increases the difficulty of an action which another character is taking against you **and which you're actively defending against**. Let's drill down:

.....
*For example, if you're fighting and only have **Melee Combat 1**, even if all your friends shout encouragement to you (using manoeuvres and aspect invokes), the maximum bonus you can apply to your roll is +2. That's your bonus cap.*

*However, if one of your friends throws sand in your opponent's eyes, the bonus cap doesn't apply in that instance, because your friend has created an obstacle **for your opponent**, not a bonus for you. The obstacle is increasing the difficulty of your opponent's attack roll by +2, even though you may just end up adding that +2 onto the result of your defend roll.*

Another exception to the bonus cap is the bonus you get from **burning a consequence** (page 215). This represents you forcing yourself to go way beyond your physical capabilities to succeed in an action, and therefore isn't directly dependent on your own skill level.

Difficulties

To see if you succeed at a skill roll, compare your result to a target number called a **difficulty**. Difficulties, like many scores, are measured on the **ladder** (page 196), although they don't usually dip below 0. By default, they aren't rolled on the dice, but are fixed or determined by your Chronicler, and so are sometimes called **static difficulties**. Unlike modifiers, they're not written with a plus or minus sign (a "+" or "-"), but as simple numbers, like "difficulty 1".

Sometimes, however, the result of a skill roll might be used instead of a static difficulty. This is sometimes called a **rolled difficulty**. You might see this written like "Roll against Athletics 1 to hit the target", indicating that the difficulty to beat is a Cosmic Fate roll, with a +1 added representing the target's Athletics skill.

In these rules we differentiate between rolled and static difficulties, but your Chronicler may always override that, and choose to roll a static difficulty, or treat a rolled difficulty as a static one. In both cases, to succeed at a skill roll, you must get a result, including all bonuses, **greater than** the difficulty. If you roll exactly equal to the difficulty, that's called a **tie**, and sometimes has special effects: see below.

TABLE 10-1: INDICATIVE DIFFICULTIES

DIFFICULTY	DESCRIPTION
0	A really easy task. You probably don't even need to roll, unless there's something vital riding on you succeeding. <i>Attacking an unsuspecting target, jumping a 2-metre gap.</i>
1	A straightforward task performed without pressure, something an average person might find tricky, but done under optimal conditions. Again, you might not need to roll. <i>Lifting a person over your shoulders, jumping over a steep-banked stream.</i>
2	A somewhat challenging task; a straightforward task performed under pressure. A pro should pull this off without trouble. <i>Shooting someone with a bow in combat, jumping a steep-banked stream while under fire, deciphering an ancient inscription while the room fills with water.</i>
3	A challenging task. A skilled professional succeeds half the time, but amateurs need support. <i>Climbing a sheer wall using pitons and rope, intimidating an armed guard to back down.</i>
4	A very challenging task. A skilled pro needs to focus, and amateurs need luck and support. <i>Deciphering an ancient inscription by touch in the dark while the room fills with water.</i>
5	A difficult task. A skilled pro will want plenty of time, luck or support! <i>Climbing a sheer wall without ropes or pitons.</i>
6	A very difficult task. An expert has a good chance of success. <i>Leaping over a river of lava with steep banks while under attack.</i>
7	A daunting task. Only heroes with magical support will succeed at this reliably! <i>Climbing a sheer vertical without rope or pitons; deciphering an ancient inscription in the dark before the lava reaches you.</i>
8	A very daunting task. There's an outside chance you'll succeed, but only heroes with luck and support can be confident. <i>Resisting demon-fire as you balance across a tightrope; shooting the gargamand in the eye from a hundred paces.</i>
9	An utterly daunting task. Even a hero with magical support will fail half the time.
10	An almost impossible task. A hero with magical support will rely on chance more than skill!
Difficulties can go higher—some things really are that hard, especially rolled difficulties. Don't forget, though, that your characters are striving to generate shifts, get special successes, and so on, and higher difficulties make that harder, so are reserved for special occasions!	
11	A beginning character with good luck and support and using his peak skill can just about hope for this.
14	The best a beginning character can achieve, with maximum support and an excellent dice roll.
18	The best a character with a skill level of 6 can hope for.
19	A legendary feat! Only an advanced character with skill 7, maximum support, and a great dice roll can hope to achieve this.
20	A feat worthy of the gods! Even an advanced character will rarely achieve this—it's more the province of superhuman characters with skills of 8 or higher!

Usually skill rolls are **difficulty 1**. This assumes you're in a safe environment, with enough time to focus on your task. If you're in a more dangerous environment, like on an adventure, the same task might be difficulty 2.

Your Chronicler will tailor task difficulties to your game's circumstances, and the *Chronicler's Guide* provides guidance for how to do that. Table 10-1: Indicative Difficulties gives you a rough idea of what kind of difficulty scores to expect. Remember—these are subject to change!

The Winds of Chance

The Chronicles of Future Earth is a heroic game, where even the smallest person can make a difference. Although the Cosmic Fate dice generally fall in the -2 to +2 range, extreme results of -5 and +5 happen often enough that even an unskilled character may accomplish almost impossible feats when the chips are down. But beware! The reverse is true, too, and an unlucky roll can bring even the most skillful character to disaster!

Shifts

You must exceed the difficulty to succeed on your roll, and the amount by which you exceed is called **shifts**. With zero shifts, you have a marginal success, which may be a **tie** (see below). Shifts are used for many things, including determining damage in conflicts.

SKILL ROLL OUTCOMES

A dice roll's result will usually be a failure, tie, success, or special success. Sometimes, depending on the Cosmic Fate dice, you may **additionally** end up with a **critical success** or **critical failure**, modifying your result in special ways; see below.

Failure

If you roll lower than the difficulty, you fail. You either don't get what you want, or you get what you want at a **serious cost** (page 200), or you suffer some negative mechanical consequence.

Tie

If you roll **exactly equal** to the difficulty, you either succeed in the task you're attempting, but at a **minor cost** to yourself (page 200); or you succeed but with a lesser version of what you wanted to achieve. The precise results of a tie depend on whether you're making an overcome, manoeuvre, attack, or defend action; see page 199.

Success

If you roll higher than the difficulty by 1 to 4 shifts, you succeed. You get what you want at no cost.

Special Success

If you beat the difficulty by 5 shifts or more, then you've achieved a **special success**. Special successes can have special effects: see "The Four Actions" below.

Critical Success and Critical Failure

Critical successes and critical failures are exceptional forms of success and failure. They occur as a result of specific rolls on the Cosmic Fate dice, rather than totalling up dice rolls and bonuses.

Critical Successes

A roll of 6 on any Hero Die and 1 on all of your Doom Dice (normally you just roll one of each) is called a **critical success**. Critical successes always succeed with at least 1 shift, **regardless of difficulty**, and ignore any **stress reduction** (page 174) used by your opponent, such as armour in combat. Whenever appropriate, a critical success should be described as flashy and spectacular; depending on the skill or situation, it may also have other effects. If a critical success would also be a special success, then the special success also applies.

.....

In the battle against the entropics at the burning homestead (page 124), an entropic thrall attacks Zimiri Tegus the Tomb Robber. Sarah rolls a 4, adds the thrall's Unarmed Combat 4, to get a result of 8. The thrall is attacking with mutated claws, a +1 SI weapon.

Zimiri rolls a 6 on their Hero Die and a 1 on their Doom Die, on their defend roll with Melee Combat 1. That would normally be a result of 6, but it's also a critical success. Normally the Entropic Thrall would win the roll with 2 shifts, but, because it's a critical defend, Zimiri wins instead, with 1 shift, and the attack fails completely. Chris describes Zimiri spinning wildly past the thrall, deftly avoiding its mutating claws!

Next, Zimiri attacks back, and rolls another critical success, this time with Melee Combat 1 (normally a result of 6)! The entropic thrall defends, rolling a 4 with Unarmed Combat 4, a result of 8.

Normally Zimiri's attack result of 6 would be insufficient to beat the thrall's defend result of 8, and the attack would fail (-2 shifts). But because it's a critical success, Zimiri wins the attack with 1 shift, adds their weapon SI of +1, and inflicts 2 shifts of damage on the thrall, ignoring any of its armour. Chris describes Zimiri's pirouetting defence ending in a dazzlingly fast lunge which penetrates the thrall's ragged remnants of armour and its mutated scaly hide!

.....

Is a Critical Success Always a Success?

A critical success result always succeeds at a task **as long as success was conceivable, however unlikely**. Dice rolls aren't appropriate if there's no chance of success, so rolling the dice means there's at least a remote possibility of success. If you want your character to swim in molten lava, your Chronicler shouldn't even ask for a dice roll—it's just not possible. On the other hand, if you want to leap on a rock floating in a river of molten lava and follow it downstream, then a critical success should definitely allow that—what you're describing is possible, however unlikely.

Critical Failures

A roll of 1 on all your Hero Dice and 6 on any Doom Die is a **critical failure**, often called a **fumble**. You may not **invoke an aspect** (page 127) to re-roll the dice on a fumble result (although you may invoke for a bonus, subject to the bonus cap as usual). A fumble is an automatic failure, with a maximum of 0 shifts—if somehow you obtained 1 or more shifts, reduce them to 0. A fumble also means something bad or embarrassing happens to you, usually represented by a condition or situation aspect (page 124), for which the first invoke is free!

.....

*Before leaving Korudav (under a cloud!), Zimiri tries using Stealth 1 to creep into the library at the temple of Khosht, after successfully picking the priest's pocket in a previous scene to get the keys. They roll 1 on the Hero Die and 6 on the Doom Die. That's a -4 result, **and** a critical failure! The temple guards roll Notice 1 to detect the attempt, and get a +2, a success.*

Sarah describes what happens: not only do the guards spot Zimiri creeping up to the library door, but Zimiri manages to disturb a massive cloud of dust on the scroll shelves just inside the entrance, incurring a Sneezing Uncontrollably condition aspect and dropping the stolen keys noisily on the floor as the guards rush up to investigate!

.....

Critical Successes versus Critical Failures

Whenever two characters roll against one another—one attacking, one defending, or one actively resisting an overcome attempt or a manoeuvre—it's possible for **both** sides to roll critical successes or critical failures. In such cases, the descriptive component of the critical is maintained, but all other rules elements “cancel out”, resulting in two normal successes or two normal failures, with results calculated as normal.

.....

Let's look again at the critical success example above, where the entropic thrall attacks Zimiri in the burning farmhouse. Let's say the thrall rolls a critical success (a dice roll of 5), adding Unarmed Combat 4 to get a critical success result of 9. Zimiri's critical defend roll with Melee Combat 1 is still a result of 6.

This time, the two critical successes "cancel out" for all rules elements except the description: the entropic thrall has made a dazzlingly impressive attack which would have spelled doom for any normal defender, but Zimiri makes an equally impressive defence. We're left with an attack result of 9 versus a defend result of 6. The thrall still wins, and, with the +1 SI for their mutated claws, does 4 points of physical stress damage. However, Zimiri's linen armour and buckler shield still protects them, reducing the stress to 2 points.

.....

THE FOUR ACTIONS

Whenever you make a skill roll, you're actually performing one of four types of **action**. These are described below, together with guidelines for interpreting the outcomes of skill rolls you make with them.

Overcome

Overcome actions are the default action. If you're not attacking someone or defending yourself, or trying to create an aspect, then you're probably just rolling to **overcome** a difficulty. Maybe you're trying to pick a lock, sneak past a guard, or outrun a pursuer.

- **Critical Failure:** You fail spectacularly at what you're trying to do. You may **also** incur a condition or situation aspect (*Lockpicks Jammed in the Lock, Fallen Flat on Your Face*, etc) for which the first invoke is free, or even a **serious cost** (page 200), representing the mess you've gotten yourself into. See also page 198.
- **Failure:** You either don't succeed at what you're trying to do, or you succeed at a **serious cost** (*Lockpicks Jammed in the Lock, Fallen Flat on Your Face*, etc, or other serious cost—see page 200).
- **Tie:** You succeed at what you're trying to do, but at a **minor cost** (*Bent and Broken Lockpicks, Twisted A Muscle*, etc, or other minor cost—see page 200).
- **Success:** You succeed at what you're trying to do at no cost.
- **Special Success:** You succeed at what you're trying to do, and also gain a **boost** (*Like the Door Isn't Even There, Moving Like a Breath of Air*, etc—see page 131).
- **Critical Success:** You succeed spectacularly, ignoring any obstacles and in a way which can't be countered. If the critical success is also a special success, you gain a **boost**, too (page 131). See page 198.



Serious Costs vs Minor Costs

Serious costs and minor costs are ways of making failed rolls meaningful without bringing the action of your game to a screeching halt, often referred to as “failing forwards”. Your Chronicler may not always want to use them—sometimes a failed roll really is just a failure, and sometimes things do indeed come screeching to a halt—but they’re a useful tool.

When thinking up a minor or serious cost, consider the place you’re at in play and the game mechanics available to you. A **serious cost** makes the current situation worse, by creating a new problem or exacerbating an existing one: you may encounter another source of opposition immediately or in the next scene (maybe a new opposing NPC or obstacle), or you may suffer a consequence in your lowest free slot, or give your opponent an advantage with a free invoke.

A **minor cost** adds a story detail that’s problematic for you, but doesn’t necessarily endanger your progress—it could just be a descriptive detail showing how you only just scraped your success. Alternatively, your Chronicler may ask you to take stress, or may give your opponent a **boost** (page 131).

Other Benefits and Penalties

Sometimes circumstances suggest a different benefit or penalty for an action result. For example, the overcome action says you get a boost (in addition to succeeding) on a special success, but if that overcome action ends the scene, or you can’t think of a good boost, then your Chronicler may let you declare a story detail (page 134) as a benefit instead.

Manoeuvre

Manoeuvres are also called **create advantage** actions. When a dice roll looks like it’s going to give you an advantage you can exploit in a subsequent dice roll, it may be a manoeuvre. Make your dice roll, and if you succeed you create an aspect (usually a **situation aspect** or **condition aspect**—see page 124), which you can invoke once for free (future invokes cost a fate point as normal).

.....
For example, when researching the history of Kados in the library of the Respectful Explorers, Zimiri makes an Investigate manoeuvre, creating a Sheaves of Notes About the Fifth Cyliad situation aspect. Later on, when the high priestess quizzes them about the infamous Siege of Kados Bastion, they invoke that aspect on their Lore roll at no fate point cost, dazzling her with their knowledge!

Manoeuvres can also exploit existing aspects without having to spend a fate point; the action you spend exploiting that aspect replaces the need to spend a fate point. Otherwise this works just like invoking an aspect (page 126).

.....
The high priestess asks Zimiri about a detail relating to the Siege of Kados Bastion: a hidden dragonel that emerges from the bastion when called. Chris could spend a fate point to declare Zimiri read that in their research; however, the high priestess isn’t in a hurry, so Chris decides Zimiri will spend the night re-reading the Sheaves, and makes a roll.

- **Critical Failure:** You fail to create the aspect, in an irrevocable manner; or your opponent can create an aspect, or take advantage of an already existing aspect, to automatically succeed at an action to your detriment. See page 198.
- **Failure:** You either don’t create the aspect, or create it in such a way that it gives the advantage (and free invoke!) to your opponent; or you give a free invoke of an existing aspect to your opponent, to your detriment.
- **Tie:** You either create a **boost** (page 131) instead of an aspect; or you gain a free invoke of an existing aspect.
- **Success:** You either create an aspect (page 126) with a free invoke, or get a free invoke of an existing aspect.
- **Special Success:** You either create an aspect with two free invokes, or get two free invokes of an existing aspect.
- **Critical Success:** You create a **critical aspect** (page 132) with greater impact than a normal aspect. For example, a Provoke critical aspect on a manoeuvre to scare a target might be *Terrified Out of His Wits*. See page 198.

Don't go crazy with aspects created using manoeuvres. You *can* jot every single one of them down, creating a huge list—that could be useful for *Sheaves of Notes About the Fifth Cylind*, and you could even note it on your character sheet as an item of (probably temporary) equipment (see page 172)—but if you've just toppled some *Fallen Crates and Barrels* behind you to throw off the pursuing guards, then you can probably dispense with jotting it down—just factor in the difficulty 2 **obstacle** (see the sidebar) the guards have to overcome to keep chasing you, and move on.

Attack

You can use certain skills to harm an opponent, usually in **conflicts** (page 207), including Melee Combat, Ranged Combat, and Unarmed Combat, but also Provoke, sometimes Physique or Willpower, and even some **power skills** (see page 279).

Usually when you attack someone, they roll to defend, which becomes the difficulty you must roll over to succeed in your attack. Here are the possible results:

- **Critical Failure:** Your attack fails in a spectacular way, and you gain a condition aspect like *Knocked Down*, *Disarmed*, *Entangled*, etc, representing either your clumsiness or a piece of bad fortune that happened to you during your attack; your opponent may even gain a free action against you! Your Chronicler or your opponent may be the one who describes this. See page 198.
- **Failure:** You fail to harm your target. This also means your target succeeded on his defend roll (if he made one), which could have other effects.
- **Tie:** You've achieved a marginal hit. You don't inflict stress, but get a **boost** (page 131) on your next attack action **or** your next action (your choice).
- **Success:** Inflict **stress points** (page 214) on your target equal to your shifts. This may cause your opponent to suffer consequences or even be taken out.
- **Special Success:** As a success, but you also get a **boost** (page 131) or push back your opponent 1 **zone** (page 209), as well as doing normal damage. If there's no zone for the opponent to be pushed back into, they must make a difficulty 2 Athletics roll or be *Knocked Down* (page 220).
- **Critical Success:** Your attack succeeds spectacularly, inflicting at least 1 point of stress on your target, regardless of their defend roll. Any stress reduction (from armour, etc) the target has is ignored. See page 197.

Obstacles, Blocks and Barriers

*An **obstacle** is one way aspects work, when they get in the way of a character taking an action. You can roll a manoeuvre to create an obstacle (and also remove one), or invoke an existing aspect to make it into an obstacle, or your Chronicler can simply declare an aspect (particularly a situation aspect) **already is** an obstacle to an action a character wishes to take.*

An obstacle increases an action's difficulty by +2. If there was no difficulty originally, it creates a difficulty of 2 and requires a character to roll to get past it.

*Now, increasing a static difficulty by +2 is easy, but what happens if a character is taking an action **against** another character, and an obstacle gets in the way? How does an obstacle interact with a rolled difficulty?*

*Often this is a judgment call. An obstacle may be sufficiently obstructive to require a separate roll to get past it **before** a character can take an action against another character. One example is the ever-faithful Collapsing Pile of Crates and Boxes that suddenly get in the way of an opponent advancing 1 zone before attacking; you can declare the opponent must make a difficulty 2 Athletics roll to advance that 1 zone (because of all the crates and boxes in the way...) **before** they can make their attack roll. The obstacle has delayed the attack by at least 1 round.*

Alternatively, an obstacle may increase the rolled difficulty a character faces by +2. Imagine an attacker trying to shoot a defender with a bow at just the moment those boxes and crates come crashing down between them. The attacker makes the attack roll, the defender makes the defend roll, and the +2 is added to the defend roll. Remember too that the difficulty increase added to a rolled difficulty because of an obstacle isn't factored into the defender's bonus cap—see page 195.

Blocks and barriers are more powerful kinds of obstacle, requiring more effort to create, often using something like the *Devise* skill, or magic—see page 239. Depending on their **barrier level**, they can be hard and time-consuming to remove, with a +2 difficulty. There's a big difference between leaping over a Flaming Pool of Pitch block (an overcome action) and actually extinguishing that flaming pool (a manoeuvre at a +2 difficulty).

Defend

Defend actions are the flipside of attack actions. You take them to defend yourself, or sometimes to defend someone else. You can usually make defend actions against anyone attacking you, unless you're physically prevented (maybe you're tied up or unconscious), and you can also make defend actions against opponents trying to carry out manoeuvres, either against you, another character, or the scene, as long as you can describe how that works. The more defend actions you take in a single **round** (page 212), the harder they become: see "Multiple Defences" on page 230.

- **Critical Failure:** You fail to defend in a spectacular way. You may also end up with a condition aspect or situation aspect like *Shield Tangled Up in Legs*, *Concussion From Diving to the Floor*, etc; or your opponent may gain an immediate free action; and so on. See page 197.
- **Failure:** You suffer the consequences of whatever you were trying to prevent. You might take a hit or have a manoeuvre succeed against you (creating a condition or situation aspect).
- **Tie:** Your opponent doesn't inflict stress on you, but you grant them a **boost** (page 131).
- **Success:** You avoid the attack or manoeuvre.
- **Special Success:** You avoid the attack or manoeuvre, and also gain a boost (page 131) as you momentarily turn the tables on your target.
- **Critical Success:** You succeed spectacularly, regardless of your opponent's attack roll (but see "Critical Successes Versus Critical Failures" on page 198).

Note: you may also make a **full defence** in a round, taking no other actions, in return for a +2 bonus on your defend roll. See page 213.

TEAMWORK

Characters don't have to take actions in isolation—they can work together to accomplish tasks, bringing their collective know-how to bear. This is called **teamwork**.

Characters engage in teamwork in two ways: first, by everyone involved putting their effort into the same kind of action; and, second, by everyone performing different actions which separately assist a single person's "main action".

Working Together Using the Same Skill

When more than one character collaborates using the same skill, the character with the highest applicable skill level makes a single skill roll. He then adds a +1 bonus to the result for every other character in the team helping who has the same skill at least at level 1. The **bonus cap** (page 195) applies. Teamwork like this always constitutes an action for all participants, even though the supporting participants aren't making a dice roll.

.....

In a river gorge beyond the Timosian Properties, the party have climbed a sheer cliff and are trying to haul Zabet's chelother up using ropes. Normally everyone would take their time and get it right, but Zabet has just spotted movement further down the gorge—more marauding entropics, and they've picked up the trail!

Sarah declares the party needs to make a Physique roll against difficulty 6 to hoist Blue-Claw up the cliff-face. There's enough rope for more than one person to pull, so the party are going to use teamwork. Two characters have the Physique skill; Zabet has Physique 2, and Ukhta has Physique 3. As a result, Ukhta is rolling, and Zabet is giving a +1 bonus, for a total Physique of 4.

.....

Helping Someone by Using a Different Skill

Sometimes you may want to shout encouragement to an ally in a fight, or distract someone's opponent just when they attack. The person helping should make an appropriate **manoeuvre** action (page 200); on a success, they create a corresponding aspect (which you only need to word if it makes sense to), and pass its free invoke to the person they're helping. The **bonus cap** (page 195) still applies.

.....
A Physique 4 roll isn't great odds against a difficulty of 6, and those entropies are approaching rapidly! Varnas decides to use his Devise 3 skill in a manoeuvre to improvise a makeshift lever using a nearby boulder as a fulcrum, to boost Ukhta and Zabet's musclepower. He succeeds, and passes the Makeshift Lever aspect to Ukhta, which she can use for a free +2 bonus or re-roll on her Physique roll. That should be enough to get Blue-Claw up the cliff and the party racing away from the pursuing horde!

CONTESTS, CHALLENGES, AND CONFLICTS

Usually a single skill roll determines how a situation plays out. You can describe actions in any timeframe or level of detail when making a skill roll; a single Ride roll can cover a gruelling day-long trek through the trackless Hagya Wastes, or whether or not you can steer your *chelothe* to avoid the flamelance barrage coming your way.

Sometimes, though, you'll be doing something dramatic and exciting, like a key scene in a movie or book. In these situations, you can "zoom in" on the action and handle it with multiple dice rolls, letting the wide range of results make things dynamic, surprising, and exciting. Most combat scenes work this way, but you can zoom in on anything you consider important: court intrigues, sorcerous duels, attempts to disarm traps, and more.

There are three ways to zoom in on the action:

- **Contests**, when two or more characters compete for a goal.
- **Challenges**, when one or more characters try to achieve something dynamic or complicated.
- **Conflicts**, when two or more characters try to harm each other.

Contests

A **contest** occurs when you're struggling over a period of time against one or more opponents or obstacles, sometimes gaining ground, sometimes losing it, in pursuit of your goal. Contests can take a couple of minutes, or they can take hours or even days.

In a contest, every participant makes one skill roll per **round** (by default *Half a Minute*—see page 212). The participant with the highest result wins one **victory point**. If you roll a special or critical success, and no one else does, you gain **two** victory points. If you roll a fumble and no one else does, you **lose** one victory point!

The first participant to accumulate three victory points wins the contest.

Contests are a great mechanic for deciding the results of running races, chases, singing or archery competitions, debates, and similar events.

When setting up a contest, ask the following questions:

- What are the "sides" in the contest? Is every character in it for himself, or are groups opposing groups? Multiple characters on a side collaborate using the "Teamwork" rules (page 202).
- What's the environment? Can you define any features as situation aspects?
- How are the sides opposing each other? Are they opposing directly using rolled difficulties (like a sprint race or a staredown attempt), or are they competing to overcome a static difficulty in the environment (like an obstacle course or judges' panel)?
- What skills are appropriate for the contest? Does everyone roll the same skill, or can several skills apply?

.....

The party are racing up the Timosia river gorge to the Tower of Virigu, pursued by a horde of entropics. The distance to be covered is maybe a dozen kilometres, so A Few Hours of a terrifying chase through Driving Rain and Claustrophobic and Rocky Terrain, where The Deadly Foe May Be Anywhere! The chase is in two groups—the party versus the entropics—and using Athletics or similar movement skills. Sarah isn't pinning down the exact length of each round, but the contest will determine whether the party get to Virigu before the entropics catch them!

*Individually the entropics have a negligible Athletics 1 skill, but they're pursuing in what's called an **NPC group** (described fully in the **Chronicler's Guide**) of 10 monsters, giving them a whacking great +9 group bonus! (NPC group bonuses, unlike teamwork bonuses, aren't subject to the bonus cap—see page 195.) Sarah describes this as the mutated creatures swarming up the gorge, clambering along the cliff faces, emerging from the rushing waters, seemingly everywhere. They're almost upon the party when the chase begins.*

In the party, Zabet has Ride 3 and Athletics 1, and Ukhta has Athletics 1. They're going to use teamwork. As Zabet is riding her chelother, Blue-Claw, she has the highest movement skill—Ride 3—and Ukhta provides a +1 bonus. Against the entropic horde rolling Athletics 1 with a +9 bonus, it doesn't look good!

.....



A contest proceeds in a series of **rounds**. In a round, each participant or side can make one overcome action to determine how well they do in that stage of the contest. Compare your result to everyone else's.

- **If you got the highest result, you win the round.** If you're rolling directly against the other participants, that means you got the highest result. If you're rolling against something in the environment, it means you got the most shifts. Winning the round means you score a **victory point**. You can represent this with a tally mark or tick on a piece of paper. Describe how you take the lead in the contest.
- **If you get a special success and no one else does,** then you get two victory points.
- **If there's a tie for the highest result, no one gets a victory point, and an unexpected twist occurs.** This could mean several things—maybe the terrain or environment changes, the conditions of the contest alter, or something unexpected occurs, affecting all the participants. The Chronicler should create a new situation aspect reflecting this.
- **The first participant to achieve three victory points wins the contest.**

.....

In the first round, Sharma rolls for Zabet's Ride 3 skill, and gets a 4. She adds the +1 teamwork bonus for a total result of 8. Sarah rolls for the entropics Athletics 1, and gets a -1. She adds the +9 bonus, for a total result of 9. That's a normal success for the entropics, giving them 1 victory point, and Sarah describes the chaos beasts fifty metres or so behind the party, baying for blood!

The Entropics: 1 victory point.

The Party: 0 victory points.

.....

Contest Manoeuvres

During any round, you can attempt a manoeuvre **before** you make your contest roll. **This is an exception to the rule that you can only make one action roll in a round.** If you're targeting another participant with that manoeuvre, they defend normally. If someone can interfere with your attempt, they provide active opposition as normal.

Attempting a manoeuvre in a contest carries a risk: **failing the manoeuvre means you forfeit your contest roll**, which means you can't make progress in the current round. If you at least tie, you can make your contest roll normally.

If you're providing a bonus via the Teamwork rules (page 202), failing the manoeuvre means the lead character doesn't benefit from your help this round.

In the second round, Zabet rolls a critical success and invokes the Driving Rain situation aspect to achieve a special success—that's 2 victory points!—but in the third round the entropics win again, narrowing the gap—that +9 group bonus is a killer! They're right behind the party!

The Entropics: 2 victory points.

The Party: 2 victory points.

One more round like that and it'll be a desperate and deadly melee. Sarah describes how Zabet spies a tall spire barely a kilometre ahead—the Tower of Virigu!

This time, Sarah rolls badly—a -3!—but spends one of her 5 fate points to invoke the situation aspect The Deadly Foe May Be Anywhere! for a re-roll, this time rolling a 1, for a total of 11.

That's a hard number to beat. Vitas declares he'd like to spend a fate point to improvise the Embolden power stunt for his Passion power skill (page 300), shouting out stirring and magically powerful encouragement to speed the party over the final stretch! Sarah approves, and Varnas's manoeuvre succeeds, emboldening the party and adding another +2 or re-roll to the contest roll.

Chris still doesn't like the odds, and is aware Zabet's bonus cap is now limiting further manoeuvres. He decides Zimiri will try a manoeuvre using their Displacement cantrip, a magical ability that makes a target move from place to place instantaneously, but, rather than using this to directly help Zabet, they're going to cast it on the entropics to create an obstacle to their movement (page 201). They succeed, and Chris describes the entropics suddenly Milling About In Confusion as they start to zip in and out of existence all over the place! As this is an obstacle, its +2 bonus won't be affected by Zabet's bonus cap, as it's actually making the entropics' roll more difficult.

Sharma rolls a 4 for Zabet's Ride 3, a result of 10 (skill level 3, +1 teamwork bonus from Ukhta, +2 manoeuvre bonus from the emboldening). However, Zimiri's Displacement obstacle—the entropics Milling About in Confusion—increases that 10 to 12, meaning the party wins! In the driving rain and surrounded by howling entropics, the party arrives at the Tower of Virigu—only to find the ford in flood and the doors barred against them! Now what?!



Attack Actions in a Contest

Making an attack action in a contest means it's no longer a contest; switch to a **conflict** instead.

Challenges

A single overcome action can deal with a straightforward goal or obstacle like breaking into a temple. It's useful when the details aren't important or worth spending too much time on, when you just need to know whether your character succeeds without setbacks or costs. Sometimes, though, it's not enough to break-in through the front entrance—because you also have to fend off the gate guardians while picking the lock and cast a spell to speed up time for your attempt.

A challenge is a series of overcome actions to resolve an especially complicated or dynamic situation. Each overcome action uses a different skill to deal with one task or part of the situation, and you interpret the separate results together to figure out how the situation resolves.

To work out if a situation is right for a challenge, ask yourself the following questions:

- Does each separate task generate tension and drama in its own right? If all the tasks are actually part of the same goal—"appraise the door's lock mechanism", "select the best pick for the lock", "pick the lock" when picking the lock—then that should be one overcome action, where you can use the details to explain what happens if the roll goes wrong.
- Does the situation require different skills to deal with? Fending off the gate guardians (Ranged Combat skill) while picking the lock (Burglary skill), and at the same time casting Wings of Unthar to speed up time to complete the lockpicking extra quick (Time power skill, Wings of Unthar power stunt) is a good opportunity for a challenge.

To embark on a challenge, identify the separate tasks or goals that constitute the situation, and treat each one as a different overcome roll. Depending on the situation, your Chronicler may require some rolls happen in a certain order, or that one or several characters attempt the different rolls.

.....
The party have reached the Tower of Virigu, pursued by a horde of entropics! The river's in flood, washing out the ford and crashing against the tower's thick brass-bound door. Zimiri needs time to pick the lock so everyone can get to safety!

Sarah declares this a challenge, with three components. First, the party must keep the entropics at bay. Second, the stone porch around the tower's door must be shored up against the floodwaters, to give Zimiri a place to work. Third, Zimiri must pick the lock.

.....
 In a challenge, you roll for each overcome action in whichever order seems most interesting or logical, but you **don't describe how everything turns out until you've collected all the results.** This gives you and your Chronicler the freedom to describe each roll in a way that makes most sense and is most entertaining. If you or any other character gets a boost, you can pass it on to another action in the challenge, as long as you can describe how that works.

Once all the rolls have been made, consider the successes, failures, and costs of each action to gauge the overall outcome. The results could lead to another challenge, a contest, or even a conflict.

.....
Vitas declares Varnas is rolling first; he's using his Enhance Construct cantrip (a magical effect—see page 302) to strengthen the crumbling porch against the pounding floodwaters. Sarah says this would normally be a difficulty 2 overcome roll, but the floodwaters are an obstacle, so the difficulty is 4. Vitas rolls Varnas's Realisation of the Will 3 skill, and gets a 1! That's a tie, meaning Varnas succeeds but with a minor cost—Sarah declares the porch is Already Crumbling. If the challenge doesn't succeed, it'll be completely washed away! But for now Varnas's magic is enough to protect Zimiri while they tackle the lock.

The next problem is fending off the entropic horde. There are 10 chaos beasts hurling themselves across the ford: even though they only have skill level 1, they get a group bonus (page 204) of +9! Sarah rolls for the entropics, getting a 1, for a total result of 11! Three of the party—Six, Ukhta, and Zabet—are

fending off the assault, using *Provoke* to cow the slobbering chimeras. Six has *Provoke* 2, and Ukhta and Zabet each provide a +1 bonus, for a total skill level of 4. Six rolls 3, for a total result of 7.

*That's a failure! Sarah explains that unless the party can do something, that's going to be a serious cost, which probably means at least one character will be injured by an entropic, exposing them to the mutating Gift of Gumazhdu. Zabet decides to invoke her We Stand to the Last Against the Entropic Horde! Doom aspect, giving her a +4 bonus and forcing her to incur a consequence (see page 132 for invoking your Doom). In this case she already has a mild consequence, so suffers a moderate consequence—Lungs Full of Water—and collapses coughing from her chelother. Ukhta declares she's invoking her Wild Lover of Fire and Flame Blood aspect, terrifying the entropics as she blazes with fiery savagery, for another +2 bonus. Unfortunately, even though the +4 Doom aspect invoke doesn't count towards Six's +3 bonus cap, Ukhta's invoke does, meaning that she can only give Six a +1 bonus (added to the +2 teamwork bonus). It's enough, though, taking the group's *Provoke* result to +12, and keeping the entropics at bay!*

Now it's Zimiri's attempt at the door. She's rolling Burglary 4 against difficulty 4, and rolls a -1! Normally that would be a failure, but happily she has the Breaking and Entering stunt, which lets her act as if her skill level was +2 levels higher in precisely these circumstances—she spots flood damage to the door's hinges, and augments her lock-picking with a carefully placed kick! The door opens, and the party rushes inside (dragging a coughing and spluttering Zabet and her wild-eyed chelother)!

.....

If you have any boosts unused in a challenge, you can keep them for the rest of the scene or whatever scene you're transitioning to, if the challenge's events connect directly.

Challenge Manoeuvres

You can attempt manoeuvres during a challenge, either for yourself or someone else; doing so doesn't count as one of the challenge actions. Manoeuvres can help challenge actions, but the tactic isn't without risk; failing a manoeuvre roll can incur a cost or problem that negatively impacts a challenge action.

Attack Actions in a Challenge

Challenges focus entirely on overcome actions, usually (but not always) against static difficulties. If you end up in a situation where it seems reasonable to roll an attack, switch to a **conflict** instead (see below).

Conflicts

Conflicts happen when two or more participants engage in a sustained attempt to harm one another using attack and defend actions. Each **round** (see below), each participant may make a single attack action against a target, and may make defend actions against attacks against them. The objective of a conflict is to inflict **stress** (page 214) and **consequences** (page 215) on the other party until they're defeated—what's known as **taken out** (page 216).

Conflicts occur in **rounds** of around *Half a Minute*. In a round, all participants get to take a single attack, overcome, or manoeuvre action, and as many defend actions as they require (but see "Multiple Defences" below).

Conflicts are physical, mental, social, or wealth in nature, depending on the stress track (page 214) targeted. Physical conflicts are often called **combat**, where participants try to physically injure (or kill) one another with weapons or magic. Mental conflicts cause loss of confidence and self-esteem, composure and mental stability, and other psychological trauma. Social conflicts cause reductions in social status and reputation and the ability to relate to, rely on, and influence others. Wealth conflicts cause loss of resources, the ability to request money and material support from your community, and crippling debt.

Setting up a conflict is more involved than contests or challenges:

- Set the scene, describing the environment, situation aspects, and **zones** (page 209), defining who's participating, what side they're on, and what they want to do.
- Based on what the participants want to do, determine the **initiative order** (page 212).
- Start the first round:
 - On your turn, take your action and resolve it.
 - On other people's turns, defend or respond to their actions as necessary.
 - At the end of everyone's turn, start a new round.

A conflict ends when everyone on one side has **conceded** or been **taken out** (page 216).

Setting the Scene

Your Chronicler will work with you and your fellow players to answer the following questions about the scene's circumstances:

- Who's in the conflict?
- Where are they positioned relative to one another?
- What are they trying to do?
- When is the conflict taking place? Is that important?
- What's the environment like?

You don't need great detail, or precise distances or times—just enough to make it clear what's going on and who's doing what. Your Chronicler can use this information to set up situation aspects to define the arena of conflict.

.....

The party have broken into the Tower of Virigu, safe from the pursuing entropics, only to find the ancient manse seemingly abandoned. As they enter the Great Hall, they notice two survivors—carrion-eating giant centipede-like creatures as big as a human!—hungrily scuttling towards them!

.....

Situation Aspects

Look for environmental features to make into cool situation aspects for the conflict. Don't overdo it—three to five are plenty. Promising features include:

- Mood, weather, or lighting—is the environment dark or poorly lit, stormy, creepy, blindingly bright?
- Obstacles to movement—dense vegetation, broken terrain, mud everywhere, etc.
- Things to hide behind—statues, obstructions, walls, rocks, plants, bodies.
- Things you can knock over, wreck, or use as improvised weapons—crates, barrels, tools.
- Things that are flammable, corrosive, explosive, or otherwise hazardous—dragonels, gravity cannon, manatines, big bails of hay, pools of acid.

You as players should feel free to suggest situation aspects. If your Chronicler has described the scene as “poorly lit”, you should be able to invoke a *Shadows* situation aspect on a Stealth roll, even if you haven't previously established it as an aspect. If an environmental feature requires your character to *do something* to make it into a useful situation aspect, that's a perfect case for a manoeuvre. Usually a barrel of pitch doesn't expose a smugglers' cave to *Raging Fire* without someone knocking it over and igniting it first...

.....

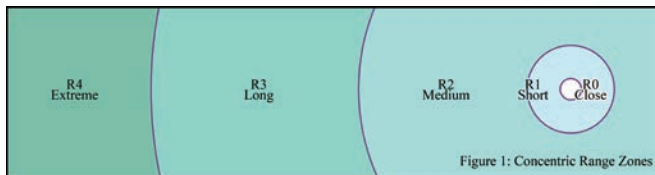
Everyone quickly reviews Sarah's initial description, identifying good opportunities for situation aspects. Together they come up with: A Haunting Tangle of Webs and Shadows; Massive Shelves, Tables, and Divans; Ponderous Chandelier; Cavernous Fireplace Bigger Than A Kenek Ox and Magnificent Tapestries of the Great Crusades. These all sound like they'll be useful in a conflict!

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Range and Zones

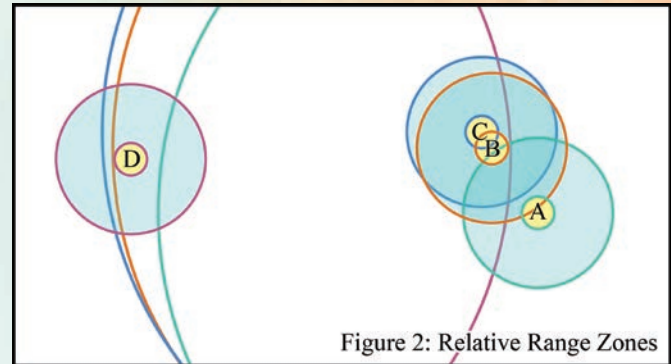
Sometimes it's useful to break conflicts down into different areas of action—imagine a combat on a ship, where there are various decks, cabins, rigging, etc—where range and distance become important factors. Range and areas are measured in **range bands** and **zones**. Zones are relatively abstract representations of “space”, usually physical, but sometimes mental or social. Being in the same zone as someone means you're “close enough” to interact with them directly—for example, to walk up to someone and punch them in the face in a physical conflict. Zones vary in size depending on scale (page 235) and context. The following distances are typical for melee and ranged combat at human scales.

Your current **zone** is the area where you could comfortably attack everyone with a melee weapon. It's a roughly circular area no more than 5 metres in diameter. Each zone beyond that roughly has the radius of its corresponding range band. Here's what that looks like from a single character's point of view:



Remember, zones are an abstraction—don't get hung up on measuring exact distances, but use the above guides to eyeball roughly how far a character is from another character or object.

When multiple characters are in play, you can imagine each character has his own set of range zones around him. These interact and overlap with other characters, letting you determine roughly how far characters are from one another. Again, just eyeball this. Here's an example:



So, in figure 2 there are four characters, A, B, C, and D. Characters B and C are in the same zone, Z0, close range—they're actually in melee combat, so they can punch one another in the face. Character A is 1 zone away, short range, from character B, but character C is a little farther, 2 zones away. Character D is another zone still from character A—Z3, 3 zones away—but is only two zones from characters B and C.

When you're in a conflict, this kind of thing can be important. For example, any character can move 1 zone in a round and still take an action; this means that character A could actually move and strike character B in melee combat in one round, but would have to use ranged combat to hit either character C or D.

TABLE 10-2: MELEE AND RANGED COMBAT ZONES AND RANGE BANDS

RANGE	NAME	COMMENTS
R-1	Hand-to-Hand	0-1 metres away. In the same zone. Grapples, knife fights, animal attacks, etc.
R0	Close Range	1-2 metres away. In the same zone. Normal melee range.
R1	Short Range	3-10 metres away. 1 zone apart. <i>Extreme Reach</i> melee weapons may make melee attacks at this range.
R2	Medium Range	10-50 metres away. 2 zones apart. Ranged combat range.
R3	Long Range	51-100 metres away. 3 zones apart. Ranged combat gets tricky.
R4	Extreme Range	101-500 metres away. 4 zones apart. Even ranged combat is unlikely!

A conflict rarely involves more than a handful of zones: two to four is ideal, unless it's a really big conflict. Keep it simple—zones should give you a tactical feel for the environment, but the moment you start reaching for a ruler, you're probably going too far.

.....



Situation aspects aren't always appropriate for mental, social, and wealth conflicts, so don't feel like you have to include them. See page 124 for more.

If you're in a conflict, **and if there's nothing preventing you**, you can always move 1 zone as well as taking your normal action in any given round. If you want to move more than 1 zone, then you must use your action for that round to move up to a number of zones equal to your Athletics skill or other appropriate movement skill (like Ride). You only need roll for such a move if there's some force opposing you, like difficult terrain, another character, or an **obstacle** (page 201).

.....

Range Penalties

In a physical conflict, most actions, including melee attacks, are made at range 0 (R0), within physical reach of an opponent. To attack at range 1 (R1) or greater requires a Ranged Combat attack (for example, using a thrown weapon or bow), or a special melee weapon like an *Extreme Reach Weapon* (page 178). Every zone of range above R1 acts as an **obstacle** to your dice roll, increasing its difficulty by +2, up to your weapon's maximum allowed range. Maximum ranges for ranged combat weapons are shown on Table 9-3: Ranged Weapons (page 182).

Using Other Skills At Range

Zones and range penalties are mostly used for physical actions (like movement and attacks) in conflicts. However, magic can also be affected by range and distance (page 271), and less obvious skills like Investigate, Notice, and even Provoke may be affected by the distance between a character and his target.

If your story suggests that range is an issue in this way, you can apply range penalties to any skill use. A Notice roll to realise you're being pursued probably won't face range penalties if you're just spotting a dust cloud on the horizon, but if you're trying to identify who those pursuers are—riders, animals, vehicles, or monsters?—then you'll probably face range penalties on your roll.

Engagement, Disengagement, and Closing to Melee

Range and zones are important when determining if you're **engaged** in melee combat—fighting at close quarters in such a way that you can't easily get away without suffering injury or death. Generally, if you're in physical conflict with someone in the same zone—ie at range R0—then you're engaged in melee combat. You can extricate yourself by making a “Disengage” **combat manoeuvre** (page 222), but if you don't—if you just turn your back and use your 1 zone automatic move (page 210) to try and get away, for example—then you incur an automatic *Opportunity Attack* condition aspect lasting a single round (the first invoke is free) **and** you may only make your move **after** your opponent has attacked.

Melee combat ranges have certain nuances. For example, if one side in a melee is using an *Extreme Reach Weapon* (page 178), then the melee begins at R1, and only the attacker with the Extreme Reach Weapon may make attacks until the defender has either disengaged or taken an action to close the range to at least R0. Closing range is an action and requires an **overcome** roll of Athletics, Melee Combat, or Unarmed Combat; if the opponent successfully defends against this overcome roll, you may not close range that round, and the melee continues at the original R1 range.

Some melee attacks are only possible at **really** close quarters—what's called “hand-to-hand” (HTH) range, also called “range -1” (R-1). You must be using an *HTH Weapon* (page 179) to fight at range R-1; this includes grapples and some really dirty forms of knife fighting (basically you're rolling around on the floor trying to kill one another...). If both sides in a melee are making HTH attacks, then the melee automatically occurs at range R-1; otherwise, the would-be HTH fighter must make an overcome roll of Athletics, Melee Combat, or Unarmed Combat to close range from R0 to R-1. If successful, you close to R-1 range, whereupon your opponent, if they're not using an HTH weapon themselves (see page 232), faces an obstacle when they try to attack you. And so on.

Establishing Sides

Conflicts are about goals, with two or more sides either trying to achieve a goal or to stop the other side achieving theirs. The PCs usually form one side, fighting against **non-player characters** on the other. Different setups are possible—PCs may fight one another, and even join NPCs to form one or more sides.

In a conflict, it's important to establish who's on which side, what their goals are and what they're trying to do, and where everyone is situated in the scene (who's in which zone, etc). It's also important to determine how each side divides up to face the other. Is one character being mobbed by the bad guy's henchmen, or is the opposition spreading itself equally among the player characters? Once conflict starts this may change, but this gives you a starting point.

.....
In the Great Hall at Virigu, it's obvious what the sides are: on the one side we have the five members of the party (and also Zabet's chelother—it's still there!), and on the other we have the two survivors.

The Round

Rounds in conflicts are more complicated than in contests. In a round, every character may roll for one action on their turn, based on what they're trying to accomplish. Usually you'll attack or perform a manoeuvre on your turn, because that's what conflicts are about—taking out your opponent, or making it easier to do so. However, you may have a secondary goal, in which case you may make an overcome action instead. This most often happens when you try to move between zones but an aspect or another character gets in your way.

You may only make one skill roll on your turn in a round, unless you're defending against someone else's action, which you can do as often as you want, subject to a gradually increasing penalty (see page 230). You can even make defend actions on behalf of others, as long as it's reasonable for you to interpose yourself between the attack and its target. In that case, you suffer the effects of any failed defend rolls (including taking damage!) yourself.

Initiative Order

The order in which characters act in a round is known as **initiative order**, and is determined by levels in certain skills, from high to low. The exact skill you're using to determine initiative depends on what kind of action you're taking that round. If you're making a physical attack or other physical action, your initiative is determined by your Notice skill, or by your Athletics in the event of a tie;

if you're taking a magical action (using a **power skill**—see page 279), your initiative is determined by your corresponding power skill score, or by your Willpower skill in the event of a tie; and if you're making a mental action (for example using Provoke to cause mental stress damage), then your initiative is determined by Empathy, or Rapport or Deceive in the event of a tie. Initiative order can also be a factor in status conflicts, using your Pillar skill and then your Social Class, and wealth conflicts, using Resources and then Contacts. This is summarized in Table 10-3: Initiative Determination.

Note that while your initiative order might remain the same for a whole conflict, if you change the type of action you're taking, your order might also change. For example, if you start by making a magical attack with a power skill of level 3, then in a subsequent round switch to a dagger attack with a Melee Combat skill of 1, your initiative order will drop from 3 to 1.

Sometimes, when it gets to your turn in the initiative order, you might want to take a different action. Perhaps the target you were going to attack with your sword (a Melee Combat attack, with initiative determined by Notice) has just been killed, so now you want to give a blood curdling war cry to demoralise a more distant foe (a Provoke attack, with initiative determined by Empathy). It's the Chronicler's decision whether an immediate change of action is possible; in this case, it probably is, but if the tables were reversed, and you were originally going to yell a war cry but now want to draw your sword and rush into melee, your Chronicler might say you face an obstacle (drawing the sword!), or may even say you have to wait until the next round to act. Assuming your Chronicler does allow you to act in the same round, if the new initiative determination skill is higher than your old one, then you still act at the current point in the initiative

TABLE 10-3: INITIATIVE DETERMINATION

TYPE OF ACTION	INITIATIVE DETERMINED BY...	TIE-BREAKER
Physical	Notice	Athletics
Magical	Power skill	Willpower
Mental	Empathy	Rapport / Deceive
Status	Pillar skill	Social Class
Wealth	Resources	Contacts

order. However, if your new initiative determination skill is lower level than the old, you must wait until that new point in the initiative order comes round.

Actions which are tied even after a tie-breaker are assumed to occur simultaneously.

.....

The conflict begins! Sarah calls for initiative: here's the order in which all the participants act.

Initiative 3: Zabet, physical attack (Notice 3)

Initiative 2: Zimiri, magical manoeuvre (Unification of Opposites power skill 2)

Initiative 1: The aurivors, physical attack (Notice 1, Athletics 2), Ukhta, physical attack (Notice 1, Athletics 1)

Initiative 0: Six, Varnas, physical attacks (no Notice or Athletics skills)

.....

Attacks and Defences

A successful attack causes a hit on a target equal to the shifts generated on the dice roll. If you get three shifts, you cause a 3-point hit.

If you're hit by an attack, you must absorb the hit to stay in the fight, or get **taken out** (page 216). You can absorb hits by taking **stress** (page 214) and / or **consequences** (page 215). You can also **concede** a conflict before getting taken out to keep some control over what happens to your character.

.....

At initiative order 3, Zabet takes her turn. She's not mounted on her chelother, so runs at the aurivor on the staircase, wielding her broadsword. She moves the 1 zone distance and rolls a 1 on the Cosmic Fate dice to attack, adding her Melee Combat 4 for a result of 5. The aurivor defends with Unarmed Combat 3, rolling a -1, for a result of 2.

Zabet's attack hits! It does 3 points of damage, plus 3 more points for her broadsword's stress increase (SI). That's 6 points of physical stress. The aurivor's armoured chitin has a stress reduction (SR) of -1, leaving 5 points of damage; Sarah decides that the aurivor takes a mild consequence, Bloody Scratch Across the Carapace, and marks off the aurivor's 3-point physical stress box. It's taken a light wound.

.....

Full Defence

If you're hard pressed in a conflict, you may forego your action in a round to concentrate on defending against attacks. You get a +2 bonus to your defend rolls in that round, but may take no other actions. Note that this doesn't let you avoid the Multiple Defence penalty (page 230).

Conflict Manoeuvres

Manoeuvres are common in conflicts, enabling participants to create situation aspects or condition aspects to dynamically modify the environment, their own condition, and / or that of their opponent, to increase their chances of victory. Your Chronicler may use these aspects to justify overcome actions; they last until they become irrelevant, or until the scene ends, and sometimes may be as much a threat to you as your opponent.



When you use a manoeuvre in a conflict, think about how long you want the resulting aspect to last, and who should have access to it. It's difficult for anyone besides you and your allies to justify using a condition aspect you create on a character, but it's also easier to justify removing it—a single overcome action or another manoeuvre could undo it. It's harder to justify removing a situation aspect on the environment (seriously, who's going to put out that *Raging Fire* you created when you upset that barrel of pitch and torched it?), but **anyone** in the scene could potentially take advantage of it.

Conflict manoeuvres are contextual. Examples are provided in the section “Contextualising Conflict” below. See page 220 for physical combat manoeuvres, page 224 for mental conflicts, page 226 for status conflicts, and page 228 for wealth conflict manoeuvres.

.....

At initiative order 2, Zimiri advances 1 zone and uses their “Ventriloquism” magical cantrip (page 305) to make the sound of an ailing animal in the far corner of the hall, trying to distract the nearby second aurivor. That’s a Unification of Opposites 2 manoeuvre, and it faces an obstacle for the 1 zone range (it’s harder for them to throw their voice that far), for a total difficulty of 3. They roll a 2, for a total result of 4—a success! There’s now an Ailing Animal Is Easy Prey! situation aspect in the same zone as the second aurivor.

.....

Free Actions

*Sometimes your character does something in conjunction with or as a step toward your action in a round. Maybe you shout a warning before opening a door, or quickly size up a tavern bar-room before joining a brawl. These **free actions** are colourful description more than anything, meant to add atmosphere instead of having a rules-mechanical effect.*

You don’t need to go to the rules for a free action. If there’s no significant or interesting opposition, you don’t need a roll, but just do what you say you do; fishing for something in your backpack or swiftly drawing your shortsword are parts of performing actions—you don’t need additional mechanics to handle such things.

Switching to a Contest or Challenge

Sometimes participants in a conflict are no longer interested in or willing to harm one another, because of a change in circumstances. In this case, you can switch straight to a contest or challenge, if appropriate. Your Chronicler won’t award any end-of-conflict fate points (page 217) until the new contest or challenge has been resolved.

Stress

In a conflict, you’re constantly exerting yourself, using up your energy reserves and straining yourself to avoid real injury. This type of relatively superficial damage is called **taking stress**. It’s what happens before you really get hurt.

A character has four **stress tracks**: physical, mental, social, and wealth. By default, each stress track has two stress boxes: one which can absorb 1 point of stress, and one which can absorb 2. Sometimes you may also have 3-point and 4-point stress boxes.

.....

At initiative order 1, the first aurivor attacks Zabet. They’re in the same zone, and it rolls 2 on the Cosmic Fate Dice, adding Unarmed Combat 3 for a result of 5. Zabet tries to parry with her broadsword, rolling a -3! Even with Melee Combat 4, that’s a defend result of 1: the aurivor hits, with 4 shifts of success. It adds its SI+3 for its rasping cilia and slashing jaws, inflicting a total of 7 stress on Zabet.

.....

Whenever you’re hit by an attack which inflicts one or more points of stress on you, you must mark off one (**and only one!**) stress box, which must be equal to or higher than the stress inflicted.

.....

Zabet’s armour is rather good, with an SR of -5, but even so Zabet takes 2 points of physical stress. Sharma marks off Zabet’s 2-point physical stress box.

.....

If you're forced to mark off more stress points than your highest stress box can take, then you're **taken out**—you lose the conflict. In physical combat, this could even mean your character is dead. See page 216.

Burning Stress to Improve Rolls

Whenever you make a skill roll, you can draw on your inner energy reserves to achieve greater results. You do this by "burning stress": you may mark off one of your stress boxes, and get a bonus to your roll equal to that stress box's value. For a physical skill, you burn a physical stress box; for a mental skill (including your power skills), you burn a mental stress box, and so on.

Stress can be burned in other ways, too. In particular, sorcerers may burn stress to affect multiple targets and increase the range of their spells. See page 271.

*Bonuses gained from burning stress are affected by the bonus cap (page 195). However, you may burn a **consequence** instead, giving a bonus equal to the consequence value (+2, +4, or +6). This bonus is **not** affected by the bonus cap.*

Consequences

Consequences are how you avoid getting taken out. You may incur a consequence to reduce the number of stress points you have to mark off using a stress box, even right down to zero. But a consequence represents serious damage—a physical or mental wound in combat, or financial difficulty or social embarrassment in wealth or status conflicts. **You can incur more than one consequence at a time**, reducing the stress you must mark off with a stress box correspondingly.

.....
Later in the conflict, Varnas faces the injured and enraged second aurivior, which has singled out who shot it with a radium pistol. It rolls 3 for its attack, a result of 6. Varnas is performing a full defence for a +2 bonus, but rolls a -4, for a -2 result.

This is bad news! The aurivior wins the attack with 8 shifts, and adds its SI+3, doing 11 points of stress damage! Varnas's armour only reduces this by 1 point. Vitas tries to work out how Varnas can survive 10 points of damage—he can only check 1 of his stress boxes, remember, and his highest is only 2 points! He needs to find some way to reduce that incoming damage by 8 points before he can do that...

Fortunately Varnas was uninjured, so Vitas decides he'll take one mild consequence and one severe consequence, reducing the stress he must mark off by 2 and 6 stress respectively. He then checks off his 2-point stress box to handle the remaining 2 stress points. That's a lot of injury: the mild consequence is described as Winded and Gasping and the severe consequence is a Broken Arm (the aurivior went straight for Varnas's radium pistol...). Varnas is in a bad way!
.....

A consequence is a special type of aspect, and can be invoked and compelled. Often, your opponent will invoke your consequences against you, taking advantage of your wounds to gain bonuses and advantages (and of course the first invoke on a newly created consequence / aspect is free—see page 126!). Consequences can also act as **obstacles** (page 201) if you try to take actions which a consequence's description looks likely to interfere with.

There are three types of consequence, each of which reduces the stress you take from a hit by a certain amount:

- A **mild consequence** represents things like *Battered and Bruised*, *Over Exertion*, *Winded and Gasping*, *Unable to Think Straight*, *Minor Flesh Wounds*, *Temporary Cashflow Problem*, or *Faux Pas*. Taking a mild consequence reduces the stress you must mark off by up to 2 points.
- A **moderate consequence** represents a more enduring injury, perhaps a *Bad Slash With a Blade*, a *Sprained Ankle*, *Temporary Amnesia*, *Maxed Out On Loans*, or *Loss of Reputation*. A moderate consequence reduces the stress you must mark off by up to 4 points.

- A **severe consequence** is nasty. This is a *Broken Limb*, or perhaps one that's *Slashed So Badly You're Losing a Lot of Blood*; or it's a significant mental trauma that's going to leave you *Stunned and Shaking* and *Not Sure Who or Where You Are*. Severe status and wealth consequences can be things like *Thrown Out In Disgrace* or *Facing Debtor's Prison*. A severe consequence reduces the stress you must mark off by up to 6 points.

Decide the wording of a consequence by talking with your Chronicler. Usually, the person inflicting the consequence gets to suggest that wording, and then the player and Chronicler discuss whether that's reasonable. Your Chronicler always has final say! (However, see "Conceding a Conflict" below.)

In time, your character can recover from stress and even consequences—see page 233.

Personal Consequences and Social Consequences

While you have separate physical and mental stress tracks, you only have 3 **personal consequences** representing both mental and physical injuries. This means that if you've taken a mild consequence from a mental attack (say, an intimidation attack using *Provoke*), you can't then take a mild consequence from a physical attack (say, with a sword); you must instead use your moderate or severe consequence to reduce the stress you take, even if you've only got 1 point to mark off: you can use a consequence to mark off fewer stress points than the consequence's maximum.

.....
Varnas has sustained 2 personal consequences. Even though they both represent physical wounds, he can only take 1 more personal consequence of any kind, mental or physical. If someone gives him even a Bad Fright (a mental consequence), he'll be on the verge of disaster.

The same applies for your status and wealth stress tracks, the consequences for which are termed **social consequences**. Again, you normally have only 3 of these; both status and wealth consequences apply to the same 3 consequences.

In the sections below (pages 219, 225, 227, 228, and 229), we provide more detail about the consequences you can incur in different types of conflict.

Extreme Consequences

As well as your mild, moderate, and severe personal and social consequences, you also get one, last-ditch chance to stay in a conflict—the **extreme consequence**. **Between major milestones (page 259), you may only use this option once**, whether in a physical, mental, social, or wealth conflict.

An extreme consequence reduces incoming stress by up to 8 points, and represents devastating, life-changing damage: *Hideously Maimed*, *Severed Limb*, *Brain Injury*, *Psychotic*, *Harrowed To Your Soul*, and so on. Additionally, there's no extreme consequence slot on your character sheet; instead, **you must immediately replace your Doom aspect with the extreme consequence**. An extreme consequence literally changes what fate has in store for you, and nothing will be the same again.

Critical Consequences

A critical success on an attack roll ignores all stress reductions employed by the defender. In physical combat, this usually means armour, which means that critical hits can be devastating.

In addition, **any** consequences (mild, moderate, severe, or even extreme) inflicted by critical hits do **not** recover (heal) normally—such **critical consequences** will linger on your character sheet more or less permanently, taking up a consequence slot; see page 234 for more.

Taken Out

If you've marked off all three of your personal or social consequences and you must still take a number of stress points higher than your highest stress box, then you're **taken out**. Taken out is **bad**. It means you've been totally defeated, and it may even be time to create a new character.

The exact meaning of "taken out" depends on the conflict. If you're in a melee where your opponent is simply trying to kill you, then a taken out result means your character is killed. If you're taken out by a sustained intimidation attack caused by *Provoke*, then your character is so overwhelmed as to suffer mental breakdown or even insanity, and can no longer cope with the stressful life of an adventurer!

.....
Badly injured by the second aurivor, Varnas is in trouble. An aurivor's tentacles are coated with paralyzing poison, which works on him, causing physical stress. In his wounded state, Varnas will rapidly incur stress and another consequence, and there isn't anyone who can really help him right now with the battle raging. Unless something changes fast, he's going to be taken out—prey for the aurivor!

Taken out results work the same for **social consequences**:

.....
In Korudav, Autarch Jakai Tellisan is berating Morvus, former apprentice of Prylotan, priest of Khosht, who died ignominiously during the recent Devastation. Morvus is currently suffering a severe status consequence and a mild wealth consequence.

The Autarch's public reproach inflicts 9 points of status stress. Even if Morvus uses his remaining moderate social consequence to reduce that by 4 points, he doesn't have a 5-point stress box, and so is taken out. He flees from the audience chamber, a broken man...

Character Death and Surviving Taken Out Results

It's usually obvious when a character is taken out in a lethal conflict. If you're having trouble imagining how a character could survive a given defeat, then they probably haven't.

But if a character is taken out in a way that a foe then has to decide whether to make a final coup de grace to dispatch them, you have to decide whether character death is called for at that moment or not. If the foe's a murderous psychopath, then fine—character death it is. The Springtide Civilisations are a dangerous place, doom is everywhere, violent death easy to come by. And not just death: characters go mad, get horribly mutated, have their will destroyed by nightmarish demonic forces. Knowing that a terrible fate is always a risk is what makes your games exciting, the jeopardy real, and moments of heroic sacrifice so poignant.

But be cautious about permanently removing a character from play on a taken out result. Especially where players have lovingly developed their characters, and their sudden demise seems called for by nothing other than a random dice roll, it may be better to make a taken out result mean a **really** bad defeat for a character: a chance to put them through hell—maybe even literally!

A character taken out in a physical conflict may find themselves captive and stripped of everything they own, on trial for treason, cowardice, or dereliction of duty, or suffering life-changing wounds. In a mental conflict, they could suffer complete breakdown, personality change, or an inability to continue in the same walk of life.

It's always a good idea to be absolutely clear when character death is on the table in a scene. When you're at a climactic, high-stakes moment, especially when PCs are **invoking their Dooms** (see page 132), it's completely appropriate. But even then, it's good to provide a clear opportunity to avoid that scene, too. Losing a character should be a moment of high emotion and drama in your game, a heroic but doomed stand, and an opportunity for great roleplaying and story-telling.

Conceding a Conflict

One way of avoiding a taken out result is by **conceding a conflict**. This is the equivalent of running away. You must choose to concede a conflict **before** the dice hit the table; you can't wait until the dice say you're taken out, then choose to concede. But, if the situation looks dire, you've taken your three consequences and have just one stress box left, then conceding might be your best choice!

Conceding a conflict means this: the conflict ends, immediately, and your opponent wins. They accomplish what they set out to do, with one proviso: you, individually, get to avoid the worst parts of your fate. You survive the conflict, and retain your freedom, living to fight another day.

Discuss what conceding actually looks like with your Chronicler. In a battle, maybe you've been knocked out and left for dead on the battlefield; you regain consciousness some time later, surrounded by the dead! Or maybe you fled the Autarchal Court in shame, before the Hierophant could finish you off in her scathing debate. You can't tarnish your opponent's victory by conceding, but you can mitigate your loss. In a conflict like a melee, conceding can mean disengaging from combat and fleeing, giving the field to your opponent.

And one other thing: if you choose to concede, you gain a fate point, plus one additional fate point for any consequence you incurred in the conflict.

Sarah's about to roll for the aurivor's poison coursing through Varnas's veins. Realising the outlook is grim, Vitas decides to concede. This means Varnas has personally been defeated in the conflict, and the aurivor has what it wants; but Vitas gets to decide what this looks like. In discussion with the Chronicler, he proposes that Varnas succumbs to the paralysing poison and is completely immobilised. The aurivor, seeing he's no longer a threat, turns to the other surviving party members. Later, if the rest of the party survive, maybe they'll even think he's dead. But he isn't...

Vitas receives 3 fate points for conceding this way; one for the concession, and two for the mild and severe consequences he incurred.

CONTEXTUALISING CONFLICTS

The rules above apply to many different types of conflict: bloody battles with sword and flamelance, duels with deadly magics, lethally polite intrigues in the halls of power. In this section, we look at how the rules apply to these types of conflict in detail.

Physical Combat

Everyone knows what physical combat looks like—clashing swords, spells flying everywhere, charges, wounds, flurries of blows and cascades of deadly arrows. Adventure movies, games, and fiction are full of it!

Attacks and Defences

Attack and defend actions in physical combat are easy to visualise. Using skills like Melee Combat, Ranged Combat, and Unarmed Combat, combatants injure and kill one another, inflicting deadly wounds. There are other forms of attack and defence, too; in **Chapter 13: Magic**, we introduce power skills and stunts, which characters can use in physical combat to cast deadly spells, destroying their foes with lightning bolts, fireballs, and more.

Fatigue and Exhaustion

Participants in physical combat incur physical and mental stress damage representing battlefield exertion; characters become fatigued, until they can no longer evade attacks, and suffer wounds.

Sometimes, mental stress damage in physical combat represents fear, intimidation, panic, and even mental control. See page 225.

Wounds

Physical conflict consequences are **wounds**. When a wound is incurred, spend a little time to define its nature. Wounds inflicted by fire attacks will be in the form of burns; those inflicted by bladed weapons will be cuts, slashes, and even severed body parts, depending on their severity. See Table 10-4: Examples of Physical Wounds for examples.

Remember that consequences don't only have a mechanistic effect; a *Broken Leg* severe consequence means the victim is on the ground, unable to walk or run, half-incapacitated by pain. You don't need the aspect rules to handle that; you know they won't be making Athletics rolls for running or jumping, for example, and you don't need to invoke an aspect to say so. Instead, use invokes of that *Broken Leg* consequence to give attackers a tactical advantage (the target's writhing around on the floor!), or let the consequence act as an **obstacle** if the character wants to roll to drag themselves out of melee.

Armour

Armour is a way of covering your fragile skin with something more durable, to stop physical attacks harming you. Sometimes it just provides an aspect as an obstacle or for invoking on defend rolls; sometimes it has a **stress reduction**, which reduces the points of any physical stress damage hitting you. Some armour is natural, like thick skin, hide, or a carapace, but for most characters it's gear you buy and wear. Some durable armours can take consequences on your behalf, reducing the stress you're facing. See page 174.

TABLE 10-4: EXAMPLES OF PHYSICAL WOUNDS

CONSEQUENCE TYPE	WOUND SEVERITY	EXAMPLE ASPECT WORDINGS
Mild	Light wound	<i>Stunned, No Feeling in Limb, Cuts and Bruises, Bloody Nose, Ears Ringing, Blood in the Eyes, Painful Slash, An Arrow Sticking in the Leg, Pulled Muscles, Singed and Sore, First-Degree Burns</i>
Moderate	Moderate wound	<i>Concussed, Dislocated Limb, Heavy Bleeding, Broken Nose, Inner Ear Balance Problem, Temporary Tunnel Vision, Gaping Flesh Wound, Impaled, Torn Ligaments, Second-Degree Burns</i>
Severe	Serious wound	<i>Fractured Skull, Broken Limb, Bleeding Out, Nose Smashed Up Into Skull, Deafened, Blinded, That Spear Goes Right Through, Snapped Tendons, Third-Degree Burns</i>
Extreme	Critical wound	<i>Comatose, Severed Limb, Gushing With Blood, Brain Injury, Ears Ripped Off, Eyes Torn Out, Gaping Hole In Body, Hideously Maimed, Fourth-Degree Burns</i>

Critical Hits and Armour

As mentioned on page 201, critical success attack rolls ignore a target's armour; they may use neither its stress reduction nor its consequence to reduce the critical hit's damage. But what happens to the armour in this case?

It's a judgment call; sometimes the Chronicler may declare that a critical hit has found a chink in a target's armour, bypassing it completely. Other times, they may declare the armour has been smashed to pieces or otherwise compromised by the attack. In this latter case, assume the physical stress damage is done **both** to the armour and the character wearing it. Reduce the damage the armour sustains by its stress reduction, and then mark off any consequences that armour can take using the remaining stress. At the same time, the target is affected by the full original damage, ignoring armour.

If a target's armour has no consequences to fill, the Chronicler may rule it's been damaged or even destroyed by the critical hit, and is henceforth ineffective.

Damaging Armour

Armour consequences represent damage to your armour when it's hit by a powerful attack; broken straps, coverage breaches, parts bashed or broken beyond use. Armour consequences don't get better naturally, and must be **repaired** (page 146).



Condition Aspects

As explained on page 125, condition aspects affect you directly. They're different from consequences, which are often wounds you must recover from, and instead represent temporary effects like enchantments, encumbrance, or tactical advantages or disadvantages unrelated to the environment (like *Bright-Eyed and Bushy-Tailed*, *Horribly Pissed-Off*, or *Soaking Wet*). Condition aspects are great for enhancing your combat descriptions; not generally as serious as a consequence, they can often be removed by a simple manoeuvre.

Do I Have to Note Down All These Aspects?

No, of course not. You'll soon get to grips with the fact that when you take an action to make a change in the real world, that change is also an aspect you can invoke (and the first invoke is free). You don't have to note down every aspect you create, but it can be a good memory aid.

Combat Manoeuvres

Combat manoeuvres are a way for your character to display his tactical smarts. Melee fighters rarely stand toe-to-toe, whacking one another with weapons in alternating flow. Instead, combat is fluid, participants in constant motion, ducking and weaving, leaping off tables or elevated places, gaining superior positioning. The possibilities are only limited by your imagination, and your character's skill.

Condition and situation aspects in combat can be the result of stunts, sometimes requiring the expenditure of a fate point. A separate manoeuvre roll isn't required: the aspect is created automatically, often alongside a separate action. See for example the Heavy Hitter stunt (page 155), which lets you do damage and create a condition aspect **at the same time**.

Often, you don't need a special stunt; you can simply take a manoeuvre action **instead of** an attack action, to put a specific condition aspect on a target, or to create a situation aspect. Table 10-5: Combat Manoeuvre Examples (page 222) provides some guidelines—feel free to riff off these and come up with your own!

To Combat Manoeuvre or Not To Combat Manoeuvre?

Combat manoeuvres add tactical detail to combat situations. Those listed aren't exhaustive or authoritative, but are suggested ways of doing things derived from the rules mechanics. We've done the work "so you don't have to", but you can always do things differently.

For example, take the ever popular "I shoot him in the head" approach to combat. You can use the Precise Attack combat manoeuvre, but is that the only solution? Not at all! If you've just shot someone with a bow and inflicted a severe consequence, then you can describe that as An Eyeful of Arrow, too. Or maybe you're rolling a manoeuvre with your Turmoil power skill, summoning a fierce wind to guide your arrow. If you succeed, you can absolutely create an Arrow In The Eye condition aspect on the target, or an aspect which can be used to create an analogous consequence on a subsequent attack roll. Get creative!

Berserk Fighting

Some characters may go **berserk** in physical combat, entering a murderous rage, gaining combat advantages but reducing their concern for their own safety. Stunts and special abilities permitting this include: the Beast Berserker power stunt for Entos, the Battle Rage power stunt of the Turmoil power skill (page 304), the Hammer of the Gods power stunt for Madiz, the Berserkergang stunt for the Thunder Berserker fighting school, and the Battle Frenzy special ability (page 86). Berserk fighting has the following effects:

- You must have a **permission** like a *Berserker* aspect or stunt to go berserk.
- Your defend rolls are made as if you had a defend skill of 0.
- You may only make melee attacks when berserk. No berserk bowmen!
- You attack with your **berserker skill** (like the Animality, Destruction or Turmoil power skills), with a teamwork bonus from your Melee Combat skill (or Unarmed Combat in the case of Animality), or vice versa.

- You gain a +2 **berserker bonus** to your attack actions. If you're a Madizi using the Hammer of the Gods temple stunt, you roll +1 Hero Die instead.
- Each round of berserk fighting, you must pay 1 fate point or lose point of 1 physical stress, deducted immediately.
- It's not easy to stop berserking: roll Willpower vs your berserker skill each round until you succeed. Otherwise you keep fighting, even your allies!

Mounted Combat

*Several examples in this chapter mention mounted combat—characters fighting while riding an animal like a horse or chelother. While anyone can invoke their steed as an aspect, to make full use of a riding animal in combat requires you to have that animal as a **relationship**; see page 257 for more.*

Cover

In physical combat, cover includes low walls, thick undergrowth, hiding behind a window frame, parapet, or crenellation, and so on. There are two types of cover; **full cover**, when you're keeping your head down to avoid being hit and don't care about attacking back; and **half cover**, when you're keeping your head down as much as possible, but keep poking it back up to try and attack. Both types of cover are a **barrier** (page 201), meaning you have to roll a minimum number to hit something under cover, regardless of that target's own skill and defend roll.

Half cover is a level 2 barrier, meaning you need an attack result of at least 3 to punch through to the target beyond. Characters in half cover face an **obstacle** (page 201) on their attack rolls.

.....
Zabet has beaten the first aurivor back beneath the staircase, and Sarah rules it now has half cover. This gives it an effective minimum defend result of 2; even if the aurivor rolls below that on its defend roll, Zabet needs to roll 3 or greater to do any damage.

Full cover is a level 4 barrier, meaning you need an attack result of at least 5 to punch through. Characters who are in full cover may not attack.

Fighting Schools

*Fighting school communities like Sakari Legions and Amadoradi Brotherhoods provide builds for characters belonging to them, where you can learn special techniques, moves, and other know-how you can use in combat. You can find an example on page 102, and many more in the **Chronicle's Guide**.*

Ammunition

Weapons like bows and crossbows, and artefacts like flamelances, use **ammunition** when you make an attack action with them; they're listed with the *Limited Ammunition* constraint in **Chapter 9: Equipment** (page 170). Because an attack action can encompass more than one single sword swing or loosing just one arrow, it isn't always clear how much ammunition you're using when you attack, and so **as a general rule** we advise against trying to count exactly how many arrows are left in your quiver, etc. Not only is it fiddly, it runs counter to the interesting effects you can achieve in play, shown below. By default, we recommend you assume you have whatever ammunition you need to use your bow, crossbow, etc. Even if you loose all your arrows, you can collect some of them up later, so generally you have a supply.

Sometimes, though, it makes for a great dramatic moment to find you've run out of ammo—usually at a crucial moment in the adventure! A great opportunity for such a moment is when you **succeed at a cost** (page 200) when using a missile weapon. If it's a minor cost, you could end up with a *Depleted Ammunition* condition aspect, imposing an obstacle on your next action as you fish around madly for another quiver of arrows. And if it's a serious cost, maybe you've incurred an *Out of Ammunition* condition aspect, meaning that spare quiver you thought you had is actually empty! An *Out of Ammunition* condition aspect doesn't impose an obstacle—it prevents you from using your missile weapon **at all** until you've removed the aspect by acquiring some new ammo in some way—either by buying it with a Resources roll or even crafting it, using Devise, etc, to fletch some new ones. Or maybe you make a daring manoeuvre mid-combat to pick up some arrows you've recently shot and which are sticking out of various bodies!

TABLE 10-5 : COMBAT MANOEUVRE EXAMPLES (1/2)

COMBAT MANOEUVRE	DESCRIPTION
Aiming	Spend a round aiming at a target to get a +2 bonus on your attack on the next round. If you're not currently engaged in combat, you don't need to roll for this manoeuvre.
Alter the Environment	Use a skill like Physique, Melee Combat, Ranged Combat, Burglary, Devise, a power skill, etc, to interact with the combat environment, knocking over objects to create obstacles, setting things on fire, flooding an area, etc, to create a situation aspect.
Blinding	Roll your combat skill or other appropriate skill to throw dirt or spray noxious liquid in a target's eyes to place a <i>Blinded</i> -type condition aspect on him.
Break Weapon or Shield	<p>If you're fighting in melee with an alagin weapon vs alagin weapon, or Ladabran steel vs Ladabran steel, or unarmed vs alagin weapon if you have the Martial Arts stunt, you need to make a separate manoeuvre action using your appropriate combat skill to break your opponent's weapon (see also page 179). You roll +2 Doom Dice on your manoeuvre roll, as the weapon you're targeting is Very Small (-2).</p> <p>Success = target weapon is <i>Snagged</i>.</p> <p>Special Success = target weapon is <i>Damaged</i>. If this happens again, it'll be <i>Broken</i>.</p> <p>Critical Success = target weapon is <i>Broken</i>, and the target is <i>Disarmed</i>.</p>
Charge	Roll Athletics to charge a target 2 zones away, getting a +2 bonus on your attack roll in the next round. The difficulty is 2 if you're already in a melee, or 1 otherwise. See also the "Charge!" stunt on page 142.
Disarm	Make a combined roll (page 194) of Deceive and your Melee or Unarmed Combat skill, with the combat skill as primary. If you succeed, your opponent immediately drops their weapon in their current zone; on a special success, the weapon lands 1 zone away; on a critical success, it lands 2 zones away.
Disengage	Make a combined roll (page 194) of Athletics and Melee or Unarmed Combat, with the combat skill as primary. If you succeed, you move at the end of the current round to be 1 zone from your opponent, and you're no longer engaged in combat. If you fail, you incur an <i>Opportunity Attack</i> condition aspect as described on page 211.
Entangled	You must have the Entangle special ability (see the <i>Chronicler's Guide</i>) or be using an <i>Entangling</i> weapon, like a net, lasso, or whip. Roll Melee or Unarmed Combat to create an <i>Entangled</i> -type condition aspect on the target which acts as an obstacle to all physical actions until removed.
Feint	Make a combined roll (page 194) of Deceive and Melee or Unarmed Combat, with your combat skill as the primary. On a success, your opponent incurs a <i>Wrongfooted</i> -type condition aspect and may neither use its shield nor make a full defence action on its next turn.
Immobilise	Roll either Physique or Unarmed Combat, or Melee Combat if you're using an appropriate weapon, to place an <i>Immobilised</i> -type condition aspect on your opponent which acts as an obstacle to any of their physical actions. The target may not move out of the current zone while <i>Immobilised</i> , and neither may you unless you're 1 Size larger (page 235) than the target.

TABLE 10-5 : COMBAT MANOEUVRE EXAMPLES (2/2)

COMBAT MANOEUVRE	DESCRIPTION
Mount / Dismount	Mounting or dismounting a riding animal or vehicle is usually a free action (page 214). However, it's a manoeuvre action requiring a Ride roll or other appropriate skill roll if you're in the middle of combat or otherwise obstructed. See also "Mounted Combat" on page 221.
Precise Attack	To target an opponent's arms, legs, head, etc, to cause greater damage, avoid armour, etc, you must first spend a round in combat and make a manoeuvre roll of your appropriate combat skill to find an opening in your opponent's defences. If you succeed, on the subsequent round you make an attack roll as if attacking a target 1 Size smaller than your opponent (page 236). If you succeed, you hit the desired location (with the corresponding additional damage for hitting a smaller target), and also avoid any of the target's armour that doesn't cover that location. If you combine this with the Aiming combat manoeuvre, roll Precise Attack first, spending 2 rounds preparing your attack!
Positioning	Combat manoeuvres involving tactical positioning affect yourself or your opponent, or even another ally, depending on description. Giving yourself a <i>King of the Castle</i> -type combat advantage in a melee, by leaping onto a table, could be a difficulty 2 Athletics manoeuvre; but forcing your opponent <i>Down the Bottom of the Steps</i> to get the drop on him is likely a Melee Combat manoeuvre against his Melee Combat defend.
Shield Bash	As a combat manoeuvre, bashing a foe with a shield is designed to send them hurtling backwards. Use your Melee Combat against either their Melee Combat, Athletics, or Physique, and if successful the opponent is <i>Knocked Back</i> 1 zone. If they can't move back 1 zone, they're <i>Knocked Down</i> in the current zone. On a special success, you can knock your opponent down regardless, or knock them back and inflict physical stress damage equal to your shifts.
Stand Up	Characters who are <i>Knocked Down</i> , <i>Supine</i> , <i>Prostrate</i> , etc, face an obstacle to all appropriate actions until they stand up again. Standing up is an action, automatically successful unless you're in melee or otherwise obstructed, in which case an Athletics roll is required.
Take Cover	In the right environment you can roll a manoeuvre (probably using Athletics) to get <i>Half-Cover</i> or <i>Full Cover</i> (page 221). If you're not engaged in combat or have plenty of time you may not even need to roll.
Tear Away Armour	<p>You can roll a manoeuvre of your Melee or Unarmed Combat skill to target part of your opponent's armour—their helm, breastplate, vambraces, greaves, etc. You roll +1 Doom Die on your manoeuvre, as the target armour piece is smaller sized.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Success = target armour piece is <i>Dislodged</i>. You can invoke this on a Precise Attack, etc. • Special Success = target armour piece is <i>Torn Off</i>. You can invoke this for effect to ignore the target's armour for that specific location. See page 127. • Critical Success = target armour piece is <i>Broken</i>. As above, but the target can't recover the armour piece without repairing it.
Winding and Other Minor Injuries	Usually winding and minor injuries like scratches, cuts, and bruises are handled by the physical stress and consequences rules (page 214). However, to inconvenience rather than wound your opponent, roll a manoeuvre of an appropriate combat skill to inflict condition aspects like <i>Gut Punch</i> , <i>Winded</i> , <i>Painful Cuts</i> , <i>Hampered By An Arrow</i> , etc.

In short, we recommend ammunition should be used as a source of tension and drama in play, and not one of arduous (and often uninteresting) book-keeping.

That doesn't mean you should *never* count ammunition, though. You can if you want to, and, in the case of weapons (particularly artefacts) where ammunition is scarce or hard to come by, like flamelances, radium rifles, and so on, the gradual reduction in precious ammo can be a source of tension and drama in its own right. The scarcity of such items and the value of finding fully-charged artefacts, or of recharging depleted ones, are important themes in *The Chronicles of Future Earth*, and for a little added book-keeping you can make it them interesting moments in your games. Here are some suggestions:

- For weapons with scarce ammunition, count up how many shots that weapon can currently make. Every time you shoot that weapon, mark off 1 shot. When that weapon has no shots left, you can't use it until you acquire more ammunition or charges.
- If the weapon allows **rapid fire** (usually as a *Rapid Fire* weapon capability—see page 179), you may choose to use it whenever you attack, as long as the weapon has at least 3 shots left. It gives you a +2 bonus on your attack roll, and you may attack up to 3 adjacent targets in a single round using the “Attacking Multiple Targets” rules (page 229). However, you incur a *Depleted Ammunition* condition aspect (see above).

Battles

*Characters may also participate in mass battles, confrontations between armies, naval engagements, and so on, as leaders and also as individuals trying to survive the fray. Your Chronicler has much more information in the **Chronicler's Guide**.*

Intimidation, Terror, and Fear Attacks

Let's look at one of the main ways conflicts can cause mental stress damage—by scaring the bejeesus out of a target.

Intimidation Conflicts

A major source of mental stress in conflicts is the prospect of imminent physical harm. Demoralising or terrifying a foe can defeat them before sword has ever touched flesh.

Almost any significant threat of harm can cause mental stress **as long as it looks real and immediate**. Threatening to bankrupt someone, burn their house down, or ruin their reputation will be effective if the target believes the threat; threatening someone you clearly have no chance of affecting, however, will not.

Intimidation attacks often precede physical combat; you spend a round or two trying to terrify your opponent and inflict mental stress and even a consequence or two, softening them up before you attack. Sometimes your foe may concede before going further, and your work is done! Intimidation attacks can precede other conflicts, too—particularly social ones.

Intimidation *conflicts*, where opponents spend the whole conflict trying to take one another out purely by causing mental stress, are rarer but not impossible. The trick is to keep it interesting in play; a whole conflict where both sides are basically snarling at one another can get real old, real fast. But, if your players are improvising well and making interesting manoeuvres, it's a valid tactic. One side attacking an opponent in physical conflict while the opponent responds with intimidation attacks can be interesting, too; any physical consequences it sustains will be obstacles to its intimidation chances.

Using Fear in Manoeuvres

Terrorising your opponent is an excellent use of a manoeuvre. Do it instead of an attack roll, probably using *Provoke* (or maybe an appropriate power skill—see page 279), to impose a *Scared Out of My Wits*-type condition aspect on your opponent which can be subsequently invoked when you're using more conventional attack actions.

TABLE 10-6: EXAMPLES OF MENTAL DAMAGE

CONSEQUENCE TYPE	DAMAGE SEVERITY	EXAMPLE ASPECT WORDINGS
Mild	Mild Agitation	<i>Dumbstruck, Taken Aback, Confused, Startled, Preoccupied</i>
Moderate	Moderate Disturbance	<i>Reduced to Tears, Bewildered, State of Shock, Frightened, Obsessive</i>
Severe	Serious Trauma	<i>Nervous Breakdown, Depressed, Burned Out, Terrified, Neurotic</i>
Extreme	Critical Breakdown	<i>Complete Mental Collapse, Suicidal, A Total Wreck, Harrowed to Your Soul, Psychotic</i>

Using Fear to Inflict Mental Stress Damage

There are other types of fear than intimidation, like the primal terror when you face a horrific sight, or the chill down your spine when you're exposed to elemental darkness or the Void. **Power skills** (page 279) like Darkness and Death have stunts like Wall of Darkness and Terror of Death which can make such attacks, and some situation aspects or monster aspects can also trigger them.

Fear attacks like this can be simple or conflict **hazards**, or (more rarely) incremental ones—see page 238.

Mental Damage

Mental stress and consequences resulting from intimidation, terror, and fear are primarily psychological. They can be minor inconveniences—a racing pulse or other distraction—or more serious, including confusion, fight or flight, hysteria, or full-blown mental breakdown. You can be **taken out** from mental damage just as surely as from physical—usually you'll be incapacitated rather than dead, but mental damage can kill, too, if your story calls for it.

Other Mental Conflicts

Not all mental conflicts involve terror or intimidation. Any “mentally stressful” situation can be a mental stress attack, from mind-bending puzzles, intense isolation, or moments of great temptation or seduction, to culture shock and reading Secrets Humankind Was Not Meant To Know. A taken out result can still mean mental collapse and / or loss of volition; sensible characters will concede before that point.

Magical Duels

*Magic-wielding characters can use **power skills**, **stunts**, and **spells** in attack actions to inflict physical and mental stress. They may even engage in magical duels, each trying to best the other using pure magic. Such duels may comprise nothing but mental stress attacks, although descriptions vary widely, including confusing opponents, haunting them with visions, terrifying the living daylights out of them, and melting their brains! See **Chapter 13: Magic** for more.*

Status Conflicts

Two rival dignitaries clash in the Autarch's audience chamber. One derides the other's ceremonial robes—the Rolls Of Precedence clearly indicate rose-patterns in the month of Gafur! There's a hush... will the insulted party successfully rebut the slur?

The head of the House of the Singing Skull is dead! The Kaldanqa and Turbalane bloodlines propose leadership candidates. There seems little between them, but the rumour mill is working overtime: scrolls are discovered suggesting the illegitimacy of the Kaldanqa bloodline's scion, while word on the street says the Turbalane have been bribing the Temple of Dafur to intervene in their favour on the next High Holy Day. When the two bloodlines meet in the Elikan Housemoot, models of politeness, few would think them locked in deadly struggle...

Social status is a crucial keystone of the Springtide Civilisations, and yet **status conflict** is everywhere, as individuals and communities jostle for position in millennia-old hierarchies. Any interpersonal interaction which can degrade your social status can be a status conflict; status stress damage represents loss of face, reputation damage, public scandal, shame, and disapproval. You can reduce the status stress points you must mark off by incurring **social consequences**. Wealth conflicts (see below) can also inflict social consequences.

Social Class

Social Class (page 38) profoundly affects interpersonal interactions, how you use skills like Pillar, Provoke, Rapport, and Resources, and how you interact with **communities** (page 39). It's a **scale**—if participants in a status conflict are from different Social Classes, **scale effects** apply, often decisively. See page 236.

Attacking and Defending in Status Conflicts

Status conflicts occur in rounds that are usually longer than physical combat—*Half An Hour* on average, but anything from *A Few Minutes* to *A Day* or more, depending on your story. Attacks are generally verbal—cutting remarks in the Autarchal Court, spreading rumours to hurt reputations, and so on.

Pillar and Provoke are common attack skills in status conflicts. Use Pillar to make your opponent feel out of place, highlighting their deficiencies by not belonging to your Pillar or being from an inferior Pillar. Use Provoke to goad them into a serious faux pas, doing something shameful or scandalous which damages their social standing.

To defend against such attacks, you have several choices. Use Pillar to rely on your occupation's prestige to brush off insults or attack your Pillar's honour or integrity; use Rapport to be more affable, admirable, or charismatic than your opponent—he's clearly trying to sully your reputation because he's a low-down dishonourable type. Use Willpower to resist attempts to Provoke you into behaving badly, or Contacts to get your people to nix the rumours besmirching your reputation. Finally, use Resources to throw more lavish parties than those out to destroy you.

Status Conflict Manoeuvres

Manoeuvres are common in status conflicts, preparing the “battleground”, setting the terms on which you're fighting, and manipulating the attitudes of your peers, as they're the ones determining who loses face. Many of the uses of Rapport and Resources given above can also create situation aspects, getting your peers to like you, impressing them with your parties, cowing your opponent with your power or generosity.

You can use Pillar to give a “tone” to a gathering or social context which favours your own Pillar. If your opponent is a guildmember from the Merchants of Zor and you're both before the Autarch, using your “The Legions” Pillar skill to give a military feel to the encounter will seriously disadvantage the trader.



TABLE 10-7: EXAMPLES OF STATUS CONFLICT CONSEQUENCES

CONSEQUENCE TYPE	STATUS DAMAGE SEVERITY	EXAMPLE ASPECT WORDINGS
Mild	Slight	<i>Committed a Faux Pas, Looked Down Upon, Disapproved Of, Snubbed</i>
Moderate	Noticeable	<i>An Affront to Decent Folk, Loss of Face, A Figure of Shame, Humiliated, Besmirched Honour, Loss of Integrity</i>
Severe	Major	<i>Public Scandal, Hounded Out of Your Community, Shunned By Your Peers</i>
Extreme	Irrecoverable	<i>Exiled, Ostracised</i>

You can use **Contacts** to spread rumours about your opponent, so that when you come to duke it out verbally, a nod and a wink from you will get your peers on your side—they've all heard what your opponent is really like!

If you're completely brazen, you can use **Deceive** to lie about your opponent, or to big yourself up or appear unfazed by their attacks. Be careful, though—lying like this can backfire badly!

Empathy is usually used more in mental conflicts, but in status conflicts it can gauge the mood of your peers, your opponent, etc, and help you plan your attack.

You can use **Provoke** manoeuvres even in **Pillar** attacks to unbalance your opponent, goad them into making a fool of themselves, saying something scandalous, or making a shameful mis-step or breach of manners or protocol.

Social Consequences

Social consequences resulting from status conflicts almost always represent **obstacles** to your smooth functioning in society, but can also be invoked like any other consequence. See Table 10-7: Examples of Status Conflict Consequences.

Extreme Consequences and Taken Out Results in Status Conflicts

An extreme social consequence reduces your **Social Class** (page 38) by 1 level, effective immediately. Being **taken out** through social consequences reduces your social class directly to -3 (Outlaw); you're effectively "dead" socially.

Wealth Conflicts

For the first time in living memory, Manse Cocudemasia, your bloodline's summer retreat on the shores of the Falais, is no longer available to you! Your arch-rivals, the Hamali, have successfully petitioned the House of the Singing Blade and received the Manse in gift. Can you lavish more luxurious gifts on the House Elders than the Hamali, to retrieve the hereditary right to Cocudemasia before it passes out of your bloodline forever?

What's this? Unexpected tithes for Regos during the month of Ganimur? Suddenly your usual creditors are nowhere to be found, and the legion's new Amadorad campaign means even the lowliest armourers are unavailable to maintain your gear. Only the outrageously expensive Demsettas remain—and you said you'd never use them. Why's this happening? Is someone out to get you?

Wealth isn't always about money; it's about the resources you can leverage, the people who support you. Wealth conflicts happen when someone tries to use the complex web of support and resources against you, forcing you to spend more than you have, rack up debt, deplete your usual lines of credit and goodwill. They inflict social consequences as your reputation suffers, and so complement status conflicts, two sides of the same coin.

Attacking and Defending in Wealth Conflicts

Wealth conflicts are usually blatant, using Resources to attack and defend, pitting your ability to deploy assets and leverage your community, peers, and creditors against those of your opponent. With wealth conflicts, though, you may not always know **who** your opponent is. Sometimes it's obvious, but sometimes you may be spending resources for reasons which seem unrelated to any possible opponent, but which are triggered by unseen scheming behind the scenes.

A wealth conflict's round varies in length. If you're haggling or bidding at auction, it may be a matter of *A Few Minutes* or even *A Few Seconds*, or as much as *Several Days* or longer if each side is liquidating assets and bringing resources to bear.

Manoeuvres in Wealth Conflicts

Wealth conflict manoeuvres are often used simply to identify your opponent; Contacts and Investigation reveal the circumstances behind sudden demands for your resources. Once you know **why** you're being attacked, maybe you can do something about it—especially if you can't afford to stay in the conflict otherwise.

Other characters can make wealth conflict manoeuvres to help you, whether using teamwork to modify your Resources rolls, or using Resources to provide you with personnel or raw assets to bail you out. You can also use Contacts, etc, to take the heat off you, or to call creditors or other interests who can assist you when you need to roll big.

Wealth Conflict Consequences

Wealth conflicts inflict social consequences. See Table 10-8: Example Wealth Conflict Consequences.

Debates, Duels, and Other Hybrid Conflicts

Hybrid conflicts combine different types of attacks to inflict both personal stress and social stress; actions belonging to one sort of conflict—for example, physical attacks—can be leveraged in another, like a status conflict. Hybrid conflicts can operate on more than one timescale, and can be open-ended and flexible. Here are a couple of examples.

Duels

The Venerable Autocracy is rife with duelling; participants meet on the field of honour, usually in the *oloriad* arenas, to fight with arms or magic, to first blood or the death, to settle issues arising from status conflicts. Defeating an opponent in a duel can inflict personal consequences which you can invoke in status conflicts.

Debates

Debates are a form of “non-lethal” duel, often conducted in public, with social stakes. Priests may debate before their temple, courtiers before their autarch, sorcerers before their school.

TABLE 10-8: EXAMPLE WEALTH CONFLICT CONSEQUENCES

CONSEQUENCE TYPE	WEALTH DAMAGE SEVERITY	EXAMPLE ASPECT WORDINGS
Mild	Light	<i>Temporary Cashflow Problem, I'm A Bit Strapped For Cash, Patriarch Holreiter Is Out of Town, I'm Afraid We'll Have to Walk</i>
Moderate	Moderate	<i>I Thought It Was Worth More Than That, Maxed Out on Loans, We'll Have To Tighten Our Belts</i>
Severe	Serious	<i>That's Totally Cleaned Me Out, Facing Legal Action for Debt, Oh She Simply Can't Afford To Dress Properly Any More</i>
Extreme	Critical	<i>Bankrupt and Ostracised, Debtor's Prison, The Penalty For Embezzlement of the Autocrator's Purse Is Death!</i>

TABLE 10-9: EXAMPLES OF DEBATE CONSEQUENCES

CONSEQUENCE TYPE	DAMAGE TO PERFORMANCE CAPABILITY	EXAMPLE ASPECT WORDINGS
Mild	Mild	<i>Distracted, Run Out of Steam, Stumbling For Words, Lost My Train of Thought</i>
Moderate	Moderate	<i>Confused, Non-Sequitur, Speechless, Strawman Defeat</i>
Severe	Severe	<i>Hang On I'm Wrong Aren't I? Sudden Realisation, Babbling Incoherently, Ridiculed, Hung Out to Dry,</i>
Extreme	Critical	<i>Seismic Insight, Mental Burnout, Brain Fried, Traumatised</i>

Debates are mental conflicts using Deceive, Lore, Rapport, and even power skills like Passion. They measure your debating technique rather than the truth of your argument; being “right” is a factor, but not a decisive one. Consequences inflicted in debates can be invoked in status conflicts.

ACTING AND THINKING TACTICALLY

The Chronicles of Future Earth highlights the *Fate Core* system's tactical features. Here are a few more examples of the sorts of things you can do.

Affecting More Than One Target

Sometimes you can affect more than one target with a single action. Magic, demonic powers, poison gas, dragons and gravity cannon can inflict damage or other effects over wide areas; some creatures and characters can attack multiple opponents in a single round; skills like Provoke can be used in mental conflicts to establish dominance in a group; and Rapport can make a speech to inspire everyone listening.

Manoeuvring to Create Situation Aspects on a Scene

The simplest way to affect more than one character with an action is to perform a **manoeuvre to create a situation aspect on the scene**. A *Chamber Filled With Poison Gas* can affect everyone in it, or the *Contagious Fanaticism* evoked by a speech may affect all those hearing it. Any character trying to bypass such an obstacle must make an overcome roll; it won't usually cause damage, but will make things more difficult for those affected.

Attacking Multiple Targets

Some creatures have more than one attack skill of the same type. Such creatures may attack a number of targets, with a single attack action, equal to the total number of their applicable attack skills. PCs may gain this ability by choosing multiple attack skills, or by using stunts or special abilities (like the “Multiple Pairs of Limbs” special ability on page 80).

Even when you're attacking multiple targets, you only make one attack roll. **It's a rule of Fate Core that a character may only make one action roll per round.** The attacker uses his highest score in the applicable attack skill, and adds a +1 teamwork bonus (page 202) for each additional instance of that attack skill on his character sheet. The result may then be divided among multiple targets up to the maximum allowed, with a minimum of +1 allocated to each target. Each target is considered to have sustained an attack equal to the result allocated to it, and must defend against that attack.

.....

*One of the entropics in the battle of the burning homestead is a hideous goat **chimera** with **three** Unarmed Combat skills at level 3, 1, and 1. It makes a single attack roll at level 5 (Unarmed Combat 3, +2 teamwork bonus for the other two Unarmed Combat skills). If it rolls, say, 2 on the Cosmic Fate Dice, it may divide its result of 7 between up to 3 targets, say attacking one target with a result of 3, and two targets each with a result of 2.*

.....

Multiple Defences

During a round, you can make one defend action without penalty **for every applicable defend skill you can bring to bear**. Any additional defend action you take faces an additional cumulative **obstacle** (page 201).

.....

Zabet Karja has a Melee Combat 4 skill. She can make one Melee Combat defend action per round without penalty. If a second opponent attacks her, her defend roll against that second attack is at a +2 difficulty.

.....

Ganging up on people in conflicts is **extremely** effective. Up to 4 attackers of a given **Size** (page 235) can attack a similarly sized target; this number is doubled for every point of difference in Size. So, a Size 1 (Large) target can be attacked by up to 8 Size 0 (Human-Sized) characters.

Outnumbering Someone

Being outnumbered in a conflict is bad news. First, if you have to defend against multiple attacks in a single round, each defend roll will face a greater difficulty than the last, and you'll be rapidly overwhelmed and go down fast: see "Multiple Defences" above.

Second, if you're attacking multiple targets in a single round, your attack roll for that round will be diluted as your result is divided among them. See "Attacking Multiple Targets" on page 229.

Zone Effects and Other Actions

Fires, explosions, gases, attacks by dragonels, gravity cannon, magic, demons, may affect all possible targets in one or more zones—what's known as a **zone effect**.

Roll once for the attack (or sometimes manoeuvre) and use the result on **every available target in your target zone**, who must defend against the same result. Sometimes a character may even have to defend against their own roll—especially if they unleash a malevolent bound demon or open a phial of poison gas.

.....

*Ukhta's flamberge, her sacred weapon of Dafur, contains a bound Agnapei fire demon that gives her access to the Fire Storm power stunt, letting her spout flame from her blade covering an entire zone—a zone effect attack. If she rolls a 1 with her Change By Fire 3 skill, **every target** in the target zone—including any allies!—faces a result 4 fiery attack.*

.....

Dealing With Time

You already know that time in your game can be measured in **rounds** (page 212) and **scenes** (page 26), and even in **Chronicles** and **campaigns** (page 20). *The Chronicles of Future Earth* also measures time passing as your characters perceive it in the game, in a series of **time increments**, each longer than the last. You can see a list of all the time increments in the adjacent text box; this is called the **time ladder**. Time increments are usually italicised so you can spot them easily, like *Several Minutes*. They're indirectly related to rounds, but there's not an exact correlation; a combat round could be anywhere from *A Few Seconds* to *Half a Minute*, or more, depending on the context. Time passing in your game is called **story time**, as distinct from **real time**, which is the actual time passing while you sit around your table (or wherever) playing the game.

Usually story time has no relation to real time. A combat round might take a few minutes to play out in real time, but only cover a few seconds of desperate struggle in story time. Likewise, sometimes your game can cover long stretches of story time in a simple description ("The high priest takes three hours to acknowledge your request for an audience—are you doing anything while you wait, or can we skip to the meeting?").

Using the Time Ladder

Take a look at the time ladder again. See how it standardises the time increments as **half, one, a few, or several** specific time units: minutes, hours, days, and so on? Well, if you articulate something your character does taking, say, six hours, you can then formulate that duration as a time increment of *Several Hours*, and situate that increment on the time ladder. When you do *that*, you can then manipulate the time increment in cool ways using the rules. Let's take a look at how you can do that.

So, the time ladder gives you starting points for modifying the durations of your character's actions resulting from skill rolls, invokes, or magic, from mere seconds to whole centuries. When you make a skill roll, if appropriate, your Chronicler can let you use the shifts you generate on your roll (see page 197) to move your action's duration up or down the time ladder by an equivalent number of steps, thus accelerating or slowing down the task's resolution. So, if you're undertaking a task nominally taking *Several Hours*, but you want to try and do it more quickly, you can spend one shift from your skill roll to reduce your task's duration by one step to *A Few Hours*, or two shifts to take it down to *An Hour*.

Modifying Story Time in Success and Failure

You can also tweak the passage of story time on the time ladder to handle especially good or bad rolls. For example, **taking extra time** is one way to succeed at a cost (page 200), making up the shifts by which you missed a roll by delaying the task's resolution by one step per shift. You get what you want, but at the cost of more time, meaning your efforts may come too late. Or the cost could push the deadline over a threshold—and now you have another problem.

Alternatively, extraordinary success can **reduce** the time an action takes. An Investigate roll looking for an obscure historical reference in an Unthari library might have a base duration of *A Few Days*, but a special success might speed up the task's resolution by five steps, meaning you find the information you're looking for in only *An Hour*.

You can also use invokes and compels to manipulate time, making things faster or slower by a number of steps. ("Hey, I've got *An Instinctive Feel For Manatine Energy*, so working out how to use this artefact shouldn't take that long, right?")

The Time Ladder

- *Half a Second*
- *A Second*
- *A Few Seconds*
- *Several Seconds*
- *Half a Minute*
- *A Minute*
- *A Few Minutes*
- *Several Minutes*
- *Half an Hour*
- *An Hour*
- *A Few Hours*
- *Several Hours*
- *Half a Day*
- *A Day*
- *A Few Days*
- *Several Days (A Week)*
- *Half a Month (A Few or Several Weeks)*
- *A Month*
- *A Few Months*
- *Several Months*
- *Half a Year*
- *A Year*
- *A Few Years*
- *Several Years*
- *Half a Decade*
- *A Decade*
- *A Few Decades*
- *Several Decades*
- *Half a Century*
- *A Century*

Range and Tactical Separation

Although zones are an abstracted measure of distance, they can be used to great effect in tactical encounters.

Close Combat Tactics

When it's your turn to act in a round, you can always move 1 zone and take an action. The major exception is if you're **engaged** in melee (page 211), when you can't automatically make your move unless your opponent agrees (assume they don't...). If you want to move but are engaged in melee, you may need to **disengage** first (page 222).

If you're not currently engaged in melee, your 1 zone automatic move each round can help you keep your distance from an opponent trying to engage you. Remember, you can take one other action in a round in which you move 1 zone; so, if you're casting a spell against an advancing opponent, backing up steadily might give you the extra time you need!

Pushing Your Opponents Around the Place

Using combat manoeuvres like Shield Bash (page 223) can knock your opponent back 1 zone; the same can also happen on a special success attack roll. This can be effective when a target has a HTH weapon and is fighting at R-1 (extremely close quarters)—you can bash him backwards and out of HTH range.

Similarly, when an opponent is standing on the edge of a cliff, firepit, or lake, pushing him backwards can end the encounter pretty quickly! Of course, he'll probably drop to the ground instead—who wouldn't?—but that just makes him easier to finish off!

Moving Out of Range

If you're being attacked in ranged combat, moving even 1 zone from your attacker makes it harder to hit you; and if you get beyond your attacker's weapon's maximum range, you can't be hit at all!

It's the same in reverse if you're attacking with a missile weapon. Closing range makes a target easier to hit, and you can advance 1 zone and loose an arrow each round. Don't get too close, though—your opponent may decide to rush you!

Marching Order

This traditional RPG convention matters when you're attacked. An adventuring party can decide which order they march in, whether in single-file, grouped, and so on (sometimes the environment may impose one or the other). The person at the front takes the brunt, the person at the rear is vulnerable to being picked off, and those in the centre are safer.

Use marching order to determine who gets attacked, who is in a position to support with manoeuvres, who has cover or can defend someone else. Putting non-combatant characters in the middle or rear lets them avoid melee until the front line is breached; putting ranged combatants in the rear lets them fight at a distance. You can even define marching order in rough zones, with a "front zone", "middle zone", and "rear zone".



Fighting Styles and Formations

Legions, fighting schools, and warrior societies in the Springtide Civilisations (detailed in the *Guide to Future Earth*, but see page 98 for an example) teach their members formations and styles of fighting, often closely-guarded secrets.

A **formation** is how multiple fighters cooperate. It's partly a question of weapons and armour, partly one of numbers and deployment—a tight phalanx, a loose grouping of two or three, etc. **Formation Fighting** is actually two stunts, one for Melee Combat and one for Ranged Combat, giving you a defend bonus when using your fighting style's weapons in formation with other fighters with the same stunt.

A **fighting style** is a particular manner of fighting, informed by temperament, temple, and history, and ranging from berserk destruction to elegant but deadly dances. There's usually a **fighting style stunt** associated with a legion or fighting school; you'll need to belong to the organisation in question to learn it.

As well as giving you cool tactical abilities, formations and fighting styles are also used in mass battles using the **communities** rules (see the *Chronicler's Guide*).

Using Miniatures

Although *The Chronicles of Future Earth* doesn't require the use of miniature figurines or cardboard or virtual tokens, they can be useful when visualising a tactical encounter and more effective than simple pen on paper when quickly adjusting relative positions in real time. And they're fun! You can sketch out zones or use battle maps, and place miniatures representing characters, NPCs, and monsters, to better see where each participant is in relation to others.

Miniatures can be useful for fighting **formations** (see above), judging the effectiveness of magic (page 271), and working out whether a character can target another with a ranged attack, or easily cross the distance to engage them in melee.

HEALING AND RECOVERY

Stress and consequences aren't usually permanent; over time, and with intervention, they clear up and are removed from your character sheet.

Because there are different types of stress, **healing and recovery** can mean different things. For physical stress and consequences, it may mean first aid, bandaging, bed-rest, and even healing magic. For mental stress and consequences, it may mean counselling, talking to a priest, quiet contemplation, rest and recuperation, and again magical healing. For status stress, it may mean the passage of time, the throwing of parties, and the cultivation and repair of relationships. For credit stress, it may mean rebuilding savings, sweet-talking creditors, and persuading communities to lend you their resources again.

In all cases, **any stress boxes you've marked off in a conflict are cleared before the next scene begins**. Stress is minor temporary damage; you might have some aches and pains, ostentatious bandages, or be temporarily out of small change, but otherwise you recover from stress fully and quickly.

Consequences aren't so simple. First, a consequence needs **treating** before you can begin to recover from it; if you don't treat it, it'll hang around indefinitely (your Chronicler may eventually reword it to reflect that, but it'll still be there nonetheless). A **treatment roll** is an overcome action using a skill based on the type of consequence. The difficulty depends on the severity of the consequence: mild consequences are difficulty 2 to treat, moderate are difficulty 4, and severe are difficulty 6. You can attempt a treatment roll on yourself, but you face an **obstacle** (page 201) to do so.

TABLE 10-10: CONSEQUENCE TREATMENT AND RECOVERY

CONSEQUENCE TYPE	DIFFICULTY TO TREAT	TIME TO REMOVE ONCE TREATED
Mild	2	End of next scene, or <i>Several Hours</i> .
Moderate	4	This point in the next session, or <i>Several Days</i> .
Severe	6	This point in the next adventure, or <i>Several Weeks</i> .

Once a consequence has been treated, you may reword it to reflect that fact; for example, a *Broken Leg* physical consequence may become a *Splinted Leg*. After that, you must wait a certain amount of time before you can remove the consequence completely (meaning it's fully healed, or you've otherwise totally recovered from it). The time it takes to recover from a consequence depends on its severity: a treated mild consequence can be removed at the end of the next scene, or after *Several Hours*; a treated moderate consequence can be removed at this point in the next session, or after *Several Days*; and a treated severe consequence can be removed at this point in the next adventure, or after *Several Weeks*. This is summarised in Table 10-10: Consequence Treatment and Recovery.

When treating a **critical consequence** (page 216), note that it continues to occupy a consequence slot on your character sheet even when the recovery period is past; rename it again to represent the permanent damage it has become—*Wooden Leg*, *Permanent Amnesia*, *Disinherited*, etc.

Failing a Treatment Roll

While the conflict in which a consequence has been inflicted is still ongoing, you can try to treat that consequence as many times as you like; each treatment attempt is an action.

Once the conflict has ended, a given character may attempt one type of treatment attempt (bandaging wounds, casting healing magic, etc) for each consequence.

If your PC party fails at all its attempts to treat a given consequence, you'll have to look farther afield until you succeed.

Recovering From an Extreme Consequence

You can't simply roll to recover from an extreme consequence—it stays with you until your next **major milestone** (page 259). After that, you can rename it to reflect that you're no longer vulnerable to the worst of it, as long as you don't just change your Doom aspect back to what it previously was: an extreme consequence is a permanent change to your character. Your new Doom aspect must make narrative sense; if your Doom aspect was renamed to *Half Devoured and Screaming In Terror* after a run-in with the Cannibal Cult of the Torn Flesh, even when you get back on your feet you're going to want a new Doom like *By My Nightmare Scars I'll Destroy the Cannibal Cult!*

Treating Consequences Caused by Physical Conflicts

A **physical consequence** is a personal consequence inflicted by a physical attack. Anyone can treat a mild physical consequence with a **Lore** roll; the First Aid stunt can give you a bonus. Moderate and severe physical consequences **can only be treated with the Healer stunt**. See page 153 for more.

Critical physical consequences are usually permanent (page 216). However, if you have access to zoic science (see pages 147 and 350), you can make a Resources roll against the treatment difficulty to acquire a **healing zoan** (page 251) to treat it; a zoic healer replaces your missing body part, etc, with a living symbiotic prosthesis. You then begin the recovery process, incorporating the zoan into your physiology; you should reword the consequence to represent you getting used to the zoic replacement for the duration of the recovery period. Once the recovery period is over, you may **remove the consequence** from your character sheet; however, as per page 250, you should also reword one of your aspects to incorporate a reference to the fact that you now have a zoic prosthesis.

Magical Healing

*Magic and miracles like the Wisdom power skill (page 308), the divine magics of Konfu and Payorian (see the **Guide to Future Earth**), and even strange technologies and inhuman **zoans** (page 248), may all aid healing. Usually they permit easy treatment of a physical consequence and help it heal more quickly; some can even remove the after-effects of critical wounds.*

Treating Mental Consequences

A treatment roll using Empathy (page 147) starts recovery from a mild mental consequence; the Soul Healer stunt (page 148) lets you treat more serious mental consequences.

Treating Wealth Consequences

A treatment roll with Resources (page 164) starts recovery from a mild wealth consequence; the Bail Out stunt (page 164) lets you treat more serious wealth consequences.

Treating Status Consequences

A treatment roll with Resources (page 164) starts recovery from a mild status consequence, or your Pillar skill if you're treating someone from the same Pillar as you; the Bail Out stunt (page 164) lets you treat more serious status consequences.

SCALE

Scale is an abstract concept used to compare and manage differences of magnitude between items and entities. It can be important when adjudicating character actions, especially as you advance and gain in power. There are two types of scale:

- **Size:** Physical scale, how physically large an entity is.
- **Social Class:** Social scale, how socially influential and important an entity's peer group is in society.
- In rules terms, scale is similar to range and difficulty rather than skill level; it's a **numerical representation** ranging from -5 to 5 (and usually from 0 to 2). Usually, a scale also has a simple descriptive **label**. Examples are given below, but these can change based on context; the scale score is the important element.

Size

Size is **always** a physical thing. Most characters are Size 0 (Human-Sized), although some are Size 1 (Large). Entities like armies and towns can also have Size, as they're discrete, objectified, and located in one place, and can be targeted by community actions and attacks, explosions, mighty magics, and so on. See Table 10-11: Size for examples of Sizes used in character actions; Sizes used in community actions are discussed in the *Chronicler's Guide*.

TABLE 10-11: SIZE

SCALE	TYPICAL LABEL	EXAMPLES
-5	Infinitesimal	Molecules, bacteria, atoms.
-4	Microscopic	Microscopic objects, visible to chemickers, magic, etc.
-3	Tiny	Gemstones, etc.
-2	Very Small	Weapons, clocks, mice, gimmerlings, etc.
-1	Small	Smaller animals, dogs, cats.
0	Human-Sized	Humans, most jeniri and esteri.
1	Large	Some jeniri and esteri; larger animals like horses, chariots, carts, flyers, etc; NPC groups.
2	Very Large	Boats, small ships, very large animals.
3	Huge	Huge vessels, juggernauts.

Social Class

For your character, Social Class is usually determined by rolling on the Social Class table for your homeland or kindred (page 51), although your Chronicler may allow you to pick your Social Class if your character concept requires a specific one. Table 4-1: General Social Class below is reproduced from page 38.

Scale Effects

When entities of different scales interact, the dice rolls they make are modified by adding or subtracting Hero or Doom Dice, as follows.

Attack and Defend Actions

For every point of scale you're **larger** than the target you're attacking, you roll 1 more Doom Die. If you succeed, you roll 2 more Hero Dice and add the total to the shifts you obtain on the roll. When you're larger scale, it's harder to hit a smaller target, but if you do, you do much more damage.

For every point of scale you're **smaller** than the target you're attacking, you roll 1 more Hero Die. If you succeed, you roll 2 more Doom Dice and subtract the total from your shifts. It's easier to hit a larger target, but much harder to damage it.

.....
Ukhta is a Size 1 (Large) Magigi Red Giant. When she attacks a Size 0 (Human-Sized) target in physical combat, she rolls an additional Doom Die, as that target is harder for her to hit; the target defends as usual. If she hits, she rolls 2 additional Hero Dice and adds the total to the physical stress damage she inflicts.

Overcome and Manoeuvre Actions

For every point of scale you're **larger** than the target you're attempting to overcome or affect with a manoeuvre, you roll one more Hero Die. It's easier to overcome or otherwise affect a smaller target.

For every point of scale you're **smaller** than the target you're attempting to overcome or affect with a manoeuvre, you roll one more Doom Die. It's harder to overcome or otherwise affect a larger target.

.....
If Ukhta attempts a Shield Bash combat manoeuvre (page 223) against a Size 0 (Human-Sized) target, she rolls an additional Hero Die. The target defends as usual. If that Size 0 target then tries to Shield Bash her, it'll roll an additional Doom Die; Ukhta will defend as usual.

TABLE 4-1: GENERAL SOCIAL CLASS

SCALE	TYPICAL LABEL ¹	COMMENTS
-3	Outcast	Outcasts, outlaws, exiles, slaves.
0	Lower Class	Peasants, rural farmers, hunters, warriors.
1	Middle Class	Townsmen, crafters, guilders.
2	Upper Class	Officials.
3	Noble	Parigers ² , gentry, lesser nobles, clan chieftains.
4	Aristocracy	Astrigers ² , upper nobility, tribal kings.
5	Ruling Body	Immediate royal family, imperial family.

1: Social Class labels vary based on Homeland and Kindred; these are general labels for reference.

2: See page 64 for more on Parigers and Astrigers.

HAZARDS, BLOCKS, AND BARRIERS

Not everything that threatens your character is alive. Inanimate things can threaten you or keep you from your goal, including natural disasters, cunning mechanical traps, deep castle moats, and rivers of lava. These things are **hazards**, **blocks**, and **barriers**. In some cases, you can even create these yourself.

Hazards

Hazards are (usually) non-living things that threaten to damage your character, like adverse weather conditions, diseases, rockfalls, and volcanic eruptions. They're statted like a character, with skills and aspects, and make "attacks" to cause damage to you. When you encounter a hazard, you must avoid or defeat it.

A hazard has two key statistics, **Intensity** and **Magnitude**, used as skills in dice rolls when the hazard acts upon you directly, or un-rolled as static difficulties when you try to negotiate or avoid its effects. **Intensity** represents a hazard's power; **Magnitude** indicates how wide an area it affects, and therefore how hard it is to avoid (a freezing blizzard is a good example of a low-intensity hazard covering a wide-magnitude area).

You roll against a hazard using skills indicated in its description, or as appropriate (check with your Chronicler). Usually it's self-explanatory, like using Physique to avoid exposure. Failure to negotiate a hazard can have various results.

Hazards may also have **aspects**, invoked or compelled by you or your Chronicler, and **actions**, detailing how they're used in play. As well as affecting your character, hazards can also affect ships, structures, and communities; such hazards often have a Size (page 235).

Hazards come in several types:

Simple Hazards

Simple hazards require a single overcome roll to avoid; their Intensity and Magnitude are usually static difficulties. If you fail to avoid the hazard, you may suffer stress or consequences based on the number of shifts by which you failed the roll; if you succeed, you avoid or destroy the hazard. *Examples: Rockfall, a Spring-loaded Spear Trap.*

Spring-loaded Spear Trap

Simple Hazard

Skills: Intensity 3.

Action: Roll Athletics vs Intensity to avoid, or take physical stress equal to the shifts of failure. Armour stress reduction applies.

Challenge Hazards

Challenge hazards comprise multiple simple hazards, requiring several actions to negotiate. You may have to succeed at some or all of the constituent actions. *Example: Plague Outbreak.*

Plague Outbreak

Challenge Hazard

Skills: Intensity 6, Magnitude 2 (static difficulties).

Action 1: Roll Physique vs Intensity to avoid infection (see Diseases and Infections on page 239).

Action 2: Roll Devise vs Magnitude to contain the outbreak to the immediate zone, otherwise it spreads a number of zones equal to the shifts of failure and increases in Magnitude by the same amount.

Action 3: Roll Lore vs Intensity to understand the plague and identify a treatment and suppress the outbreak (takes *A Day*).

Contest Hazards

Contest hazards require you to gain three victory points to negotiate them. They're extended simple hazards; difficulties may be static or rolled. *Example: Rust Marshes.*

Rust Marshes

Contest Hazard

A Rust Marsh's corrosiveness is represented by its Intensity, its size by its Magnitude.

Aspects: *Endless Expanse of Twisted Metal and Toxic Liquid; The Very Air Is a Fume; Stinging Eyes and Gasping for Breath.*

Skills: Magnitude 5, Intensity 3.

Actions: Each round, roll Athletics vs Intensity to avoid physical damage; the Rust Marsh has SI+1. Each round, also roll a contest of Athletics vs Magnitude; three victory points mean you find your way out of the marsh.

Conflict Hazards

Conflict hazards act like characters trying to harm you. A conflict hazard may have a stress track and one or more consequences, or you may just have to accumulate victory points to avoid it. It takes actions in rounds, and uses Intensity and Magnitude for skill rolls. *Example: Volcanic Eruption.*

Volcanic Eruption

Conflict Hazard

Aspects: *Lava Flows; Choking Gas Clouds.*

Skills: Intensity 5; Magnitude 3 (rolled difficulties).

Actions: Attacks with Intensity each round, causing physical stress damage due to fire, intense heat, and noxious gases. You defend by rolling against its Magnitude using Athletics, Lore, Ride, Survival, etc, and must accumulate 3 victory points to escape its area of effect.



Incremental Hazards

Incremental hazards can be simple, contest, or conflict hazards. They must be rerolled at specific time intervals (*A Few Minutes, Several Hours*, etc), increasing in Intensity (and / or sometimes in Magnitude) by +1 each time. *Examples: Avoid Exposure, Survival Hazard.*

Avoid Exposure

Incremental Hazard

Skills: Magnitude 6, Intensity 1.

Actions: Attacks with Intensity vs Physique or Survival. Roll every *Few Minutes* to *Several Hours*, depending on degree of cold or heat, doing physical stress damage. If it's possible to get away from the exposure, roll Athletics, Ride, Survival, etc, vs Magnitude to acquire 3 victory points to do so.

Diseases and Infections

Diseases are **conflict hazards**. Sometimes you roll *vs* Magnitude to avoid exposure; sometimes exposure is automatic. If you're exposed, you must roll *Physique vs Intensity* or take physical stress damage; any consequence represents you becoming infected.

Once infected, you must roll a contest of *Physique vs Intensity*; treatment by a healer can provide a teamwork bonus (page 202) or condition aspect (page 125). You must accumulate 3 victory points to shake off the disease; failure continues to inflict physical damage equal to the shifts of failure, or consequences based on the disease.

Once infected, you may infect anyone contacted, who must roll to resist.

Zoic Malaise

Conflict Hazard

Aspects: *Cancerous Growths Affecting Zoans; Immune If You Don't Have Zoans; Parts of Me Keep Sloughing Away!*

Skills: Intensity 6, Magnitude 1.

Actions: Attacks with Intensity each round, causing physical stress damage. Any consequence starts to kill one of the target's zoans, acting as an **obstacle** (page 201) to that zoan's use and making use painful and difficult.

Barriers

A barrier is a special kind of **obstacle** (page 201), usually created using a manoeuvre with the Devise skill (page 146) or Realisation of the Will power skill (page 301), or with a stunt. Barriers usually take time to create—often a scene or more. Barriers prevent movement or provide **cover** (page 221); examples include high fences, ditches, and moats.

A barrier has a **barrier level** equal to the shifts used to create it. A high fence created with a 3-shift Devise skill roll (page 146) has a barrier level of 3.



Examples:

- *Half Cover* (barrier level 2).
- *High Fence* (barrier level 3).
- *Moat* (barrier level 8).

To cross a barrier, you must overcome its barrier level with an appropriate skill roll. If you fail, you do not cross; if you tie, you may cross, but take a point of physical stress damage.

If you want to attack or otherwise affect someone beyond a barrier, the target may use the barrier level instead of making a defend roll, or make a defend roll and use the better of the two results.

You may combine skills when acting and moving across a barrier. See “Combining Skills” on page 194.

.....

*The party are trying to escape through the rear courtyard of the Tower of Virigu, where Ukhta and Zabet are trying to lift the portcullis while fending off the attacks of entropics swarming on the other side. The portcullis has barrier level 10, and the entropics are defending with an effective Unarmed Combat skill of 3. Ukhta makes a combined skill roll of Physique and Melee Combat, with Melee Combat as prime (and so reduced from level 4 to level 3); she gets a +1 teamwork bonus from Zabet. It's an overcome roll, and she needs a result which beats the entropics' defend roll **and** is at least 10 to lift the portcullis. Fortunately she rolls an extra Hero Die because of her Large (1) Size, but will it be enough?*

.....

Blocks

A block is a barrier which causes damage to those trying to pass. Blocks include walls of fire, thick hedges of thorns, whirling blades, pendulum blades, pits of lava, living statues, and so on. You still roll against the block's barrier level to pass, but if you fail you take damage equal to your shifts of failure. You create blocks just like barriers, except you can "spend" your shifts to beef up the block's damage-causing capabilities instead of its barrier level, as follows:

- Each shift can create 1 point of barrier level.
- 2 shifts can give the block a stress increase of +3.
- 2 shifts can allow the block to inflict a condition aspect on a target on a special success (ie if the target fails to pass the block by 5 shifts or more).
- 2 shifts can add an additional zone to the block (see **extended blocks** below).

Examples of blocks include:

- *Hedge of Thorns* block (barrier level 2).
- *Whirling Blades* block (barrier level 4, SI+3).
- *Wall of Fire* block (barrier level 3, *On Fire* aspect on special success).
- *Pit of Lava* block (barrier level 5, SI+6).

Sometimes you may willingly take damage to pass a block. Treat your roll as if it was a result of 0; if you survive, you've successfully passed the block.

Extended blocks cover more than one zone and usually require more than one round to pass. You cross 1 zone of a block per round. If you're willing to take damage, treat your roll as a result of 0 and cross a number of zones equal to your Athletics skill.

Removing Blocks and Barriers

Manoeuvres to remove blocks and barriers are always +2 difficulty higher than the barrier level. Failing to remove a block or barrier results in you taking damage as normal.



Relationships

In this chapter we return to a concept introduced in **Chapter 4: Creating Your Character** (page 31): **relationships**.

A relationship is a representation on your character sheet of the abilities of an entity that has a broader independent existence. Your relationship lets you get that entity to use its abilities to do things for you.

Relationships are **external** to your character—things like sidekicks, patrons, legions, temples, communities, steeds, and even demons. With existences and minds of their own, they may even have their own stat blocks. When you establish a relationship, you note down on your character sheet which of its stat block abilities you can get the entity to use on your behalf.

Sometimes a relationship may just be an aspect; sometimes, a couple of skills or a stunt. Sometimes it may look like a non-player character. Indeed, relationships sometimes use the NPC rules (see the *Chronicler's Guide*). However, relationships are **not** NPCs; rather, they represent a subset of an NPC's abilities that you have access to by virtue of your relationship. Unlike NPCs, relationships are controlled by you, and **you must take an action to use one of their abilities**.

You use your **advancement points** (pages 29 and 264) to develop your relationships. Spending AP like this doesn't necessarily advance the abilities of the underlying entity who's the target of the relationship (although your Chronicler may declare it does); rather, AP spends represent improvements to the **quality** of your relationship. You've cultivated a friendship with the Autarch of Korudav, and after spending AP to improve the Resources skill of your relationship with him, he's now willing to spend more money on you and your projects if you ask him. In fact, the target entity of a relationship will often have far higher capabilities on their own character sheet than their limited relationship on your character sheet suggests.

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Zimiri Tegus has Resources 1 in their relationship with the Blue House At Korudav. Sarah doesn't have a stat block for the Blue House, but suspects it has a better Resources skill than that. If Zimiri improves that Resources skill further, Sarah will have to decide whether to veto the increase, or to let Zimiri's advancements reflect the Blue House's actual status, including possible improvements.

.....

At character creation (page 44), you have a dedicated **relationships budget** of 28 AP which you can spend on one or more relationships. See pages 45 and 260 for how much relationship advancements cost.

You don't have to spend your whole relationships budget during character creation. Some characters, like priests and sorcerers, keep a "pool" of unspent AP to spend during play on temporary relationships with entities like summoned demons. See pages 29 and 277.

Shared Relationships

More than one character in your party may have a relationship with the same entity—perhaps an influential autarch, ship's crew, or a major house, temple, or legion. Such relationships are called **shared relationships**, and they can be powerful elements in your game. When your party has a shared relationship, you pool all the abilities in the separate instances of that relationship, even **adding together the skill levels** you have in the same skills.

.....

After the party have completed their mission, Sarah's going to let them create relationships with the Autocrator's Hand community. If Zabet and Zimiri both buy an Investigate 1 skill for that relationship on their character sheets, they'll create a shared relationship with the Autocrator's Hand with an Investigate 2 skill.

.....

You should describe how a shared relationship functions for your party. Your Chronicler may even provide you with a free-standing relationship sheet for the shared relationship, where you can note down all the abilities you've given it. You'll keep maintaining each character's instance of that relationship on his own character sheet too, but the shared relationship sheet will function alongside as an easy aggregation of the skill totals and abilities the party can draw on.

Priests and their servitors often pool their power (their AP) to summon **demons** (page 312); these are treated as shared relationships, and can be potent!

How To Include A Relationship On Your Character Sheet

You can briefly mention your relationships by name on your character sheet, but we've also provided a **relationships sheet** (page 354) with space to detail four separate relationships—aspects, skills, stunts, stress boxes, etc. There's no limit to how many relationships you may have, but the more you have, the less powerful and useful each will be. Here are some tips.

You Don't Have To Fill Out Everything!

Sometimes relationships are just an aspect, or a skill or stunt or two. You should add a name for easy identification, but it's fine to leave anything else blank if it isn't relevant. Just use what you need.

Relationships Don't Have To Follow the Skill Column Rules

Remember that a relationship sheet isn't a character sheet; the entity you have a relationship sheet for always has at least a "notional" character sheet elsewhere; your Chronicler may have it written out, or it may be imaginary. It's *that* character sheet that must follow the skill column rules; the skills on your relationship sheet just represent the skills the subject of your relationship will use on your behalf. It's okay to have just one skill at a high level (say, Resources 3) with nothing below it.

Relationships Can Include "Floating" Stunts

You can buy just a stunt belonging to a skill on your relationship sheet, without buying its governing skill. You use that stunt either at level 0 or with your own level in the governing skill.

TYPES OF RELATIONSHIP

Sidekicks and Servants

These are subordinate characters who travel with you. Although they're at risk of death or damage if you get into a fight, they also accompany you on your adventures so you can easily justify using their abilities.

Companion

You may have an apprentice, bodyguard, or similar sidekick (maybe even a demonic one!), with a relationship sheet that looks like a character sheet (actually a **standard NPC** sheet—see the *Chronicler's Guide*), although your companion is under your control and not the Chronicler's.

Your companion aspect (page 41), if it's not with another PC, can be your permission to create a companion relationship. Build out from the aspect to add skills, teamwork bonuses, and more stress boxes and consequences for your PC.

.....
Zabet's companion aspect is Blue-Claw, Steed and War-Brother. During character creation, Sharma decided she wanted to make more of Zabet's chelother steed by spending AP to define Blue-Claw as a relationship—see page 47.
.....

Followers

Minions or helpers, a retinue providing a teamwork bonus, followers can be statted as if they were a **minor NPC group** (see the *Chronicler's Guide*). Spend AP to buy abilities for each member in the group, who must have the same abilities. You can spend 5AP, for example, to buy 5 level 1 Melee Combat skills, giving you a 5-member level 1 minor NPC group as a relationship.

Followers can even take damage, effectively giving you extra stress boxes in one type of conflict—say, physical, if your priest character has a bodyguard of temple guards—and a teamwork bonus in one or more skills.

Damage taken by a minor NPC group relationship can easily result in one or more members being taken out, reducing your relationship's power for at least the rest of the session, and maybe even destroying the relationship if the follower, bodyguard, etc, is disabled, destroyed, killed, or unconscious. At an appropriate milestone the relationship group can be replaced (usually it's not possible mid-scenario)—check with your Chronicler.

Can a Sidekick Let Me Act Twice in a Round?

*No. While non-player characters acting independently of your character are **always** under the Chronicler's control, you as a player may only ever make 1 action roll in a round (page 212). This can be an action performed by your sidekick if you like, but if so your character can't also act in that round. If you want to act at the same time as your minions or sidekick, have them give you a teamwork bonus.*

Allies and Dependents

Allies and dependents often have their own lives, independent from your character—perhaps in a city, temple, or other community you visit often, or perhaps further afield. This means you can't use their abilities as readily as you can sidekicks; you must describe how you communicate or interact with an ally or dependent to use its ability.

You *can* specify an ally or dependent is travelling with you if you can narrate it, but it'll be subject to being damaged or taken out just like a sidekick (see above).

Contacts

Contacts are people you know, usually living in a certain place and belonging to a certain community. They can boost your Contacts skill and provide Resources and other abilities, improving your information network, interaction abilities, and social skills; usually they don't help in physical actions. They can be just an aspect.

.....

Varnas is a fan of the travelling comedy troupe Arin and Danny—the “Two Grumps”. He always tries to see their act when he can, and they know him by name. Vitas gives Varnas a relationship with them with a Contacts 1 skill; Varnas will have to visit a gig or otherwise communicate with the duo to use it, but they know everybody.

.....

Patrons

Patrons have a vested interest in your activities and can help you in return for you carrying out activities—even missions—on their behalf. They can boost your Lore, Resources, Contacts, and general social status and net-working abilities. Again, they can be just an aspect.

.....

Instead of a community relationship with his temple of Vareltias, Paco decides that Six has the patronage of Equianimus the Shrewd, a senior priest. He can petition the temple on Six's behalf, and often sends business deals and insider information his way.

.....

Dependents

Children, spouses, lovers, family members, and so on, dependents are a source of compels and fate points as you look out for their welfare—they're always getting into trouble! Your Chronicler may imperil them in a scenario, or they may contact you asking for help or with leads to new adventures. They'll need protection if they travel with you, but sometimes provide unusual abilities (crafts, interpersonal skills, etc). A dependent can be just an aspect.

.....

Zimiri Tegus has a relationship which is a single aspect: Old Mama Houser, Mother To a Thousand Urchins. Chris has a hunch Zimiri was an orphan raised by Old Mama and feels a duty to look out for the old crone. Old Mama can provide aid and information, but may need help and even rescue from time to time!

.....

Mounts and Other Animals

Often it's enough to treat mounts as simple equipment (page 186), letting you describe your actions in certain ways and maybe providing an aspect. If you want your steed to be something more—a “personality” with abilities, foibles, and idiosyncrasies—you can define it as a relationship.

Riding animals travel with you, providing teamwork bonuses with your Athletics skill and even letting you **act at scale** (page 236) if you buy the Larger Size special ability (page 245). A riding animal relationship also gives you greater oomph in **mounted combat** (page 221). We're providing simple stat blocks for these creatures below so you can form relationships with them—see the bestiary in the *Chronicler's Guide* for much more detail.

Riding Horses

Give a riding horse relationship skills like Athletics and Physique, stunts like Sprinter, and special abilities like Larger. A war horse may also have the Unarmed Combat skill and associated stunts, and special abilities like Integral Weaponry and Trample.

Riding Horse

Standard NPC

Physical Stress: ☐¹ ☐² ☐³

Mental Stress: ☐¹ ☐² ☐³

Consequences: 1 mild + 1 moderate

Size: S1

Aspects: *Swift Dapple Mare;*
Always Finds Her Way Home.

Skills: Athletics 3, Physique 2, Willpower 1

STUNTS

- ✦ **Sprinter:** Move 2 zones for free in an exchange, instead of 1.

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- ✦ **Larger:** You are Size S1 and act at scale.

Armour: None.



Chelothers

Chelothers are ornery carnivorous versions of a warhorse, complete with ripping fangs and tearing claws. You usually need a permission like belonging to the Temple of Regos to take one as a relationship, but they can carry you fast, help you fight, and terrify your foes. They're great in mounted combat.

War Chelother

Standard NPC

Physical Stress: ☐¹ ☐² ☐³ ☐⁴

Mental Stress: ☐¹ ☐² ☐³

Consequences: 1 mild + 1 moderate

Size: S1

Aspects: *Ripping Jaw and Tearing Claw War Steed; Filthy Temper; Sudden Excess of Violence.*

Skills: Athletics 4, Physique 3, Unarmed Combat 2, Provoke 1, Unarmed Combat 1, Willpower 1

STUNTS

- ✦ **Charge!** Athletics roll to rush a target 2 zones away and make a Melee Combat or Unarmed Combat attack vs that target in the same exchange.

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- ✦ **Integral Weaponry 3:** Hooves and Claws, SI+3.
- ✦ **Larger:** You are Size S1 and act at scale.
- ✦ **Trample:** Use Physique to attack targets of lower size in the zone you're moving into, affecting up to two targets one size lower (S0), and so on. Any target fumbling their defend roll is also *Knocked Down* (page 223).

Armour: Lamellar Barding, SR -2, Larger 1, price 34.5S.

Ornithers

These elegant two-legged avian riding beasts are flightless, and too frail for combat, but they look great! They get very jittery around bad people, but if you're the good sort, they're wonderfully soothing just to be around. As well as Athletics, they can boost your social status and interaction rolls.

Elegant Ornither

Standard NPC

Physical Stress: ☐¹ ☐²

Mental Stress: ☐¹ ☐²

Consequences: 1 mild + 1 moderate

Size: S1

Aspects: *Sleek and Elegant Steed; Shimmering Plumage; Loyal and Affectionate; Jittery; Easily Overloaded.*

Skills: Athletics 3, Notice 2, Empathy 1

STUNTS

- ✦ **Sense Danger:** Notice skill ignores all obstacles or impeding conditions when someone/thing intends to harm you.
- ✦ **Sprinter:** Move 2 zones for free in an exchange, instead of 1.

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- ✦ **Integral Armour 1:** Iridescent Plumage, SR-1.
- ✦ **Larger:** You are Size S1 and act at scale.

Cambriothers

Cambriothers, also known as lopers, are bipedal riding beasts, a kind of saurian / giraffe combo. They're less aggressive than chelothers, but are great in rough terrain and are excellent climbers (if you can stay in the saddle!).

Cavalry Cambriother

Standard NPC

Physical Stress: ☐¹ ☐² ☐³

Mental Stress: ☐¹ ☐²

Consequences: 1 mild + 1 moderate

Size: S1

Aspects: *Agile and Flighty Sauricamelid; Veteran Steed of the Hagya Campaigns.*

Skills: Athletics 3, Physique 2, Unarmed Combat 1, Unarmed Combat 1

STUNTS

- ✦ **Charge!** Athletics roll to rush a target 2 zones away and make a Melee Combat or Unarmed Combat attack vs that target in the same exchange.
- ✦ **Climber:** Act at +2 skill level to perform expert climbs.
- ✦ **Leaper:** Act at a +2 skill level to perform long and high jumps.
- ✦ **Sprinter:** Move 2 zones for free in an exchange, instead of 1.

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- ✦ **Climatic Adaptation (Desert):** Act at +2 skill level on Survival rolls.
- ✦ **Environmental Adaptation (Rough Terrain):** Ignore obstacles and penalties for moving through rough terrain.
- ✦ **Integral Armour 1:** Thick velvety hide, SR-1.
- ✦ **Integral Weaponry 3:** Bite and tail lash, SI+3.



Elenisors

Elenisors are the flying reptilian quadruped mounts of the Kesh jeniri. Having one as a steed means you can fly! You need a permission to acquire an elenisor; usually you're a Kesh (page 67) or friend of the Kesh.

Sleek Elenisor Steed

Standard NPC

Physical Stress: □¹ □² □³

Mental Stress: □¹ □² □³ □⁴

Consequences: 1 mild + 1 moderate

Size: S1

Aspects: *Sleek Flying Reptilian; Celebrated Steed of the Kesh Air Cavalry; Daredevil Kite Beast.*

Skills: Athletics 4, Willpower 3, Notice 2, Stealth 2, Physique 1, Unarmed Combat 1, Unarmed Combat 1

STUNTS

- ✦ **Acrobat:** Act at a +2 skill level to perform acrobatic moves.
- ✦ **Charge!** Athletics roll to rush a target 2 zones away and make a Melee Combat or Unarmed Combat attack vs that target in the same exchange.
- ✦ **Indomitable:** Act at a +2 Willpower to defend against Provoke fear and intimidation attacks.
- ✦ **Killing Stroke:** 1/scene, pay 1 fate point to increase a physical consequence you inflict by 1 step.
- ✦ **Sprinter:** Move 2 zones for free in an exchange, instead of 1.

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- ✦ **Environmental Adaptation (Aerial) 2:** You can fly! Use Athletics for aerial actions.
- ✦ **Integral Armour 1:** Fine-scaled hide, SR-1.
- ✦ **Integral Weaponry 4:** Claws and bite, SI+4.

Magical Relationships

Chapter 13: Magic introduces the rules for cantrips, divine magic, and sorcery. Relationships are integral to how magic works.

Avatars

An **avatar** is the magical “alter-ego” which priests develop when they devote themselves to a god. It’s a bit like statting out your soul, shamanic fetch, or astral body, a way of getting superhuman (even divine) abilities and becoming “holy”. As priests advance, their avatars become increasingly powerful. See page 310 for more.

Demons

Demons are the divine servitors of the gods (page 312); you can summon them as a relationship, or someone can summon one for you. You’ll need a **permission** in both cases.

A summoned demon relationship lets you buy abilities from the demon **builds** in the temple writeups and elsewhere (see page 313 for an example). You spend AP on the relationship **only for the period of the summoning**; once a demon is destroyed, dismissed, or otherwise departs, you get the AP back and can re-use them in other relationships—usually more summonings!

.....
Ukhta has a relationship with an Agnapei fire demon, probably a gift from her temple or legion. It's bound into her flamberge, and can pour forth gouts of flame in combat!

Relationships and Social Influence

A relationship with someone from a different social class, Pillar, or culture can open doors, letting you act at different social scales (page 236) or avoid disadvantages of rank, occupation, kindred or culture. You can put a patron's Pillar skill on your relationship sheet, for example, and use it to access that Pillar in ways you otherwise couldn't, such as using your interpersonal skills without penalty or gaining influence in foreign cultures. This powerful advantage is why traders, diplomats, etc, cultivate such relationships.

Communities and Constructs

Communities are large-scale aggregations of people, often hundreds or thousands of individuals. They're statted out very much like characters, with special skills, stunts, and even special abilities. You can find full rules for communities in the *Chronicler's Guide*.

A community relationship gives you access to a community's abilities, which you use at the community's own Size scale, even when providing a teamwork bonus from one of your own skills. If you get a teamwork bonus from a community relationship skill, you use your own skill at your own Size scale as usual.

Legions

Legionnaire characters often have their legion as a community relationship, gaining Contacts, Resources, access to archives (the Lore skill), and even military support (using the "Physical Combat" community skill—see the *Chronicler's Guide*). It may also just be an aspect. See page 98 for an example.

Temples

You need a permission to take a temple as a relationship; belonging to the Priest occupation gives you one. A temple relationship will use a power skill (page 279) on your behalf, useful in **group workings** (page 313), and it can also provide Contacts, Resources, and Lore. See page 320 for an example.

Houses

A house relationship lets you act at scale with other houses, and can provide Contacts, Resources, and other forms of concrete community support.

Sorcery Schools

Sorcerer characters often take their school as a community relationship. It provides power skills, Lore, Contacts, Resources, and the ability to interact with other schools at scale, as well as being useful in **group workings** (page 313). Non-sorcerer characters require a permission to take a sorcery school relationship. See page 342 for an example.

Vehicles

Vehicles like ships, war waggons, and so on are **constructs** operated by **crew communities** (see the *Chronicler's Guide* for more). If you take a crew community relationship, you can get them to use their vehicle on your behalf. You need a permission, such as belonging to the Sailor occupation (page 113), although spending treasure (page 171) can temporarily acquire one.

Crew community relationships often provide movement and combat community skills and stunts. Your Chronicler may provide a **construct sheet** listing construct stats and your community abilities, or you may jot them on your relationship sheet. If you're planning on shipboard adventures, a ship's crew can be an excellent **shared relationship** for your PC party.

Zoans

Zoans are strange items of **hsuntach** (page 364) providing remarkable special abilities; small symbiotic life-forms feeding off your bodily fluids (mostly salt and water), they can replace lost limbs, eyes, ears, and so on, providing increased strength, night vision, superior hearing, and other non-human abilities which may seem like magic.

In game terms, zoans are equipment that use the relationship rules. That's because a zoan is a living thing, with abilities you can't initially access when you acquire it, but which you can explore as you develop skill and familiarity with its use.

TABLE 11-1: ZOANS

ZOAN NAME	NOTES	INITIAL SPEND ¹	PRICE ² (S)	MAX AP ³	DIFF ⁴
Breather	Spend +2 additional AP to unlock Exude Breathable Air 1.	8	40	10	2
Claws	Spend +2 to +6 AP to unlock up to Integral Weaponry 3.	8	120	14	4
Concentrator	Spend +2 AP to unlock Heightened Concentration.	8	40	10	2
Enervator	Spend +2 AP to unlock Battle Frenzy.	8	40	10	2
Far Hearer	Spend +2 AP to unlock Enhanced Sense (Far Hearing).	8	40	10	2
Far Seer	Spend +2 AP to unlock Enhanced Sense (Far Vision).	8	40	10	2
Healing Zoan	You must spend 2AP and 20-60S for 1 use of Regeneration.	2	20-60	n/a	2
Hearer	Spend +2 AP to unlock Enhanced Sense (Microhearing).	8	40	10	2
Muscle Enhancer	Spend +2 AP to unlock Heightened Strength.	8	40	10	2
Night Vision	Spend +2 AP to unlock Enhanced Sense (Nightsight).	8	40	10	2
Poison Glander	Spend +6 AP to unlock either Exude or Project Poison 3.	8	120	14	4
Shrieker	Spend +6 AP to unlock Project Sound 3.	8	120	14	4
Vocalus	Spend +2 AP to unlock Transform Sound.	8	40	10	2
Zoic Eyes	Spend +6 AP to unlock Enhanced Sense (Nightsight), Heightened Visual Acuity, and Resist (Luminosity).	8	120	14	4

1: Initial spend is usually 8 AP, providing the zoan as an aspect.

2: Price is based on the zoan's maximum power, even though you may not initially be spending the requisite AP to access all of its abilities.

3: Max AP is reflected in the TP cost, and is the 8AP base + however many additional AP are needed to max out the zoan.

4: The Construction Difficulty, used for characters creating zoans; see the *Chronicler's Guide*.

To buy a zoan, pay the treasure point cost and spend 8AP to acquire its **base aspect** as a relationship. If you want a bonus or a rules mechanical use of your zoan, you can spend a fate point or maybe make a manoeuvre. Remember, aspects are always true, so a Breather lets you breathe underwater; you don't need to invoke it to do that, it's just what it does. But if you want your Breather to give you an advantage in underwater combat, that's what invoking is for.

If you need it, you can also use AP (when you acquire the zoan, or later) to add special abilities (page 21) to your zoan relationship from those listed in the writeups below. This represents you learning how to use your zoan better, develop new tricks with it, and so on.

Table 11-1: Zoans presents suggested zoan costs and abilities for a range of "entry-level" zoans beginning characters are likely to be interested in. Descriptions are provided below, and full details, including more powerful zoans, are given in the *Chronicler's Guide*. There are many types of zoan, and you may develop your zoan relationship very differently—check with your Chronicler. Of course, you may simply choose to keep your zoan as an aspect.

Zoic Dehumanisation

As well as providing a base aspect on its relationship sheet, every zoan you have must also be incorporated into one of your personal aspects in some way—zoans change who you are. Zoic aspects can and should be compelled, at least once per session, for you to react according to the zoic nature, use the zoan whenever possible, behave in a way that safeguards the zoan, etc.

Example zoic aspects include: Bulldozing Veteran With Pumped-Up Zoic Arms; My Zoic Eyes Make Me Stand Out in a Crowd; Twitchy Virikki Psionicist With Bat-Like Zoic Ears.

Breather

Base Aspect: *Zoic Gills Fused With Your Neck and Windpipe*

Special Ability:

- **Exude Breathable Air 1 (2AP):** The zoan exudes breathable air sufficient for one person.

This zoan flattens itself around your neck, fusing with your skin and piercing your windpipe. It operates as a set of gills, letting you breathe underwater.

Claws

Base Aspect: *Zoic Claws Fused With Your Hands*

Special Ability:

- **Integral Weaponry 1-3 (2-6AP):** Unarmed Combat attacks have a +1 stress increase per level.

This zoan fuses with or replaces your own hands, giving you huge, tearing, retractable claws.

Concentrator

Base Aspect: *Zoic Drug Pump Fused With the Back of Your Neck*

Special Ability:

- **Heightened Concentration (2AP):** You're oblivious to all else when you concentrate on a task. Act at a +2 skill level on any appropriate action when you concentrate for an additional round beforehand without interruption. For both rounds you incur an *Oblivious To All Else* condition aspect.

Almost unnoticeable, this zoan sits at the top of your spinal chord, infusing your system with a "concentration drug".

Enervator

Base Aspect: *Zoic Aggressor Drug Pump Fused With Your Carotid*

Special Ability:

- **Battle Frenzy (2AP):** You may go **berserk** at will in melee or unarmed combat (page 220).

This zoan fuses with your torso over your carotid artery, giving you a massive boost of energy and aggression in combat.

Far Hearer

Base Aspect: *Zoic Bat's Ears Hear Every Squeak*

Special Ability:

- **Enhanced Sense (Far Hearing) (2AP):** You act at a +2 skill level when listening, eavesdropping, detecting sneak attacks and ambushes, and so on.

Paired zoans sitting over or replacing your ears, they're often obvious, like a bat's or cat's ears. They give accurate, long-distance hearing.

Far Seer

Base Aspect: *Zoic Lenses Give You Telescopic Vision When You Squint*

Special Ability:

- **Enhanced Sense (Far Vision) (2AP):** You have magnified vision over long distances, and reduce range penalties by 2 steps for Investigate, Notice, and Ranged Combat rolls.

These twin zoans are tiny and transparent and live in your eyes. When you squint, they give you magnified and long-distance vision.

Healing Zoan

Base Aspect: *A Slick, Livid, and Glistening Replacement Zoic Limb*

Special Ability:

- **Regeneration (2AP):** You recover rapidly from debilitating wounds, regenerating tissue and even regrowing limbs. You may recover from any consequence, including extreme consequences and permanent consequences caused by critical hits. The zoan is only good for one regeneration.

A zoic prosthesis applied to a seriously injured body to replace limbs and substitute for damaged or missing organs. As per page 234, it can heal crippling disabilities resulting from critical consequences. Its cost is based on the consequence it's treating; 20S for a mild consequence, 40S for a moderate, and 60S for a severe.



Hearer

Base Aspect: *Zoic Cat's Ears Let You Hear a Pin Drop*

Special Ability:

- **Enhanced Sense (Microhearing) (2AP):** You hear the tiniest sounds; distant conversations, pins tumbling in a lock, etc. Act at a +2 skill level where this would be advantageous.

Similar to the Far Hearer, this zoan gives you more accurate hearing, letting you hear extremely faint sounds.

Muscle Enhancer

Base Aspect: *Cables of Zoic Muscles Fused With Your Own*

Special Ability:

- **Heightened Strength (2AP):** You act at a +2 skill level on Physique rolls and other strength-related actions, and gain a +2 stress increase on your melee and unarmed combat attacks.

This zoan burrows under your skin and fuses with your muscles, making you physically stronger.

Night Vision

Base Aspect: *Zoic Cat's Eyes Let You See At Night*

Special Ability:

- **Enhanced Sense (Nightsight) (2AP):** You see at night or in similar low-light conditions as if it was full day.

Like the Far Seer, this twin zoan set intensifies incoming light, letting you see by starlight as if it were a cloudy day. It doesn't work in complete darkness. If a bright light flashes in front of you, you may be blinded.

Poison Glander

Base Aspect: *A Zoic Poison Gland Lives In Your Mouth*

Special Ability:

- **Exude (Poison) 3 (6AP):** You exude a **poison** (page 184) which may affect those you touch, sting, or bite. You must first cause a consequence to introduce the poison to the target; it must be ingested, injected, or introduced via a wound. A special success attack may strike the eyes or other orifices with the same effect, or enter the bloodstream via an existing wound (if there is one). By default, the poison takes effect the next round and attacks with an Intensity of 3, resisted by Physique, once per round for 1 scene or until treated (page 233). You may make repeated poison attacks, but on a fumble or costly success you run out of poison for the rest of the scene. You may spend an additional 8 AP to specify a *Wracking Pain*, *Blindness* or *Creeping Paralysis* first consequence.

OR

- **Project (Poison) 3 (6AP):** As Exude Poison, except you attack with Ranged Combat, and are able to spit or otherwise project the poison at a distance. A special success is required to introduce the poison into the target's bloodstream, usually via the eyes or other orifice; existing physical consequences may be invoked to represent targeting existing wounds.

This zoan crawls into your mouth and fuses with the back of your throat, where it secretes poison. You may make a poison bite attack, and may be able to spit the poison some distance.



Shrieker

Base Aspect: *A Zoic Shrieker Lives In Your Throat*

Special Ability:

- **Project (Sound) 3 (6AP):** You may project a deafening shriek in a +3 SI sonic attack causing physical stress damage.

This zoan crawls down your throat and fuses with your vocal chords, letting you emit a painful, ear-piercing sonic attack, either a zone effect with Physique or using Ranged Combat for a single target or group of adjacent targets.

Vocalus

Base Aspect: *A Slimy Zoic Crustacean Fused With Your Breathing Passages*

Special Ability:

- **Transform Sound (2AP):** You can transform sound from one frequency to another. For a fate point, this can also be used as a sonic attack using the Ranged Combat skill (see the Project Sound special ability above).

Used only by the Hsun Spider Folk, this zoan sits over one of your breathing apertures and converts your high-pitched vocalisations into something audible to human ears.

Zoic Eyes

Base Aspect: *Brightly Coloured Zoic Eyes Give You Superhuman Vision*

Special Abilities:

- **Enhanced Sense (Nightsight) (2AP):** You see at night or in similar low-light conditions as if it was full day.
- **Heightened Visual Acuity (2AP):** Your ranged attacks increase in difficulty by only +1 per zone above R1 instead of +2 (page 211).
- **Resist (Luminosity) (2AP):** You're protected from dazzling luminosities and blinding.

These twin zoans replace your eyes, giving you superb vision and the ability to see in both low light and in bright light without being dazzled.

The Appearance of Zoans

Zoans are symbiotic alien life forms, and look like it. They're often garishly colourful, with a glistening texture different from your own skin. Usually it'll be obvious if you have a zoan.

Damaging Zoans

Some powers and artefacts damage or disable zoans, and diseases like Zoic Malaise can compromise and kill them (page 239). As a relationship, a zoan has notional stress boxes and consequences, and you can use the ones on your relationship sheet if yours is targeted during play.

Mindstones

Mindstones are the mysterious organic excrescences of the alien Paladoi or **Proteans** (page 81). They convey knowledge, in the form of memories and information, or know-how like skills, stunts, spells, and psionic talents. The Paladoi use most mindstones themselves, but also trade them at the infrequent Paladoi markets found in certain places across the Springtide Civilisations.

You must buy a mindstone as an item of equipment (page 170). To use it, however, you must spend time with its creator (or **Glander**—see page 92) to “attune” the stone and spend AP to “unlock” its abilities as relationship abilities. Mindstones can’t therefore be purchased elsewhere; beware charlatans attempting to sell “used” mindstones!

When you acquire a mindstone, its abilities have been “set” by its creator, who has spent a certain number of AP on it—the stone’s “max AP” on the table below. The price you pay to buy the mindstone is based on this max AP. When you attune the stone, you may gain knowledge of its abilities gradually, ie you don’t have to spend the full max AP at the moment of attunement, but may do so incrementally, over time (perhaps a long time). The minimum “initial spend” of AP you must make when first attuning a mindstone gives you a basic level of ability. For some mindstones (like spell stones and stunt stones), the initial spend and max AP are the same; you must spend the AP when you attune the stone to gain its powers.

To use a mindstone’s abilities, you must hold it in one hand, which may not be used for anything else.

You can find more information on mindstones on page 351, and full details in the *Chronicler’s Guide*. Table 11-2: Mindstones summarises powers and prices if they’re available for purchase at a Paladoi market.

Damaging Mindstones

Mindstones can be damaged and even destroyed, by weapon attacks, impact damage, fire, immersion in acid, and so on.

USING RELATIONSHIPS

A relationship gives you access to skills, stunts, and other abilities you wouldn’t otherwise have. Your character hasn’t gained these abilities directly; instead, the entity referred to in the relationship uses its own abilities on your behalf. That means the relationship entity can only affect targets in its vicinity, as if it was making its own skill rolls; however, you (the player) make these rolls when it’s your turn to act. Otherwise, as long as you can describe how you get the relationship entity to act on your behalf, you may use relationship abilities just like your own.

TABLE 11-2: MINDSTONES

MINDSTONE TYPE	NOTES	INITIAL SPEND	PRICE (S) ¹	MAX AP
Memory Stone	Contains memories in the form of an aspect.	8AP	80	8AP
Power Stone	1-3 levels; each level can hold up to 10 charges of manatine energy.	2-6AP	20-60	2-6AP
Skill Stone	Conveys 1 level of a mundane skill per 2AP invested.	2AP	20+	n/a
Spell Stone	Contains knowledge of 1 sorcery spell (page 351).	4AP	40	4AP
Stunt Stone	Contains knowledge of 1 mundane stunt.	4AP	40	4AP
Talent Stone	Contains knowledge of 1 psionic talent.	4AP	40	4AP

1: This is the base price, ie the minimum you’ll pay. Your Chronicler may increase this price—mindstones are rare!

Using a Relationship Aspect

You can invoke and compel your relationship aspects, as can other characters, including NPCs. The aspect belongs to the relationship entity, but the invoke or compel affects your situation.

.....
When Zabet rides Blue-Claw into combat, she can invoke its Sudden Excess of Violence aspect for a bonus or a re-roll on her attack actions.

Using a Relationship Skill

You can use a relationship skill directly, representing you getting the relationship subject to do something on your behalf; or you can use it for a teamwork bonus for one of your own skills, representing the relationship subject assisting you in one of your actions. If your relationship uses one of its skills directly, you may give it a teamwork bonus if you have the same skill and can describe how that works.

.....
Zabet can also ride headlong into a foe, using her Trample relationship stunt to make a Physique attack. When she does that, she uses the Physique 3 skill on Blue-Claw's relationship sheet, and gives it a +1 teamwork bonus from her own Physique 2 skill, as her weight and strength contribute to the impact of the Trample. Sharma rolls for Blue-Claw's Trample attack using a total skill level of Physique 4.

Using a Relationship Stunt

You may use a relationship stunt as if it was one of your own; describe the relationship subject using its stunt on your behalf. If you're making a skill roll, the governing skill for the stunt is either one of your own skills, with a corresponding relationship skill providing a teamwork bonus, or vice versa.

.....
The bound fire demon in Ukhta's flamberge has the Fire Storm power stunt. In combat, Ukhta can sweep her sword before her and pour forth raging fire burning all targets in a single zone! She uses her own Change By Fire 3 power skill in the attack, with a +1 teamwork bonus from the demon relationship's own Change By Fire 1 skill.

Using a Relationship Special Ability

Relationships are a cool way to get access to a special ability! Usually you describe this as the relationship subject using its special ability on your behalf, but in the case of zoans, mindstones, bound demons, and so on, it may appear as if you yourself have developed the special ability in question!

.....
Zabet's chelother mount, Blue-Claw, has Larger Size 1 as a relationship special ability. When Zabet attacks in mounted combat, she does so as if she was Size 1 (Large).

Relationships Taking Damage Instead of Characters

If you take damage when using a relationship in a conflict, you can choose for that relationship to take the damage instead of you, **as long as you can describe how that works**. Often it's obvious; if you ask a community relationship to make a community attack (see the *Chronicle's Guide*) and it gets damaged in the ensuing conflict, then obviously the relationship itself takes damage rather than you. Similarly, if your sidekick fights at your side, giving you a Melee Combat teamwork bonus, and you take damage, you may decide the sidekick takes the damage instead of you. Usually it's your choice; however, sometimes your opponent may deliberately target your relationship instead of you.

As mentioned above, relationships have stress tracks and consequences, either explicit or notional, for use when they take damage in this way.

Choosing to Take Damage Instead of Your Relationship

If your story indicates your relationship should take damage in a conflict, you may choose to take that damage yourself. Sometimes this is the only way to prevent a relationship being destroyed. If it seems problematic for you to take the damage instead of your relationship, your Chronicler may ask you to either pay a fate point or make a skill roll.

.....

Zabet was using Blue-Claw to make Trample attacks, and the aurivor it was trampling attacked back, inflicting 8 stress damage! Logic would suggest that the aurivor hit the chelother, but Sharma doesn't want it to be injured, so opts for Zabet to take the damage instead. She describes how she pulls Blue-Claw up just as the aurivor's tentacles lash past, striking Zabet full in the chest. Hopefully her armour will absorb some of the damage!

.....

Healing a Relationship

When relationships take damage, they recover from that damage in the same way as their parent entity. Checked stress boxes clear in the scene following the conflict. Consequences follow the logic of your story; sidekicks can have their wounds healed, communities require community recovery, and constructs may require physical repair.

What To Do When Relationships Are Destroyed

Relationships can be **taken out**, one of the main dangers of involving them in conflicts. If this happens, you **immediately lose the relationship**. The AP you had invested become available for you again at the next logical opportunity; this can be more or less immediately in the case of a sorcerer who dismisses his bound demon relationship, but may require a lengthy stay in a settled area for a legionnaire who has just had his relationship with his legion destroyed and wishes to develop a new community relationship. Spending AP freed up by the destruction of a relationship is always subject to the rules in **Chapter 12: Advancement**.

How you describe a taken out result for a relationship can also vary widely, although it's usually obvious from the context. A chelother relationship destroyed in a bloody battle pretty much means your chelother is dead—or at least subject to the same rules as you'd be if you'd been taken out in the same situation. For a community relationship, let the context inform the description; if a priest has his temple relationship taken out in a social conflict with an enemy faction at the autarchal court, this may mean the priest has brought his temple into disgrace and the temple has severed all connection with him—it's unlikely the temple itself will have been taken out, although it could have taken a hit to its reputation as a consequence. On the other hand, if a legionnaire's legion relationship is taken out in a physical conflict with an entropic horde, it could indeed mean the legion itself has been taken out—destroyed, routed, decimated, and so on.

How To Use A Shared Relationship

Shared relationships (page 242) exist when one or more PCs have a relationship with the same relationship subject; belonging to the same community, hiring the same ship and its crew, participating in the same summoning ritual for a powerful demon. Often you'll have a shared relationship sheet where all its relationship abilities are presented together.

Any character contributing to a shared relationship may use any of its abilities, even if they don't exist purely on his own character sheet, as long as he can describe how that works. This means a PC might have access to higher skill levels, multiple stunts, and unusual magics and special abilities which he hasn't himself spent AP to acquire. This is one of the big advantages of shared relationships.

The only caveat is that access to shared relationship abilities that a PC hasn't himself spent AP on isn't 100% guaranteed. It *usually* is, but the Chronicler may require an interpersonal skill roll to induce the shared relationship to use its abilities like this.

Often this won't be an issue; shared relationships are meant to be awesome, not a pain in the neck. If a party has a bound Serapai war demon as a shared relationship, with the Battlefield Healing stunt paid for by one character and the Mindlink stunt paid for by another, then it's crummy not to let the second character Mindlink the Serapai to use its Battlefield Healing stunt on a wounded character. On the other hand, if both characters also have a shared relationship with the Temple of Regos, and the first character has Resources 1 and the second Physical Combat 1, then the Chronicler may reasonably require the second character to make, say, a Rapport roll to get the temple to expend some of its Resources on equipping the elite military cadre his Physical Combat 1 skill represents.

Relationships and Mounted Combat

If you want to make mounted combat a major part of your character's combat strategy, you can define your mount as a relationship. See page 244 above for more on mounts.

Fighting From the Saddle

Let's recap: even without your mount as a relationship, to attack in mounted combat you make a **combined skill roll** (page 194) of Ride plus your relevant combat skill (usually Melee Combat), with Ride as the primary skill. You can't use *HTH* or *Two-Handed* melee weapons, and to take full advantage you should use a *Mounted Weapon* (page 179, and see below).

Likewise, **mounting and dismounting** is a free action (page 214) unless you're in combat, in which case it's a Ride manoeuvre (page 200).

Larger Size Attacks

Mounts are usually Size 1 (Large) creatures, so you can take the "Larger Size" special ability for your mount relationship to take advantage of that in combat **as long as you're attacking with a Mounted Weapon or using your mount's combat skill**. If so, you effectively act as 1 Size larger (page 236).

Teamwork Bonuses

You can get a teamwork bonus on your Ride skill from your mount relationship's Athletics skill, and on your Melee Combat skill from its Unarmed Combat skill or skills (if any), **and vice versa** if you want to give your mount free rein and roll for its attacks instead of yours.

Special Abilities

Some mounts, like cheloths, cambrioths, ornithers, and elenisors, have special abilities which you can spend AP on to incorporate into your relationship and use in play. See page 245 for example stat blocks.

Sharing Damage

You may share damage between you and your mount—see "Relationships Taking Damage Instead of Characters" above. The only caveat is that if the damage is from a critical hit or any kind of aimed or precise attack (page 222), then the attack affects **only** the target (usually the one that made the defend roll).

Relationships and Advancements

You can use advancement points to improve your relationships. Indeed, this is one of the main avenues of character advancement in the game—how your character goes from "zero to hero". Find out more in Chapter 12: Advancement.



Advancement

Seeing your character survive and thrive is exciting and satisfying. Your skills improve, you learn new stunts, abilities, mighty magics, and acquire powerful artefacts and forge relationships with legions, temples, communities, and more. This is called **advancement**.

Advancement is handled by the expenditure of **advancement points**, or AP, in much the same way as character creation. However, whereas you had a budget of AP to spend when you created your character, once you begin play, you receive AP in smaller increments as rewards for your adventuring achievements, and may only spend them in specific ways and (usually) at specific intervals known as **advancement milestones** (or just **milestones**).

TYPES OF ADVANCEMENT

The most obvious form of advancement is spending AP to increase your character's skill levels, buy new stunts, modify your aspects, and increase your Refresh—what's called **personal advancement**. In the early days of your adventuring career, you'll probably concentrate on doing just that. However, eventually buying new skill levels, etc, becomes slower and more expensive, and another form of advancement comes to the fore—**relationship advancement**.

In relationship advancement, you spend AP to improve the abilities of one of your relationships instead of your character. This is a key way your character can achieve real power—not only does he become more competent himself, but he develops deep and committed relationships with major figures and organisations in the world which can help him in his ever greater adventures. See “Improving Relationships to Power Up Your Character” below.

GAINING ADVANCEMENT POINTS

You gain advancement points for adventurous achievements where you exercise your abilities under challenging conditions and learn from the experience. Your Chronicler will usually give each character in play 1 or more AP at the end of each game session.

Gaining AP is never automatic; your character has to be doing something challenging—you won't gain AP from sleeping, or lying in a field staring at the sky (well, unless you're an astronomer, and it's night, and you're studying the stars... but you get the idea).

Advancement Milestones

Usually your Chronicler will award AP at **advancement milestones**, as summarised in Table 12-2: Advancement Point Awards. Awards are cumulative; for example, at the end of a session where you conclude an adventure tying up the current campaign arc, you may gain 7 AP.

Milestones generally happen at fixed points, specifically at the end of a game session, although some Chroniclers prefer to award AP at the beginning of the next session, so players can spend them just before play. There are three types of milestone—minor, significant, and major—each awarding more AP.

The Chronicler may also **declare a milestone** during play. If something really significant happens in the middle of a session, maybe the end of a scenario or story thread, and it feels like what happens next is part of a new episode or chapter, the Chronicler can declare a significant milestone, award AP, and let players spend them before continuing play.

Minor Milestones

A minor milestone usually happens at the end of a game session. You've been adventuring, you've progressed through the scenario, had a few encounters, but so far nothing's resolved and the mission is still underway. Minor milestones are about small-scale tweaks to your abilities, rather than awesome and noticeable "level-ups".

Significant Milestones

A significant milestone usually happens at the end of a session marking an important event, like the end of a scenario. You may have one significant milestone every 3 to 5 minor milestones; it's a moment where your recent experiences potentially permit a noticeable improvement in your abilities.

Major Milestones

Major milestones don't happen often—usually they mark the end of a scenario tying up the current campaign arc. They're big moments when your characters undergo major changes, developing new abilities and forging new relationships, so that in the next session of play you really do look that much more awesome. You can find out more about campaign arcs and scenarios in the *Chronicler's Guide*.

As an aside, major milestones are also when you can rename an **extreme consequence** (page 216).

SPENDING ADVANCEMENT POINTS

When you receive AP, you can spend them immediately or keep them until a subsequent milestone. Usually you can only spend AP at milestones (but see "Summoning Demons" on page 312), and only on advancements that make sense at that milestone. If you're crossing barren desert battling hostile *skarapai*, it won't make sense to spend AP to improve your Sailing skill; but it **does** make sense to save that AP for later (maybe when you arrive at a port city...), or spend it on a level 1 Survival skill instead. Don't get too hung up on this—tenuous justifications can usually be made to work, and it's more a matter of credibility and consistency rather than obstructing game fun!

Table 12-1: Advancement Point Spends summarises the AP spends you can make at a milestone.

TABLE 12-1: ADVANCEMENT POINT SPENDS

ADVANCEMENT POINT SPEND	RESULT
1	<p>Change a stunt for another stunt, or reword an aspect on your character sheet.</p> <p>Swap the position of two adjacent skills on your character sheet, or remove a level 1 skill and replace it with another.</p> <p>Change one sorcery spell you've memorised for a new one, effectively "forgetting" the old one. See page 340.</p>
2	<p>Increase one of your skills by 1 level, or add a new level 1 skill. You must adhere to the Skill Column rule (page 42).</p> <p>Learn a new sorcery spell, if you're a sorcerer (page 340). You must have access to the spell in question.</p>
4	Add a new stunt. This reduces your Refresh by -1 (page 44) unless it's a relationship stunt.
8	Add a new aspect to one of your relationships.
16	Increase your Refresh by +1.

TABLE 12-2: ADVANCEMENT POINT AWARDS

MILESTONE	AP AWARDED	DESCRIPTION
Minor	1	At the end of any game session.
Significant	2	At the end of a session marking a significant event like the end of an adventure.
Major	4	At the end of a session concluding an adventure tying up the current campaign arc.

TABLE 12-3: MILESTONE CHANGES

MILESTONE TYPE	MAGNITUDE OF ADVANCEMENTS POSSIBLE
Minor	A single small change: buying a new stunt or other ability, raising a skill level by 1 point, changing one stunt for another, swapping two skills round.
Significant	Level up! Up to 5 small changes—tweak an aspect, increase a couple of skills, buy a couple of new stunts, etc.
Major	As many changes as you can afford in AP! Your Chronicler may declare they require a certain amount of time.

How Many AP Can I Spend At a Milestone?

You don't have to spend AP as soon as you receive them; you can save them for a subsequent milestone.

*Your Chronicler may limit how many AP you can spend at a milestone. Usually you'll only make a **single small change** at a minor milestone; buying a new stunt or other ability; changing one stunt for another; raising a skill level by 1 point (or swapping two skills round).*

*At a significant milestone, you can make **up to 5 small changes**, enough to feel your character has "levelled up", but not so that he feels unrecognisable. You can tweak an aspect, increase a couple of skills, buy a couple of new stunts.*

*At a major milestone, you can **spend as many AP as you want**, even if it makes a major change to the game. If this was a TV show, you've just finished one season and are about to start another; it's a whole new ball-game! The only caveat is that your Chronicler may declare your changes require a certain amount of time (and maybe even advance your game clock accordingly)—becoming expert in a new form of magic doesn't happen overnight, for example. At least not usually!*

These changes are summarized in Table 12-3: Milestone Changes.

Rewording Your Aspects

Although your Chronicler may let you reword your aspects pretty freely in your first session or two, that's just while you get used to your character and figure out what works best. Once you've settled on your aspects, you must spend 1AP at a milestone to change an aspect.

Even then, some aspects can't be changed easily. Your Essence won't change outside of a major milestone where you redefine who you are. But other aspects, like your Shadow, Companion, or Blood, can be **tweaked** as long as you can justify the change in story terms.

Sharma thinks Zabet's adventures feel like the world is on the brink of great changes—and that Zabet's going to be instrumental in them! At the end of the scenario, she's planning to spend 1AP to reword her Shadow aspect to The Rebirth of the Age is Upon Us! It'll still cause Zabet trouble, but will be more about her feeling obliged to ride out to save the world than to fatalistically submit to its inevitable end.

The easiest aspects to change are often relationship aspects, as they represent how you interact with your relationship, favouring one facet over another. You must describe how your approach to your relationship has changed, but may otherwise reword it completely.

Varnas wants to make more of his relationship with Arin and Danny, the Two Grumps. He can spend a fate point to declare a chance meeting with Everyone's Favourite Travelling Comedy Troupe, but then he wants to use a minor milestone spend to change his relationship aspect, revealing that In Secret, Everyone's Favourite Travelling Comedy Troupe Fights Crime!

In-Game Events Changing Your Aspects

You can think of spending AP to reword an aspect as giving you narrative **permission** to do so. Sometimes, though, game events can change an aspect directly—sometimes even against your will! You can become **corrupted** (page 280), gain a **zoan** (page 248), or perhaps a new companion arrives or an old one dies or becomes irrelevant. **As long as in-game events have mandated the change**, you can reword an aspect without spending AP.

Vitas thinks Varnas's companion aspect Only I Know the Damage Taleraz Kunazel Has Wrought! hasn't been getting much use, and instead has been considering the Tunguddi's Mechanical Servitor as a possible replacement. Sarah agrees this would be a cool change—the Servitor has been following Varnas around the Tower of Virigu—and lets him spend AP to switch his companion aspect to The Mechanical Servitor Joins Me To Seek the Tunguddi.

Changing Your Doom

The one personal aspect you can't change easily is your **Doom**—it's your overarching destiny, integral to who you are. It **can** be changed, however, by major in-game events:

- Corruption aspects can change your Doom (see the *Chronicler's Guide*).
- Mythical deed aspects can change your Doom (see the *Chronicler's Guide*).
- Extreme consequences can change your Doom (see page 216).

You don't need to spend AP to change your Doom in this way. In some cases, though, your Chronicler may let you spend AP to tweak your Doom slightly.

Ukhta's Doom has recently been more about scaring the daylights out of her enemies instead of proselytising the ecstatic fires of Dafur. For a 1AP milestone spend, Sarah lets Rika reword it from Let the World Exult in the Embrace of the Flame Lord to Let the World Fear the Embrace of the Flame Lord!

Increasing Skill Levels and Adding New Skills

You can spend AP to add new skills to your character sheet or increase existing skill levels. It costs 2AP to do either. You must justify the improvement narratively, although that can be straightforward—"I've been practicing my longsword in my spare time" is enough to justify an increase in your Melee Combat skill. Your Chronicler may veto some descriptions, though—you're not going to suddenly develop a Ride skill if you've been sailing the high seas for several months!

When you add or increase skill levels, you must follow the skill column rules (page 42). You can't have more skills at one level than at the level below.

Zabet has the following skills:

Melee Combat 4

Notice 3, Ride 3

The Legions 2, Physique 2, Ranged Combat 2

If Sharma wants to improve Zabet's Ride skill, that would give:

Melee Combat 4, Ride 4

Notice 3

The Legions 2, Physique 2, Ranged Combat 2

*See how that breaks the skill column rule? In this case, Sharma would have to improve **two skills in a single milestone** rather than one, paying twice the AP cost. At a significant milestone or better, she could spend 4 AP to move a level 2 skill to level 3, and a level 3 skill to level 4, giving her:*

Melee Combat 4, Ride 4

Notice 3, Ranged Combat 3

The Legions 2, Physique 2

*She'd do the same to add a new skill level at the top of her skill column. If she wanted to improve her Melee Combat 4 skill by one level at the same time as improving her Ride and Ranged Combat, she'd move **three skills in a single milestone**, costing 6AP, giving her:*

Melee Combat 5

Ride 4

Notice 3, Ranged Combat 3

The Legions 2, Physique 2

Doing this repeatedly can produce a spindly skill column, indicating extreme specialisation. Be careful about prioritising skills above stunts and other abilities, though—it's eventually cheaper to buy a stunt to get the bonuses you want.

Swapping Adjacent Skills

Improving skill levels becomes costly, but one way round this is to **swap the relative positions of two skills** in your skill columns. You can do this for a single spend of 1AP at a minor milestone; it's a quick way to reconfigure your character, and often a good tactical decision just before a session where you figure one skill is going to be more important than another.

Zabet's about to venture into the bowels of the Tower of Virigu, and Sharma doesn't imagine she'll be riding her chelother much. At the minor milestone preceding the session, she spends 1AP to switch around her Ranged Combat and Ride skills, giving her the skill columns below. She can swap the skills back at a future milestone if she wants.

Melee Combat 5

Ranged Combat 4

Notice 3, Ride 3

The Legions 2, Physique 2

Adding New Stunts

For 4AP you can add a new stunt to your character sheet. You must describe how you get this: if you want the Ride skill stunt "Hell For Leather", you should have at least ridden a mount in the last few sessions; but it's probably unreasonable to want to buy Damage Control, a Sailing stunt, if you've never even been close to a sailing ship!

Buying a new stunt for your character **always reduces your Refresh by 1 point**, giving you fewer fate points in play. Although you can spend AP to increase your Refresh, one way round this is to buy stunts for one of your relationships instead; these don't affect your Refresh. The downside is you must describe how you get your relationship to use that stunt on your behalf; buying Damage Control for a sailing ship crew relationship works great if you're on board that ship, but not if it's a hundred leagues away!

Changing Stunts

Changing one stunt for another is powerful juju when preparing for a new session, and only costs 1AP. If you haven't been using one stunt much, you can swap it for one which will be more useful. You can even do that just for one session, swapping the stunts back at the next milestone. You must still justify the new stunt you're swapping in, but otherwise this is a quick and dirty way to reconfigure your character on the fly.

Note that you can't swap personal stunts for relationship stunts; they're always separate. However, you **can** swap stunts **between** relationships, reducing the importance of one relationship in favour of another. You should come up with narrative justification. See "Summonings" below for an exception to this.



Adding Aspects to Your Relationships

You can't add new aspects to your character, but only tweak existing ones. That's not the case for relationships, though; even if you have a relationship with only one or two aspects, behind your relationship is a notional character sheet with a full complement of essence, shadow, blood, companion aspects, and so on, which you can buy as relationship abilities. Usually you can word these however you want, unless your Chronicler has defined those aspects already; even then, she might let you tweak their wording.

Increasing Your Refresh

The more stunts you know, the greater the reduction in your Refresh and the fewer fate points you have for use in play. You can spend AP to increase your Refresh; it's expensive, but lets you gradually increase the number of stunts you know. But even then it still may be preferable to buy relationship stunts; if you're a fighter looking for cool combat stunts, consider getting a serapai war demon bound into your favourite weapon with stunts it can use on your behalf!

.....

Rika did this when creating Ukhta the Fire Warrior; with three stunts and four special abilities, she only had a Refresh of 3, and Rika didn't want to play with fewer fate points. By having an agnapei fire demon bound into her flamberge, she bought the Fire of Agni and Fire Storm power stunts as relationship abilities without reducing her Refresh. She must ensure her flamberge or its bound demon aren't lost or destroyed, as she'd lose those abilities, but otherwise she can use them as if Ukhta knew the stunts herself.

.....

Improving Relationships to Power Up Your Character

Spending AP to develop relationships is key to taking your character from zero to hero, to becoming a mover and shaker in the Springtide Civilisations. Here are a few observations.

Summonings

You can summon and bind demons and elementals using **magic**—see page 312. You spend AP to define the relationship **at the moment of summoning**, which can occur any time during play, as long as you have the AP to spare (ie it doesn't have to be done at an end-of-session milestone).

Communities

When advancing your community relationships, you must describe how you interact with that community and get it to do more on your behalf. If the advancement is significant enough, your Chronicler may declare it takes a certain amount of time. See the *Chronicler's Guide* for full rules for communities.

Zoans and Mindstones

When you first acquire a zoan or mindstone, you may spend up to its **max AP** (page 249) to represent the time and effort to attune it or familiarise yourself with its use (page 250). After acquisition, you must spend AP at milestones to deepen your expertise and unlock more of its abilities.

Recovering Advancement Points From A Relationship

Relationships can be weakened, damaged, or even destroyed, either deliberately when, say, a summoned demon is dismissed, or accidentally when a favourite war steed is slain in battle. When this happens, you get some or all of the AP invested in that relationship back.

Losing a Summoned Entity

When you dismiss a summoned entity, or when it's destroyed or otherwise departs, you immediately regain all the AP invested in it, which become immediately available for you to re-use. The nature of summoned entities, however, means you can't syphon off just a few AP to re-allocate them to another relationship; you must maintain the entity's integrity for the duration of the summoning.

Summoners usually spend AP recovered in this way on another summoning (see above). However, you can spend them on other advancements, as long as you follow the rules given above.

Voluntarily Downgrading a Relationship

If you have a community relationship that isn't getting much use, or a mount you don't need any more, you can, with your Chronicler's approval, liquidate some or all of the AP invested in the relationship and add them to your AP pool for re-allocation at subsequent milestones.

You must keep this credible in story terms. You can switch stunts between two different community relationships at appropriate milestones, or between zoans and mindstones, or even between a community and a zoan, or a zoan and a mindstone. If it's tricky to justify this narratively, your Chronicler may require you to take certain actions or even make certain dice rolls. In extreme cases re-allocating AP like this might even be the subject of a scenario.

Spending AP From a Relationship on Personal Advancement

During character creation, we recommended not allowing AP from your relationships budget to be spent on your character's own skills, stunts, etc. Once play begins, you can relax that rule a little if you like, as long as you follow the advancement rules. We still recommend keeping plenty of AP invested in relationships, though, as AP spent on personal advancements can't later be easily freed up for spending on relationships if you change your mind.





Magic

The sages of the Springtide Civilisations say the cosmos is ordered in accordance with **mystical principles**, also called **powers**, originating with and embodied by **gods**. These principles include Death (represented by the god Belom), Time (represented by Unthar), Command (Regos), and others; the temples of the Great Compact of the Venerable Autocracy recognise twenty gods.

Certain mortals gain understanding of these principles, harnessing their powers to impose changes on the world in accordance with their wills. This is called **magic**. Some say you need a natural ability to use magic; others say it's something you can learn.

In game terms, each mystical principle is a special type of skill called a **power skill**. Taking actions with power skills is how you use magic. As with non-magical skills, power skills may also have stunts, representing special uses of those powers.

This chapter provides rules for creating and playing magic-using characters.



The Magical Landscape

The cosmos is beyond comprehension. Nevertheless, mortals have tried, over millennia, and many competing cosmologies try to explain it.

It's clear there are many other worlds than the Earth. Some say they are simply out there, floating in the heavens, visible as the stars in the night sky; if you could travel far enough, you could visit them. The Ancients did this, before their hubris laid them low, and today the Artificers of Khosht claim the worlds accessible via planing machine, like dark airless Stuyvos and bright Ladabran, source of the world's steel, are just such worlds—out there somewhere, beyond the sky. Others say the worlds exist in other “dimensions”, universes next to ours but utterly invisible and inaccessible—except by magic. Worlds of fire, ice, burning radiation, endless screaming ruins; the sages say the demons claim them as their own worlds, but who can trust the word of demons?

But even magic has its limits. No sorcerer has ever gone where the dead go when they die. Perhaps they go nowhere; perhaps mortals simply burn to ashes and are recycled in life's eternal round. The coffer corpses and skeletal guardians of the darker temples are merely sorcerous automata, mindless and soul-less; and the undying liches of Staros the Bright God speak only of darkness after dying, before Staros's sorcery opened their dry, dead eyes again. People claim to have seen ghosts and spirits; but in truth all we have are the assurances of priests that our souls will dwell with the gods when we die, assuming we avoid the annihilating curse of the Reaper Gods.

THE FORMS OF MAGIC

Mortals have categorised and learned to use magic in four different **forms**: cantrips, power stunts, divine magic, and sorcery.

Cantrips

Cantrips are the simplest form of magic. To use cantrips, you must have a **natural talent power aspect** or a **divine power aspect** (page 271) and at least one power skill. Cantrips are minor magics, often improvised spontaneously, although many share features common enough to have names everyone can understand. Cantrips magically enhance or obstruct whatever mundane task you're engaged in, instead of working changes on the world in their own right. In game terms, they're **manoeuvre actions of power skills**, creating aspects and / or magically improving or disadvantaging your mundane skills. Anyone with an appropriate power aspect can use cantrips, from naturally talented individuals to members of the priesthoods. One notable exception is **sorcerers** (those with a **sorcerous power aspect**—see page 268), who **may not** use cantrips unless they also have a natural talent power aspect or divine power aspect. Temples often teach specific uses of cantrips, expanding the power of cantrips to include the special competencies of their god (see page 310 for more).

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Example of cantrips include:

*A **Light** cantrip lets you see in the dark. Magic users can use the Change By Fire or Command power skills to cast Light cantrips, and may invoke a successful casting of a Light cantrip on Investigate or Notice rolls to spot or analyse things in the dark.*

*The Change By Fire power skill has a cantrip called **Wreath the Sword In Fire**. Once cast, you may invoke it on subsequent Melee Combat attack rolls to inflict burn wounds on your opponent, and for other effects.*

*A **Fireflare** cantrip can cause an existing fire to flare up into an obstacle (page 201). It's different from a Wall of Fire-type effect, which would be a more powerful **power stunt**, which could be summoned out of nothing and which could cover an entire zone or passage between zones.*

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See page 277 for more on cantrips.

Power Stunts

Power stunts are special uses of power skills which cause direct magical effects. If you want to perform an overcome, attack, or defend action with a power skill, or if you want to use a manoeuvre which does something more powerful than simply enhancing or obstructing a mundane skill, then you need a **power stunt**. You must have a natural talent power aspect or a divine power aspect to use power stunts; sorcerers may not use power stunts unless they also have one of these aspects.

Power stunts are magical feats which are often improvised; the user may not themselves know the power stunt, but will spend a fate point to get a single use of it (see page 138). If you find yourself resorting to a particular power stunt frequently, you may want to take it as a permanent stunt on your character sheet.

Many power stunts are available to anyone who knows a particular power skill, called **general power stunts**. Some, however, are the preserve of temples, called **temple power stunts**. See page 278 for more on power stunts.

Divine Magic

Divine magic is associated with the reverence of the gods or elemental powers. It includes the use of power skills and stunts, but with specialisations particular to the nature and capabilities of the god worshipped. Divine magic also gives priests the ability to incarnate an **avatar** of their god, and to summon demons and elementals. The most powerful may perform divine **miracles**.

To learn divine magic, you must have a **divine power aspect**. This means you may belong to a temple—in the Venerable Autocracy, one of the twenty Temples of the Great Compact—or an elemental cult. Some divine magic users may be gifted “lay members” of a temple community, or even completely unaffiliated with a temple or cult; even then they must still have a relationship with the god or elemental power. Most divine magic users are formal members of a temple or a cult.

See page 310 for more on divine magic.

Sorcery

Sorcery is the academic, almost scientific study and application of the mystical principles. To use sorcery, you must have a **sorcerous power aspect**. Sorcery requires no natural talent, but instead demands learning and memorisation. Sorcerers learn **spells**, which are tightly defined uses of the magical principles. Sorcery is less flexible than divine magic—you can't improvise with it, for example—but in return you get access to a greater number of spells and potentially a much wider range of magical effects.

While it's possible for magic users to know both sorcery and divine magic, it's necessary to have **both** divine and sorcerous power aspects, and there are also certain social constraints. In terms of sheer time and energy invested, most magic users decide to specialise in one or the other form of magic. There's nothing to stop insistent PCs from learning both, however (you know who you are!).

See page 323 for more on sorcery.

Other Forms of Supernatural Power

*While magic comes from “outside”, the exploitation of the power of the mystical principles, there are forms of supernatural power that come from “within”, including things like psionics, mindstones, and hsun shaping. These are known as **mysticism**, and there's a whole chapter devoted to them—see page 344.*

TABLE 13-1: A SUMMARY OF WHO USES MAGIC AND HOW (1/2)

MAGIC USER	MAGIC USED
Natural Talents (anyone with a natural talent power aspect and at least one power skill—see page 103)	<p>An unlimited number of general cantrips (manoeuvre actions with minor effects) with the power skills you know.</p> <p>General power stunts for any of the four actions with any power skill you know. You buy these as stunts or improvise them for a fate point (page 138).</p>
Novices	<p>Your power aspect must be a divine power aspect.</p> <p>You're a minor outer member of a temple community.</p> <p>You have all the abilities of a Natural Talent.</p> <p>You may improvise your temple's temple power stunts for a fate point.</p>
Initiates	<p>You're a more senior member of a temple community—a temple servitor, holy warrior, or even an affiliated sorcerer—and your divine power aspect reflects this.</p> <p>You have all the powers of a Novice.</p> <p>You can also use the temple cantrips of your temple.</p> <p>You may improvise your temples's temple power stunts for a fate point, or buy them as permanent power stunts.</p>
Priests	<p>You're part of the inner circle of a temple community, a leader and administrator, and your divine power aspect reflects this.</p> <p>You have all the powers of an Initiate.</p> <p>You may create and incarnate an avatar (page 310).</p> <p>Depending on your temple, you may summon and bind temple demons (page 312).</p> <p>You have access to miracles (page 312).</p>
Shamans	<p>You're the leader of one of the informal religious communities called elemental cults, often found in out-of-the-way places, and your divine power aspect reflects this.</p> <p>You have all the powers of an Initiate.</p> <p>You may summon and bind elementals (page 319).</p>

TABLE 13-1: A SUMMARY OF WHO USES MAGIC AND HOW (2/2)

MAGIC USER	MAGIC USED
Sorcerers	<p>Your power aspect must be a sorcerous power aspect.</p> <p>You may be a member of a sorcery school (an apprentice, journeyman, master sorcerer, etc), but you don't have to be. If you are, your sorcerous power aspect will reflect this.</p> <p>You do not have the abilities of a Natural Talent.</p> <p>You must know at least one spell effect stunt (page 324).</p> <p>You have memorised a limited number of spells (page 323) using any of the power skills you know. These may use any of the four actions. You may cast them at will, and they do not require fate points to use.</p> <p>You may burn mental stress to increase the range and number of targets affected by your spells.</p> <p>You may cast spells you haven't memorised by casting them directly from spell books.</p>
Using both Sorcery Spells and Natural Talent magic	You must have two power aspects---a sorcerous power aspect and a natural talent power aspect.
Using both Sorcery Spells and Divine Powers	You must have two power aspects—a sorcerous power aspect and a divine power aspect.
Forbidden Magic	<p>The magic of the nightmarish Hegemonist and the inimical Reaver Gods is powerful, easy to access, and rapidly corrupts the user. It's a terrible temptation for the weak-minded magic user! See the <i>Chronicler's Guide</i> for more.</p> <p>An ancient form of magic—the sorcery of Demos and Gebrahil of Nayarak—once destroyed the world. Said to be as powerful as that of the Hegemonist and the Reaver Gods, it corrupts just as surely. It's forbidden knowledge, essentially impossible to learn within the Springtide Civilisations. There are so many cautionary stories about it...</p>



USING MAGIC

Magic is performed using skill rolls of the power skills described on page 279. **By default, a magical power use skill roll is difficulty 1.** You can use magic to attack, defend, make overcome rolls, and perform manoeuvres. Each form of magic (cantrips, power stunts, divine magic, sorcery) uses the dice rolls, actions, and descriptions given in **Chapter 10: How To Do Things**, and builds on them in different ways with the additional rules and exceptions given below.

Ritual Magic

*You may enhance your magic rolls by using **ritual magic** via the “Rituals” Lore stunt (page 153). You may act at a higher skill level, in exchange for burning physical stress in time-consuming rites.*

Your Power Aspect

If you want your character to use magical power in a significant way, you must have a **power aspect**. This makes it explicit that your character is a magic user, and gives you a **permission** to select power skills, power stunts, sorcery spells, as appropriate (depending on the exact power aspect). Your power aspect can be any of your aspects, but it's often part of your Essence, like *Apprentice of Unthar*, *Fire Sorcerer of the Lambent Eye School*, or *Initiate of Dafur*. Sometimes it could be part of your Doom instead, like *Severed Souls For the Lord of Decay*!

You don't need a separate power aspect like this if you're just taking a power skill or a sorcery spell or two as standalone abilities; but, even then, make sure your access to magical power is at least hinted at somewhere in your aspects. For example, you could have *Seventh Son of a Seventh Son* as your Origin aspect. You can always develop this later.

Usually, your power aspect makes it clear whether you're a natural talent magic user, divine magic user, or sorcerer. If you want access to both natural talent magic and sorcery, or divine magic and sorcery, you must have **two** power aspects, one for each form.

While it's possible to take a power aspect during play, it's not a trivial thing; suddenly discovering you have magical powers is a life-changing event, and your Chronicler may insist this part of your story should be played out in-game, probably as part of a **major milestone** (page 259), modifying your Essence and maybe even your Doom (page 41). Even then, to begin with that will probably only give you access to natural talent powers; if you want to learn sorcery or divine magic, you'll have to play out how you find a sorcerous mentor, join a sorcery school or temple, complete an arduous apprenticeship, etc, using the **builds** in **Chapter 6: Occupations** as a guide. It's much simpler to begin play as a character who already has these momentous events behind him.

Range

We've already discussed performing actions at range in **Chapter 10: How To Do Things** (page 209). Using magic follows the same rules, with a few modifications, such as a greater number of ranges, as shown in Table 13-3: Expanded Range Table, overleaf.

By default, **cantrips** and **power stunts** (including **divine magic**) affect targets in the same zone as the caster (range 0). You may also affect targets a number of zones away from you equal to your power skill score, but at a +2 difficulty per additional zone of range beyond range 0.

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For example, Ing Shu trader priest Six Tentacles Bearing Treasure wants to cast the Mindwhisper cantrip to suggest something to Zabet Karja. Normally that would be a difficulty 1 roll of its Communication 3 power skill. However, because Zabet is 2 zones away, this becomes a difficulty 5 roll.

Sorcery has a default maximum range of R4. Each range above R0 costs you 1 mental stress, lost upon casting, and increases the spellcasting difficulty (page 323) by +2. For a sorcery spell to have a range greater than R4, it must be defined with the **Very Long Range** spell effect stunt (see page 324 for more on spell effect stunts); in this case, each additional zone of range above R4 also costs the caster another point of mental stress, but this time increases the spellcasting difficulty by +1.

TABLE 13-2: MAGIC USE RANGE SUMMARY

MAGIC TYPE	RANGED USE
Cantrips, Power Stunts, and Divine Magic	Default range is R0. For each additional zone of range, increase difficulty by +2. Maximum range is equal to your skill level.
Sorcery	Default range is R0. For each additional zone of range, burn 1 point of mental stress and increase difficulty by +2. Maximum range is R4; beyond that requires a Very Long Range sorcery spell.
Very Long Range Sorcery	The spell must include the Very Long Range spell effect stunt (see page 325). Each additional zone above R4 requires you to burn 1 mental stress, and increase difficulty by +1.

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For example, Taleraz Kunazel sees a shadowy figure approaching the gates to his tower, and casts a Consumption of the Life Force sorcery spell to drain the intruder's energy. The intruder rolls Physique 1 to resist, getting a result of 2; Taleraz rolls his Eternity 1, getting a result of 5. This would normally drain 3 points of physical stress from the target; however, because the intruder is 1 zone away, the roll is +2 difficulty, and Taleraz must pay 1 point of mental stress to cast the spell. The intruder feels the strength momentarily go out of his limbs, and loses 1 point of physical stress.

.....

Duration

Often the duration of a magical effect is indicated in the corresponding cantrip, power stunt, or sorcery spell description. If it isn't, you can assume the magical effect lasts as long as an aspect does (indeed, magical effects often *are* aspects)—a single scene. As a rule of thumb, that could be something like *A Few Minutes*, but check with your Chronicler—the duration of magical effects is very contextual.

For example, as a simple condition aspect can't take a target out (you'd need an attack for that), then a condition aspect created by something like a Turn to Stone manoeuvre would indicate the target is being adversely affected by the power but isn't fully turned to stone—the resulting aspect would be something like *Turning to Stone*. Power skill manoeuvres are flashy, but their effects are temporary, and can't take someone out with a single roll.

TABLE 13-3: EXPANDED RANGE TABLE

RANGE IN ZONES	APPROXIMATE DISTANCE FOR MISSILE* AND SPELLCASTING PURPOSES
R-1	Hand-to-hand, touching.
R0	1-2 metres.
R1	3-10 metres.
R2	10-50 metres.
R3	51-100 metres.
R4	101-500 metres.
R5	501-1000 metres.
R6	1-10 kilometres.
R7	11-100 kilometres.
R8	101-1000 kilometres.
R9	1001-10000 kilometres.
R10+	10000 kilometres and up!

*These ranges simply extend the ranged combat ranges on page 209.

A **consequence** imposed by a magical attack action, on the other hand, is potentially more long-lasting. Consequences like *Paralysed*, etc, must be **treated** (page 233), and that treatment must be specific to and effective against the magical effect. Often the nature of the power skill or stunt indicates possible treatments; a good slapping around or treatment with First Aid or Healing may work against a magical *Paralysed* consequence, but it'll still take time to recover completely. See "How to Dispel Magic" below.

A magical attack whose full effect is intended to be debilitating (*Turned to Stone*, etc) must render a target **taken out** (page 216) to inflict that full effect. This may require multiple rounds of conflict if the magic user isn't very powerful. Lesser consequences imposed along the way indicate lesser effects towards that goal, like *Stiff Limbs*, *Turning to Stone*, and so on.

When using cantrips or divine magic, it's generally your choice whether to manoeuvre or attack, depending on your final goal. Sorcery spells, however, have their effect hard-coded; a manoeuvre effect and an attack effect are two different spells.

Under certain circumstances, your Chronicler may allow you to extend the duration of a magical effect. For example, and especially for sorcery spells, you can use the shifts generated on your magic roll to extend that spell's duration by 1 step on the Time Ladder (page 231) for each shift spent on doing so, from the default of *A Few Minutes*.

.....
*For example, Taleraz Kunazel casts **Hobbling of the Animal Mind** on the chelother ridden by one of the intruders in his tower. He rolls a total of +9 on his **Domination** roll, against the chelother's +0. He decides to use the 9 shifts to increase the duration from **A Few Minutes** to **Several Days**. Without magical intervention, that beast is going nowhere!*

Targets

By default, **cantrips** and **power stunts** (including **divine magic**) affect a single target or object, like any normal action. If you want to affect two or more targets or objects, you can use the rules for "Affecting More Than One Target" on page 229. If you want a **zone effect** (page 230) instead, then you need a specific power stunt like *Fire Storm*, *Winterstorm*, etc, which includes that zone effect in its description (usually the zone effect is the whole purpose of the stunt).



TABLE 13-4: MAGICAL TARGETING SUMMARY

TYPE OF MAGIC	TARGET(S) AFFECTED
Cantrips, Power Stunts, and Divine Magic	Affects 1 target by default, but you may use the rules for "Affecting More Than One Target" (page 229). Zone effects require a specific power stunt.
Sorcery	Affects 1 target by default, plus +1 target for each 1 point of mental stress incurred. Zone effects require the Zone Effect spell effect stunt (page 325), and difficulty is +2.
Power stunt zone effect	Affects a single zone. On a special success, it may also affect zones adjacent to the target zone. On a critical success, it may affect zones adjacent to those zones, too.
Sorcery spell zone effect	See page 325.

By default, **sorcery** affects a single target, plus one target for each 1 point of mental stress incurred. For a sorcery spell to affect an entire zone, it must be defined with the **Zone Effect** spell effect stunt (page 325), and the difficulty of the spell is increased by +2.

Zone Effect Power Stunts

Some power stunts are **zone effect stunts**, affecting an entire zone. Depending on the description, any targets in that zone may get a roll to resist or avoid the effect, against a difficulty equal to the result of the power skill roll.

By default, zone effect stunts affect a single zone, either the zone the power skill user is in, or another zone targeted by the power skill user. On a special success, the power skill may affect (it's the power user's choice) not just a single zone, but all the zones adjacent to that zone. On a critical success, the power skill may affect another zone outwards, in other words all zones within 2 zones of the target zone.

Sorcery spells work slightly differently, using the Zone Effect spell effect stunt described on page 325.

Resisting Magic

As was mentioned above, by default, a magical power use skill roll is difficulty 1. This may be modified by circumstances like situation aspects. If successful, any target may choose to dodge or resist, rolling against a difficulty equal to the **result** (page 193) of the spellcasting roll.

Resisting magic works the same for cantrips, divine magic, and sorcery. Characters usually dodge physical attacks caused by magic (balls of fire, waves of pain, etc) using Athletics, or tough them out using Physique; armour usually protects. Mental attacks are usually resisted using Willpower. Sometimes, power skills or power stunts may be used to resist magic.

Critical Successes and Failures With Power Skills

A critical success or failure means you succeed or fail spectacularly. If possible, use the rules on page 197. For example:

- A critical success with a power skill attack stunt **ignores all stress reductions** employed by the target, bypassing armour and so on (page 174), and any consequences inflicted are considered **critical consequences** (page 216) and will not recover (heal) naturally.
- A critical manoeuvre creates a **critical aspect** (page 132).
- Fumbles on power skill rolls can't be re-rolled and mean you've done something stupid.

Because you're dealing with magic, critical results can differ from the above. Some power skills and stunts have specific descriptions of critical successes or failures—see, for example, “Magic and Corruption” on page 280.

Where these results aren't sufficient or don't apply, choose (or roll randomly, for fumbles) one of the critical results on Table 13-5: Power Use Critical Success Effects or Table 13-6: Power Use Fumble Effects **instead of the above**, or make up something similar.

TABLE 13-5: POWER USE CRITICAL SUCCESS EFFECTS (PICK ONE)

Increase the range of the effect by +1 range.

Increase the duration of the magical effect; instead of a situation aspect lasting one scene, it lasts for the rest of the session, and so on. For a consequence, increase its severity by one step; a mild consequence becomes a moderate consequence.

If you were targeting multiple targets (page 229), you don't have to divide your shifts among them; each target is affected by the shifts you rolled.

If you were using a Zone Effect (see page 230 or 325), increase the effect by +1 zone. So, if you were affecting your zone and each zone adjacent, you actually affect an area 2 zones out from your current zone.

The magical effect incorporates a second action: if it was a manoeuvre, maybe it also acts as an attack. If it was an attack, maybe it also creates a situation or condition aspect.

The magical effect increases in magnitude; if it was a cantrip, it acts like a power stunt; for a fate point, you may immediately cement this as a new power stunt. If it was a power stunt already, you double its effect; you may also cement this as a new stunt, with the original stunt as a prerequisite. In both cases, reduce your Refresh accordingly.

TABLE 13-6: POWER USE FUMBLE EFFECTS (PICK ONE OR ROLL)

COSMIC FATE DICE ROLL	FUMBLE EFFECT
-5 to -3	The power's effect is reversed!
-2 to 0	The power affects you instead! If it was intended to affect you, it affects a random opponent or other character instead.
+1 to +3	You suffer a <i>Magical Backfire</i> consequence; not only is this alarming and painful, it acts as an obstacle to all your subsequent power skill rolls until removed.
+4 to +5	A completely different magical effect occurs which causes you trouble in some way, possibly another cantrip or power stunt.

Illusions

Illusions are magics which trick the senses into perceiving a reality that isn't real. Most illusions are visual and audio, but all senses can be affected. There are several ways to create illusions, but the most common are the Unification of Opposites power skill (page 305) and the temple magics of Qal the Two-Faced God (see the *Guide to Future Earth*).

Illusions have no objective reality. Just because one person perceives an illusion doesn't mean anyone else does. The mind and body of someone who perceives an illusion react as if the illusion was real—but that's also part of the illusion. A person struck by an illusory sword will

see their body sliced open and suffering terrible wounds; however, an outside observer will not see those wounds at all, and the victim will appear to be screaming and writhing under unseen blows and gazing at non-existent wounds.

Illusions can be anything. The more complex, the harder they are to achieve. If the illusion is anything other than a simple static form (or with simple repetitive movements or other changes on a special success), the caster must concentrate continually for as long as the illusion lasts.

Skills like Devise and stunts like Artist can provide manoeuvre bonuses when creating illusions; an illusion created by a skilled painter will be more convincing.

Creating and Disbelieving Illusions

Illusions can be deliberately **disbelieved**. The initial roll to create an illusion is a power skill roll vs Willpower, and success means the target believes in the illusion—his senses have convinced him. However, if events turn to strongly suggest the illusion can't be real, the target may make a new Willpower roll to disbelieve. Success means the target no longer perceives the illusion; any other targets continue to perceive the illusion as before. Damage caused by the illusion up to that point remains, for the time being, but any consequences heal one step quicker.

Issues With Illusions

The Mona Lisa Has My Mother's Smile

Even though illusions are created by a caster, they're perceived by the target's senses. This means there's a difference between the illusion the caster intends the target to see, and the illusion the target's mind actually perceives, which may be coloured by the target's own experiences. For example, if a target perceives an illusory statue of the Avatar Enessi, he may notice traits in Enessi's features that remind him of someone he knows—perhaps someone close to him, a parent or a loved one.

This can be useful. If the target can be brought to doubt the reality of the illusion, for example, perhaps by a roll to recognise who the above statue reminds them of, then that doubt can become the pretext for a new roll to disbelieve the illusion. Additionally, the target's own mind could be building subliminal messages into the perceived illusion—perhaps things the target doesn't consciously know yet. This can be a great way for the Chronicler to pass clues to the players, or indeed for the players to declare story elements (see pages 134 and 200) which will shortly become useful.

The Illusory Bridge That Felt Solid But Wasn't

If the target of a successful visual and tactile illusion of a bridge across a chasm reaches out to touch that bridge before standing on it, it'll feel completely solid and real. If the target then boldly steps out onto the bridge, they'll promptly fall right through. You can feel the stone of an illusory bridge with your hands because that's part of the illusion, but the bridge can't support your weight because it's not there, and the stone-feel sensation is coming from inside your head.

Illusion Breakpoints

Most illusions have “breakpoints”, situations where a target's mind is no longer able to accept the illusion's reality. If you're the target of a successful illusion, your mind will do whatever it can to continue to accept the illusion, inventing all kinds of narrative workarounds—if that illusory bridge is over a shallow stream, then physically you may just end up trudging through the water while your mind tells you you've walked across the bridge. You'll be wet but you'll think you're dry. However, if that bridge is over a ravine that's a hundred feet deep, you'll fall, possibly to your death. At that point the illusion is just going to break – there's no reasonable way your mind can narrate its way through that. So, the illusion vanishes as you fall, and you're left facing the terrible reality.



How to Dispel Magic

Dispelling magic is a delicate proposition for magic users. It uses magic to deny the will of another person or entity—a will that has created a magical effect you don't like or want. Denying the will of another person strays perilously close to dominating that person's will—and domination, as everyone knows, is the gateway to the Easy Dark Path that leads to corruption of a magic user's soul and worship of the Great Hegemonist.

The simplest way to dispel magical effects is to use the Void power skill. The trick is to avoid using the Void power for anything else; the temptation is often irresistible, and the Void Cult is a pernicious and persistent evil in the Springtide Civilisations. Only sorcerers have codified a unique “Dispel Magic” spell, ringfenced and limited to avoid such temptations; otherwise, you must turn to the world-weary ascetics of the god Pline (see the *Guide to Future Earth*), who practice extreme denial in all its forms, to unpick magical effects directly. And Pline’s “followers” (as much as they follow anything...) are notoriously difficult to motivate to intervene in the world’s reality.

That doesn’t mean there aren’t other ways to remove the effects of magic. Often it’s a matter of the primal opposition of the Principles of the cosmos: you’ll see below in the power skill writeups that certain powers are mutually opposed and incompatible. For example, the power of Change By Fire is primally opposed to the powers of Law and Command. Assuming you can describe your magical working in an appropriate way, you may be able to use the Command or Law power skills in manoeuvres to undo effects created by the Change By Fire power. Usually these are like for like—cantrips can undo cantrips, but you’ll need a power stunt to undo the effects of a power stunt.

There are other, more obvious ways to remove magical effects. For example, a worshipper of Babisiya can use the power of Darkness to cause blindness (page 288); worshippers of Konfu the Healer can use their Wisdom power to cure blindness. Dismissing demons and elementals is also a form of dispelling magical effects—see page 329.

Using Mundane Skills Against Power Skills

There’s a subtle difference between a magical consequence and a consequence caused by magic. The former is a subset of the latter. If you suffer a consequence from an attack by a magical fireball, you may be crispy, but there’s no difference between the burns you sustain and those you might have sustained from a mundane fire. In such a case, mundane healing skills can help you remove the consequence.

However, if you’ve been blinded as the result of an attack or manoeuvre of the Darkness power skill, then rubbing a chemick salve on your eyes won’t help a bit; you’re going to need a magical cure for that blindness.

Magic and Advancement Points

A magic user casting summoning magic generally uses the available points in their AP pool (page 29) to buy the abilities of the entity they’re summoning. For that reason, summoners often “bank” their available AP, starting with their relationships budget AP received at character generation, to enable them to perform decently effective summonings and similar magics. This “banking” represents characters using the time and experience they could have spent improving their own abilities on learning formulas, techniques, and researching magical texts to increase their own abilities to summon such entities. See page 312 for more.

Using Cantrips

Some individuals can naturally tap into the mystical principles and use them to achieve minor everyday tasks. You may not even perceive this as magical; if you’re powerful in the power of Command, you may just find you can easily sway people by the force of your personality. Sometimes, though, you may develop rituals and invocations to achieve these supernatural effects; if you’re strong in the power of Change by Fire, you may have a short ritual which lets you wreath your sword in fire. You can create a character with a power skill (page 279) and an associated **power aspect** (see above), and that power skill can be automatically used to create situation aspects via minor magical manoeuvres known as **cantrips** (see “Manoeuvres” on page 200).

Cantrips are limited in scope; they can only be manoeuvres (no other action is permitted with a cantrip), and **can only enhance the use of a mundane non-power skill** (as with any aspect, the first invoke is free), or perform other aspect functions like acting as **obstacles** (see page 201) by **enhancing existing physical effects**. For example, a Change By Fire cantrip can enhance the use of your Melee Combat skill by wreathing your blade in fire, or it can cause an existing fire to flare up, creating an obstacle difficult to move or attack across. Note, however, that **aspects describe reality** (page 125), so your blade wreathed in flame by a Change By Fire cantrip can really set things on fire, making the aspects it creates more permanent. See the corresponding power descriptions for examples of cantrips.

Magical Obstacles

You can use cantrips to create magical **obstacles**, such as the Change By Fire cantrip Fireflare on page 282. Apart from the fact that they're often overtly magical, they work just like mundane obstacles (page 201).

Where Can I Learn Cantrips?

As cantrips are minor magical improvisations, you can usually figure them out yourself, on the fly, within the limitations given above. That said, some improvisations are so obvious that most people use them; you'll see examples in the power skill writeups below.

Additionally, if you're a member of a temple (see pages 98, 99, and 109 for examples), then worshipping your god may broaden what you can do with a power skill, to encompass some of your god's abilities. In such cases, if you've been initiated into worship of a god, you can use your power skill in cantrip manoeuvres to enhance abilities governed by your god's Principle. You can find examples of these **temple cantrips** on page 320.

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For example, Regos's cantrips use the Command power to help others defend in combat, generate loyalty, communicate over long distances, and so on.

Using Power Stunts

Power stunts are stunts which belong to a specific power skill. **They may create direct, unambiguously magical effects**, in which the power skill is employed in a direct action rather than enhancing the use of a mundane non-power skill. They're generally available to anyone with that power skill and an appropriate power aspect (page 271). Many temples help individuals develop these powers, but the powers themselves are natural. Power stunts are created and defined using the normal stunt rules (page 138), and may use any of the four actions (not just the manoeuvre actions used by cantrips). In addition, power stunts may be used to give power skill effects a **Zone Effect** (page 230). You must buy them as stunts, but, as with all stunts, you may improvise one for a fate point (page 138).

Additionally, if you're a member of a temple, worshipping a god broadens what you can do with a power skill, and therefore also what power stunts you can learn or improvise, often to something very different from the usual use of the power skill. These special stunts are known as **temple power stunts**, and are **specific direct uses of the power provided by the god**. You can even improvise them as long as you're an initiate or priest of the god.

.....
*For example, the Regos temple stunt **Battlefield Healing** lets initiates or priests use the Command power skill to heal combatants in the midst of battle.*

Magical Blocks and Barriers

You can use a power stunt to create a magical block or barrier (page 239). You may choose whether to define the effect as a barrier or block (some power skills, like Change By Fire, create blocks by default).

Where Can I Learn Power Stunts?

Power stunts are similar to cantrips; you'll often figure them out yourself, but there are many obvious uses which are commonly found—see the writeups below for examples.

Temple power stunts are only available to initiates and priests of a god. While you may improvise a temple power stunt anywhere, as long as you're an initiate or priest, in order to learn the stunt permanently, you must do so in a temple of your god, under the tutelage of an initiate or priest. See the Regos temple writeup on page 320 for more.

THE POWER SKILLS LIST

This section describes the twenty-two mystical principles which constitute the forces underpinning the cosmos. Twenty are the domains of the Gods of the Great Compact (see page 17); two, Domination and Entropy, are the domains of the Great Hegemonist and the Reaver Gods (see the *Chronicler's Guide*). Check with your Chronicler if you'd like to choose Domination and Entropy as your character's power skills—there are consequences...

The power skill descriptions are slightly different from those of the skills in **Chapter 8: Skills and Stunts**. Instead of describing the four actions for each power skill, we describe the uses of each power skill in general, and then provide guidelines for how you may improvise cantrips (power skill manoeuvres—see page 267). We then describe example power stunts for each power skill, showing you how you can use the power skill for direct effects with the four actions. Note that you can't make overcome, attack, or defend rolls with a power skill without using a power stunt. Examples of **temple cantrips** and **temple power stunts** can be found on page 320; the *Guide to Future Earth* contains many more.

The power skill descriptions also include one or more of the following entries where appropriate:

Meaning and Correspondences

Priests, sorcerers, and scholars have elaborate systems of **Correspondences** associated with the principles, indicating colours, gemstones, natural objects, locations, and other concepts which fall under their auspices. Each power skill writeup lists these Correspondences in italics, presented initially as descriptive colour: a priest of Dafur, associated with Change By Fire, may wear crimson and orange robes, ruby-studded jewellery, and wield copper daggers or flamberges of red-lacquered alagin.

Moreover, magic users using **ritual magic** (see the Rituals stunt on page 153) may invoke Correspondences they've gathered together as situation aspects, at the Chronicler's discretion.

Typical Aspects

You must incorporate at least one aspect relating to **each power skill** you have on your character sheet, representing the impact which the cosmic principle has had on your personality, nature, and personal history. This may form all or part of your Shadow Aspect, or may be incorporated in your Essence, Blood, or even Doom.

You usually do this when creating your character. However, if you somehow acquire a power skill during play, you must modify one of your aspects accordingly.

Incompatible Powers

Some powers are cosmically opposed or incompatible with one another, like Law and Change By Fire. You may not learn a power skill which is incompatible with one you already know; if you do, you must remove the other from your character sheet using advancements.

Resistances

You can use some power skills to resist the effects of others, often **incompatible powers**. See "Resisting Magic" on page 274.

Typical Critical Effects

We provide examples of critical successes and fumbles that can occur when using each power skill.

Temple Stunts

Each power skill writeup includes a simple list of temple power stunts associated with the god for whom the power is a Divine Principle. Full descriptions can be found in the temple writeups in the *Guide to Future Earth*; see page 320 for the Regos example temple writeup.

Sorcery Spells

Each power skill writeup includes a list of **sorcery spells** which are cast using that power skill. There are also versions of the following spells that can be used with every power skill, as appropriate: Commanding of Demons and Elementals, Corporeal Binding of Demons, Dismissal of Demons and Elementals, Object Binding of Demons and Elementals, Summoning of Demons and Elementals, Usurpation of Demonic or Elemental Control. See page 326 for descriptions of these spells and additional rules for sorcery.

Magic and Corruption

Using magic is fraught with danger, which is why the temples and the schools of sorcery try to keep their members to tried and tested paths, and frown upon unchecked improvisation. Using power skills in improper ways, and indeed using certain power skills, is forbidden.

Using the powers of Domination, Entropy, and the Void opens you up to the corruption of the Great Hegemonist and the Reaver Gods. This is the **Easy Dark Path**, that since time immemorial has rotted the societies of Future Earth from within. Even power skills like *Change By Fire*, *Destruction*, *Eternity*, and *Narcissism*, if used to impure ends, can begin your fall.

You can find out much more about corruption and the Easy Dark Path in the **Chronicler's Guide**.

Animality

Wildness of Animal Life, Primal Beasts, Entos; Bestial Rage and Instinctive Urges; Exaltation of the Primitive, the Refusal of Civilised Life.

Typical Aspects: *Riven By Bestial Urges; There Is Much To Be Learned From Beasts; Bloodsworn to the Beast Totem; Instinct Above Intellect.*

The Animality glyph represents the horns of the beast, and this power is common to all animals, though some are also associated with other powers. When an intelligent entity has the power of Animality, it means they're part animal, or can assume a beast's form or characteristics. They may have a **totem beast** (select one!) whose behaviour they idealise.

Incompatible With: Law, Unification of Opposites.

Resists: Command, Law, Unification of Opposites.

Cantrips

☛ **Animal Scout:** Animal senses and instincts improve actions with skills like Notice, Survival, as well as Scouting rolls (see the **Guide to Future Earth**).

☛ **Know Animal:** Enhance skills like Lore to detect and understand the properties of animals.

☛ **Ripclaw:** Your hands sprout razor-sharp claws which you can invoke in actions with skills like Provoke and Unarmed Combat.

☛ **Riptooth:** Your mouth becomes the muzzle of your totem beast, which you can invoke on skills like Provoke and Unarmed Combat, as well as to eat and digest things you normally couldn't.



Power Stunts

◆ *Beastwalk*

Requires Skinshift

One step further than *Skinshift* (see below), you make a roll to immediately transform into your totem animal entirely, gaining a *Beastwalker* aspect. Your intellectual capacity is suppressed, dominated by bestial instincts. However, your inner nature doesn't change; if you were kind and gentle before the transformation, there's a kind and gentle beast beneath your ravaging, bloody exterior—if only someone can get to it!

You may invoke your *Beastwalker* aspect to enhance your natural Beast abilities, but may make no mental skill rolls (Lore, Rapport, Devise, etc). You acquire any abilities you already selected for your *Skinshifter* form (see below), and an additional +2AP you may spend on special abilities or as Stress Increase or Stress Reduction bonuses.

It's difficult to return from *Beastwalker* form; make a Willpower roll against your highest Beast skill. On a failure, take one point of mental stress, and increase the time period by 1 step before making the roll again. Your first roll to return occurs *Half an Hour* after you start *Beastwalking*. You may elect to fail the roll, but must pay a fate point and still take a point of mental stress.

◆ *Instinct Reactivity*

Use your Animality skill to determine initiative in physical conflicts.

◆ *Lick Wounds*

Requires Skinshift

When wounded, you may transform into *Skinshifted* or *Beastwalker* form to lick your wounds, often healing faster than normal. Use your Animality ability to treat physical stress and consequences you've sustained; for a fate point, you may decrease the recovery time for any physical consequences you're suffering by one step.

◆ *Skinshift*

While retaining your humanoid form, make a roll to assume the skin and physical features of your totem animal, gaining a *Wolf-Man*, *Black Lion Woman*, etc, aspect. The first invoke is free. You retain your intellectual capacity, although the instinctual urges of your animal form are incredibly powerful.

While *Skinshifted*, you retain all your skills, although some are unusable: you can't use melee or ranged weapons, for example, and people won't respond well to Rapport attempts. You can use any AP to buy additional abilities for your *Skinshifted* form, at a cost of 2AP per ability, such as:

- **Enhanced Sense (Far Hearing) (2AP):** You act at a +2 skill level when listening, eavesdropping, detecting sneak attacks and ambushes, and so on.
- **Enhanced Sense (Nightsight):** You see at night or in similar low-light conditions as if it was full day.
- **Extra Sense (Smell Blood):** You can smell spilled blood at great distances—range penalties only apply after the first kilometre.
- **Heightened Agility:** You have long, powerful legs, and act at a +2 skill level on dice rolls involving speed, dodging, lightning movements, huge leaps, etc.
- **Heightened Awareness:** You're nervous and twitchy, constantly darting your eyes, ears, and tongue. You act at a +2 skill level on rolls of Notice, etc, relying on alertness and peripheral awareness.

TABLE 13-7: HEIGHTENED ENDURANCE BENEFITS (CUMULATIVE)

SPECIAL ABILITY LEVEL	BENEFIT
1	+1 1-point stress box
2	+1 2-point stress box
3	+1 3-point stress box
4	+1 4-point stress box

- **Heightened Endurance:** This special ability has 4 levels. You can go for hours and hours without breaking a sweat. You gain the cumulative benefits for each level shown in Table 13-7: Heightened Endurance Benefits (Cumulative). These are *in addition to* stress boxes gained from the Physique skill or elsewhere.
- **Heightened Strength:** You act at a +2 skill level on Physique rolls and other strength-related actions, and gain a +2 stress increase on your melee and unarmed combat attacks.
- **Integral Armour (Thick Hide):** Your thick hide gives you -1 stress reduction (for 2AP) or -2 stress reduction (for 4AP). Any armour you wear in addition must be specially (and expensively) tailored.
- **Integral Weapons (Teeth and Claws):** Unarmed Combat attacks with your teeth and claws have a +1 stress increase. You may take this ability up to three times, each costing 2AP and adding +1 SI.
- Other special abilities specific to your totem beast; check with your Chronicler.

♦ Totem Call

You may call a totem animal to come to you, and then command it to do your bidding. This stunt usually affects a single target, but you may use the Multiple Target (page 229) rules to try and affect more. The animals must be in your vicinity; this isn't like demon summoning, so you can't call a pack of black lions to your side if you're on a ship in the middle of the ocean (unless the lions were already on the ship).

Typical Critical Effects

On a **fumble**, attack your friends, refuse to attack your opponents, or run off randomly into the wild to satisfy some unfathomable urge; or cower terrified or snarling in a corner.

On a **critical success**, assume the beast powers of a primal beast, mighty and irresistible. Transformations last longer, and you don't lose your intellectual capacity.

Temple Stunts (Entos): Atavistic Curse, Beast Berserker, Beast Friend, Blood Orgy, Run With the Pack, Sanctum of the Id, Summon Primal Beast.

Sorcery Spells: Finding of Animals, Growing of Wings, Identification of Creatures, Revelation of Toxins, Scaring Away of Animals, Tearing by Tooth and Claw.

Change By Fire

Fire and explosive change, the Flame Beneath the Earth; earthquakes and volcanoes; salamanders, copper, and rubies; crimson and orange; flamberges and the forge; Agni, Lord of Salamanders; Agnapei fire demons; Dafur, Lord of the Flame; the Firelands; the Magigi; the Agnath; the Copper Flame.

Typical Aspects: *Rash and Reckless; Dynamic and Adventurous; Fiery; Given to Bursts of Rage.*

Fire is the force for dramatic and explosive change in the world, and with this power you can harness fire and heat to work these changes. You've an affinity with fire and creatures of fire, including *agnapei* fire demons and salamanders. Fire is not peaceable, but wild, barely under control: it loves conflict and chaos, and dramatic, sweeping change.

Incompatible With: Command, Entropy, Law.

Resists: Change By Fire, Command, Entropy, Eternity, Law, Wisdom.

Cantrips

☞ **Communicate With Creatures of Fire:** Make a Change By Fire manoeuvre to establish a common language with creatures of fire.

☞ **Fireflare:** Cause an existing fire to flare up into an **obstacle** (page 201).

☞ **Forge:** Delicately manipulate the heat in molten metal, making attempts to forge weapons and armour much easier.

☞ **Kindle Fires:** Bring the fire of Agni to any easily combustible material. This won't set a table or tree on fire, but will ignite kindling, hay, dry clothing, etc.

☞ **Light:** Heat an object until it glows with a lantern-like light—although it will be hot and dangerous to the touch.

☞ **Resist Cold:** Bring forth an inner heat in yourself or another, to help you resist cold damage.

⚔ **Shape Rubies:** Understand the inner structure of a ruby, enhancing your ability to cut a raw ruby into a gemstone using skills like Devise.

⚔ **Soften / Break Metal:** Heat or cool metal to make it pliable or brittle, making Break Weapon attempts (page 222) easier.

⚔ **Wreathe Blade in Flame:** By touching your weapon's blade to an open flame, you can cause it to be covered with fire, enhancing your Melee Combat attacks. You can do something similar with arrows, too.

Power Stunts

◆ *Fire of Agni*

Gouts of fire shoot from your hands, making Change By Fire attacks causing physical stress damage.

◆ *Fire Storm*

Requires Fire of Agni

Fire spouts forth from your hands, falling upon all targets in a single zone in a zone effect attack (page 230).

◆ *Summon Salamander*

You may summon a fire elemental; see page 319.

◆ *Wall of Fire*

You create a wall of fire as a **block** (page 240).

Typical Critical Effects

On a **fumble**, the fire gets out of control and harms you or your friends; or it fizzles, leaving you exposed, ridiculous, and at a serious disadvantage.

On a **critical success**, the fire roars more powerful than ever; zone effects increase by +1, materials that aren't readily combustible catch fire, and those that are are reduced to ashes.

Temple Stunts (Dafur): Banish Cold and Water, Blood Sacrifice, Burn Gumazhdu, Earthquake, Fireblast, Heal Cold or Fire Wounds, Immolate, Poisonous Fume, Summon Agnapei.

Sorcery Spells: Abjuration of Darkness, Evocation of Ethereal Arms, Hurling of Fire, Illumination of Things, Invocation of the Rain of Fire, Raising of Fire, Removal of Fire, Slathing of Flame.



Command

Command, conquest, and war; Hel, Lord of Light; Hellions and Chelothers; blue and gold; Regos, Lord of War.

Typical Aspects: *Aura of Natural Authority; Look of Eagles; Justice Will Prevail!*

Command is the power of authority, leadership, and rule, the irresistible light which shines in the darkness, the order which pushes back chaos and saves the world from entropy. It's the charisma of autarchs and generals for whom thousands give their lives, and is often called the Power of War.

Characters strong in Command are imperious, imbued with natural authority. They instinctively grasp a situation's command elements, understanding and analysing the hearts of leaders and followers and the strategies and tactics which move them.

Incompatible With: Change By Fire.

Resists: Change By Fire, Command, Darkness, Turmoil.

Cantrips

⚔ **Command Subordinates:** Enhance your use of Rapport, Provoke, etc, to command subordinates in a power hierarchy.

⚔ **Impress Others:** You're naturally impressive, which enhances your use of Rapport when trying to impress people or make a good impression.

⚔ **Light:** Use Command to order the Brightness of Hel, Lord of Light, to shine forth before you.

⚔ **Natural Leader:** Create a *Natural Leader*-type aspect to get people to instinctively look to you for advice, commands, orders, and general leadership.

⚔ **Overawe:** Enhance your ability to overawe people using Provoke.

⚔ **Understand the Command Situation:** Enhance your Empathy and Lore rolls to understand the power hierarchy around you, and its current condition.

⚔ **Wrest Control Over Magic:** Your natural command authority helps you use Willpower, etc, when trying to take command of a magical artefact or summoned being which is currently subject to someone else's will (see page 317).

Power Stunts

✦ *Banish Demon*

Use Command to banish a demon from your presence. If you already control the demon, you may choose to dismiss it; see page 318.

✦ *Command Mount*

Use Command to get a mount to follow your instructions. This is usually the mount you're riding, but it can be another.

✦ *Cow Upstart*

Use Command to overcome rolls to bend to your authority anyone trying to resist it. Against significant NPCs or other PCs this may be a contest.

✦ *Defend Against Usurper*

Use Command to defend against any attempt to usurp your authority. This can be used against overcome rolls or attacks.

✦ *Demoralise Troops*

This manoeuvre places a *Demoralised* situation aspect on any troops preparing for or currently in an active conflict. It's a zone effect.

✦ *Reduce Mental Resistance*

Act at a +2 skill level when using Command in a manoeuvre ordering a target to not resist a mentally-targeted overcome roll, attack, or manoeuvre.

✦ *Your Community Needs You!*

Use Command to make Assimilate overcome actions when recruiting a sub-community (see the *Chronicles's Guide*). This can affect communities up to Size 3 without incurring scale penalties (page 236).

Typical Critical Effects

On a **fumble**, your orders are completely ignored or disastrously misinterpreted; or you end up looking ridiculous, impeding your ability to command until you've rectified things.

On a **critical success**, your orders are followed perfectly, your powers have a superlative effect, like affecting many more people or imposing automatic consequences.

Temple Stunts (Regos): Battlefield Healing, Command Serapai, Chelother, Heal Chelother, Mindlink, Oath, See Battle, Summon Serapai, Warlord.

Sorcery Spells: Abjuration of Darkness, Commanding of Armies, Detection of Ambushes, Hobbling of the Animal Mind, Identification of Enemies, Illumination of Things.

Communication

Communication, trade, and exchange; writing and languages; the Virikki.

Typical Aspects: *Fair Dealing; Natural Communicator; Open-Minded.*

Communication is also called the Power of Trade; its glyph represents both a carriage wheel and a network of people joined by communication. It's said to be the oldest of the Powers, predating even the gods.

Characters strong in Communication are talkative, friendly, natural linguists and mediators. If you see a situation where people are having difficulty talking to one another, you can hardly help jumping in and facilitating a meeting of minds. You probably know multiple languages.

Incompatible With: Animality, Narcissism.

Resists: Animality, Narcissism, Void.

Cantrips

☞ **Evaluate Object:** Enhances your ability to identify an item's nature, whether it's valuable or not, and if so to whom. It's not precise: it won't identify an artefact's powers or a book's monetary value; but it will identify an item as an artefact, or suggest who is the best collector or customer for a book.

☞ **Facilitate Communication:** Enhances your ability to mediate between two people so they can communicate. You can be one of the people. If the communication involves a non-native language, invoking the aspect created by this manoeuvre effectively gives you a higher skill level for determining communication effectiveness (see the Learned Language skill on page 149).

☞ **Linguistic Insights:** Gives you insights into a language, helping you identify which language it is, the nature of the content, and so on. If it's a language you know, it enhances your ability to use and understand it, letting you increase your language cap (page 149) and boosting your effective linguistic ability.

☞ **Mindwhisper:** Lets you whisper a short message (say, 5 or 6 words or so) directly into someone's mind. No one else can hear it. The message must be in a language both parties can understand.

Power Stunts

♦ Communicate Without Error

Use Communication to ensure another person understands **exactly** what you or someone else is saying. Even when speaking another language, there's no possibility of misunderstanding. You must have at least level 1 in the Learned Language skill (page 149) for the language in question **and be able to reproduce its sounds** to use this stunt.

♦ Decipher Language

For the rest of the scene, you can use Communication to read an otherwise unknown language. This doesn't allow speech, but you can jot down notes and start learning the language; on a critical success, you develop the miraculous ability to understand and speak the language at the end of the current scene, beginning at level 1 (see the Learned Language skill, page 149)!

◆ *Mindspeech*

Requires Communicate Without Error

Allows communication even when collocutors share no common language. A roll is required unless the recipient also knows Mindspeech.

◆ *Speak to Community*

Use Communication to make Assimilate manoeuvre actions when targeting part of a community as a sub-community (see the *Chronicler's Guide*). This takes *An Hour* on a Size 1 community, increasing by +1 time step per additional point of community size. You incur the usual scale penalties (page 236) for interacting with the target community.

Typical Critical Effects

On a **fumble**, your communication goes spectacularly wrong, insulting or offending your collocutor; or that collocutor misunderstands what you want to say and does something disastrous instead; or your attempt achieves precisely the opposite of what was intended.

On a **critical success**, your communication succeeds beyond wildest expectations. You communicate perfectly, without error, producing the best possible result for precisely that moment.

Temple Stunts (Vareltias): Assess Value, Command Bantoor, Communicate Point of View, Convert Coinage, Detect Gold, Eloquence, Identify Oathbreaker, Make Peace, Sacred Oath, Sanctify Market, Understand Other's Needs, Zone of Truespeech.

Sorcery Spells: Evaluation of Gems, Reading of Thoughts, Speaking to Minds.

Cyclical

Cycles and balance of the cosmos; the eternal recurrence, the round of days and seasons, alternance of day and night; Nim, King of Tides; undines.

Typical Aspects: *Capricious, Mercurial.*

Cyclical is the power that holds reality together, and that the forces of the Void and Entropy seek constantly to undermine. It keeps galaxies spinning, planets orbiting, birth succeeding death, effect succeeding cause. Characters strong in Cyclical tap into that force, perceiving its workings into the future and the past, manipulating the way it affects the world.

Incompatible With: Entropy.

Resists: Change By Fire, Entropy, Eternity.

Cantrips

☯ **Glimpse the Cycle:** Enhance your Lore rolls with this minor divination, cryptic and fragmented, sometimes even glimpsing the future.

☯ **Drowsiness:** Flip the target's day-night cycle, causing them to feel sleepy when they should otherwise be awake.

☯ **Wakefulness:** Flip the target's day-night cycle, causing them to feel alert and wide awake when they should otherwise be asleep.

☯ **Predict Weather:** Make a Cyclical manoeuvre to create a situation aspect representing what the weather's going to do next.



Power Stunts

✦ *Change Weather*

The weather of any area within range changes to what you want, as long as the change is to conditions which might prevail in this season or an adjacent season. You can make it snow in winter, spring or autumn, but not in summer. This isn't a zone effect; you can extend the power's reach by increasing its range (page 271).

✦ *Command the Tide*

Make a Cyclical roll to affect the sea's tides. This isn't a zone effect, but affects all the sea within range.

✦ *Day and Night*

Create a zone of daylight at night, or a pool of night during the day. This is a zone effect.

✦ *Revitalize*

Restore energy lost to fatigue as if you'd had a refreshing night's sleep, either returning lost stress or removing fatigue-based consequences.

✦ *Sleep*

Use Cyclical roll in attack actions causing intense fatigue and physical stress damage. A taken out result means your target falls into a deep sleep from which they won't awaken for at least 8 hours. The effect can be resisted with skills like Cyclical roll, Physique, or Willpower.

✦ *Summon Undine*

Summon an undine (water elemental) from an adjacent body of water at least the size of a fountain or small pool. See page 319.

Typical Critical Effects

On a **fumble**, your divination attempts give you dangerously incorrect insights; your attempts to tap into Cyclical roll cause the opposite effect to that intended.

On a **critical success**, your divination attempts give you far more meaningful results than you were expecting, on the level of "major divine insight"; or your tapping into the power of Cyclical roll is hugely more effective: you

cause tidal waves, put people into a deep sleep lasting a month or more, summon huge elementals, and so on.

Temple Stunts (Nimur): Breath of Life, Calm Water, Drown, Moonsight, Summon Sea Demon, Tempest, Waterspout, Water Walk.

Sorcery Spells: Calming of the Flood, Illumination of Things, Invocation of the Tempest, Calling of the Tidal Wave.

Darkness

Darkness, night, the underworld; the dark sides of the planets, eclipses; evil, murder, and suicides; witchcraft; oaths and superstitions; Bab, shades; the P'Tek.

Typical Aspects: *Cold, Cruel and Secretive; Flinch From the Light; I Come Alive in the Darkness.*

The power of Darkness is an elemental force. It represents not just physical darkness, but also the darkness of the mind—the cosmic darkness which hides terrible secrets and unpalatable truths. It's the cosmos of benighted superstitions, bloody urges, a recoil from enlightened thought and behaviour, the darkness which permits murder and abandonment, suicide and despair.

Characters strong in Darkness indulge these urges and glorify the primitive. It differs from the cosmos-denying forces of Void and Entropy, in that those would destroy all existence; and from Animality which promotes instinct and an existence unfettered by intellect. Instead, Darkness exults in a cosmos where intelligent beings abandon themselves to evil and criminality. It's often viewed as the gateway to corruption and the Great Hegemonist.

Incompatible With: Change By Fire.

Resists: Change By Fire, Command, Wisdom.

Cantrips

⌘ **Frighten:** Assume a *Dark and Terrifying* aspect, enhancing your ability to elicit fear with Provoke.

⌘ **Murder:** Draw on darkness and shadowy places to ambush and murder.

⌘ **See in Darkness:** Operate even in total darkness as if it was full daylight.

⌘ **Shadowstealth:** Blend in with already-existing patches of shadow and darkness to enhance your Stealth actions.

⌘ **Stumble:** Deepen shadow and darkness to make people stumble, acting as an obstacle to their physical actions.

Power Stunts

◆ *Create Darkness*

Use Darkness to cover the entire zone around you in total darkness, even in the brightest daylight.

◆ *Nightwalk*

Use Darkness to step instantaneously from one patch of shadow or darkness to another, as long as both points are in range.

◆ *Speak With Darkness Creature*

Use Darkness to communicate with creatures of darkness, including bats and beetles, darkness elementals, umbrai, animated corpses, and the P'Tek.

◆ *Summon Darkness Elemental*

Use Darkness to summon a darkness elemental (page 319).

◆ *Wall of Darkness*

Use Darkness to create a wall of solid darkness two metres thick stretching from one point to another within range of the stunt. You'll need to increase the range to make this fully effective. Any non-Darkness creature trying to step through this faces an Intensity 2 physical cold and fear attack, inflicting both physical and mental stress damage, rising to Intensity 4 on a special success and Intensity 6 on a critical success Darkness roll to create, resisted by skills such as Physique or any power skill able to create light.

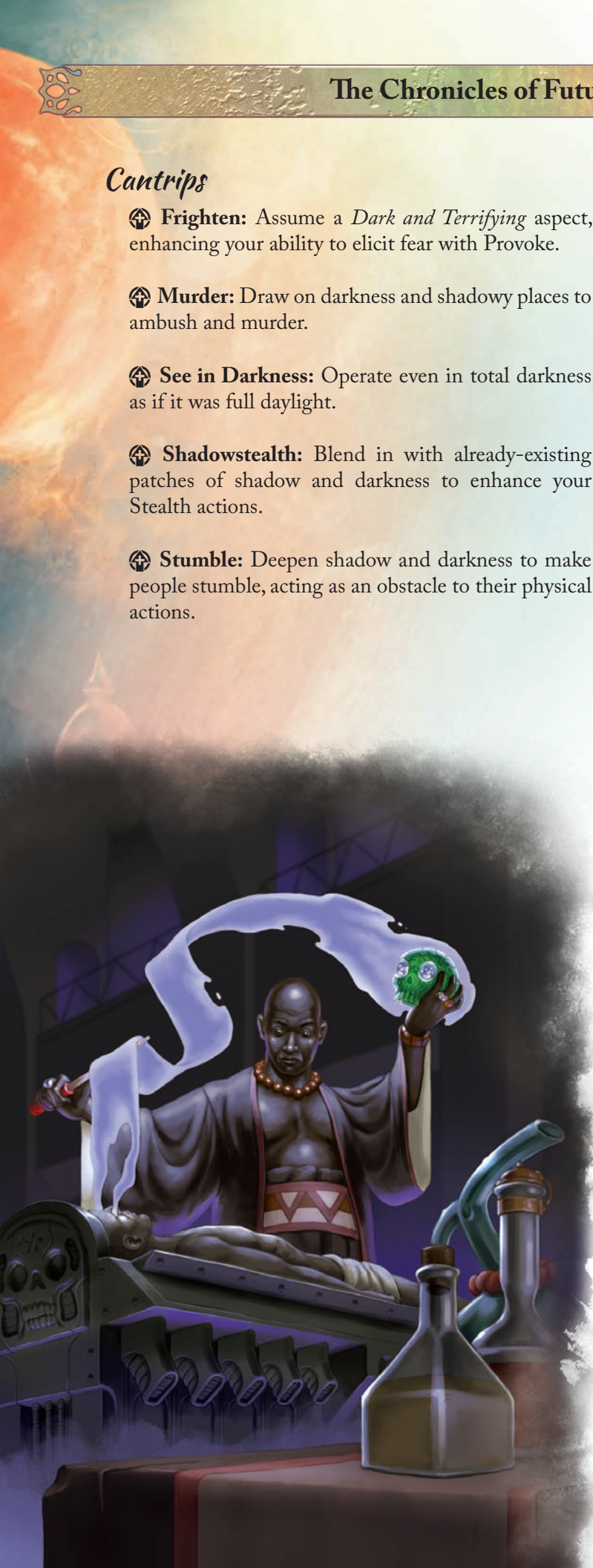
Typical Critical Effects

On a **fumble**, you're glaringly exposed when trying to pass unseen, or you lay yourself open to possession by darkness, gaining a Corruption aspect (see the *Chronicle's Guide*), or you achieve exactly the opposite effect from that intended.

On a **critical success**, your workings are blessed by the most intense darkness, doubling their effectiveness.

Temple Stunts (Babisiya): Animate Corpse, Cause Blindness, Commune With Darkness, Dark Oath, Frightblast, Howl, Nightmare, Shapeshift to Spider or Bat, Spider Bite, Summon Umbrai, Web, Wither.

Sorcery Spells: Barring of the Way, Destruction of Fire by Darkness, Enfeeblement of the Mind, Evocation of Ethereal Arms, Removal of Fire, Scaring Away of Animals, Transformation of the Balequ.



Death

The power of endings; death, decay, and corruption; the battle against the curse of undeath; scythes; separation and sundering.

Typical Aspects: *Dark and Funereal; Fanatical Destroyer of the Undead; Obsessed With the Decay of the Flesh.*

The power of Death is that of the natural finiteness of living things, the destiny of mortality, the certainty that even worlds must die. It's the power of enforcing that principle, of ending life, of destroying undead, of ensuring what's dead stays dead. Characters strong in Death have the power of sundering relationships and even communities, leaching the vitality out of living things if they believe their end has come.

Incompatible With: Eternity.

Resists: Eternity, Wisdom.

Cantrips

⌘ **Deadly Blow:** Enhance the damage done on successful blows in melee combat.

⌘ **Determine Cause of Death:** Gain a greater understanding when using skills like Investigation and Lore to work out how or why something died.

⌘ **Know Death:** Enhance your knowledge rolls related to the processes of death, how creatures kill, and the temples, cults, gods, demons, and rituals which are associated with both.

⌘ **Sense Death:** Enhance your ability to detect undead and the imminent arrival of death using Investigate, Notice, and Lore.

Power Stunts

♦ Drain Soul

Use Death in attack actions to inflict physical stress damage on a living target, simply by touch. You must touch bare flesh; armour protects against this attack.

♦ Hasten Death

Use Death to inflict an immediate coup de grace on any target that is either taken out but not yet dead, or who is suffering an untreated extreme physical consequence. The target dies immediately.

♦ Paralyse

Use Death in attack actions to cause physical stress damage to a target as they are gradually paralysed; consequences reflect gradually advancing paralysis. Armour protects against this attack as normal, but isn't an absolute shield.

♦ Terror of Death

Use Death instead of Provoke in manoeuvres to fill a target with the *Terror of Death*, or to make fear attacks (page 225).

Typical Critical Effects

On a **fumble**, the Death power affects you or an ally instead; or it has the reverse effect.

On a **critical success**, you are death incarnate—plants wither, grass turns grey, birds drop from the sky. Double the effectiveness of your Death power use.

Temple Stunts (Belom): Disrupt Undead, Heal Wounds From Undead, Sever Relationships, Severing, Touch of Death, Turn Undead, Ward Corpse.

Sorcery Spells: Discorporation of the Undead, Evocation of Ethereal Arms, Repelling of the Undead.

Destruction

The ecstatic joy of destruction and annihilation, the fundamental violence of the cosmos; the hammer; the roaring collapse of temples and mountains; the ruined cities of the plain.

Typical Aspects: *Blindly Destructive; Ecstatic Annihilation; Maniac With a Massive Hammer.*

Destruction is the cosmic principle which opposes creation, and mystically its necessary precursor and successor. It isn't the natural tendency of things towards destruction—that's more the domain of Entropy—but rather the deliberate imposition of the will to destroy, annihilate, reduce to nothing. Characters strong in Destruction can summon incredible force to destroy objects, people, plans, and destinies. They're "violence unchained", barely tolerated in civilised society.

Incompatible With: Growth, Realisation of the Will.

Resists: Entropy, Growth, Law, Realisation of the Will, Wisdom.

Cantrips

☞ **Break Things Apart:** Enhance skills like Physique by becoming possessed by a wild compulsion to tear things into their component parts, dismantling devices, vehicles, buildings, doors, gates, and so on.

☞ **Pick Apart an Idea:** Enter a wild intellectual frenzy to demolish an idea or concept, probably using Lore or possibly Provoke. This works great for manoeuvres, but also in social and mental conflicts.

☞ **Ruin Friendship:** In a fit of rage, you know just what to say to destroy friendships and ruin relationships. This usually enhances skills like Provoke.

☞ **Smash!** Enter a blind fury to physically destroy things—including people!—with raw strength, enhancing skills like Physique, Melee Combat, and Unarmed Combat. You must use bare fists or bludgeoning weapons like mauls, maces, and especially hammers—swords and similar weapons require too much nuance and concentration. Ranged weapons are right out unless you're throwing rocks!

Power Stunts

✦ Break Bonds

Act at a +2 skill level when using Destruction to break chains, ropes, cages, etc, whether they bind you or another person.

✦ Destructive Fury

Use Destruction directly instead of Melee Combat or Unarmed Combat to destroy opponents.

✦ Strike Weak Spot

Requires Destructive Fury

On a successful attack using Destruction, spend a fate point to inflict an automatic consequence on your opponent instead of calculating your stress damage. This avoids any stress reduction the target has, including armour.

Typical Critical Effects

On a **fumble**, you're possessed by the urge to lay waste, succumbing to the temptation of Entropy and gaining a Corruption aspect (see the *Chronicler's Guide*).

On a **critical success**, you're destruction personified! Your target is destroyed utterly, as long as it's the same scale as you (see page 235)—you can utterly destroy a statue, artefact, or portcullis, but not a castle! (See, however, "Incarnating an Avatar" on page 310.)

Temple Stunts (Madiz): Hammer of the Gods, Hand of Vengeance, Lay the Temple Low, Shout of Disintegration, Strength of Madiz, Summon Unichai, Vitality of Madiz.

Sorcery Spells: Scaring Away of Animals, Scorching of the Earth, Stomping to the Ground, Tearing by Tooth and Claw, Tearing Down of Walls.

Domination

Tyranny, the usurpation of free will, eternal oppression; the deliberate denial of another's validity and will.

Typical Aspects: *Unable to Tolerate Criticism; Bullying and Browbeating; Submit or Face Destruction; I'll Make Your Decisions for You.*

Domination is the fever-dream of the megalomaniac and the revenge fantasy of the oppressed, and for that reason its grim temptations resound through history: damned are those who answer its clarion call! It's the principle of forcing other minds to bend to your will, to surrender, submit, and obey. With it you can gently suggest, or ruthlessly imprison the mind of an individual while you control his body like a puppet. With Domination, oppression reaches cosmic levels of irresistibility—and that's where you find the Great Hegemonist, the evil demiurge that would strangle the universe in its grasp, and his Fleshbound Demons of Domination.

Using the power of Domination is not only forbidden, but fastidiously avoided by right-minded priests and sorcerers. Few have the willpower to resist the Hegemonist's corruption when using this power; in the long run, it's said no one does.

Incompatible With: Command.

Resists: Command, Domination, Passion, Turmoil.

Cantrips

☞ **Cow the Weak-Minded:** Enhance your Provoke attacks to dominate the weak-willed and the easily cowed.

☞ **Demagoguery:** You're a firebrand before crowds, enhancing your oratory against groups using skills like Deceit and Rapport.

☞ **Forcefulness:** Use bullying tactics to back up your arguments in debates.

☞ **Weasel Words:** Twist people's words and force others to accept misleading arguments, enhancing skills like Deceit and Lore.

Power Stunts

◆ Behavioural Programming

Act at a +2 skill level in Domination manoeuvres to plant behavioural programming in a target. You can compel the resulting aspect at an appropriate moment.

◆ Dominate Person

Act at a +2 skill level in Domination manoeuvres to force a target to become your henchman. Against significant NPCs and PCs this may be a contest.

◆ Enslave

Requires Dominate Person, Suppress Will

This is a zone effect, using Domination to remove all will and initiative from targets, who become slaves, requiring orders for their every action.

◆ Enslave Community

Requires Enslave

Use Domination instead of Assimilate in overcome actions to take control of a community or hive off a sub-community from a larger community (see the *Chronicle's Guide*). You incur scale penalties (page 235) for interacting with the target community.

◆ Indomitable Self-Exertion

Use Domination to defend yourself against attempts to suppress your own will.

◆ Suppress Will

Requires Dominate Person

Use Domination to temporarily remove the target's ability to deliberately resist **any** attempts to control them using skills like Domination, Provoke, and so on. This has the same duration as a normal situation aspect, but doesn't require invoking. Against significant NPCs and PCs, this may be a contest.

Typical Critical Effects

On a **fumble**, your Domination attempt exposes you to Corruption (see the *Chronicler's Guide*). Alternatively, your own will is suppressed for the same period, and you may not attempt to dominate another person in any way, although you may take other actions as normal.

On a **critical success**, you channel the raw power of Domination through your mind, and your Domination attempts succeed beyond expectations, affecting more people, or lasting longer, as appropriate. However, you're **also** exposed to Corruption (see the *Chronicler's Guide*).

Temple Stunts (The Great Hegemonist): Entomb Mind, Hidden Domination, Devour Soul, Nightmare, Puppeteer (prereq Dominate Person), Summon Chaos Demon, Summon Fleshbound.

Sorcery Spells: Consumption of the Life Force, Creation of the Familiar, Domination of the Undead, Harvest of the Binding, Hobbling of the Animal Mind.



Entropy

The tendency of the cosmos towards dissolution, the breakdown of reality, mutation, corruption.

Typical Aspects: *Damn the Future for Power and Glory Now! The Reckless Exultation of Unbridled Change; Rav- ening Servitor of the Reaver Gods.*

Entropy is the natural tendency of the cosmos towards dissolution, and the Entropy power skill is the force that produces, promotes and accelerates that tendency. It's the power to corrupt reality, to cause systems to break down and become incoherent, to mutate living things into often unviable forms; in short, to produce chaos from order. In the world of the Springtide Civilisations, the supreme manifestations of Entropy are the Reaver Gods, which the Great Hegemonist unleashed upon the world to lay it waste after his defeat in the Armageddon of the Gods. Most of human history since has been the struggle to avoid that terrible fate. Using the power of Entropy, however well-meaning you might be, works towards the dissolution of reality and the destruction of the world.

Entropy is diametrically opposed by heat and fire, which inject energy into a system where Entropy would drain it. The creative use of fire can be used to resist Entropy's effects.

Incompatible With: Change By Fire, Cyclical, Law.

Resists: Change By Fire, Cyclical, Growth, Law, Re- alisation of the Will.

Cantrips

☞ **Cause Weariness:** Use Entropy to leach energy from your target, causing them to lose strength, con- centration, and the ability to act coherently. This acts as an obstacle (page 201) to skills like Physique, Lore, Stealth, and so on.

☞ **Extinguish Fire:** Use Entropy to rapidly dissipate heat, extinguishing mundane fires and acting as an obstacle to skills like Change By Fire.

⚙ **Increase Wear and Tear:** Use Entropy to cause things (equipment, items, mechanisms, etc) to fall apart, malfunction, or break; this can act as an obstacle to attempts to use such items.

⚙ **Stumble:** Use Entropy to interfere with a target's physical movements or actions, causing them to stumble. This is an obstacle to skills like Athletics.

Power Stunts

♦ *Energy Drain*

Use Entropy in a direct attack action on a powered object, draining it of a number of charges equal to the stress inflicted (see the *Chronicler's Guide*).

♦ *Life Drain*

Use Entropy in an attack action to cause physical stress to a living target.

♦ *Putrescence*

Requires Energy Drain and Life Drain

Use Entropy in a manoeuvre to cause the target to age rapidly. The default is *Half a Minute*, increased by one step on the Time Ladder (page 231) for every shift of success; on a special success, shifts are doubled, and quadrupled on a critical success. If the manoeuvre is repeated successfully in the next round, the effect is cumulative.

♦ *Twist Form*

Requires Energy Drain and Life Drain

Use Entropy in an attack action wracking the target with agonising mutating energies. Any consequence bestows a random Entropic Feature on the target (see the *Chronicler's Guide*).

♦ *Zone of Cold*

Requires Energy Drain

Use Entropy to remove heat from an entire zone. This doesn't affect magical or manatine energy charges (see the *Chronicler's Guide*), but can be used as a zone effect attack exposing targets to intense cold.

Typical Critical Effects

On a **fumble**, you gain a corruption aspect and an Entropic Taint (see the *Chronicler's Guide*). Additionally, the original target becomes immune to entropy effects for the rest of the scene.

On a **critical success**, the forces of Entropy course wild through you; effects may be doubled, or extended in duration. Additionally, you may come to the attention of the Reaver Gods (see the *Chronicler's Guide*).

Temple Stunts (The Reaver Gods): Beseech Hegemonist, Children of the Void, Command Chaos Demon, Summon Chaos Demon, Entropic Powers specific to each Reaver God.

Sorcery Spells: Banishment Beyond the Veil, Consumption of the Life Force, Enfeeblement of the Mind, Intensification of Entropy, Mutation of the Flesh, Tearing by Tooth and Claw.

The Terrible Nature of Entropy

*The whole cosmic balance of the Gods of the Great Compact is screaming out to player characters not to use the Entropy power skill. It's the power of the Reavers, it's evil, and it will lead to the end of the world. The *Chronicler's Guide* has a lot more to say about this.*

Needless to say, this doesn't prevent certain people from using Entropy in secret—especially arrogant and over-confident sorcerers. It's a source of great and easily-accessible power. For that reason, and to tempt complacent PCs down the Easy Dark Path, we present the Entropy power skill here.

Eternity

Eternal changelessness, resistance to the forces of time, undeath.

Typical Aspects: *Cold As the Grave; Ashen-Faced and Deathly Still; Too Little Life Stretched Over Too Much Time.*

The power of Eternity is that of the cosmos outside time, that which views the fourth dimension from the outside, as a dimension like any other, and which is beyond its compass. It's the power which resists change, always remaining the same, forever constant. It's about lasting forever, about not dying. A paradoxical power, it resists the corrupting effects of time, but also restores animation and activity to the bodies of the dead, creating the **undead**. People turn to this power in the hope of eternal life.

Mystically, there is a terrible correspondence between a cosmos which never changes, a frozen moment like a held breath, and the suffocating emptiness of the Void. Eternity can corrupt; perhaps not as obviously as Domination, Entropy, and the Void, but no less surely.

Incompatible With: Death, Entropy, Time.

Resists: Death, Entropy, Time.

Cantrips

⌘ **Abjure Decay:** Use Eternity to prevent organic matter from decomposing, from food to corpses and everything in between.

⌘ **Constancy:** Enhance Willpower to avoid being swayed from your current point of view.

⌘ **Immobility:** Enhance your ability to remain completely unmoving, resist being knocked back, etc.

Power Stunts

✦ Create Zombie

Use Eternity to animate a recently dead body as an undead servitor like a **coffer corpse** (see the *Chronicler's Guide*). These "bottom-level" undead, without will or intelligence, are used for menial labour and as guardians in the Necropolises of the Empire. Animation takes one round; the zombie is animated as a minor NPC with a peak skill equal to the shifts rolled (a maximum of skill level 3), or as a significant NPC on a critical success. If more than one corpse is available, the shifts can be divided between them; 4 shifts can animate four corpses as level 1 minor NPCs, two corpses as level 2 minor NPCs, or one corpse as a level 3 minor NPC, and so on. By default animation lasts for one scene.

✦ Resist Injury

Use Eternity to prevent invokes on an existing physical wound for the rest of the scene. This doesn't heal the wound, but simply pauses bleeding, cuts off pain, and stops the wound deteriorating, all of which start up again as soon as the scene is over.

✦ Resist Mutation

Use Eternity in defend actions to resist any mutagenic magic or effects.

✦ Speak With Dead

Use Eternity to interrogate a dead body. Enough of the body must still be present for air to be pushed through the voice box to hear it talk—a lot depends on the state of preservation of the corpse, which can only discourse on that which it knew and experienced in life. There is no real intelligence in the discourse, unless Trap Soul has been used on the cadaver; otherwise the speech is more the mindless recitation of stored memories.

✦ Trap Soul

Use Eternity to stop the mental decay of a body when it dies. The physical body continues to decay as normal. This must be cast within a few minutes after death, otherwise it has no effect. Its effect is to permit the body to be resurrected or raised as an afterganger or *moumai* using "Create Major Undead"; see the *Guide to Future Earth* for more. If the body is **not** resurrected or raised as undead, the trapped soul quickly goes insane—within a few weeks at most.

Typical Critical Effects

On a **fumble**, you may acquire a corruption aspect (see the *Chronicler's Guide*), if your application of Eternity has been sufficiently twisted (especially if you've been dealing with the dead and undead). Otherwise, the opposite effect to that desired happens.

On a **critical success**, you tap deep into the seam of Eternity in the cosmos, and the results you achieve are more effective (twice as much, if not specified elsewhere).

Temple Stunts (Staros): Animate Bone, Communicate With Demon of Undeath, Create Major Undead, Drain Life, Prolong Life, Restore Corpse, Sanctify Coffin Corpse.

Sorcery Spells: Animation of Bones, Consumption of the Life Force, Domination of the Undead, Preservation From Decay, Transformation of the Balequ, Vivification of Life Energies.

The Philosophy of the Soul

There's no part of your character or your character sheet that represents your "soul": no Soul skill, no Spirit stress track. Nevertheless, in the world of the Springtide Civilisations, belief in the soul is widespread, despite very little evidence; the few magics that claim to affect "the soul" probably affect the mind, the psyche, or the unconscious.

There are many ghostly phenomena in the world, but no one has a satisfactory explanation, except to say they're linked with the mysterious, terrifying krilovorghai, Demons of Undeath. Philosophers theorise an "afterlife dimension" whence the krilovorghai hail, and where "souls" go after death. Some claim to have been there.

Most people believe they'll be looked after by their favourite god when they die, but there's not much evidence for this. The truth of what happens to us after we die, if anything, is, as in our own era, a mystery.

Fate

Destiny, Fate, Horses; divination, the Terchus Tarot.

Typical Aspects: *Reckless, Fatalistic, The Future Is Already Written!*

The power of Fate says free will doesn't exist, and that the future is fixed like the past and can be discerned by those with the ability. It's the power of fortune tellers and readers of the **Terchus Tarot**, used for divination and meditation throughout the Venerable Autocracy.

The horse is the universal symbol for Fate, its wild tempestuous ride, where the rider holds on for dear life and perhaps hopes to influence its course, the supreme metaphor for a life lived in a predetermined cosmos. Fate magic affecting horses also affects cheloths, but excludes non-equine steeds like cambrioths, ornithers, and elenisors.

Most people don't really subscribe to this grim, fatalistic view of human existence, but it's behind a lot of Sakari philosophy. Few deny the potency of those who wield the power of Fate.

Incompatible With: Void.

Resists: Passion, Realisation of the Will, Void.

Cantrips

☞ **Bless Horse:** Use Fate to bless a horse and make it more tractable and easier to ride, and even perform complex manoeuvres with.

☞ **Clumsy:** Use Fate to make circumstances conspire against a target; things get knocked over, break, the character stumbles over an **obstacle**, etc.

☞ **Lucky Break:** Use Fate to favour a target set on a single course of action with a single skill; they appear to be lucky, discover things by chance, make lucky shots, etc.

☞ **Recklessness:** Use Fate to cause someone to abandon themselves to Fate's whims, behaving recklessly. If they go along with this, it can be an advantage; if they fight it, it acts as an obstacle. But they have to be reckless!

Power Stunts

◆ *It Is Fated*

Requires Tell Fortune

Once per session, use your Fate skill in place of any other skill.

◆ *Ride Fate*

Requires It Is Fated

For a fate point, you or your target rolls one extra Hero Die **and** one extra Doom Die in all rolls in the current scene.

◆ *Tell Fortune*

Use Fate in a manoeuvre to pronounce a single cryptic phrase about a character's imminent future—literally the next day or so—or the next big endeavour they embark on. You may word this phrase in a positive or negative way. During the next endeavour, the target or those around him who are aware of the fortune may invoke or compel this phrase at any moment it seems appropriate. The first invoke, as usual, is free.

Typical Critical Effects

On a **fumble**, you're gravely mistaken with your insights, which have the reverse effect of that intended; and / or you're afflicted with an aspect like *Dogged by Bad Luck* or *The Future Is Hidden From Me!* for the duration of the next big endeavour.

On a **critical success**, you've tapped into the tides of Fate and have an almost prescient awareness of the thing you were trying to divine. Your efforts have twice their normal effect.

Temple Stunts (Eshtikar): Command Tolpai, Detect Scrying, Heal Horse, Portent, Scry, See Chain of Causality, See Neighbouring Dimensions, Summon Tolpai.

Sorcery Spells: Calling of the Path, Identification of Enemies, Projection of Prescience, Ride of the Five Thousand.

Growth

Life, the earth, gnomes; Malud; Emeldias; plants, farming, birth, livestock; sex, procreation, the coupling of the male and female principles.

Typical Aspects: *Pragmatic and Prudent; Worldly and Lustful.*

Growth is the power of life and nature, that which guides and breathes through all growing things. It's the power of agriculture as much as the wildness of nature, and peasants and farmers, herders, mothers, midwives, and lovers everywhere revere it. Characters strong in Growth use it to encourage and foster growth and fertility, whether planting and tending crops, giving birth, procreating, or simply acknowledging the majestic and fecund power of the great wild.

Incompatible With: Death, Entropy, Eternity.

Resists: Death, Entropy.

Cantrips

⌘ **Find Nourishment:** Use Growth when foraging for food to make Provisioning rolls easier (see the *Chronicle's Guide*).

⌘ **Inspire Lust:** Use Growth to make a target feel *Lustful* when you're using skills like Deceive, Provoke, and Rapport.

⌘ **Understand Plants:** Use Growth to enhance your ability to detect and understand the properties of plants when using Investigate, Lore, etc.



Power Stunts

◆ *Bless Growth*

Requires Bless Planting

Use Growth in a zone effect to protect plants during the growing season from pests, disease, entropic taints, and weather damage. This power stunt, as well as Bless Harvest and Bless Planting, can boost a community's ability to feed itself—see the *Chronicler's Guide*.

◆ *Bless Harvest*

Requires Bless Growth

Use Growth in a zone effect to ensure crops are harvested in good condition and without taint or damage, enabling them to be properly stored.

◆ *Bless Planting*

Use Growth in a zone effect to ensure seeds germinate and plants form solid roots when placed in the ground. This protects plants from early disease and weather, and can remove an *Entropic Taint* from plants, seeds, and soil, and strengthen their resistance against the same.

◆ *Control Fertility*

Use Growth to control your own fertility or that of another, preventing or enabling conception and protecting or defending a pregnancy from *Entropic Taint*. Many women in the Springtide Civilisations learn this power stunt.

◆ *Earth's Blessing*

Requires Bless Harvest

Use Growth to put a target in contact with the mystical principle of Growth. This acts like a permission, letting the target acquire the Earth power skill or even a standalone stunt.

◆ *Ease Birth*

Use Growth to ensure an easy birth for any pregnant creature, including humans, jeniri, and even esteri. It reduces labour pains and duration, and reduces trauma for mother and newborn alike. Its effects extend for a day or two after birth, too.

◆ *Summon Gnome*

Use Growth to summon an earth elemental (see page 312 for more on summonings).

Typical Critical Effects

On a **fumble**, your application of the power of Growth goes awry, resulting in too much growth, leading to dangerous exhaustion of the growing thing in the form of physical consequences and even, in cases where an *Entropic Taint* is present, deformed growth, or even exposure yourself to the same taint.

On a **critical success**, you're the supreme conduit for the power of Growth. Effects are twice normal, resulting in superb crops and vibrantly healthy births—or even extraordinarily fertile lust and spontaneous pregnancy!

Temple Stunts (Emeldias): Calm Wind, Curse Violator, Earthpower, Envelop, Heal Blight, Make Desert Bloom, Provide Food, Summon Urthai, Tame Beast.

Sorcery Spells: Biting of the Earth Jaw, Evocation of Entangling Defenders, Invigoration of the Body, Revelation of Toxins, Turning to Stone.

Law

Justice, authority, oaths and the rule of law, civilisation, society, Law as a structuring principle of human existence.

Typical Aspects: *Honest and Truthful; Upholder of the Rule of Law; I Take My Stand to Protect the Helpless.*

Law is the power which governs the human perception of truth. It's not a power of cosmic but human law—the order, authority, and just decision-making which permits a strong, functioning society, capable of resisting the depredations of the Hegemonist and Reaver Gods. There's deep truth in the opposition of Law and Entropy, for it's human activity which protects the world and keeps annihilation at bay.

The Law power skill on its own handles moral law and just action between two or more individuals. It's not concerned with written law and its application and interpretation, which is more the preserve of the Temple of Ankadar the Lawgiver (see the *Guide to Future Earth*).

Incompatible With: Entropy, Unification of Opposites, Void.

Resists: Entropy, Unification of Opposites, Void.

Cantrips

⌘ **Break Illusion:** Enhance your use of the Willpower skill to see through and disbelieve illusions.

⌘ **Detect Error of Judgement:** Create *Keen Sensitivity to Injustices Done*-type aspects, enhancing your Lore rolls to determine whether or not an error of moral judgement has been made. Many entreaties made by commoners to those with the Law power skill are because they believe an injustice has been done.

⌘ **Detect Lie:** Enhance attempts using Empathy, etc, to detect whether a target is lying.

⌘ **Intimidate the Faithless:** Enhance attempts using Provoke, etc, to intimidate those who pay only lip-service to the law, or who disregard it entirely.

⌘ **Sense Entropy:** Create *Alert to the Presence of Entropy*-type aspects, enhancing your Empathy, Investigate, or Notice rolls, etc, to detect *Entropic Taints* or other manifestations of the power of Entropy. This can detect those possessing the Entropy power skill even if they're not currently using it.

Power Stunts

◆ *Determine Justice*

Use Law directly to determine what the morally just cause of action is when faced with such a decision. This also creates an aspect which can be invoked to have others agree with and follow you.

◆ *Find Social Good*

Requires Determine Justice

Even if you know the justice of a decision, that doesn't tell you how to apply it in such a way that the social good isn't damaged. With this stunt, you may come up with moral judgements which don't damage the social fabric and are acceptable to the people (no matter how harsh they may be).

◆ *Impose Authority*

Use Law in a zone effect to cause targets to submit to your moral judgements. They may not like them, but they'll accept them. This can be resisted by skills like Willpower, Domination, Entropy, and Void.

◆ *True Sight*

Act at a +2 skill level when using Law to see through illusions, magical deceptions, etc.

Typical Critical Effects

On a **fumble**, your moral judgements are radically wrong and your perceptions of justice the opposite of what they should be. You appear arbitrary and unfair, and may trigger angry mobs if making public judgements.

On a **critical success**, you're a vessel for pure law; your judgements are infallible, you see through to the truth of the matter, and your Law power effects are at least twice normal.

Temple Stunts (Ankadar): Break Domination, Destroy Entropy, Heal Entropic Wound, Lawsworn Pact, Sense Ambush, Sense Faithlessness, Smite the Unjust, Summon Servitor of Law.

Sorcery Spells: Compelling of Submission Before the Law, Revelation of Falsehood, Smiting of the Hemophage.

Narcissism

Selfishness, self-love, onanism, self-obsession, self-centredness.

Typical Aspects: *The Mirror Looking Into Itself; Supreme Self-Love; Am I Not Fairest of All? Only I Matter.*

The power of Narcissism is that of the supreme ego, which always takes and never gives. Spiritually self-contained, needing nothing external to itself except food and support, it is the ouroboros, the eye gazing lovingly into its own reflection. Narcissism would destroy society utterly if it became universal, denying the value of every other living thing except as food. It leads ultimately to Entropy and the meaningless Void.

Characters strong in Narcissism sustain and magnify themselves with total disregard for others, indeed even at their expense. They're supremely self-involved, barely regarding others as valid individuals at all.

Incompatible With: Wisdom.

Resists: Command, Domination, Narcissism, Wisdom.

Cantrips

☞ **Beautify Self:** Use Narcissism to make yourself seem more beautiful, enhancing your abilities to seduce, persuade, and win over others.

☞ **Instill Worthlessness:** Use Narcissism to make yourself so important that everyone else feels utterly worthless, enhancing your attacks and manoeuvres with skills like Provoke.

☞ **Sufficient Unto Myself:** Use Narcissism to feed yourself (and yourself only) with your self-love and go without food and drink, enhancing your Provisioning rolls (see the *Guide to Future Earth*).

Power Stunts

♦ Bully and Browbeat

Use Narcissism to make mental and social stress attacks.

♦ Imitate Emotion

Use Narcissism instead of Rapport to emote convincingly, fooling others into thinking you're warm, charismatic, approachable, and so on.

♦ Mirror Self

Use Narcissism to create a mirror image of yourself. It's a trick of the light, and very distracting. It's **not** in the mind, so not an illusion in the strict sense (page 275).

♦ Psychic Vampire

Requires Bully and Browbeat

Use Narcissism to transfer points from the mental stress track of your target to yourself, damaging them and healing your own mental stress damage on a two-for-one basis. You can heal a mental consequence by inflicting enough stress on your target to cause them a more severe mental consequence.

♦ Resist Another's Will

Act at a +2 skill level when using Narcissism to resist domination, intimidation, or persuasion attempts.

Typical Critical Effects

On a **fumble**, your disdain for others is so intense that you gain a corruption aspect (see the *Chronicler's Guide*); alternatively, your selfish attempts at exploiting others backfire, either by having no effect other than to enrage your target, or by affecting you instead.

On a **critical success**, your self-centredness is so intense that you double the effectiveness of what you're trying to do, increasing the severity of any damage inflicted upon those meaningless servitors who exist to glorify you.

Temple Stunts (Minisia): Breath of Minisia, Fascinate, Hand of Minisia, Winterstorm, Regenerate, Steal Knowledge, Steal Skill, Steal Wealth, Summon Morzai.

Sorcery Spells: Consumption of the Life Force, Invocation of the Blizzard of Knives, Removal of Fire.

Passion

Music, art, inspiration, creativity; knowing oneself through suffering, embracing life; art, performance, dance, music.

Typical Aspects: *The Joy of Life; The Unbearable Intensity of Being; I Have Become a Work of Art.*

Passion is knowing yourself through suffering. That doesn't mean misery, as characters strong in this power prove, but rather taking arms against the Wounded World and singing of the vibrancy and ecstatic joy of being alive. Facing the end of the world in the Armageddon of the Gods, Passion was one of humankind's most precious and potent weapons. It still is today.

The Passion power skill lets you communicate emotions directly to others, and influence their emotions by expressing yourself. You may cause a zone effect at will, with no need for a specific stunt; and magically charm, enchant, fill with joy—but also terrify, move, and cause to question and doubt. Passion goes far beyond mere performance and charisma, tapping into the communal wellspring of archetypes and emotions which course through all thinking and feeling beings.

Incompatible With: Narcissism, Void.

Resists: Narcissism, Passion, Void.

Cantrips

⌘ **Adoration:** Enhance your Rapport rolls by persuading an audience and making them like you.

⌘ **Emote:** Enhance your Deceive rolls by making an audience believe you're feeling a certain emotion.

⌘ **Entertain:** Enhance your Provoke rolls by stirring your audience to feel a certain emotion.

Power Stunts

◆ Embolden

With stirring speeches, performances, song, and music, use Passion to embolden people to overcome fears and face dangers.

◆ Inspire / Remove Specific Emotion

Use Passion in performance to create or remove a specific emotion in the targets, irrespective of their natural emotions.

◆ Know Other

Use Passion instead of Empathy to magically divine people's deepest feelings and emotions. You do not need to speak to the targets to achieve this.

◆ Pied Piper

Use Passion for Assimilate overcome and manoeuvre actions on communities up to Size 3, ignoring scale penalties (see the *Chronicler's Guide*). The audience must witness your performance.

◆ *Sing For Your Supper*

Once per session, use Passion instead of Resources, charming and performing so that people will give you money, food, and goods.

◆ *Soothe*

Use Passion to heal mild mental and social consequences.

◆ *Voyage Within*

Use Passion to explore your psyche and understand yourself better. At the end of every session, you receive one free advancement point (page 259) to spend immediately. You must spend this before the next session; you may not save it for later, although you may spend other AP you have at the same time.

Typical Critical Effects

On a **fumble**, your passionate self-expression is horribly misplaced, and you achieve the opposite effect to that intended. You may be run out of town for a truly appalling performance!

On a **critical success**, you pluck the heartstrings of your target or audience, achieving twice the intended effect.

Temple Stunts (Payorian): Amorous Exultation, Arrowsong, Bacchanale, Dance All Night, Improv, Psychometric Elicitation, Rejoice, Steel Hearts Before Battle.

Sorcery Spells: Enchantment of the Lord of the Bow, Invocation of Lord Payorian's Dance, Revelation of the Music of the Spheres.

Realisation of the Will

Building, construction; artifice, architecture, and design; the imposition of the will on the cosmos to effect changes.

Typical Aspects: *Driven to Build; Natural Tinkerer; Can't Leave a Puzzle Unsolved.*

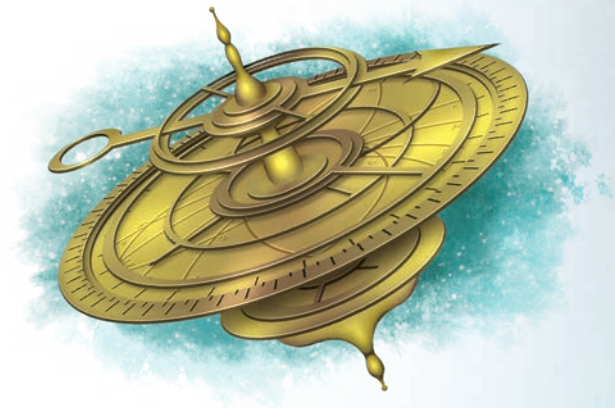
Realisation of the Will represents the imposition of the human imagination and will upon the world to reshape it. It's said to be the primal human urge driving all civilised activity—and also responsible for many of its greatest disasters. It's the skill of architects and engineers, tinkers and trapmakers, chemickers and those with a mechanistic view of the cosmos and society. With this skill, you can harness your will to produce amazing feats of construction—and even destroy them.

The urge to impose human control on the natural world occasionally strays close to the desire to impose control on human beings, too—which itself is a gateway to the “Easy Dark Path” of the Great Hegemonist. The Venerable Autocracy always tries to recruit those naturally skilled with this power into the temple of Khosht the Builder, where their activities may be monitored and directed towards socially profitable ends.

Note that several of the cantrips and power stunts of this power skill refer to artefacts and constructs; full details for these are provided in the *Chronicler's Guide*.

Incompatible With: Entropy, Void.

Resists: Entropy, Realisation of the Will, Void.



Cantrips

⌘ **Build Project:** Coordinate teamwork efforts to create and repair large-scale items, including (but not limited to) constructs.

⌘ **Damage Structure:** Pinpoint the weak spots in a structure, enhancing your ability to damage structures, artefacts, and constructs.

⌘ **Enhance Construct:** Enhance your effectiveness when working with constructs, including shoring them up against damage.

⌘ **Persevere With Construction:** Enhance your rolls when spending longer to create or repair items.

⌘ **See Structure:** Enhance your attempts to figure out artefacts and create well-structured design plans.

⌘ **Tie Up In Knots:** Enhance Devise manoeuvres to manipulate an item or collection of items to improve a block or barrier in a single action, affecting either movement by others past or over the item or collection, or use of the item or collection itself.

Power Stunts

◆ Actualise

Use Realisation of the Will instead of Devise on artificing rolls, including chemick. Devise stunts relating to artefacts work with this skill in the same way.

◆ Move Earth

Use Realisation of the Will to reduce the time it takes to dig and move earth, quarry, finish, and set stone, etc. By default this affects a single target working on such an endeavour. Time reduction is one step per shift on the roll; on a special success, twice the amount of earth, etc, is moved; on a critical success, the amount is increased four times.

◆ Nullify Gravity

Use Realisation of the Will to provide a number of shifts which may be used as a bonus on Physique rolls, etc, made by you or another person, to move or lift an object. If the object moved or lifted is alive, it may resist using Willpower, Realisation of the Will, or Void.

◆ Remote Manipulation

Use Realisation of the Will to manipulate objects at range. Anything you'd normally do with your hands may be attempted, including using equipment, opening doors, activating artefacts, triggering traps, and so on. You must see what you're manipulating, and must move your own hands as if you were touching the object.

Typical Critical Effects

On a **fumble**, your efforts fail horribly, possibly causing damage when a structure collapses, or ruining an item you're trying to repair. If your action could be construed as trying to control or dominate another's will, then you may incur a **corruption aspect** (see the *Chronicler's Guide*).

On a **critical success**, you succeed beyond your wildest dreams, creating a superior item or improving the performance of an item you're trying to repair.

Temple Stunts (Khosht): Create Shelter, Reclaim Metal, Repair Pereprae, Reveal Artefact, See Manatine Energy, Trigger Mechanism.

Sorcery Spells: Magnification of Vision, Opening and Closing of Locks, Revelation of Toxins, Sensing of Manatine Energy, Unlocking of the Secrets of the Artefacts.



Time

The experience of temporality; creation and preservation of history, memory, knowledge, and libraries; the melancholy brevity of individual existence.

Typical Aspects: *Excessively Punctual; Always Late; Thousand Yard Stare; Live in the Moment; Obsessive About Detail; Hoarder; Affected By Spleen.*

The Time power skill represents the deep insights and abilities derived from the experience of time's passage and the preservation of the knowledge of time passed. Characters strong with Time observe and chronicle events, contributing to the body of lore known as "history". In this Post-Historical Age, where so much time has passed that events seem to shrink to meaninglessness and insignificance, they're often afflicted by a deep melancholy, a sense of being "in time, but not of time", the curse of being a dispassionate observer, in touch with the brevity and insignificance of their individual existences.

The Time power skill lets you tap into the flow of time, using it to perceive past and perhaps even future events, and manipulate how time passes in your vicinity. The Temple of Unthar claims mastery over Time, declaring it dangerous and risky to use without discipline and oversight, and anyone with this power skill will be approached to join.

Incompatible With: Eternity, Void.

Resists: Eternity, Time, Void.

Cantrips

⌘ **Celerity:** You run magically fast, enhancing your Athletics or other appropriate skill roll.

⌘ **Lucid Recall:** Remember things that happened to you in the past as if they're happening to you now, enhancing Investigate, Lore, and Notice rolls.

⌘ **Phase Blur:** All or part of your body becomes an indistinct blur, vibrating rapidly, enhancing your rolls to dodge, be anonymous, or perhaps even hide.

⌘ **See Every Moment:** See every microsecond pass, giving you time to notice and appreciate detail and to take time to think. Time hasn't actually slowed, though; to the outside world, you don't *look* any different, but just happen to suddenly figure things out, etc.

⌘ **Sense the Hour:** Know **exactly** what time it is, as precisely as you like, wherever you are.

⌘ **Temporal Sprint:** Time seems to rush past. Minutes pass like heartbeats. The world sees you slow down and stop, and any deterioration in mental consequences, etc, is stalled.

Power Stunts

◆ *Alacrity*

You move and react blisteringly fast; whenever you burn physical stress for a bonus on rapid movement and reaction, you get **twice** the normal bonus (see page 215).

◆ *Temporal Confusion*

Use Time in a mental stress attack on a target, resisted by Time or Willpower.

◆ *Time Tell*

Use Time to see into the recent past in your area. This limited **chronometry** (reading the temporal flow) lets you glimpse the most recent major event to happen in the vicinity. On a special success, you may specify what the event pertains to, useful if you're trying to pick up on something specific. If it's useful, you may use the Time Telling as an aspect.

Typical Critical Effects

On a **fumble**, your manipulation or perception of the temporal flow fails horribly, producing catastrophically misleading information or backfiring completely.

On a **critical success**, you tap into the temporal flow spectacularly, perceiving events in minute detail, or manipulating time to achieve even more powerful effects.

Temple Stunts (Unthar): Aging Field, Chronoabdication, Chronoacceleration, Chronovoyance, Perceive Inflection Point, Precognition, Temporal Tarry, Wings of Unthar.

Sorcery Spells: Conjunction of Time Past, Incarceration in the Temporal Prison, Preservation From Decay.

Turmoil

Storms and turmoil, air and winds; unruliness, violence, and rugged independence; barbarism and a lack of civilisation; air elementals, storm demons, and the Belur.

Typical Aspects: *I Despise Authority; As Free As Wind and Storm; No One Rules Me! There's Thunder in my Fists!*

The power of Turmoil is the unruly and often violent restlessness of the cosmos, the buffeting storminess of the air, and the independence of breathing the thin, clear air of mountaintops. Characters strong in Turmoil control the winds and weather, create and manipulate air, and communicate with and summon creatures of air, wind, and storm, including air elementals and the *ulmai* storm demons.

Incompatible With: Entropy, Law.

Resists: Entropy, Law, Turmoil.

Cantrips

☙ **Arrowfleet:** The winds drive your arrows further and faster, enhancing your ranged combat attacks.

☙ **Communicate With Creatures of Air, Wind, and Storm:** Enhance your communications with air elementals, storm demons, belur, etc.

☙ **Hear on Wind:** Enhance your attempts to eavesdrop on distant conversations, as the wind carries the words to your ears.

☙ **Resist Choking:** Enhance your resistance to choking from physical attack, noxious gases, drowning, etc.

☙ **Shield of Wind:** Use the winds to help you defend yourself, buffeting your opponents, blowing arrows and other missiles off course, and so on.

☙ **Stormcamp:** Enhance your Camping checks (see the *Chronicler's Guide*) by controlling and manipulating the winds. You can also make other people's Camping checks harder.

☙ **Terrifying Blasts:** Enhance your ability to intimidate a target by buffeting them with terrifying blasts of wind.

Power Stunts

◆ Battle Rage

Go berserk at will, using your Turmoil power skill as your berserker skill (see page 220).

◆ Breath of Bel

Breathe at altitude, during dust storms, where there's poison gas or no air, underwater, etc. You don't need to roll to resist; this stunt actively provides you with breathable air.

◆ Knock Down

Blast a target with a violent gust of air. They must roll to resist or be *Knocked Down* (page 220).

◆ Summon Air Elemental

Use Turmoil to summon an air elemental (page 319).

◆ Words of Bel

Use Turmoil to carry away your words to communicate with someone at a distance. You speak normally and the target of your roll (and only that target) hears what you say.

Typical Critical Effects

On a **fumble**, your attempts to manipulate air and storm fail disastrously, achieving the opposite of what you intend (you're knocked down, disadvantaged, damaged, etc).

On a **critical success**, you commune with the power of Turmoil effortlessly, achieving spectacular effects. Larger elementals and demons answer your summons, you change the weather drastically, the winds and lightning you call down are devastating.

Temple Stunts (Belorias): Cloud Dance, Control Weather, Lightning Bolt, Lightning Storm, Suffocate, Summon Ulmai.

Sorcery Spells: Calling of the Thunderbolt, Invocation of the Tempest, Reaping of the Whirlwind.

Unification of Opposites

Trickster, falsehood, concealment, sudden enlightenment, the shock of understanding, paradoxes.

Typical Aspects: *See Through Contradictions; I Can't Let Hypocrisy Pass; Paradoxical Philosophical Prankster; Ambiguous in Body, Thought, and Deed; Question Everything!*

Unification of Opposites is the power of paradox, the secret dialectic which lies behind reality and drives forward evolution, revolution, and change. It's always shocking, disturbing, challenging; an over-turning of the established order and tables of moral and social values, a destruction of ideologies which aren't strong enough to survive, clearing the way for new ideas to be born from the contradictions of the past.

Characters strong with the Unification of Opposites are often outcasts, or at least provocateurs of the Temple of Qal, the Two-Faced God (see the **Guide to Future Earth**). Many regard them as an affront; they see conspiracy theories and upset the status quo wherever they go. Knowing that strong green shoots grow from ashes, they like to see things burn—sometimes literally!

Use Unification of Opposites to confuse people, force new ideas to emerge, and drive people mad (usually re-

quiring a common language). It's also a key principle in the Lost Science of Chemick (page 363), working to force contradictory ingredients to combine in explosive new forms. Its paradoxical mindset is also behind the magic of illusions.

Incompatible With: Domination, Law.

Resists: Domination, Law, Unification of Opposites.

Cantrips

⊕ **Confusion:** Your words and behaviour cause confusion, acting as an obstacle or enhancing your attempts to Deceive, Provoke, etc.

⊕ **Disguise:** Disguise yourself by manipulating your perceived identity, enhancing Deceive rolls, etc.

⊕ **Lay Bare the Contradictions:** Your analyses expose the hidden contradictions in common sense viewpoints, acting as an obstacle or enhancing your abilities to debate someone else or understand ideas.

⊕ **Mimic:** Mimic an animal call (easiest), or the voice of another person (more difficult), even a specific person (most difficult).

⊕ **Silvertongue:** Come across as affable and adaptable, enhancing Rapport rolls.

⊕ **Sleight of Hand:** Your feats of legerdemain or minor illusion enhance Deceive rolls, etc.

⊕ **Trick of the Eye:** Create small-scale visual illusions—for a brief moment, your target sees something that isn't there. The target doesn't have to be aware of your presence.

⊕ **Unify Opposing Ingredients:** "Encourage" chemick ingredients to align, enhancing your Chemick rolls (see the **Chronicler's Guide**).

⊕ **Ventriloquism:** Create small-scale audio illusions—for a brief moment, your target hears something that isn't there. The target doesn't have to be aware of your presence.

Power Stunts

◆ *Bare the Soul*

Your words and behaviour knock your target mentally off-balance, forcing them to expose otherwise hidden facets of themselves, revealing one of their aspects per shift. You may specify which aspects or hidden facets are revealed.

◆ *Blow Your Mind*

Rock someone's preconceptions to the core, momentarily rendering them *Mind-Blown*.

◆ *Charm Person*

Use Unification of Opposites instead of Rapport to make people like you and agree with you.

◆ *Force Brew*

For a fate point, re-roll a failed Chemick roll using Unification of Opposites instead of Devise, forcing ingredients to combine where they wouldn't previously. There's always some comical or transgressive side effect, which can become serious if you need to succeed at a cost.

◆ *Hilarity*

Use Unification of Opposites in social combat defend actions, pointing out paradoxes and contradictions in your opponent's words and deeds and provoking your audience to laughter and ridicule. On a special success or greater, you also inflict a social consequence on your opponent.

◆ *Illusion*

Create a small-scale **illusion** (page 275), no greater than Size 1—a single large creature, a rider and her mount, etc. This affects all the target's senses.

◆ *Leading Question*

Ask your target a leading question in the form of an aspect (*Wouldn't You Like To Put Your Weapon Down and Come and Sit Next to Me?*), suggesting a specific course of action.

◆ *Mass Delusion*

Requires Illusion

Create a small-scale illusion, as above, but as a zone effect affecting all targets in a single zone.

◆ *Mirage*

Requires Mass Delusion

Create a large-scale illusion, as above, as a zone effect affecting multiple targets. The difficulty increases by +2 per additional zone after the first.

◆ *Truth to Power*

Use Unification of Opposites in social combat attack or manoeuvre actions, pointing out an unpleasant "elephant in the room" to your target, often in front of others.

Typical Critical Effects

On a **fumble**, your attempt to unite opposites fails abysmally, reinforcing the separation of elements and backfiring on you. You may be chased away by an enraged mob!

On a **critical success**, you unite contradictory elements in a glorious fusion, achieving profound, far-reaching, and possibly permanent effects.

Temple Stunts (Qal): Adaptive Sensuality, Change Sex, Create Golem, Create Homunculus, Derridan Deconstruction, Dialectical Distillation, Discover Property, Face Jumper, Madness, Mind Maze, Modify Memory, Qali Koan, Reality Imitates Art, Restore Property, Unravel Chemick.

Sorcery Spells: Detection of Ambushes, Identification of Enemies, Replication of Sound, Replication of Vision, Transformation of the Body.

Void

Emptiness, meaninglessness, disinterest, lethargy; endurance, meditation, abnegation, denial; the Flay void elementals; Vile, Lord of Emptiness.

Typical Aspects: *Detached and Disinterested; Lethargic and Uncaring; Almost Impossible to Motivate; Cynically Stoic.*

The Void is the “first element”, the nothingness that precedes the cosmos and from which all reality is born. It’s still there today, beyond time, beyond the Veil, beyond all human (and inhuman) morality. Characters strong in the Void resist, deny, and even negate the forces of reality, but are tortured by a belief in the intense pointlessness of existence.

The Void is close to a blanket “resist magic” power. Mystically it opposes all other elemental powers, as well as several other major principles. Some Void cantrips and power stunts can resist, counter, or negate magical effects of any origin.

This makes the Void powerful. Unfortunately, the mindset it breeds is close to the nihilism of Entropy and the Reaver Gods, and the threat of Corruption is a constant danger (see the *Chronicler’s Guide*). The Temple of Pline, God of Empty Spaces, is a rare approved venue for venerating the Void; however, his followers are few and their powers hamstrung, and it’s in the Void Cult that the Void’s true devotees find their true outlet—and an almost limitless corruption.

Incompatible With: None.

Resists: Change By Fire, Command, Cyclicity, Darkness, Fate, Growth, Law, Passion, Realisation of the Will, Time, Turmoil.

Cantrips

⊕ **Counter Magic:** Enhance your rolls to resist direct effects from any power skill listed under “Resists” above; or create a *Counter Magic* aspect on a target to provide an obstacle to use of these power skills by or against that target.

⊕ **Endure Pain:** Create an *Endure Pain* aspect you can hold in reserve to counter attempts to invoke a physical or mental consequence you suffer against you. You can cast this **before** sustaining the consequence.

⊕ **Firewalk:** Enhance Physique rolls to resist fire damage.

⊕ **Lethargy:** Afflict others with *Lethargy*.

⊕ **No Mind:** Enhance Willpower rolls to resist mental control.

⊕ **Recognition:** Recognise the presence of the Void in another creature (ie detect if it has the Void power skill). On a special success, you also recognise its source, ie whether the target belongs to the temple of Pline, the Void Cult, etc. Usually this is a difficulty 1 or 2 roll; the target may not resist without special magics.



Power Stunts

◆ *Anti-Magic*

Requires Resist Magic

Create an *Anti-Magic* aspect on your target, enhancing its efforts to resist magic from any source. It's resisted by Willpower. If used against a spellcaster, it acts as an obstacle to that character's spellcasting attempts.

◆ *Anti-Magic Zone*

Requires Anti-Magic

This zone effect version of Anti-Magic affects all targets in a single zone.

◆ *Demoralize*

Act at a +2 skill level in Void manoeuvres to demoralise and terrify.

◆ *Effortlessness*

Use Void to heal lost physical stress points (page 233), even during the same round they're lost. This doesn't affect consequences.

◆ *Meaninglessness*

Your words and behaviour sap the meaning from your target's life; use Void to make mental stress attacks.

◆ *Resist Magic*

Use Void to directly resist magical effects from any source directed against you.

Typical Critical Effects

On a **fumble**, you gain a **corruption aspect** and are henceforth considered to belong to the **Void Cult** (see the *Chronicler's Guide*). If you're already a member, you also come to the attention of one of the Reaver Gods.

On a **critical success**, your connection with the Void is supreme, achieving powerful effects like doubling your result. If you're a member of the Void Cult, you also gain a **corruption aspect**.

Temple Stunts (Pline): Aura of Spleen, Ignore Foe, Invisibility, Negate Authority, Negate Damage, Negate Gravity, Negate Magic.

Temple Stunts (Vile): Breath of Annihilation, Cloud of the Weeping Void, Command Flay, Sap Will, Summon Flay, Withering Touch.

Sorcery Spells: Chamber of Purple Shadows, Curse of Rending, Door Beyond the Veil, Enfeeblement of the Mind, Negation of Magic, Passing Beyond the Veil, Purpling of the Mind, Refutation of Cosmic Forces, Removal of Fire, Tourmaline Sight, Traversing of the Dimensions.

Wisdom

Wisdom, insight into the cosmic order; connect, extrapolate, and conclude; harmony and cooperation.

Typical Aspects: *A Deeper Understanding; Forgiveness and Mercy; Love, Peace, and Solidarity.*

Wisdom is the power of understanding what you see, and of inducing change in the world because of that understanding. Characters strong in Wisdom see the connections between people, events, ideas, places, and perceive the lines of cause and effect as they ripple through the cosmos.

You may use the Wisdom power skill to reinforce understanding and the harmonious connections that exist within the cosmos. This includes assisting in the care of the sick of body and mind.

Incompatible With: None.

Resists: Animality, Destruction, Domination, Narcissism.



Cantrips

⌘ **Create Harmony:** Bring people together and create harmony between them, enhancing Contacts, Empathy, and Rapport rolls.

⌘ **Gain Insight:** Gain an insight into a problem or person, enhancing skills like Empathy, Investigate, and Lore.

⌘ **Light the Way:** Create *Magical Light* to light your way.

⌘ **Resist Deceit:** See through attempts to deceive you, enhancing rolls like Empathy. This includes seeing through illusions, mind tricks, and magical suggestion.

⌘ **Tend the Wounded:** Calm the wounded and treat their wounds, enhancing First Aid and Healer rolls (page 153).

⌘ **Understand Words:** Better understand what people mean (not necessarily just what they say), enhancing your Learned Language or Lore rolls.

Power Stunts

♦ *Follow the Path*

Act at a +2 skill level to determine direction and location, even inside, underground, in the dark, etc.

♦ *Heal Mind*

Act at a +2 skill level on attempts to heal mental consequences.

♦ *Heal Wounds*

Act at a +2 skill level on attempts to heal physical consequences.

♦ *Identify Disease*

Act at a +2 skill level on attempts to identify a disease or similar ailment, even if it's otherwise unknown.

♦ *Peaceground*

Create a *Peaceground* where people can meet to negotiate, trade, become friends, and reach agreements. This also acts as an obstacle to anyone trying to argue, create or sow discord, etc.

Typical Critical Effects

On a **fumble**, your deeper understanding of the cosmos fails, leading you to wildly inaccurate conclusions which materially worsen your situation.

On a **critical success**, you spread intense harmony, doubling the effectiveness and / or scope of your attempts to understand, reconcile, and heal.

Temple Stunts (Konfu's Yellow House): Awaken Property, Cure Blindness / Deafness, Exorcism, Fast Healing, Heal Community.

Temple Stunts (The Emanations of Konfu): The Silent Song, Resist Fear, Pacify, Resist Damage, Zofi Strike, Zofi Self, Resist Chaos, Distance Strike, Repel Attackers.

Sorcery Spells: Comprehension of Sorcery, Healing of Minor Physical Wounds, Healing of Moderate Physical Wounds, Healing of Severe Physical Wounds, Identification of Creatures, Identification of Enemies, Illumination of Things, Invigoration of the Body, Magnification of Vision, Recreation of the Shattered Mind, Restoration of the Damaged Mind, Revelation of Toxins, Soothing of the Troubled Mind.

DIVINE MAGIC

The most direct way of using a power is to devote yourself to a deity associated with that power. Individuals who do this are known as **initiates** and **priests**, and the magic they use is called **divine magic**. It extends the scope of cantrips and provides new power stunts drawing on the competencies of the gods.

Learning Divine Magic

As a divine magic user, you may automatically use the temple cantrips associated with your god's power skill, assuming you have that power skill. You may also improvise and learn your temple's power stunts, as described on page 268.

Priests may additionally create and incarnate an **avatar**, and have access to **miracles**. Depending on your temple, you may also **summon and bind temple demons**. See below for more.

Avatars

In addition to using power skills directly, priests (not initiates) may also incarnate their deity's essence in their own bodies, physically changing and temporarily acquiring strange and supernatural features to more closely resemble their god—what's known as **incarnating an avatar**. Before you can do this, you must define your avatar form, by creating a particular type of relationship with specific abilities, like an alternate self or alter-ego. Incarnating an avatar is potentially the most powerful use of magic, but is also fraught with danger.

You define your avatar on your relationships sheet, listing the superhuman powers it gives you. When you create an avatar, you must give it at least one aspect and a power skill, **in addition to** your own personal version of that power skill. The aspect usually describes the physical appearance you assume when you incarnate your avatar, like *Touch of Death*, *Cadaverous Mien*, *Silver-Green Lustre of the Moon-Drenched Sea*. Your avatar can have other aspects, skills, and stunts, too, bought using your relationships budget before you begin play, and with advancement points (AP) during play (page 247). Your avatar is almost like a character in its own right; you can add

to it over time, gradually increasing its power. Example builds for avatars are given in the temple descriptions in the *Guide to Future Earth* (see page 320 for an example).

Just having an avatar makes you “holy”. The more powerful it is, the “holier” you are. Sometimes you can use some of your avatar's abilities without needing to incarnate it.

All the gods of the Great Compact provide avatars, as does the nefarious Great Hegemonist. The Reaver Gods and the Elemental Cults do not.

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For example, Paco defines an avatar for his Ing Shu trader priest character, Six Tentacles Bearing Treasure, during character creation. He gives it the aspect Honey-Tongued Aura of Peace, and the skills Communication 1 (a power skill) and Empathy 1 and Rapport 1 (mundane skills). He also gives it the three power stunts Sacred Oath, Sway Community, and Zone of Truespeech (you can find descriptions of these in the Guide to Future Earth).

Incarnating an Avatar

Incarnating your avatar fills your body and mind with the divine power of your god, enabling you to achieve awesome effects. One of the main effects is to act at a greater scale than your normal mortal scale; in game terms, it gives you one or more additional **Hero Dice** (page 236) for use in your rolls. **Note that you don't actually increase in physical size**; it's the divine power coursing through you that lets you act at scale. You still, physically at least, remain Size 0 (or whatever your normal size is).

To incarnate your avatar, make a difficulty 8 manoeuvre roll of your appropriate power skill. You may invoke your *Priest of Deity* aspect. The difficulty increases by +2 per additional point of scale increase (per additional Hero Die) you select beyond the first (see below).

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For example, to incarnate Six's avatar, Paco must make a difficulty 8 roll of his character's Communication 3 power skill. He can invoke his Machiavellian Trader Prince of Vareltias essence aspect when he does so.

Once you've incarnated your avatar, you're infused with your god's majesty and might, and may use any of your avatar's abilities (skills, stunts, aspects, etc) as if they were your own. You may gain a teamwork bonus (page 202) from your avatar's skills, or you may use your avatar's skills directly and give it a teamwork bonus from your own skills (in the event your avatar's skill is higher than yours). You also gain one bonus Hero Die for each point of scale you've increased (a minimum of 1 point). See page 236 for more on scale effects.

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For example, when Six incarnates its avatar of Vareltias, it is imbued with a Honey-tongued Aura of Peace, and gets a +1 teamwork bonus to its Communication, Empathy, and Rapport skills. It may also use the Sacred Oath, Sway Community, and Zone of Truespeech power stunts, and acts at scale, rolling an additional Hero Die on its Cosmic Fate rolls.

It's not natural for a mortal body to incarnate such power, and you suffer one physical consequence immediately after your incarnation ends. This consequence is treated like a physical wound for invoking, compelling, treatment, and healing.

Incarnation Changes You

Incarnating an avatar changes you; little by little, your personality, motivations, and even appearance change to be more like your god. This may restrict your freedom of choice; such is the price paid for intimate contact with the divine.

If you roll a critical success or failure when incarnating your avatar, you must change one of your aspects when your incarnation ends. If you were using a **miracle** (page 312) when you rolled the critical, you may change one of your aspects to be a **mythical deed aspect**, describing your critical action and its circumstances as if it was a myth of your god. Often a mythical deed aspect replaces your Origin aspect, or your Doom, Essence, or Shadow.

Mythical deed aspects are described in the *Chronicler's Guide*; simply put, having one lets your character embark upon the path of an epic hero, adopting the Pathwalker epic occupation (if **all** of your aspects are mythical deed aspects, you **must** embark on this occupation—you have no choice!). Your Chronicler has lots more information about how your character can become an epic hero, and the remarkable abilities it gives you.

Your Holy Symbol

Even when not incarnating your avatar, some of its powers are accessible to you via your **holy symbol**, in a limited form. As long as your holy symbol is in your possession (carried on your body), you may:

- receive teamwork bonuses from your avatar's skills.
- use your avatar's stunts "appropriately", ie as if they were effects manifesting from your holy symbol. You may **not** access your avatar's miracles or aspects in this way.

Note that you don't get additional Hero Dice when using avatar abilities via holy symbol.

Holy symbols are specific to your god, and are described in the temple entries in the *Guide to Future Earth*. See page 320 for an example.

.....
For example, when Six brandishes his Knotted Circle holy symbol of Vareltias, he may get a +1 teamwork bonus on his Communication, Empathy, and Rapport skills (he even gets this when trying to invoke his avatar in the first place). Additionally, he may use the Sacred Oath, Sway Community, and Zone of Truespeech power stunts, but doesn't act at scale, and doesn't get the additional Hero Die. He also doesn't give off that lovely Honey-tongued Aura of Peace...

Miracles

Miracles are special stunts you can access by being the priest of a god. **Some have other prerequisites.** Each costs a single stunt to buy, but may provide multiple benefits, or a single especially powerful benefit. Your avatar must already have all the power stunts specified in your temple's avatar build. You must be at a temple of your god to do this, and you must have just passed a significant milestone. You may **not** pay a fate point to improvise a miracle; learning one is a spiritual milestone in a priest's life. Some miracles are so powerful that they have a **cost** to use. You may be weakened against something as a result of the miracle, or the Chronicler may compel your Essence or power aspect to represent a downside of the miracle's use.

Miracle stunts belong to your avatar; **they don't affect your Refresh.** They represent specific miracles of your deity which you're able to emulate. **To use a miracle stunt, you must currently be incarnating your avatar (page 310).**

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*For example, as a beginning character, Six hasn't yet had the opportunity to acquire the "Forge Community" Vareltias miracle—but maybe one day it will. In such a case, when incarnating its avatar, Six will be able to use the miracle to create whole new permanent communities. Full rules for communities are found in the **Chronicler's Guide**.*

All of the gods of the Great Compact provide miracles, as do the Great Hegemonist and the Reaver Gods; some provide more than one. The Elemental Cults do not provide miracles. Additionally, powerful priests may become **Pathwalkers** (see the *Chronicler's Guide*) and discover hitherto unknown miracles of their god.

Demons

A demon is a divine principle in living form—a servitor of a deity which you can summon on a power skill roll, using a temple-specific Summon (Demon) stunt or sorcery spell (page 338), and which can work for you on your deity's business in a number of ways.

Demons are specific to a god; Dafur the Flame Lord has his *agnapei* fire demons; Regos, Lord of War, has his *serapai* war demons; and so on. Not all gods have demonic servitors. For those that do, the temple entries in the *Guide to Future Earth* include **demon builds**, letting you define the stats of a demon you summon; see page 321 for an example. Example stat blocks for demons and **elementals** (see page 319) can also be found in the *Chronicler's Guide*.

When you summon a demon, you need only define the stats relevant to the role the demon is playing in your story. If you summon a demon and command it to attack someone, for example, then you can stat it with a stress track, and so on. The simplest form of a summoned demon is an aspect.

Summoning Demons

When you summon a demon, you define it as a **relationship** (page 247), with a stat block comprising at least one aspect. Its default skill scores, if required, are zero (0), and it has 2 stress boxes in each track, and may take 1 mild and 1 moderate consequence. The summoning is difficulty 2, plus the demon's peak skill level. Any scale effects apply (page 236). The demon will remain for a single scene.

You may summon a more powerful demon by "investing" advancement points (AP) in the summoning, just as if you were defining a relationship. These AP remain unavailable for anything else as long as the demon is present; once it departs, **you get the AP back.**

Because of the aspect, the base cost of a summoned demon is 8AP. To "upgrade" a demon, you must dismiss the current one and summon a new, more powerful one.

Example: Summoning a Simple Serapai War Demon

A beginning priest of Regos may use up to his entire 28AP relationships budget (page 45) to summon a low-power Serapai war demon, defining the demon's abilities using the rules in **Chapter 11: Relationships**, and according to the Serapai build on page 321. Such a demon might have:

- 1 aspect (costing 8AP)
- SR-3 armoured skin (Integral Armour special ability costing 6AP)
- SI+3 natural weapons (Integral Weapons special ability costing 6AP)
- The Mindlink stunt (power stunt costing 4AP)
- The Command 2 and Unarmed Combat 2 skills (costing 4AP)

As a relationship, a summoned demon doesn't have to follow the skill pyramid and column rules; it may well have other skills, but the ones in the relationship are those the summoner has access to. See page 243 for more.

Group Workings

Summoners may pool their AP when summoning demons, treating the demon as a **shared relationship** (page 242). The maximum number of summoners that may participate in a summoning is equal to the highest power skill used in the summoning. IE for four summoners, one of them must have a score of at least 4 in the relevant power skill. All participants must know the appropriate summon demon stunt, or improvise it for a fate point.

In a summoning, summoners position themselves according to a glyph inscribed on the ground based on the number of summoners, as shown in Table 13-8: The Glyph of Summoning.

It's rare for a PC group to comprise enough summoners to make **group workings** common within the group. Instead, a summoner character goes to his temple or sorcery school and asks his community to lend him one or more **servitors** to help with the summoning, providing teamwork bonuses and AP. Group workings like this are one of the advantages of belonging to a temple or sorcery school, although your community will usually ask you for a favour in return. Usually you may only have one group working (AP lending) active at any one time from a given community.

TABLE 13-8: THE GLYPH OF SUMMONING

NUMBER OF SUMMONERS	GLYPH OF SUMMONING
1	Point
2	Line
3	Triangle
4	Square
5	Pentagram
6	Hexagram
7	Heptagram
8	Octagram



Requesting a group working is an influence roll of Resources, Pillar (using the stunt “The Ties That Bind”), Rapport, Contacts, etc. The difficulty is usually 1 or 2. Success grants you a number of servitors to assist you equal to your summoning skill minus 1, as well as a number of AP to invest in the summoning **per servitor**, as follows:

- **Fumble:** Your request for a group working is refused, and you incur a social (status or wealth) consequence.
- **Failure:** Your request for a group working is refused.
- **Success:** Gain 1 AP per shift of success, per servitor.
- **Special Success:** Gain 1.5 AP per shift of success, per servitor (round up).
- **Critical Success:** Gain 2 AP per shift of success, per servitor.

The maximum community AP you can expend in a group working may not exceed the personal AP you yourself are expending.

For example, Eglasiyan, War Priest of Regos (page 320) is summoning a Serapai War Demon to act as his bodyguard. He wants to bind it into its own body, and its level of Command skill is not as important as its more physical skills. He's dismissing a 30AP-Serapai he previously had bound into a Demon Sword, and is reusing those 30AP in the new summoning. Before he performs the summoning, he tries to boost those AP by making an influence roll to acquire aid from temple servitors in a group working at his local temple.

Eglasiyan has the stunt “The Ties That Bind” and a Pillar skill of 4, and pays a fate point to improvise the “Servitors” Rapport stunt, to avoid scale effects when influencing his Size 3 local temple community for the AP loan. He invokes aspects, gives gifts, and otherwise gathers +5 bonuses (up to his bonus cap), and rolls +0 on the Cosmic Fate Dice. The influence roll is difficulty 1; Eglasiyan gets 8 shifts on the roll.

That's a special success, giving him 1.5AP per shift of success, for a total of 12AP. However, this is **per servitor**, and because he has Command 5 (the skill he's using for summoning), 4 servitors present themselves, each with 12AP to invest in the shared demon summoning. As Eglasiyan was investing 30AP of his own, he can only use 30AP of the 48AP on offer, but still elects to work with all 4 servitors, as that will give him a +4 teamwork bonus on his summoning roll.

So, now to the summoning roll. Eglasiyan is summoning a Serapai with a peak skill of 6, so the roll is difficulty 8 (equal to the summoning target's peak skill +2). Eglasiyan rolls the Cosmic Fate Dice, adding +5 for his skill and +4 for his teamwork bonus, making the summoning roll comfortably.

He now has 60 AP to spend. Looking at the Serapai War Demon build on page 321, he allocates those 60AP as follows:

1 aspect (8AP)

One level-6 skill, one level-5 skill, and one level-2 skill (26AP). As a summoned demon is a **relationship** (page 247), its skills don't have to follow the skill pyramid and column rules.

2 stunts (8AP)

2 special abilities (in this case costing a total of 18AP)

You can find the final stat block for the summoned Serapai in the adjacent textbox. Note that it's worth writing in the AP cost in the stat block, as these will again become available if the demon is released or destroyed.

Serapai War Demon Bodyguard

Standard NPC

Physical Stress: □¹ □² □³ □⁴

Mental Stress: □¹ □²

Consequences: 2 mild + 1 moderate

Size: S0

Aspects: *Martial Humanoid of Solid Gold.*

Skills: Melee Combat 6,
Physique 5, Command 2.

STUNTS

✦ **Mindlink:** Use Command to communicate with your forces in battle.

✦ **See Battle:** Use Command instead of Investigate / Notice to see what's going on across the battlefield.

SPECIAL ABILITIES

★ **Integral Armour 3:** Skin of gold, SR-3.

★ **Integral Weapon 6:** Battle sceptre, SI+6.

AP Cost: 60AP.

Choosing Abilities From the Demon Build

As described above, you increase a summoned demon's abilities beyond its base aspect by using your own **advancement points**. When the demon leaves, is destroyed, dispelled, or otherwise departs (see "Dismissing a Demon" below), you regain those advancement points. Indeed, many summoners keep a bank of "free" advancement points specifically for use when summoning demons. Note that you may not casually spend AP during play to improve your demon relationship; you must dismiss and resummon a demon to "upgrade" its abilities in this way.

Can I Release a Demon and Suddenly Increase All My Skills and Stunts?

If one of your summoned demons is destroyed or released, you regain the AP you spent on the summoning. Usually you'll keep those in your AP pool for use in future summonings, but you may be tempted by the sudden influx or 10, 20, 30, or even more AP to suddenly and drastically increase your character's abilities by spending them on new stunts, skill increases, and other relationships. Can you do this?

*The simple answer is yes, you can. However, you need to be careful not to destroy the credibility of your story by doing this; you'd need a **very good reason** to suddenly become significantly more powerful and skillful as an individual overnight! In short, you need to narrate such a major event; for example, it's possible a priest may dismiss all his demons and suddenly abandon his post to retire to a mysterious sorcery school, where he spends many months arduously learning the secrets of sorcerous spellcasting. That's a great way to spend accumulated AP—but check with your Chronicler for a way to incorporate this into your story if that's what you want.*

Demon Size and Scale

In a sense, demons are a kind of kindred; all demons of a specific type share certain characteristics, even though the scope for variation is vast. One of these characteristics is Size; for the most part, demons are roughly the same size as the mortals they interact with, Size 0. It's *possible*, though rare, to encounter larger or smaller demons, but largely in the way you'd encounter larger or smaller people. In particular, the terrifying Greater Demons are usually larger than mortals—sometimes much larger. If in doubt, check with the Chronicler.

The same isn't true about **elementals**, which come in many shapes and sizes. See page 319 for more.

Binding Demons

A character may spend AP on a relationship representing a bound demon received from his temple (or sorcery school—see page 341). Additionally, he may **bind a demon**, to force it to remain beyond the end of the current scene (the usual duration for summonings), effectively becoming a permanent relationship on your character sheet.

You don't usually have to make a dice roll to bind a demon: the investment of AP “cements” the relationship on your character sheet. However, if the demon **doesn't want to be bound**, you should make an overcome roll of an appropriate skill (Command, Provoke, Rapport, perhaps even Deceive, and so on) against the demon's peak skill or other appropriate skill (depending on the skill you use) to induce it to enter into the binding. You can make the overcome roll into a contest (page 203) if the situation is dramatic enough. On a failure, the demon simply departs forthwith; on a fumble, it attacks you!

There are two main forms of binding: binding into an object, and binding a demon in its physical form. Select which you want when you bind a demon; you may not change it thereafter without releasing the demon and then re-summoning and re-binding it.

Binding a Demon Into an Object

Demons don't have to arrive in their physical bodies when summoned; they can be induced to inhabit an inanimate physical object like a statue, amulet, or weapon or item of armour, or even a musical instrument. Objects which have been blessed, prepared, or which are otherwise auspicious in some way, have an aspect that makes them better binding objects than ordinary items. When a demon agrees to be bound into an object, it vanishes into the object in question, which then acquires a markedly magical appearance based on the nature of the demon inhabiting it, gaining or modifying an aspect accordingly.

When a demon is bound into an object, the owner of the binding may use its relationship abilities when touching the object, as follows:

- Receive teamwork bonuses from the bound demon's skills. For example, you may gain a teamwork bonus to your Melee Combat skill when wielding a demon sword.
- Use the bound demon's stunts as if you knew them yourself.
- You **can't** use any of the bound demon's special abilities, unless they're directly related to the nature of the binding object. Note that this does mean that, if you bind a demon with an extremely tough skin or carapace into a suit of armour, that armour **does** become correspondingly more protective. Demon armour is formidable, although its consequences (if any) are the first to be damaged, releasing the demon before the underlying armour takes damage.
- You **may not** take advantage of the demon's own stress tracks and consequences. However, the binding object **will** have the stress and consequences of the demon bound within it, making it supernaturally strong.
- You **may not** communicate with the demon unless you use the appropriate cantrip or stunt.

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For example, before Eglasiyan summoned the powerful war demon above, he had a 30AP serapai bound into a demon sword. Those 30AP were spent as follows:

*GLOWBLADE GOLD, DEMON
 BROADSWORD*

*Glistening Golden Demon Sword aspect
 (8AP)*

*Command 1, Melee Combat 1, Physique 1,
 Provoke 1, Willpower 1 (10AP)*

Mindlink power stunt (4AP)

*Integral Weaponry SI+4 (8AP): added to the
 broadsword SI of +3, for a total SI+7)*

Total AP: 30

.....

Demon Weapons Are Deadly!

Note that it's not just your characters that can use bound demons! Enemy holy warriors and other elite champions may often have demon armour and weapons, too—so be prepared!

Binding a Demon In Physical Form

Demons arrive in their physical bodies, and may be induced to remain in the world in that form. As above, binding in this way happens automatically when you invest AP, unless the demon does not wish to be bound, in which case you must force it.

A demon bound into its physical form has the appearance described in the demon builds in the *Guide to Future Earth* (see page 321 for an example). The binder isn't in physical contact with the demon, and must verbally command it (or use magic like Mindlink). You don't usually need to make a dice roll to command an already bound demon to act on your behalf, unless the demon is implacably hostile, or the actions you're proposing run totally counter to its nature. The binder may use the abilities of a demon bound into its physical form as follows:

- Command the demon to use any of its skills and stunts on your behalf. You may give the demon a teamwork bonus from your own skills if appropriate.
- Command the demon to use any of its special abilities on your behalf.
- Command the demon to protect you in conflicts. You may declare that any stress damage or consequences you would normally suffer are instead suffered by the demon.

Summoning and Binding a Demon For Someone Else

It's possible for a character to summon a demon, and then for another character to provide the AP that power the binding. In such a case, the character providing the AP becomes the beneficiary of the binding.

Demons will only voluntarily allow themselves to be bound to worshippers of their god—you must have an appropriate **permission**, like an aspect or community relationship. If the character doesn't have such a permission, the demon will resist the binding, and will be hostile if it escapes or is released.



Wresting Control of a Bound Demon From its Owner

Certain magics (like the Usurpation of Demonic Control sorcery spell) let you seize control of a bound demon owned by another character, thereby making the demon your own. These magics involve a mental stress conflict with the owner of the bound demon, in which you attack using the appropriate temple cantrip, stunt, or sorcery spell for that demon. The owner may defend with Willpower or the appropriate power skill. It's the owner's choice whether to attack back in the same way, or to attack using other methods, but either way attacking back is recommended!

If the demon is voluntarily bound, it will provide its owner with appropriate teamwork bonuses on all appropriate actions; if hostile, it may provide the teamwork bonuses to the opponent trying to wrest control!

For a demon bound into an object, the opponent must also be touching the object. If the current owner of the binding isn't also touching the object, only the demon resists the control attempt—if it wants to! For a demon bound into its physical body, the opponent must be able to communicate with the demon.

If the demon's owner is **taken out** or **concedes**, the opponent must make a command roll to take over the demon binding; on a failure, the demon either attacks the opponent or departs, as above. If the demon alone is resisting the usurpation attempt, and it is taken out or concedes, the opponent takes control of the binding immediately; no additional command roll is required. If the opponent is **taken out** or **concedes**, the owner retains control of the binding.

If a demon's owner loses control of a bound demon in this way, he or she also loses control of the AP invested in that demon. This can be expensive! If the demon is subsequently destroyed, dismissed, or otherwise departs, the original owner regains the invested AP, but not until then.

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For example, Taleraz Kunazel has taken Ukhta the Fire Warrior captive, and casts a Usurpation of Fire Demon Control sorcery spell on her demon flamberge. He lays his hands on the sword, and rolls an attack action with his Change By Fire 1 power skill. As Ukhta is not touching the weapon herself, the fire demon within only defends with its own Change By Fire 1 skill. This is a mental stress conflict; if Taleraz wins, he gains control of the demon flamberge, and Ukhta loses access to the 10AP invested in the binding.

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Taking Control of a Found Bound Demon

Sometimes items containing bound demons are found: demon swords and demon armour on the bodies of the fallen or in ancient ruins, or even bound demons found in the lairs of noted sorcerers. Characters knowing the same power skill as the demon or an appropriate sorcery spell may attempt to command such bound demons to work for them, becoming their own bound demons.

In this way, a character effectively "inherits" the large quantity of AP invested in the bound demon. However, if the demon should subsequently be released, the

character does not get to keep the AP. See, however, the "Harvest of the Binding" sorcery spell for an exception (page 331).

Taking over a bound demon is an overcome roll (or contest) of the power skill used to command the demon, unless the demon does not wish to resist, as described above. On a failure or fumble, the demon attacks you. It may not escape unless the binding object is broken or it is released.

Releasing a Demon

You may release a demon you control at will. It takes one exchange, and is considered an action. The binding is broken, and the demon emerges in its true form. You may dismiss it immediately, or command it to perform a service for you, but otherwise it will depart at the end of the scene. If for any reason the demon does not wish to depart, you can command it to do so.

Additionally, if the demon's binding object is broken, it's immediately released. If it's badly disposed to you, it will immediately attack you; otherwise, you may attempt to command it to perform an action for you as above. It then departs at the end of the scene.

Dismissing a Demon

Once a previously bound demon departs, whether slain, released, or dismissed, everyone who summoned it gets their advancement points back. The characters getting their AP back, wherever they are, realise immediately that one of their bindings has been broken. They won't know exactly which one, but they may be able to guess based on the number of AP they receive back. However, see the "Harvest of the Binding" sorcery spell (page 331) for a possible exception.



Limits to Demon Binding

There's no limit to the number of demons you may summon and bind, other than the AP investment required. However, a given community will usually only lend you AP for one summoning at a time.

Difficulties Controlling a Bound Demon

Demons are strong-willed beings. Usually a bound demon will accede to your commands if treated with respect but, especially in the case of the more unruly demons, like those of Turmoil, Darkness, Fire, and Destruction, they may occasionally try to tell you what to do!

This struggle for dominance is particularly true if the demon hasn't agreed to the binding. At a crucial moment in play, the Chronicler may compel such a bound demon aspect to declare that the demon demands a certain course of action from its binder; if the binder disagrees, he must engage in a contest of Willpower to force the recalcitrant demon to obey, requiring actions and distracting him from the business at hand.

Demon Possession

*Demonic possession is the epitome of the mystic principle of Domination and of the terrible power of the Hegemonist. None of the demons of the gods of the Great Compact engage in this practice—it runs counter to their entire cosmological raison d'être. However, there's one greatly feared entity that **does** engage in the theft of mortal minds and the possession of their bodies—the dreaded Fleshbound, the Demons of Domination of the Great Hegemonist.*

Elementals

Elementals are creatures formed exclusively from one of the seven mystical elements of the cosmos—void, darkness, aether, fire, earth, water, or air. They share certain characteristics with demons, but possess little or no intelligence. They exist naturally throughout the cosmos, including on Earth, in places where sufficient quantities of their native element are concentrated. The seven types of elemental are the flay, shades, hellions, salamanders, gnomes, undines, and sylphs, often just known as void elementals, darkness elementals, and so on.

Worshippers of gods with a strong elemental connection, like Babisiya, Regos, Dafur, Emeldias, Nimur, Belorias, and the Void Cult, may summon and command elementals. Additionally, shamanic **elemental cults** throughout the Springtide Civilisations revere the “elemental lords” (Lord Vile, Hel, Bab, Agni, Malud, Nim, and Bel) and their servitors. The Elementalists of Zor sorcery school (page 342) also explores the powers of these strange beings.

Elementals may be communicated with, summoned, commanded, dismissed and bound using stunts and sorcery spells in the same way as demons. Elemental Cult writeups can be found in the *Guide to Future Earth*, and example elemental stat blocks in the *Chronicler's Guide*. Special rules for dealing with elementals are given below.

Commanding Elementals

Compared to demons, elementals are pretty dumb. Left to their own devices, they'll do what accumulations of that element would normally do: fire elementals will burn where they stand, water elementals will soak into the ground or form a puddle or pond, and so on. If you want a “free” elemental (ie one that's not bound into an object) to perform a specific action, you must control and guide it, requiring time and concentration, and usually a dice roll.

Failure to command an elemental usually just results in the elemental doing its thing. If you've summoned a large salamander or flay into the middle of a city, that can be catastrophic, of course! Additionally, if the elemental was previously bound, it may simply depart, which can be inconvenient. If you fumble your command roll, the elemental will likely attack you before departing.

Elementals automatically always have a body, made of their element. So, if you summon an elemental, **it comes in that body**; you can't bind it to that body. You **can** bind an elemental into an object, however; the object in question takes on features of the element, as appropriate (it may become hot and covered in flames, wet to the touch, extremely shiny, etc).

You can temporarily release an elemental from its binding, but you must command it to return again afterwards. Shamans prefer to avoid this, as they may lose the elemental entirely if they fail.

Example Temple: The Temple of Regos

Mystical Principle of Command

The All-Lord, The Conqueror, God of War

Colours: Blue and gold.

Holy Symbol: Golden Sceptre.

High Holy Day: First holiday in Gabisa (*The Festival of the Great Compact*).

Holy Day: Each Rashadi.

Regos is Emperor of the Gods. He commands and rules over loyal subjects, wishing to bring the light of his rule into benighted lands. He seeks a well-ordered, smoothly run society, and ritual, pageantry, and bureaucracy are important to him. He's worshipped by rulers, the nobility, and the great houses, as well as by military commanders and soldiers. His temples are glorious and martial, and choirs and trumpets accompany his ceremonies. He commands the Serapai, Demons of War.

Mythical Deeds

- *When Regos Inspired the People To Fight.*
- *When Regos Won Victory on Terchus Plain.*

Temple Cantrips

⌘ **Awe Crowds:** Enhance attempts to impress or oppress large groups.

⌘ **Command Serapai:** Make Command manoeuvres to communicate with war demons and to convey simple orders, or to enhance Provoke or Rapport attempts to command them.

⌘ **Decaim Loudly:** Your stentorian voice carries widely—you can communicate your message over great distances.

⌘ **Inspire Loyalty:** Enhance your Rapport attempts to generate loyalty in others.

⌘ **Lead Troops Into Battle:** Enhance your ability to bestow advantages on those you lead into battle.

⌘ **Prevail in Battle:** Give the impression that you're prevailing in a battle situation.

⌘ **Rally Troops:** Rally troops into a cohesive unit or around a particular location.

⌘ **Resist Damage:** Help others defend in conflicts.

Temple Stunts

♦ **Battlefield Healing:** Remove physical stress and mild consequences during battle.

♦ **Command Chelother:** Use your Command power on *chelothers* (page 245).

♦ **Follow Me! Requires Your Community Needs You!** Use Command to make *Assimilate* overcome and manoeuvre actions when recruiting a sub-community (see the **Chronicler's Guide**). Affects communities up to Size 5 without incurring scale penalties, as long as they can hear you.

♦ **Heal Chelother:** Requires Command Chelother. Use Command to heal mild consequences on *chelothers* (page 245).

♦ **Mindlink:** Use Command to communicate with your forces in a battle, even if they're out of sight. This includes relaying comms between them, as long as you take an action to facilitate it.

♦ **Oath:** Create an oath between two parties (each may roll Willpower to resist) which lasts until broken, at which point it becomes an immediate consequence which may only be removed by a priest of Regos.

♦ **See Battle:** Use Command instead of Investigate / Notice to see what's going on across the battlefield.

♦ **Summon Serapai:** You may summon serapai war demons. See page 313 and the war demon build below.

♦ **Warlord:** Use Command in actions affecting communities like armies (see the **Chronicler's Guide**). Affects communities up to Size 5 without incurring scale penalties.

War Priests

Regos's martial priests accompany his legions into battle, their war demons key to legion tactics. They're trained in the battle sceptre, also the holy symbol manifesting Regos's divine powers. Battlefield healers and field medics, war priests also incarnate Regos to terrify and target whole troop units.

Essence: Embodiment of War For the Sake of Conquest, Divine Servitor Guiding the Legions to War.

Shadow: For the Glory of the Empire; Distracted by the Serapai Call To War.

Skills: *Command, Lore, Melee Combat.*

Stunts: *Battlefield Healing, See Battle, Tactics.*

Equipment: *Battle sceptre, scale hauberk, open helmet.*

Paladins

Regos's holy warriors protect his temples and priesthods. Although they fight with the legions, they're separate, answerable only to the high priests. They're headquartered in the temples instead of legion barracks, and participate in services.

Paladins ride chelothers into battle, armed with lances, or even flamelances if high rank.

Essence: Lord of the Fifth Chelother Lancers; Oath-Sworn Warrior Monk Waging War For Peace.

Shadow: All Questions Have Martial Answers; Trained to the Saddle.

Skills: *Command, Melee Combat, Ride.*

Stunts: *Chelother, Cleave, Formation Fighting.*

Equipment: *Plate cuirass, full helmet, cavalry lance, broadsword, chelother, round shield.*

Regos Avatar Build

Select from this build when creating your avatar of Regos (see page 310).

Aspects: Conqueror, Commander, and Lord of War; Bring the Light of Rule to the Benighted; Ritual and Pageantry; Lord of the Serapai.

Skills: *Command, Melee Combat, Provoke.*

Stunts: *Mindlink, Oath, Warlord.*

Miracle:

★ **Regos on Terchus Plain:** *If you're leading fighters into battle against Entropy and / or Domination, you may use Regos on Terchus Plain as an aspect affecting an entire zone, plus one zone per shift on a Command roll, up to the entire battlefield. The aspect is effective for the whole battle, and may be invoked on attacks and defences; it also acts as an obstacle to every attack made by the forces of Entropy or Domination. Ranks of war priests may combine their powers when using this miracle, aiming to achieve a critical aspect affecting the entire battlefield.*

Serapai War Demon Build

These towering shining warriors of solid gold support Regos to conquer, rule, and wage war. See page 312.

Typical Aspects: Martial Humanoid of Solid Gold; Shines With an Inner Light; Exhorts the Faithful to Eternal War.

Typical Skills: *Command, Melee Combat, Physique.*

Typical Stunts: *Battlefield Healing, Mindlink, See Battle.*

Typical Special Abilities: *Integral Armour, Integral Weaponry.*

Bound Elementals

Many summoners bind elementals into objects, usually shamanistic fetishes like statuettes and effigies, bundles of bones, and so on. As with demons, binding an elemental into an object requires no additional dice roll other than the initial roll to summon, simply the expenditure of AP. Bound elementals enable you to:

- Receive teamwork bonuses from any of the bound elemental's skills. For example, you may gain a teamwork bonus to your Physique when wielding a bound gnome fetish.
- Use the bound elemental's stunts as if you knew them yourself.

Note that:

- You **don't** gain access to the bound elemental's special abilities, unless they're directly related to the nature of the binding object. For example, if you bind a salamander into a spear, that spear **does** become correspondingly more damaging because it's now searingly hot.
- You **may not** take advantage of the elemental's own stress tracks and consequences. However, the binding object **will** have the stress and consequences of the elemental bound within it, making it supernaturally strong.
- You **may not** communicate with the elemental unless you use the appropriate cantrip or stunt.
- Scale effects don't apply when using a bound elemental's powers, regardless of the elemental's own size. They work at your own scale.

Elemental Size and Fusion

Most demons are roughly human-sized, other than the Greater Demons (see the *Chronicler's Guide*); however, elementals range in size from the tiniest spark to an enormous mountain or lake. Additionally, elementals can flow together, forming larger elementals, or split apart to form smaller ones.

When you summon an elemental, you may freely choose the size of the elemental you're trying to summon. While it may be tempting to summon the biggest elemental you can, that's not always a good idea. Scale effects apply even to the summoning rolls for demons and elementals, so summoning a massive elemental is much more difficult than summoning a human-sized one. Additionally, even if you do succeed in summoning it, you're going to want to command it, too—and scale effects apply there, too. You need a very high power skill and a lot of magical assistance if you want to deal with the larger elementals.

Binding an elemental into an object, of course, removes the need for all the command rolls. However, bound elementals don't cause scale effects; you may have a water elemental as big as a lake bound into your *Silverfish Fetish*, but you won't get any extra Hero Dice for using its abilities from that fetish. You can, of course, release the elemental from the binding—you'd subsequently have to command it to get it to obey you, but maybe with your lake-sized undine, just letting it wash over your assembled foes might be enough.

Commanding an Elemental To Fuse or Split

You may take an action and make a command roll to command an elemental to fuse with another elemental, or to split into two or more elementals. The difficulty equals the size of elemental to be fused or split into: scale effects apply. If the elemental resists for any reason, it uses its corresponding power skill instead.

For more on elementals fusing and splitting, see the "Fusion" special ability in the *Chronicler's Guide*.

SORCERY

Sorcery is a “scientific” approach to magic. It requires no natural talent; instead, sorcerers study gestures, words, sounds, mental states and correspondences which allow them to manipulate the cosmic powers in precise ways, known as **spells**. Sorcery spells are more restrictive than divine magic, but in many ways more powerful.

Sorcery is studied in **schools**; you can find an example on page 342, and many more in the *Guide to Future Earth*. A member of a sorcery school has access to a **build** of power skills, stunts, and spells. You use a power skill to cast spells governed by that power.

As a beginning sorcerer character, you’ll have already learned spells governed by a given power skill equal in number to that power skill level. In other words, if you’ve a level-3 power skill, you can pick three spells belonging to that power when you create your character. You can find a list of sorcery spells beginning on page 326.

Sorcery schools include **sorcerous colleges**, where you can study spells from more than one power skill; and **temple sorcery schools**, where temple sorcerers study the sorcerous applications of their god’s powers, focusing on just one power skill. Initiates and priests of temples may also learn sorcery, but it’s fairly uncommon—learning sorcery **and** divine magic requires a considerable investment of time, and also requires you to have **two** power aspects (one for divine magic, one for sorcery). Initiates and priests are usually formally forbidden from learning any power skills other than that pertaining to their god, which they use for both divine magic and sorcery. For dark historical reasons, sorcerers are feared and suspected the more power skills they learn.

Sorcerers often join temples as affiliate **temple sorcerers** (page 121). They can’t use divine magic unless they take a corresponding divine power aspect, but can learn temple sorcery.

Sorcerers aren’t automatically **natural talents** (page 269). If a sorcerer wishes to improvise magic like a natural talent, he or she must have **two** power aspects: one for sorcery, and one for natural talent magic. Most sorcerers just learn and cast sorcery spells using their power skill or skills.

What’s a Spell?

A spell is a precise deployment of the magical power of a cosmic principle. Unlike divine magic, which is improvisational, sorcery is rigid in its application: a spell usually does just one thing.

To **cast a spell**, you make an action roll with a power skill: either overcome, manoeuvre, attack, or defend, as specified by the spell description. **Unless otherwise indicated, a sorcery spell, like other power skill use, has a default difficulty of 1.** This may be modified by range, duration, number of targets, and other factors. Each sorcery spell has a single, limited **spell effect**, specifying how it manifests its governing power skill in that action. The spell effects are: Absorb, Analyse, Combine, Control, Create, Deny, Destroy, Detect, Summon, Transform, Very Long Range, and Zone Effect. To cast (or even learn) a spell which has a given spell effect, you must first know the corresponding **spell effect stunt** for that spell effect. Targets of sorcery spells may resist as described in “Resisting Magic” on page 274.



Spell Effect Stunts

This section describes the spell effect stunts in general terms; you can see precisely how each of these is used in combination with a power skill and action in the sorcery spell descriptions beginning on page 326. By definition, every sorcerer knows at least one spell effect stunt; most know several, and the most powerful eventually master all of them. You can learn a spell effect stunt just like any other stunt; your sorcery school will teach you these as you need them.

Absorb

You absorb the manifestation of your spell's power skill into yourself, sapping the power's energy from the target (life energy, death energy, heat, cold, time, etc). If you also know the Control spell effect stunt, you may re-use this absorbed energy—see below.

- As an attack action, you may inflict stress on your target. On a special success, you may reduce the value of your hit by one to gain an *Absorbed Energy* boost.
- As a manoeuvre, you gain *Absorbed Energy*.

Example spells: Consumption of the Life Force, Extinguishing of Flame.

Analyse

You analyse a manifestation of the power you can perceive. This is usually a manoeuvre, creating an aspect.

Example spells: Comprehension of Sorcery, Evaluation of Gems, Identification of Creatures, Identification of Enemies, Reading of Thoughts, Unlocking of the Secrets of the Artefacts.

Combine

You cast a single spell, taking a single action, which combines two or more spell effect stunts you already know. The spell difficulty increases by +2 for each additional spell effect stunt after the first.

For example, a Slathing of Fire spell combines the Create Fire and Control Fire spell effects into a single spell, cast at a +2 difficulty.

Example spells: Abjuration of Darkness, Animation of Bones, Calling of the Tidal Wave, Calming of the Flood, Creation of the Familiar, Evocation of Ethereal Arms, Healing of Physical Wounds, Invocation of the Blizzard of Knives, Invocation of the Rain of Fire, Reaping of the Whirlwind, Recreation of the Shattered Mind, Restoration of the Damaged Mind, Slathing of Fire, Soothing of the Troubled Mind, Traversing of the Dimensions.

Control

You manipulate or command a manifestation of the power, using any of the four **actions** (page 199). This may include a manifestation you've absorbed using the Absorb spell effect; for example, you may use Hurling of Fire to hurl fire you've created, or a fire adjacent to you, or fire you've absorbed using the Extinguishing of Flame spell.

Example spells: Animation of Bones, Commanding of Armies, Commanding of Demons and Elementals, Compelling of Submission Before the Law, Corporeal Binding of Demons, Creation of the Familiar, Dismissal of Demons and Elementals, Domination of the Undead, Evocation of the Entangling Defenders, Healing of Physical Wounds, Hobbling of the Animal Mind, Hurling of Fire, Invocation of the Blizzard of Knives, Invocation of the Tempest, Object Binding of Demons and Elementals, Recreation of the Shattered Mind, Restoration of the Damaged Mind, Slathing of Flame, Soothing of the Troubled Mind.

Create

You create or otherwise call into existence a manifestation of the power, seemingly out of nowhere.

Example spells: Barring of the Way, Chamber of Purple Shadows, Creation of the Familiar, Evocation of Ethereal Arms, Healing of Physical Wounds, Illumination of Things, Invocation of the Blizzard of Knives, Invocation of the Rain of Fire, Invocation of the Tempest, Raising of Fire, Reaping of the Whirlwind, Recreation of the Shattered Mind, Restoration of the Damaged Mind, Slathing of Flame, Soothing of the Troubled Mind, Vivification of Life Energies.

Deny

You prevent the approach, touch, or manifestation of the power, or drive it from you if it's already there. This effect is often used with manoeuvres or defend actions.

Example spells: Banishment Beyond the Veil, Calming of the Flood, Exportation of Fire, Negation of Magic, Preservation From Decay, Refutation of Cosmic Forces, Repelling of the Undead, Scaring Away of Animals.

Destroy

You remove a manifestation of the power from existence, or cause a manifestation of the power to remove manifestation of other powers from existence. This effect is often used with attack or manoeuvre actions.

Example spells: Abjuration of Darkness, Calling of the Thunderbolt, Calling of the Tidal Wave, Destruction of Fire by Darkness, Discorporation of the Undead, Enfeeblement of the Mind, Intensification of Entropy, Purpling of the Mind, Tearing By Tooth and Claw.

Detect

You magically detect a manifestation of the power. This is usually a manoeuvre.

Example spells: Calling of the Path, Detection of Ambushes, Finding of Animals, Revelation of Toxins, Tourmaline Sight.

Summon

You summon a specific entity, like a specific demon or elemental, into existence. By default this creates an aspect; you may further empower the summoned entity by spending AP on its special abilities. See page 312 for more on summoned entities.

Example spells: Summoning of Demons and Elementals (various spells).

Transform

You add a condition aspect to the spell's target based on a specific manifestation of the power. This is a manoeuvre.

Example spells: Animation of Bones, Conjunction of Time Past, Evocation of Ethereal Arms, Growing of Wings, Transformation of the Balequ, Transformation of the Body, Turning to Stone.

Very Long Range

You must employ this spell effect in a **combined** spell. It allows you to cast a sorcery spell at a range greater than R4 (see page 271). Each additional zone of range costs you +1 point of mental stress, and increases the difficulty of the spell by +1. See Table 13-3: Expanded Range Table (page 272).

Example spells: Traversing of the Dimensions.

Zone Effect

You must employ this spell effect in a **combined** spell. It allows your spell to affect an entire zone; the difficulty increases by +2 as with any combined spell, and the radius of effect may be increased by +1 zone for each additional +2 difficulty increase. The maximum number of zones affected is equal to your power skill.

For example: A sorcerer with Change By Fire 4 may cast Invocation of the Rain of Fire with an effect 4 zones in radius (including the current zone), with a difficulty increase of +8.

Example spells: Abjuration of Darkness, Calling of the Tidal Wave, Calming of the Flood, Intensification of Entropy, Invocation of Lord Payorian's Dance, Invocation of the Blizzard of Knives, Invocation of the Rain of Fire, Invocation of the Tempest, Reaping of the Whirlwind, Scorching of the Earth, Stomping to the Ground.

The Sorcerous Grimoires

This section lists spells your sorcerer character may learn, indicating which schools and temples they may be learned from. Some spells may be cast using more than one power skill; pick which one you're going to use when you learn the spell.

These example spells aren't exhaustive; see "Creating Your Own Spells" in the *Guide to Future Earth* for making your own.

Spell Parameters

- **Name:** Sorcerers give their spells bombastic names, conveying their power and very precise effect.
- **Power Skill:** Use this power skill to cast the spell. Some spells may be cast with more than one power skill; these are effectively different spells, and you should choose which version you learn when you acquire the spell. Unless otherwise specified, the default difficulty of a sorcery spell is difficulty 1.
- **Action:** Whether your power skill roll is an overcome, manoeuvre, attack, or defend action.
- **Spell Effect:** Which limited spell effect results from the casting; **combined** spells may have more than one effect, at a +2 increase in difficulty per additional spell effect stunt after the first.
- **Source:** The community claiming ownership of the spell, and where sorcerers must go to learn it. "Elementalists" refers to the Elementalists of Zor (page 342); "Seekers" refers to the Seekers Beyond the Veil; "Thaumaturgists" refers to the Ward of Thaumaturgists (see the *Guide to Future Earth* for both these schools). There are many sorcerous schools; spells may also be found independently in **grimoires** (see the *Chronicler's Guide*); and sorcerers may teach spells to others, although this is met with severe reprisals from the owning community if discovered!
- **Description:** A short description of what the spell does, what it looks like, and any special features.

Sorcery Spells of Summoning and Binding

A number of sorcery spells are used for summoning, commanding, dismissing, and binding elementals and demons. Although these are described below as generic spells, in reality there are separate versions of these spells for each type of demon and elemental. There's no single "Summoning of Demons" spell, but instead spells such as "Summoning of the Agnapei", "Summoning of the Sylphs", and so on. You must learn each such spell separately if you wish to summon and deal with more than one type of demon or elemental.

The spells which function this way are: Commanding of Demons and Elementals, Corporeal Binding of Demons, Dismissal of Demons and Elementals, Object Binding of Demons and Elementals, Summoning of Demons and Elementals, Usurpation of Demonic or Elemental Control.

Abjuration of Darkness

- ◆ *Change by Fire / Command, Manoeuvre, Combine (Destruction, Zone Effect)*
- ◆ *Dafur / Regos; Elementalists*
- ◆ This spell banishes darkness in one or more zones, dismissing magical darkness but also creating diffuse lighting in conditions of natural darkness.

Animation of Bones

- ◆ *Eternity, Manoeuvre, Combine (Control, Transform)*
- ◆ *Staros; Seekers*
- ◆ This spell animates whatever bones you have to hand. You knit them together in the shape you want, and either give them a simple command or remote control them. This is a manoeuvre creating an aspect, but you can also use AP to add special abilities.

Banishment Beyond the Veil

- ◆ *Entropy, Attack, Deny*
- ◆ *Seekers*
- ◆ This is an attack spell causing physical stress damage to **any** being originating Beyond the Veil. It doesn't dismiss entities like the Dismissal of Demons and Elementals spell, but may encourage targets to depart voluntarily!

Barring of the Way

- ◆ *Darkness, Manoeuvre, Create*
- ◆ *Babisiya; Elementarists, Thaumaturgists*
- ◆ This spell raises a barrier of physical darkness which resists passage. It can be cast on a corridor as a standard barrier, or on a locked door or gate to make it even harder to pass.

Biting of the Earth Jaw

- ◆ *Growth, Manoeuvre, Control*
- ◆ *Emeldias; Elementarists*
- ◆ The ground opens and clamps around your feet, trapping you in place.

Calling of the Path

- ◆ *Fate, Overcome, Detect*
- ◆ *Eshtikar; Seekers*
- ◆ This spell allows you to perceive the immediate events which lie ahead of you. You must simply stand still and concentrate without interruption. Each round, you may call guidance and directions to your allies based on your foresight, by rolling and distributing your shifts as bonuses to the rolls they make. Your allies must be able to hear and understand you. If you're struck or otherwise distracted before you can roll in a given round, you lose your insight for that round.

Calling of the Thunderbolt

- ◆ *Turmoil, Attack, Destroy*
- ◆ *Belorias; Elementarists*
- ◆ This spell allows you to summon a bolt of lightning to strike a given target. Your spell use faces an obstacle if you attempt to cast it underground or indoors. If you cast it outdoors during a storm, you may invoke that storm for increased effect. Armour doesn't protect against damage done; and any metal armour worn *increases* the damage the target takes by its SR!

Calling of the Tidal Wave

- ◆ *Cyclicity, Attack, Combine (Destroy, Zone Effect)*
- ◆ *Nimur; Elementarists*
- ◆ This spell causes a sizable body of water (a river, lake, or stretch of sea) to form a tidal wave which smashes into every target in one or more zones. Armour protects against the impact damage, but targets will subsequently face a *Submerged* obstacle for the remainder of the scene and may face drowning.

Calming of the Flood

- ◆ *Cyclicity, Manoeuvre, Combine (Deny, Zone Effect)*
- ◆ *Nimur; Elementarists*
- ◆ This spell causes floodwaters to abate. It can work against water elementals, sea demons, rainstorms and tides, as well as the effects of the Calling of the Tidal Wave spell.

Chamber of Purple Shadows

- ◆ *Void, Manoeuvre, Create*
- ◆ *Void Cult; Seekers; Elementarists (Forbidden), Thaumaturgists (Forbidden)*
- ◆ This spell creates an extradimensional hidey-hole, literally a chamber filled with purple shadows, roughly 5 metres a side and 3 metres high, comprising a single zone. It's furnished in accordance with your nature. You can stock objects here, and even living things; there's enough breathable air for roughly *A Week*. You must cast this spell when you want to put anything in or take it out.

Commanding of Armies

- ◆ *Command, Overcome, Control*
- ◆ *Regos*
- ◆ This spell lets you command an army to undertake a single action. The army doesn't have to be able to hear you for the spell to work, and there are no scale effects for armies up to Size 5.

Commanding of Demons and Elementals

- ◆ *Corresponding Power Skill, Overcome, Control*
- ◆ *Many schools, depending on demon or elemental; temple sorcery*
- ◆ This spell lets you command a demon (page 318) or elemental (page 319). You must learn a separate version of this spell for each type.

Compelling of Submission Before the Law

- ◆ *Law, Manoeuvre, Control*
- ◆ *Ankadar*
- ◆ This spell forces a target to obey a law you expound to them, placing a condition aspect on them. The first invoke or compel is free.

Comprehension of Sorcery

- ◆ *Wisdom, Manoeuvre, Analyse*
- ◆ *Konfu; Thaumaturgists*
- ◆ This spell identifies a sorcery spell either being cast or currently in effect. It doesn't work on divine or natural magic.

Conjuration of Time Past

- ◆ *Time, Manoeuvre, Transform*
- ◆ *Unthar*
- ◆ This spell causes your consciousness to be invisibly present in a past moment. You may not interact with that moment, but may observe, analyse, and deduce (including casting appropriate spells). You may not move around. By default the past moment is only *A Few Minutes* in the past, but each shift on your roll may send you **two** steps further back in time on the time ladder. Thirteen shifts could send you back five hundred years!

Consumption of the Life Force

- ◆ *Domination / Entropy / Eternity / Narcissism, Attack, Absorb*
- ◆ *Minisia, Staros; the Great Hegemonist, the Reaver Gods; Elementalists (Forbidden)*
- ◆ This spell drains the life force of a target into yourself, inflicting physical stress damage. On a special success, you may reduce the damage inflicted by 1 point and gain an *Absorbed Life Force* boost.

Corporeal Binding of Demons

- ◆ *Corresponding Power Skill, Manoeuvre, Control*
- ◆ *Many schools, depending on demon; temple sorcery*
- ◆ This spell allows you to bind a specific type of demon into its physical form (see page 317). You must learn a separate version of this spell for each type of demon.

Creation of the Familiar

- ◆ *Domination, Manoeuvre, Combine (Create, Control)*
- ◆ *Forbidden Sorcery, Evil Sorcerers*
- ◆ This spell clearly crosses the line of dominating the wills of sentient creatures, and its abuse easily leads to corruption. Hence it's a forbidden spell; in the Springtide Civilisations, only evil sorcerers, servitors of the Hegemonist, the Reaver Gods, witches and black magicians create familiars; even having one is enough to get you lynched by a hysterical mob. This spell works on a confined or trapped animal; it awakens it to greater intelligence, dominates its will and subordinates it to the caster, and finally binds the familiar to the sorcerer in a relationship, represented by the investment of at least 8AP on the base aspect (page 312). The animal usually resists all of the above, with a +4 bonus due to the complexity of the spell, which is usually cast as a ritual (page 153). On a fumble, the animal goes wild and attacks you, or it's created as a familiar but you gain a corruption aspect (see the *Chronicle's Guide*).

Curse of Rending

- ◆ *Void, Manoeuvre, Summon*
- ◆ *Void Cult; Seekers; Elementalists (Forbidden)*
- ◆ This spell creates a condition aspect on the target, cursing them to be hunted down and torn to pieces by *Invisible Demonic Creatures*. The creatures will hover invisibly around the target, waiting for it to be injured; when it is, the Chronicler may invoke the condition aspect to increase the severity of the wound affecting the target by one level, as gashes and slashes appear in the target's flesh, caused by a host of invisible foes. Points of physical stress become a minor physical consequence; a minor consequence becomes a moderate, and so on. This can easily (and quickly!) be lethal. The condition aspect will not disappear on its own, but must be removed by magic.

Destruction of Fire by Darkness

- ◆ *Darkness, Attack, Destroy*
- ◆ *Babisiya; Elementalists*
- ◆ This spell uses the suffocating, freezing power of darkness to dampen and extinguish fires. It damages creatures of fire, fire hazards, and so on.

Detection of Ambushes

- ◆ *Command / Unification of Opposites, Manoeuvre, Detect*
- ◆ *Regos; Thaumaturgists*
- ◆ This spell lets you spot anyone trying to ambush you. Only you detect the ambush, and the targets don't know they've been detected.

Discorporation of the Undead

- ◆ *Death, Attack, Destroy*
- ◆ *Belom*
- ◆ This spell destroys the forces of undeath animating any undead, causing them to collapse into inanimate flesh or bones, or simply to vanish. It's resisted by the Eternity power skill; against targets without that skill, it's simply an attack against difficulty 0.

Dismissal of Demons and Elementals

- ◆ *Corresponding Power Skill, Overcome, Control*
- ◆ *Many schools, depending on demon or elemental; temple sorcery*
- ◆ This spell lets you dismiss a demon (page 312) or elemental (page 319). There's a separate spell for each type. If the demon or elemental is bound into an object, you must be touching that object. The spell is resisted by the demon's or elemental's peak skill, with a teamwork bonus from the summoner's appropriate power skill, if the summoner is present. If the spell succeeds, the demon or elemental discorporates and returns to where it came from; it may later be summoned again.

Domination of the Undead

- ◆ *Domination / Eternity, Manoeuvre, Control*
- ◆ *Staros; the Great Hegemonist; Seekers*
- ◆ This spell puts one or more undead *Under Your Control*; you may invoke the aspect to control the actions of the target for a single round. Against a major NPC, this may be a contest (check with your Chronicler). On a fumble or a critical success, you also incur a corruption aspect (see the *Chronicler's Guide*).



Door Beyond the Veil

- ◆ *Void, Manoeuvre, Create*
- ◆ *Seekers; Elementalists (Forbidden)*
- ◆ This forbidden magic opens a black gaping hole in reality, at least a couple of metres in diameter. It just hangs there impossibly in mid-air. Anything thrown into the hole simply vanishes! If you put an arm in, etc, then you automatically incur a physical consequence as your flesh freezes; if you're already suffering consequences, this can kill! In combat, if you can force your opponent even to just touch the Door Beyond the Veil, they'll incur a consequence; if you can somehow push them through, then they're gone. There are tales that the Door Beyond the Veil is actually a gate to other worlds. If so, it appears to be only one way...

Dousing of Flame

- ◆ *Narcissism / Void, Attack, Absorb*
- ◆ *Minisia; Void Cult; Elementalists*
- ◆ This spell directly attacks fire and flame. It will damage creatures of fire like salamanders and *agnapei* fire demons, as well as putting out natural fires.

Enchantment of the Lord of the Bow

- ◆ *Passion, Overcome, Create*
- ◆ *Payorian*
- ◆ This spell gives the target a pool of bonus points equal to the shifts generated on the roll. These points may be added to the target's ranged attack rolls with a bow or similar weapon. The points remain for the whole scene, and may be distributed over several attack rolls in more than one round; the points are not subject to the bonus cap.

Enfeeblement of the Mind

- ◆ *Darkness / Entropy / Void, Attack, Destroy*
- ◆ *Void Cult; Elementalists, Seekers*
- ◆ This spell is a mental stress attack. It gradually degrades the target's mental state, eventually causing total simplemindedness.

Evaluation of Gems

- ◆ *Communication, Manoeuvre, Analyse*
- ◆ *Vareltias*
- ◆ This spell reveals the value of one or more gemstones. It will also identify the gems in question, and give you a broad idea of their properties and correspondences. You can also use the resulting aspect as an immediate modifier on a Resources roll, etc, in which you spend the gems as treasure.

Evocation of Entangling Defenders

- ◆ *Growth, Manoeuvre, Control*
- ◆ *Emeldias; Elementalists*
- ◆ This spell causes plants in your vicinity to prevent your opponents from attacking you, by entangling them and hampering their movements. There must be at least some plants in your zone, which grow extremely vigorously for the spell's duration.

Evocation of Ethereal Arms

- ◆ *Change By Fire / Command / Darkness / Death, Manoeuvre, Combine (Create, Transform)*
- ◆ *Babisiya, Belom, Dafur, Regos; Elementalists, Seekers*
- ◆ Many grimoires have versions of this spell, which temporarily gifts the target (or targets) with an *Ethereal Weapon* formed of darkness, shining light, darkness, fire, or the chilling power of death. The weapon gives you an automatic SI+2 with your Melee Combat attacks (SI+4 on a critical success), and you may invoke its aspect for additional magical effects related to its governing power skill (for example, to set things on fire when attacking with an *Ethereal Fire Sword*). This spell can instantly rearm a target that has been disarmed; and that target may only be subsequently disarmed by negating the spell.

Finding of Animals

◆ *Animality, Manoeuvre, Detect*

◆ *Entos*

◆ This spell locates and identifies any animals in range of the spell (this might be quite overwhelming in densely populated areas). You may also specify which animal you're looking for, and the spell will locate and identify the nearest such animal within range.

Growing of Wings

◆ *Animality, Manoeuvre, Transform*

◆ *Entos*

◆ This spell causes the target to sprout wings (of a nature specified by the caster) and be able to fly (including using your Athletics skill to move in the air).

Harvest of the Binding

◆ *Domination, Manoeuvre, Combine (Absorb, Control)*

◆ *The Great Hegemonist; Seekers*

◆ This spell lets you break binding objects and harvest the AP used to create them for immediate use in a subsequent summoning, dismissing the original bound entity to where it came from. You must conduct the summoning in the same scene, otherwise the AP are lost. The difficulty of the spell is the peak skill of the bound entity, +2. On a failure, the bound entity is not released; on a fumble, it's released and automatically attacks you. You may cast this spell as a **ritual** (page 153), breaking multiple bindings up to your Domination skill level in number, and harvesting all the AP.

Healing of Minor Physical Wounds

◆ *Wisdom, Overcome, Combine (Create, Control)*

◆ *Konfu*

◆ This difficulty 4 spell completely heals a mild physical consequence at the end of the current scene. You must touch the wound directly. On a failure, you must resort to divine magic or natural healing; on a fumble, the wound worsens to moderate!

Healing of Moderate Physical Wounds

◆ *Wisdom, Overcome, Combine (Create, Control)*

◆ *Konfu*

◆ This difficulty 6 spell completely heals a moderate physical consequence at the end of the next scene. You must touch the wounds directly. On a failure, you must resort to divine magic or natural healing; on a fumble, the wound worsens to severe!

Healing of Severe Physical Wounds

◆ *Wisdom, Overcome, Combine (Create, Control)*

◆ *Konfu*

◆ This difficulty 8 spell completely heals a severe physical consequence at the end of the current session. You must touch the wounds directly. On a failure, you must resort to divine magic or natural healing; on a fumble, the character is taken out! (Optionally, the wound may worsen to an extreme consequence—see page 216.)

Hobbling of the Animal Mind

◆ *Command / Domination, Manoeuvre, Control*

◆ *The Great Hegemonist; Thaumaturgists*

◆ This spell forces an animal to remain in one place, and even in one position, for the rest of the scene, or until it removes the aspect (it may roll each round). As this spell involves seizing control of the target's will (even if you use the Command power skill), a fumble means you incur a corruption aspect (see the *Chronicler's Guide*).

Hurling of Fire

◆ *Change by Fire, Attack, Control*

◆ *Dafur; Elementalists*

◆ This spell lets you project an existing fire at a target at range, using Change By Fire instead of Ranged Combat. The fire has SI+2, or SI+4 on a critical success.

Identification of Creatures

- ◆ *Animality / Wisdom, Manoeuvre, Analyse*
- ◆ *Entos, Konfu; Thaumaturgists*
- ◆ This spell identifies a target creature. It tells you what the creature is called in your language, and reveals one significant feature (special ability, aspect, etc) per shift generated on the roll.

Identification of Enemies

- ◆ *Command / Fate / Unification of Opposites / Wisdom, Manoeuvre, Analyse*
- ◆ *Eshtikar, Konfu, Qal, Regos; Thaumaturgists*
- ◆ This spell identifies a target exhibiting intent hostile to the caster. It tells you who and what the enemy is, and reveals one significant feature (aspect, stunt, skill, special ability, etc) per shift generated on the roll.

Illumination of Things

- ◆ *Change By Fire / Command / Cyclicalilty / Wisdom, Manoeuvre, Create*
- ◆ *Dafur, Konfu, Nimur, Regos; Elementalists, Thaumaturgists*
- ◆ This spell creates light affecting your immediate area, illuminating everything within range as bright as daylight.

Incarceration in the Temporal Prison

- ◆ *Time, Manoeuvre, Control*
- ◆ *Unthar; Seekers*
- ◆ This spell causes the target's mind to become *Locked in a Temporal Loop*, replaying the same events over and over in their imagination. They may not take any actions outside that context, and face an **obstacle** (page 201) when reacting to any actions affecting them.

Intensification of Entropy

- ◆ *Entropy, Attack, Combine (Destroy, Zone Effect)*
- ◆ *Reaver Gods; Seekers*
- ◆ This spell intensifies the force of Entropy in one or more zones, draining life, energy, heat, and so on. It's a zone effect attack action causing physical stress damage to living creatures; at the Chronicler's discretion, it may also affect structures and some undead. On a critical success, it may cause spontaneous entropic mutations (see the *Chronicler's Guide*).

Invigoration of the Body

- ◆ *Growth / Wisdom, Overcome, Create*
- ◆ *Emeldias, Konfu; Elementalists*
- ◆ This spell gives the target an additional stress box or consequence slot lasting 1 scene. The stress box created is the next largest after the target's highest stress box; if the target already has a 4-point stress box, it will provide an additional mild consequence slot. After the end of the scene, the stress box or consequence slot vanishes, together with any stress they had absorbed. On a special success, the target gains two stress boxes instead of one.

Invocation of Lord Payorian's Dance

- ◆ *Passion, Manoeuvre, Combine (Control, Zone Effect)*
- ◆ *Payorian*
- ◆ This spell causes everyone affected to immediately dance madly. This is an aspect, acting as an obstacle to any other actions the target or targets attempt. By default it lasts 1 scene; when the effect finishes, each target must take 1 point of physical stress damage for each scene they were dancing.

Invocation of the Blizzard of Knives

- ◆ *Narcissism, Attack, Combine* (Create, Control, Zone Effect)
- ◆ *Minisia; Elementals*
- ◆ This spell causes freezing cold shards of crushing, slashing ice to whirl around in one or more zones. All targets in the affected zones must try to hide or flee the blizzard or take physical stress damage; armour will protect. The attack causes consequences like *Frostbite* and *Bloody Lacerations*. On a special success, the targets face a *Blinding Blizzard* obstacle; on a critical success, this is a critical aspect.

Invocation of the Rain of Fire

- ◆ *Change by Fire, Attack, Combine* (Create, Control, Zone Effect)
- ◆ *Dafur; Elementals*
- ◆ This spell causes a raging whirling firestorm in one or more zones, damaging everyone within and setting fire to anything flammable. All targets in the affected zones must try to flee or take physical stress damage; armour will protect, but non-metal armour will take the physical stress damage to its SR and quickly fail. The attack causes consequences like *On Fire* and *Third Degree Burns*. On a special success, targets face an *Impassable Blaze* obstacle; on a critical success, this is a critical aspect.

Invocation of the Tempest

- ◆ *Cyclical / Turmoil, Manoeuvre, Combine* (Create, Control, Zone Effect)
- ◆ *Belorias, Nimur; Elementals*
- ◆ This spell causes a whirling storm of driving rain covering one or more zones. It's almost impossible to see or do anything while you're in it. It's a **barrier** (page 239).

Magnification of Vision

- ◆ *Realisation of the Will / Wisdom, Manoeuvre, Analyse*
- ◆ *Khosht, Konfu; Thaumaturgists*
- ◆ This spell lets you zoom your vision in on small or distant things, causing them to look much larger or closer. Each shift of success reduces the effective visual range to the object by 1 level, or increases the size of the object by the same amount, up to the maximum range for the spell (4 points by default—see page 271). This spell can make microscopic targets, or those hundreds of yards away, appear to be right in front of you.

Mutation of the Flesh

- ◆ *Entropy, Manoeuvre, Transform*
- ◆ *Reaver Gods; Seekers*
- ◆ This spell bestows a temporary entropic feature on the target; it may be resisted by *Change By Fire*, *Law*, or even *Physique*. Treat any resulting entropic feature as an aspect for the purposes of duration (see page 272), and roll on the Entropic Feature table in the *Chronicler's Guide* for the precise feature. On a critical success, or on a critical failure to resist this spell, the target may incur a corruption aspect (see the *Chronicler's Guide*).

Negation of Magic

- ◆ *Void, Manoeuvre, Deny*
- ◆ *Void Cult; Elementals (Forbidden)*
- ◆ This spell removes any magical aspect created by magic, including acting as a treatment roll for magical consequences. It doesn't affect mundane aspects created by magic. This means it'll remove a *Turned to Stone* aspect, but not a *Third Degree Burns* aspect inflicted by an attack with the *Change By Fire* power skill. By default, the difficulty is 2, or 4 in the case of a critical aspect (page 132), although difficulties may be higher in the case of obstacles, consequences, etc.

Object Binding of Demons and Elementals

- ◆ *Corresponding Power Skill, Manoeuvre, Control*
- ◆ *Many schools, depending on demon or elemental; temple sorcery*
- ◆ This spell lets you bind a demon (page 312) or elemental (page 319) into a specific type of object (staff, sword, ruby, etc); see page 316. There's a separate spell for each type.

Opening and Closing of Locks

- ◆ *Realisation of the Will, Manoeuvre, Control*
- ◆ *Khosht; Thaumaturgists*
- ◆ This spell lets you magically open or close a lock. It's exactly the same as if you had the correct key. However, on a special success, the lock also gains a *Magically Locked* or *Magically Unlocked* condition aspect, which may act as an obstacle (page 201). If the roll is a critical success, this will also be a critical aspect.



Passing Beyond the Veil

- ◆ *Void, Manoeuvre, Create*
- ◆ *Seekers; Elementarists (Forbidden)*
- ◆ This spell causes a willing target to dissolve from view, and appear somewhere unknown Beyond the Veil. At the same time, another being from Beyond the Veil materializes in the vanished target's place! (Check with your Chronicler for exactly what kind of being this is!)

This isn't a summoning spell, as there appears to be no way for the caster to control what being takes the target's place (nor does it seem possible to control where the target disappears to). Terrible tales relate that the most common arrival is one of the dreaded Helemor, servitors of the Hegemonist, and for this alone the spell is forbidden. Simply knowing how to cast it is punishable by death in most of the Springtide Civilisations!

Preservation from Decay

- ◆ *Eternity / Time, Manoeuvre, Deny*
- ◆ *Staros, Unthar; Seekers, Thaumaturgists*
- ◆ This spell preserves a corpse or similar mass of organic matter from decaying (or decaying further...). It allows you to later attempt to revive a dead body as if it had just died, but more practically it also allows tomb robbers, archeologists, and like-minded explorers to move objects like books, scrolls, and rusted metal artefacts that would otherwise disintegrate from age, perhaps to be restored later.

Projection of Prescience

- ◆ *Fate, Manoeuvre, Transform*
- ◆ *Eshtikar; Seekers*
- ◆ This spell lets you be, temporarily, invisibly present (although still perceptible to magical senses) in a remote location. It doesn't just affect your vision—all your senses are engaged. It's as though you're there, except that you can't be physically affected or take physical damage, or physically interact with your surroundings. Conceivably, however, you could suffer mental attacks and stress damage.

Purpling of the Mind

- ◆ *Void, Attack, Destroy*
- ◆ *Void Cult; Seekers; Elementals (Forbidden)*
- ◆ This spell curses a target with the madness caused by the Tourmaline Sight (page 338). Visions of uncanny dimensions break their mind, and they are suddenly visible to the weird creatures that dwell there, who may subject them to arcane attacks. The spell is a mental stress attack causing madness.

Raising of Fire

- ◆ *Change by Fire, Manoeuvre, Combine (Create, Zone Effect)*
- ◆ *Dafur; Elementals*
- ◆ This spell creates a huge conflagration affecting one or more zones. It's a **block** (page 240) lasting the rest of the scene; it must have a barrier level at least equal to its SI, and may cause condition aspects like *On Fire* and *Third Degree Burns*.

Reading of Thoughts

- ◆ *Communication, Manoeuvre, Analyse*
- ◆ *Vareltias*
- ◆ This spell lets you read a target's thoughts; usually their surface thoughts, but a special success may probe deeper. If appropriate, the spell creates an aspect you can later invoke or compel. The difficulty is usually 1 or 2 (depending on how relaxed the target is), but a target who knows you're trying to read their thoughts can resist with their Willpower (see page 274).

Reaping of the Whirlwind

- ◆ *Turmoil, Attack, Combine (Control, Zone Effect)*
- ◆ *Belorias; Elementals*
- ◆ This spell twists the air into a powerful whirlwind, which rages across one or more zones, stripping flesh from bone and hurling targets high into the air. It's an attack action doing physical stress damage; targets may resist with Physique, or perhaps take cover or flee the zone. Armour protects from damage.

On a special success against a target, that target is *Knocked Down*. If the target also fumbled their roll, they're thrown high into the air instead, and must take an automatic physical consequence (and also be *Knocked Down*) when they land.

Recreation of the Shattered Mind

- ◆ *Wisdom, Overcome, Combine (Create, Control)*
- ◆ *Konfu*
- ◆ This spell completely heals a severe mental consequence at the end of the current session. You must touch the head of the afflicted person. It's difficulty 8: on a failure, you must let nature take its course; on a fumble, the character is taken out! (Optionally, the mental damage may worsen to an extreme consequence—see page 216.)

Refutation of Cosmic Forces

- ◆ *Void, Manoeuvre, Deny*
- ◆ *Pline; Seekers; Elementals (Forbidden), Thaumaturgists (Forbidden)*
- ◆ This spell repels, negates, or otherwise refutes a single "cosmic force", like an element, gravity, magnetic fields, heat, cold, atomic cohesion, and so on. You must specify the cosmic force in question when you learn the spell. The spell creates an aspect such as *Fire Repulsion*, *Anti-Gravity Field*, *Undark Aura*, etc.

Removal of Fire

- ◆ *Change By Fire / Darkness / Narcissism / Void, Manoeuvre, Deny*
- ◆ *Babisiya, Dafur, Minisia; Void Cult*
- ◆ This spell immediately removes a fire from a single zone, placing it “somewhere else”. It doesn’t directly affect or damage fire creatures, but it will effectively put out a person or object on fire.

Repelling of the Undead

- ◆ *Death, Manoeuvre, Deny*
- ◆ *Belom*
- ◆ This spell is a lesser version of the Belom temple power stunt “Turn Undead” (see the *Guide to Future Earth*). It’s not a zone effect, but must be targeted against specific undead creatures. If successful, the target or targets acquire a *Shun My Presence!*-type aspect, which may be compelled to force them to flee from the caster for a single round, and which also acts as an obstacle to any actions (including attacks) the target may take against the caster.

Replication of Sound

- ◆ *Unification of Opposites, Manoeuvre, Combine (Control, Create)*
- ◆ *Qal*
- ◆ This is a spell of **illusion** (page 275). It creates an audio illusion in the mind of the target, causing them to hear voices, sounds, music, and so on. If the target is on the alert for illusions, etc, they may roll to resist the spell using Willpower (see page 274). The illusion is an aspect, and may be invoked or compelled as usual; it may also be created as an obstacle, barrier, or block, at the caster’s discretion.

Replication of Vision

- ◆ *Unification of Opposites, Manoeuvre, Combine (Control, Create)*
- ◆ *Qal*
- ◆ This is a spell of **illusion** (page 275). It creates a visual illusion in the mind of the target, causing them to see things—people, monsters, hideous atrocities, beautiful vistas, and so on. If the target is on the alert for illusions, etc, they may roll to resist the spell using Willpower (see page 274). The illusion is an aspect, and may be invoked or compelled as usual; it may also be created as an obstacle, barrier, or block, at the caster’s discretion.

Restoration of the Damaged Mind

- ◆ *Wisdom, Overcome, Combine (Control, Create)*
- ◆ *Konfu*
- ◆ This spell completely heals a moderate mental consequence at the end of the next scene. You must touch the head of the afflicted person. It’s difficulty 6: on a failure, you must let nature take its course; on a fumble, the mental consequence worsens to severe!

Revelation of Falsehood

- ◆ *Law, Manoeuvre, Detect*
- ◆ *Ankadar*
- ◆ This spell detects when a person is lying, identifies illusions, sees through disguises, and so on. It requires conscious intent to deceive on behalf of the falsehood in question. It doesn’t dispel anything; the falsehood remains, but the caster is aware of its nature. If appropriate, the spell creates an aspect.

Revelation of the Music of the Spheres

- ◆ *Passion, Manoeuvre, Combine (Create, Zone Effect)*
- ◆ *Payorian*
- ◆ This spell causes the target or targets to hear “the music of the spheres”, the primal stuff of passion itself. It’s the great music which lies behind all reality, tying it together, expressing connections, harmonies, correspondences, and imbuing the raw material of nature with meaning.

Targets hearing the Music of the Spheres will, at least, be rapt, utterly distracted; this is the case for intelligent and non-intelligent targets alike. Intelligent targets may undergo profound realisations from hearing the Music; they may understand themselves, the world, other people, better. This takes the form of a condition aspect like *A Deeper Understanding*, which the target may invoke or which may be compelled by another.

Revelation of Toxins

- ◆ *Animality / Growth / Realisation of the Will / Wisdom, Manoeuvre, Detect*
- ◆ *Emeldias, Entos, Khosht, Konfu; Thaumaturgists*
- ◆ This spell detects poisons. Usually it’s difficulty 1, unless the toxin is masked or otherwise hidden in some way. It alerts the caster to the presence of any poisonous substance, poisoned item, or venomous creature in the current zone.

Ride of the Five Thousand

- ◆ *Fate, Manoeuvre, Combine (Control, Create, Zone Effect)*
- ◆ *Eshtikar; Seekers*
- ◆ This spell causes a ghostly *tolpai* centaur demon to appear alongside every rider in a cavalry charge, riding and fighting with that rider. It effectively doubles the numbers of riders, increasing group bonuses and potentially increasing unit size (see the *Chronicle’s Guide* for both these things), as well as providing an aspect that may be invoked or compelled appropriately.

Scaring Away of Animals

- ◆ *Animality / Darkness / Destruction, Overcome, Combine (Deny, Zone Effect)*
- ◆ *Babisiya, Entos, Madiz; Elementalists, Thaumaturgists*
- ◆ This spell drives away “ordinary” animals from the caster’s vicinity. It doesn’t affect summoned creatures, intelligent beings, artificial constructs, or otherwise “magical” monsters. Usually the target animals won’t resist this spell.

Scorching of the Earth

- ◆ *Destruction, Manoeuvre, Destroy*
- ◆ *Madiz*
- ◆ This spell destroys all the food and water supplies of the target, preventing them from provisioning themselves (see the *Chronicle’s Guide*). The target may be of any size, and the sorcerer must successfully target that size with this spell (see pages 236 and 273). In this way, a powerful sorcerer can scorch the earth for an entire army or city.

Sensing of Manatine Energy

- ◆ *Realisation of the Will, Manoeuvre, Detect*
- ◆ *Khosht; Thaumaturgists*
- ◆ This spell permits the caster to “feel” (see, hear, smell, etc) the presence of manatine energy in their current zone. They detect the source of the manatine energy also, but otherwise gain no detailed information.

Slathing of Flame

- ◆ *Change by Fire, Attack, Combine (Create, Control, Zone Effect)*
- ◆ *Dafur; Elementalists*
- ◆ This spell is a classic “fireball”, creating fire from nowhere and projecting it against a target at range, whereupon it explodes, affecting all targets in a single zone. Any other targets in a straight line from the caster to the target zone are also affected. If the caster casts this on his own zone, he will also be affected. On a special success, this spell also creates a *Raging Inferno*-type block (page 240) in the target zone, with a block level and stress increase together totalling the shifts generated on the roll.

Smiting of the Hemophage

- ◆ Law, Attack, Create
- ◆ Ankadar
- ◆ This spell “burns” the nefarious vampiric hemophage (see the *Guide to Future Earth* and *Chronicler's Guide*) with the Light of the Law emitted by a strongly branched holy symbol of Ankadar. The hemophage may try to flee this attack by running away, but otherwise has no resistance against this spell. It causes physical stress damage and consequences.

Soothing of the Troubled Mind

- ◆ Wisdom, Overcome, Combine (Create, Control)
- ◆ Konfu
- ◆ This spell completely heals a mild mental consequence at the end of the current scene. You must touch the head of the afflicted person. It's difficulty 4: on a failure, you must let nature take its course; on a fumble, the mental consequence worsens to moderate!

Speaking to Minds

- ◆ Communication, Manoeuvre, Create
- ◆ Vareltais
- ◆ This spell permits the caster to communicate telepathically with one or more other individuals. The communication lasts for an entire scene, and consists of exchanges as if the participants were conversing verbally. The participants must all share a common language.

Stomping to the Ground

- ◆ Destruction, Manoeuvre, Effect (Create, Zone Effect)
- ◆ Madiz
- ◆ The sorcerer casts this spell and stamps his foot, and everyone in the current zone (plus any adjacent zones also targeted) must roll to resist or immediately be *Knocked Down*.

Summoning of Demons and Elementals

- ◆ Corresponding Power Skill, Manoeuvre, Summon
- ◆ Many schools, depending on demon or elemental; temple sorcery
- ◆ This spell lets you summon a demon (page 312) or elemental (page 319). You must learn a separate version of this spell for each type.

Tearing by Tooth and Claw

- ◆ Animality / Destruction / Entropy, Attack, Destroy
- ◆ Entos, Madiz; Reaver Gods; Seekers
- ◆ The sorcerer points at the target of this spell, and they are instantly torn and lacerated by invisible teeth and claws. This allows the corresponding power skill to be used as an attack skill, doing physical stress damage. You don't have to touch the target for this to take effect.

Tearing Down of Walls

- ◆ Destruction, Attack, Destroy
- ◆ Madiz; Thaumaturgists
- ◆ This spell targets the walls of a construct such as a tower, castle, or city (see the *Chronicler's Guide*), causing structural damage and eventually collapse. Scale effects and range restrictions apply, but otherwise any construct may be targeted. There is no finesse to this spell; it uses brute force, and will destroy delicate objects.

Tourmaline Sight

- ◆ Void, Manoeuvre, Detect
- ◆ Void Cult; Seekers; Elementalists (Forbidden), Thaumaturgists (Forbidden)
- ◆ This spell lets you see disembodied entities floating around you in other dimensions—and they can see you as well! This will also reveal invisible or otherwise magically hidden entities in your own dimension, although some may be able to resist this spell. Fumbling on this spell subjects you to a Purpling of the Mind attack (page 335).

Transformation of the Body

- ◆ *Unification of Opposites, Manoeuvre, Transform*
- ◆ *Qal*
- ◆ This spell breaks the corporeal integrity of the target, remodelling it according to the caster's instructions. It's a "shapechange"-type spell, with the proviso that the target's body undergoes broad transformations, but otherwise remains the same mass. It's not detailed enough to transform the target into the likeness of a specific individual, but it can make them appear to be a different kindred. The caster may use any additional shifts generated on the spell roll as AP to give the target temporary special abilities, so that claws may have SI bonuses, hard skin may have SR bonuses, and so on. See the *Chronicler's Guide* for the AP costs of special abilities.

Transformation of the Balequ

- ◆ *Darkness / Eternity, Manoeuvre, Transform*
- ◆ *Babisiya, Staros; Elementarists*
- ◆ This spell must be cast on a dead body that's still a bit juicy—it won't work on skeletons. It animates that body as a *balequ* zombie; see the Staros temple writeup in the *Guide to Future Earth* and the Balequ writeup in the *Chronicler's Guide*.

Traversing of the Dimensions

- ◆ *Void, Overcome, Combined (Create, Very Long Range)*
 - ◆ *Seekers; Thaumaturgists (Forbidden)*
 - ◆ This spell lets the target travel from one place to another in our world by passing through unseen dimensions between. The destination point must be within the spell's range (page 271), and must either be visible or exceedingly well known to the caster. It's a great spell for bypassing locked doors, penetrating fortifications, or travelling great distances. On a fumble, either the traveller is interrupted in some unknown (but presumably horribly dangerous) dimension in between, or a denizen of another dimension breaks through into ours, either at the point of departure or arrival. Surprise!
- This spell is considered Forbidden Magic; only its extreme utility keeps it in circulation, although casters should be circumspect!

Turning to Stone

- ◆ *Growth, Attack, Transform*
 - ◆ *Emeldias; Elementarists*
 - ◆ This spell lets the caster use the Growth power skill in an attack action causing physical stress damage. It gradually petrifies the target, eventually turning them completely to stone. Physical stress represents the target's limbs becoming stiff and heavy (which will recover naturally); consequences represent flesh turning gradually to stone (which requires special healing magics to heal); a taken out result represents the target turning completely to stone.
- Targets turned to stone aren't dead; they're in a kind of suspended animation, if the spell effect can be reversed.

Unlocking of the Secrets of the Artefacts

- ◆ *Realisation of the Will, Manoeuvre, Analyse*
- ◆ *Khosht; Thaumaturgists*
- ◆ This spell identifies the properties of **artefacts** of all kinds (see the *Chronicler's Guide*), including their special abilities and other characteristics. One property is revealed per shift of success.

Usurpation of Demonic or Elemental Control

- ◆ *Corresponding Power Skill, Manoeuvre, Control*
- ◆ *Many schools, depending on demon or elemental; temple sorcery*
- ◆ This spell allows you to wrest control of a bound demon or elemental from the owner of that binding (page 317). There's a separate spell for each type of demon and elemental.

Vivification of Life Energies

- ◆ *Eternity, Manoeuvre, Transform*
- ◆ *Staros; Seekers*
- ◆ This spell "heals" the undead, by filling them with Starosian life energies provided by the caster, either from his own body, or from life energy he has drained or absorbed from another. For every 2 points of stress the caster provides, an undead creature recovers 1 point of stress; for every consequence he incurs, a consequence of lesser magnitude is removed. So, for example, a sorcerer who casts this spell to help an undead individual recover from a mild consequence must themselves incur a moderate or severe consequence to do so.

Learning Sorcery Spells

You can learn sorcery spells from several sources. First, you can always learn a spell from your school, assuming you're a member. Second, you may discover spells on your travels which are associated with your principle. Third, you may pay or persuade someone to teach you.

During character creation, you may pick a number of spells that you already know governed by a specific power skill equal to your skill level in that power skill.

For example, a beginning sorcerer with two power skills at levels 4 and 3 will start play knowing 7 spells; 4 for the first skill, and 3 for the second.

During play, at a minor milestone or greater, you can spend 2 AP to add a new sorcery spell to those you already know, up to the maximum you may know. See page 260.

You must have access to that spell; maybe it's in a grimoire you're reading, or maybe it's taught in a temple or sorcery school you belong to or are associated with.

The maximum number of spells you may learn and know for a given power skill is equal to the total of your skill level, plus every level below it, as shown in Table 13-9: Sorcery Spells Learned Per Power Skill Level.

For example, a sorcerer with two power skills at levels 4 and 3 could know as many as 16 spells.

Tips for Selecting Spells and Spell Effect Stunts

When you start play as a sorcerer, check out which sorcery spells are potentially available to you based on the power skills you know. Then, take a note of which spell effect stunts you'd have to pick (either now during character creation, or later during play) in order to be able to learn and cast those spells. You'll have to balance how many spell effect stunts you choose against other stunts, to ensure you're an effective sorcerer but not hamstrung in other areas. Remember: you can't do absolutely everything when you start play, so choose carefully!

Changing Which Spells You Know

As a sorcerer, you may eventually end up with access to more spells than you can know at any one time. That's why you have a spell book or **grimoire**—you can use it to write down those spells you choose not to memorise. You may swap a spell you already know for one in your spell book by paying 1 AP. This usually takes *A Few Days*.

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For example, Kandatris the Flammable has Change By Fire 3, and wants to learn the Slathing of Fire sorcery spell. However, she already knows 6 spells, the maximum she can memorise with a level 3 power skill. She looks at her list of Change By Fire sorcery spells, and sees that she won't need to use Hurling of Fire any more—her new spell is kind of an improved version. She decides to transcribe Hurling of Fire into her spell book, removing it from her 6 known spells, and to replace it with the Slathing of Fire. This costs her 1AP, and takes A Few Days. She still knows only 6 spells, and still has Hurling of Fire in her spell book if she ever wants to memorise it again. She'll also want to make sure she doesn't lose that spell book...

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TABLE 13-9: SORCERY SPELLS KNOWN PER POWER SKILL LEVEL

POWER SKILL LEVEL	MAXIMUM SORCERY SPELLS KNOWN FOR THAT POWER SKILL
1	1 spell
2	3 spells
3	6 spells
4	10 spells
5	15 spells
6	21 spells
7	28 spells
8	36 spells

Casting Sorcery Spells From Spell Books

Sorcerers memorise spells to be able to cast them quickly, often in high-pressure situations. However, if you're relaxed, in a low-pressure situation, and have plenty of time, you can attempt to cast a spell you haven't memorised, but which is written in your spell book.

Casting a spell from a spell book takes *Several Minutes* at least, and is at least +2 difficulty harder than casting a spell you know. If you fumble, you automatically incur a *Disastrous Spell Backfire* critical consequence (page 216), in addition to any other fumble results.

With time, a sorcerer's spell book may become an incredibly valuable repository of magic. Sorcerers become paranoid about their spell books, casting various spells on them protecting them from fire, water, insects, decay, theft, intruders, and so on.

More Than One Sorcery School

Of course, it's always possible for sorcerers to learn spells from more than one sorcery school, as long as they know the requisite power skill and spell effect stunts. It's a social issue more than a metaphysical one; you can theoretically learn spells from many different sorcery schools. However, you always need some kind of **permission** to learn sorcery school spells, and often the way you get that is by joining the sorcery school's community (see page 39). Some sorcery schools are more lenient, however, and allow sorcerers to affiliate themselves with the school (usually for a fee). Also, some schools are long-dead, and their secrets are waiting to be found in lost scrolls, teachings, and grimoires, usually in abandoned and perilous places.

Standalone Spells

Sorcery schools often jealously guard their spells, teaching them only to members. However, it's sometimes possible for others to learn them, usually as **standalone spells**.

A standalone spell is treated as a **stunt**. It indicates your character has been taught a spell, either by a school or (more commonly) a renegade sorcerer, even though you may not be a sorcerer or understand any magical theory. You don't need to know the spell's power skill, or its spell

effect stunts; you've just rote-learned this one spell, and can cast just that.

A standalone spell has its normal effect, except that it's cast with a skill level of 0, and can't be manipulated by burning mental stress to increase range or number of targets. If you subsequently somehow acquire the power skill governing your standalone spell, you can use it to cast it instead of rolling at level 0, and even convert your standalone spell to be one of your permitted spells, freeing up that stunt for use with something else (maybe the spell effect stunt you need?).

Temple Sorcerers

An initiate or priest who learns sorcery from the temple sorcery school, or a sorcerer who initiates to a temple and learns divine magic, will have one power skill covering both sets of magical abilities. As mentioned above, you must also have two power aspects: one divine power aspect, and one sorcery power aspect. However, the two forms of magic are linked by sharing a common power; as a result, one power aspect can be invoked when using the other.



Sorcerers and Relationships

Sorcerers routinely use their relationships budget and AP to develop the following relationships.

A Sorcerer's Staff

Sorcerers frequently bind demons and elementals into staffs. This usually gives you at least a teamwork bonus on your spell casting rolls, and may even provide you with additional spell effect stunts. A staff also has 2 stress boxes, and you can imbue the demon or elemental bound within with Physique and Willpower for additional durability. There's no specific spell to create a staff; you use demon and elemental magic, as described on page 312.

A Familiar

As the spell "Creation of the Familiar" explains, this is forbidden sorcery and the trademark of the evil sorcerer: it's all about domination and enslavement. Evil sorcerers have relationships with their familiars, giving them access to additional skills, stunts, and special abilities.

A Bound Demon

Sorcerers often bind demons into their physical form, using them as bodyguards.

Where Can I Learn Sorcery?

To begin with, you usually learn sorcery from a teacher, either at a sorcery school, in a temple, or one-on-one. If you're literate, it's also conceivable you could have acquired an understanding of sorcery from reading sorcerous grimoires.

After that, you learn new spells and power skills by: being a member of a temple or school; affiliating to a temple; influencing a temple or school to teach you that one thing; persuading an individual to teach you; or finding an appropriate grimoire. You must pay AP to learn new spells and skills as usual (see page 260); the contacts simply give you the permission you need.

The Sorcery School of the Elementalists of Zor

There's a mountain upon the largest of the Outer Isles of Zor called Nu-Zimbura, where stands the Tower of Fire and Ice, oldest chapter house of this ancient college. Famed for its impossible construction and fabled library, for millennia its teachings have spread through the Venerable Autocracy, so that almost every archaeopolis boasts a chapter house today.

The Elementalists of Zor recognise seven elements as the building blocks of the cosmos. These are, in order of their sacred numbers (beginning with zero): Void, Darkness, Aether, Fire, Earth, Water, and Air. Each is associated with a deity and a planet, in a triad which forms the basis of many of the college's spells. The study of Sakari numerology, although not invented by the Elementalists, is a specialty of the school. The "Theory of Elemental Correspondences" (see Table 13-10) expounds a profound interconnectedness of the elemental world to categorise and master it: the philosophy lends itself both to the life of the solitary mage and to the cooperation which has given the college one of the largest libraries of esoteric lore in the Springtide Civilisations, second only to the Temple of Unthar.

The Elementalists specialise in sorcery of the elements, including the summoning of elementals and demons of the elemental powers. They must usually be affiliated with temples to summon such demons; if not, the demons are considered to be hostile to the summoning. Most Elementalists deal exclusively with elementals; it's simpler and safer.

While the Elementalists acknowledge the power of Void sorcery, their members are forbidden to practice it. Void grimoires are off-limits in their chapter houses, and dallying with its forbidden spells will earn you at least expulsion, if not sentencing to the immolation pyres. Nonetheless, there are several infamous instances where high-ranking Elementalists have succumbed to temptation, and subsequent Corruption, by prying into these forbidden spells, with several notorious survivors fleeing to join the Void Cult or worse.

Elementalists use ritual magic (page 153) together with the Correspondences to boost their spellcasting chances. Each correspondence present in the ritual acts as an aspect which may be invoked on the roll. For example, sorceries of fire are best cast by Three Sorcerers of Dafur, when Devrak the Red Planet is in the ascendant; when the sorcerer is Dressed in Red Robes and Surrounded by Red Objects; and when Music in the Daragai Mode is being Played on Red-Tasselled Cymbals—and so on.

The Elementalists are on good terms with the temples of the “elemental gods”—Belorias, Emeldias, Dafur, Nimur, Babisiya, Regos, and Pline (although for the latter it’s more for metaphysical completeness than practical benefit...). College members often reside in these temples, studying and teaching, and chapter houses are found anywhere these deities have temples of substantial size.

Elementalists are remarkable for their breadth of sorcerous knowledge and control of elementals (unlike the Elemental Cults, which are often disorganised and marginal). They’re sought after by the Empire’s legions.

Symbol: Stylised astrolabe pendant.

School Aspect: Sorcerers of the Seven Elements.

Shadow: One Must Act In Accordance With the Sacred Correspondences!

Power Skills: *Change by Fire, Cyclicity, Darkness, Growth, Narcissism, Turmoil, Void (Forbidden).*

Stunts: *Lore (The Seven Elements), spell effect stunts.*

Sorcery Spells:

- **Change by Fire:** *Abjuration of Darkness, Evocation of Ethereal Arms, Hurling of Fire, Illumination of Things, Invocation of the Rain of Fire, Raising of Fire, Removal of Fire, Slathing of Flame; spells to summon and control agnapei fire demons and salamanders.*
- **Cyclicity:** *Calling of the Tidal Wave, Calming of the Flood, Invocation of the Tempest; spells to summon and control ichthai sea demons and undines.*
- **Darkness:** *Barring of the Way, Destruction of Fire by Darkness, Enfeeblement of the Mind, Evocation of Ethereal Arms, Removal of Fire, Scaring Away of Animals, Transformation of the Balequ; spells to summon and control umbrai darkness demons and shades.*
- **Growth:** *Biting of the Earth Jaw; Evocation of Entangling Defenders; Invigoration of the Body, Revelation of Toxins, Turning to Stone; spells to summon and control urthai earth demons and gnomes.*
- **Narcissism:** *Dousing of Flame, Invocation of the Blizzard of Knives, Removal of Fire; spells to summon and control morzai frost demons.*
- **Turmoil:** *Calling of the Thunderbolt, Invocation of the Tempest, Reaping of the Whirlwind; spells to summon and control ulmai storm demons and sylphs.*
- **Void (Forbidden Sorceries):** *Chamber of Purple Shadows, Curse of Rending, Door Beyond the Veil, Dousing of Flame, Negation of Magic, Passing Beyond the Veil, Purpling of the Mind, Refutation of Cosmic Forces, Removal of Fire, Tourmaline Sight; spells to summon and control fly.*

TABLE 13-10: THE THEORY OF ELEMENTAL CORRESPONDENCES

ELEMENT	NUMBER	ELEMENTAL / DEMON	GOD	LORD	PLANET	COLOUR	INSTRUMENT	MUSICAL MODE
The Forbidden Void	0	Flay	Pline	Vile	Eplanai	White	Voice	Kiyo Plainchant
Darkness	1	Shade, Umbrai	Babisiya	Bab	Sayib	Black	Drum	Dambu
Aether	2	Hellion, Serapai	Regos	Hel	Rasha the Sun	Gold	Trumpet	Filaun
Fire	3	Salamander, Agnapei	Dafur	Agni	Devrak	Red	Cymbal	Daragai
Earth	4	Gnome, Urthai	Emeldias	Malud	Malud	Ochre	Bullroarer	Thamish
Water	5	Undine, Ichthai	Nimur	Nim	Yala the Green Moon	Green	Strings	Shanshi
Air	6	Sylph, Ulmai	Belorias	Bel	Balor	Azure	Pipes	Alu



Mysticism

If magic is about harnessing the power of the principles of the cosmos, mysticism is about harnessing the power within each individual. It's about supreme self-discipline, honing one's abilities to almost supernatural levels, and achieving seemingly miraculous effects. Not all kindreds are capable of all forms of mysticism, and some are more gifted in certain areas than others.

In rules terms, mysticism is a **permission** giving your character access to sets of special stunts, which let you use your mundane personal skills in weird and unusual ways. You may get this permission by belonging to a kindred (like the Virikki), a community (like the Ten Jau Tei), having a relationship (like a friendship with the Paladoi), and so on.

There are several types of mystical power, each called a **discipline**. Disciplines include things like telepathy and telekinesis. Each discipline has several **talents**, like Mind Blast or Mental Probe; these are **stunts**. You don't need a whole lot of talents to be competent in a discipline; two or three should do it. A deeper understanding of mysticism **broadens** your choice of abilities; but it's honing your own personal skills that deepens your competence.

USING MYSTICISM

Mysticism uses your mundane skills, and often more than one, using the **combined skill rules** (page 194). Often, when using a talent, you'll make a combined roll of Willpower or Empathy (depending on the discipline) plus another mundane skill. So, to read someone's thoughts, you'll make a roll of Willpower and either Investigate or Notice. **Unless otherwise specified, a mysticism roll is made against a difficulty of 1, or the difficulty rolled by a target resisting its use.**

By default, mysticism has a relatively limited area of effect; usually a single target that you must touch. However, you may burn stress (page 215) to supercharge your talents. See "Range" and "Targets" below, as well as the talent writeups beginning on page 346.

Resisting Mysticism

Some talents can be resisted; some cannot. However, due to the uncanny nature of mysticism talents, resistance is neither obvious nor easy, and targets generally face an **obstacle** (page 201) when trying to resist a talent, even if they're able to make a roll. Other mystics and magic users may have talents, power skills, or power stunts enabling them to resist while avoiding this obstacle.

Range

Mysticism has a default range of R-1; you must be touching your target. For each point of physical stress you burn, you may increase the range by +1; this also increases the difficulty of your mysticism roll by +2. So, using mysticism on a target at R0 is 1 stress, +2 difficulty; at R1, it's 2 stress, +4 difficulty; at R2, it's 3 stress +6 difficulty; and so on. See Table 13-3: Expanded Range Table (page 272); in theory, there's no limit to the range of a mysticism power.

Targets

Usually you target a single individual with your mysticism talents. However, provided you're already using a talent at range, you can add one additional target for each +1 physical stress you incur; this increases the difficulty by +2 for each additional target. So, using mysticism at R0 is already +2 difficulty and costs 1 point of stress; by paying 2 points of stress and incurring a +4 difficulty, you may target 2 individuals with your talent.

Where Can I Learn Mysticism?

Sometimes, you have to belong to a specific kindred to learn certain mysticism disciplines. For example, to learn Virikki psionics, you must actually be a Virikki. If you are, you'll likely begin play with a talent or two—see page 75.

At other times, you can learn a mysticism discipline by seeking out a teacher and engaging in an arduous course of study. For example, anyone from any kindred can, in theory, learn the Body Mastery talents of the Tung Mai Tiridat Masters; however, you'll need to seek out someone who already knows the ways of the Ten Jau Tei, the mystical arts of the alien Mantis People. For example, the Legion of Hahaggash Bloodied of Charn in Korudav city teaches Tiridat to non-Tung Mai, and Jakai Tellisan, Korudav's autarch, encourages recruits. Many die during the arduous training period.

See "The Mystics" on page 350 for an overview of the main practitioners of mysticism.

THE MYSTICAL DISCIPLINES

This section describes the seven mystical disciplines: Awareness, Body Mastery, Sensitivity, Sympathy, Telekinesis, Telepathy, and Zoic Science. Some are used only by one type of mysticism; others are common to more than one. Each discipline has a number of **talents**, which are purchased just like stunts, costing 4AP and reducing your Refresh by 1 point.



Awareness

Awareness is the uncanny ability to be hyperaware of your surroundings, picking up on subtle (and even psionic) signals and accessing your own body's instinctive register of everything that's going on around you. You make combined skill rolls with Willpower to use Awareness.

✦ Audience

This talent works just like the Voyance talent, except that it applies to remote hearing and not seeing. Although you're not present in that location, your Audience may be detected by mystical or magical means.

✦ Detect Psionics

Use Willpower + Notice to detect any psionics use in the vicinity. You may even detect if a person is psionic even if they're not using any psionic talents, but they may roll to resist.

✦ Energy Sense

Use Willpower + Notice to sense any energy use in the vicinity, including its type: which power skill is being used, whether it's manatine energy, psionics, and so on.

✦ Enhanced Recall

Use Willpower + Investigate or Notice to interrogate your memories of places you've been to, even if just briefly, to get more information from those memories. It's as though you're actually there again.

✦ Life Sense

Act at a +2 skill level on Willpower + Notice rolls to detect the presence of and identify living things. This isn't affected by environmental conditions; you can do it with your eyes shut, while hiding in a closet, and so on.

✦ Parlance

Use Willpower + Provoke or Rapport to speak into a location you've visited before, or anywhere you can see using magic or a device. This works like Voyance (below), except it involves you speaking rather than seeing. Although you're not present in that location, you may be detected by mystical or magical means.

✦ Telepresence

Requires Voyance, Audience, Illusions, Parlance

This talent incorporates the Audience, Illusions, Parlance and Voyance talents into one, permitting you to project an illusion of yourself which can see, hear, and speak, and also be seen and heard. It requires a roll of Willpower + Devise to initiate, and, as required, possibly also subsequent rolls of Willpower + Investigate, Notice, Provoke, or Rapport.

✦ Telescience

Requires Voyance, Audience, Parlance

This talent works like Telepresence, except you cannot normally be seen (although you may be detected by mystical or magical means). It requires a roll of Willpower + Investigate or Notice to initiate, and possibly also subsequent rolls of Willpower + Provoke or Rapport as required.

✦ Voyance

Use Willpower + Investigate or Notice to look around anywhere you have ever visited, or anywhere you can see using magic or a device. You make a single roll; the difficulty depends on the range to the target location, ambient conditions there, and what you're actually trying to see in that location, including its size, stealthiness, noticeability, and so on. Although you're not present in that location, your Voyance may be detected by mystical or magical means. The difficulty of the roll may also be reduced based on how familiar the target location is to you, as follows:

- You've Never Even Heard of It: -3
- You've Never Been There: -2
- You've Been There Once: -1
- You've Been There A Few Times: +0
- You've Been There More Than A Few Times: +1
- You've Been There A Lot: +2
- You Know It Like The Back of Your Hand: +3

Body Mastery

The Body Mastery discipline comprises the uncanny abilities that emerge when you achieve supreme control of your physical self. It often uses combined rolls of Willpower and a physical mundane skill like Athletics or Physique.

★ Boost Skill

Pay a fate point OR make a combined roll of Willpower plus *any* physical skill to enable you to act at a +2 skill level with that skill for the rest of the scene.

★ Enhanced Healing

Requires Fast Healing

On a Willpower + Physique roll, you may immediately recover from any physical consequence you're suffering; the recovery takes place at the end of the scene. You may even regrow limbs, etc. The difficulty of the roll is equal to the magnitude of the consequence (difficulty 2, 4, 6, etc). On a fumble, you do not recover from the consequence, and its recovery period is increased as if it was the next most serious consequence (a mild consequence takes until this point in the next session, or *Several Days*, and so on).

★ Fast Healing

On a Willpower + Physique roll, you may remove any physical consequence you're currently recovering from 1 step faster than usual. The difficulty is equal to the magnitude of the consequence (difficulty 2, 4, 6, etc).

★ Feign Death

Make a Willpower + Physique roll to appear dead; any attempts to detect if you're alive must beat your mysticism roll result. This is an aspect that lasts up to *Several Hours*; you may specify how long you'll feign death for **before** you do so, but once you're feigning death, you're out cold.

★ Slow Bleeding

Requires Fast Healing

On a Willpower + Physique roll, the blood flowing from your wounds slows to a trickle for the rest of the scene, allowing you to ignore the effects of a physical consequence you've suffered; it acts neither as an obstacle, nor may anyone else invoke or compel it. The difficulty of the roll is equal to the magnitude of the consequence (difficulty 2, 4, 6, etc). You may slow bleeding on more than one consequence, but you must make a roll for each. On a fumble, the consequence worsens by one step. Note that this may kill you!

★ Toughened Skin

Requires Withstand Wounds and Pain

Make a Willpower + Physique roll to temporarily toughen your skin, acquiring 2 additional points of stress reduction, or 4 points on a critical success. Your movements become stiff and lumbering, and you face an obstacle to any physical actions you take. The effect lasts for the rest of the scene.

★ Uncanny Climb

Use Willpower + Athletics to make climbing rolls. You have an almost supernatural ability to utilise the tiniest holds, crevices, and ledges when climbing, and may ignore any aspects acting as obstacles of the object to be climbed. This may be combined with Spider Climb (page 86).

★ Withstand Wounds and Pain

Make a Willpower + Physique roll to ignore an invoke or compel of a personal consequence (mental or physical) at the moment that invoke happens. This works like a defend roll, and doesn't require an action. The difficulty is equal to the magnitude of the consequence being invoked or compelled: difficulty 2 for a mild consequence, difficulty 4 for a moderate, and difficulty 6 for a severe.

Sensitivity

Sensitivity represents your mystic ability to tune into and interpret the vibrational energies present in your surroundings. It's a specialism of the Paladoi. It uses a combined skill roll of Empathy plus a mundane skill such as Investigate or Notice.

✦ *Intuition*

You act at a +2 skill level when making Empathy + Notice combined skill rolls to sense danger or attempt to detect things in your vicinity (animate or inanimate).

✦ *Precog*

Requires Intuition

You may make an Intuition roll to gain a glimpse of an event *immediately* before it happens to you (literally *A Few Seconds* to *Half a Minute* before it happens). This allows you to avoid being taken by surprise, take cover, shout alarms, or otherwise react. You don't have to be endangered by the event; it can be something benign, but you can see it coming. This isn't reliable and isn't intended to be a campaign-killer, but it can be very useful.

✦ *Psychometry*

Requires Intuition

You may make an Intuition roll to reveal the past history of an item you're handling. This will reveal the equivalent of one aspect or other feature of the item, or two on a special success, or three on a critical. If the item is intelligent (such as a demon bound into a weapon), it may roll to resist.

✦ *Psychotopometry*

Requires Intuition

You may make an Intuition roll to reveal the subtle or supernatural features of your immediate environment, including its nature, usage, main points of past history, hidden features, energies present, and so on. This will reveal the equivalent of one aspect or other feature of the environment, or two on a special success, or three on a critical.

Sympathy

Sympathy is the mystical discipline of being "in sync" with the emotional "vibrations" of a target, and being able to pick up on and even control them. You make combined skill rolls with Willpower and / or Empathy to use sympathy.

✦ *Atavistic Elicitation*

Requires Emotion Control

Use Empathy + Provoke to bring out atavistic behaviours in a target, in an attack inflicting mental stress damage, as though they'd slid back down the evolutionary tree a few steps to a more bestial existence. Any consequences represent aspects of this "evolutionary regression" (*Dull-Witted*, *Bestial Rage*, *Wild and Primitive*, *Ravenous Cannibal*, etc), and can only be removed with appropriate treatment (magical healing, mystical changes, artefacts, and so on). On a special success, this can even bring out physiological changes, the target acquiring fangs, claws, a hairy pelt, and so on.

✦ *Emotion Control*

Requires Read Emotions

Use Empathy + Provoke to change someone's emotional state, making them happy, angry, fearful, and so on. This creates an aspect.

✦ *Read Emotions*

Act at a +2 skill level on Willpower + Empathy rolls to read a target's emotions. Unlike the mundane Empathy skill alone (page 147), you don't have to talk to the subject or spend time with them; you can get an immediate reading in the same round.

Telekinesis

Telepathy is the discipline of physically interacting with the outside world using only the power of your mind. It's commonly a combined roll of Willpower + Devise.

✦ *Cryokinesis*

Use Willpower + Devise to freeze a target. Against living targets, this can be an attack causing physical stress damage.

★ *Fine Manipulation*

Use Willpower + Devise to manipulate a target as if you had it in your hands.

★ *Push*

Use Willpower + Devise to physically shove a target or object, causing it to move 1 zone. If the target is unable to move 1 zone, it is *Knocked Down* (page 220).

★ *Pyrokinesis*

Use Willpower + Devise to heat a target, setting it on fire if flammable. Against living targets, this can be an attack causing physical stress damage.

★ *Sense Mechanism*

Use Willpower + Devise to “feel around” inside a mechanism, gaining insight into its design, purpose, and current state of functioning. This provides an aspect which can be useful in figuring out that mechanism, repairing it, and so on.

Telepathy

Several kindreds display telepathic abilities, including jeniri like the Virikki. How they do so is unknown, although scholars theorise they have specially developed brains. You make combined skill rolls with Willpower to use telepathy.

★ *Illusions*

Use Willpower + Devise to create illusions (page 275) in a target’s mind. Each point of Size above 0 is a +2 difficulty. The illusion lasts for as long as you concentrate on it. Like all illusions, these are subjective realities.

★ *Mental Control*

Requires Suggestion

Use Willpower + Provoke to control a living target like a puppet. If you try to force the target to take an action counter to its nature or potentially causing it harm, your roll faces an **obstacle** (page 201). A fumble on a Mental Control roll will automatically gift you with a Domination 1 power skill, or increase your Domination skill level by +1 if you already have it.

★ *Mental Shield*

Use Willpower + Athletics to defend against any mental stress attack or attempts to control you, read your thoughts, etc. It’s effectively a “mental dodge”, and you have to be quick!

★ *Mind Blast*

Use Willpower to make an attack action doing mental stress damage. The target may resist with Willpower, but faces an **obstacle** (page 201) to do so, or may resist with Mental Shield or a similar ability.

★ *Probe*

Use Willpower + Investigate / Notice to read a target’s thoughts. This reveals one thought, or two on a special success. These are usually surface thoughts, but may be deep and even unconscious thoughts on a critical success.

★ *Stream of Thought*

Use Willpower + Rapport to project your thoughts into a target’s mind. If the recipient isn’t used to this, they must make a Willpower roll each round to make sense of it; otherwise it’s just a jumble of impressions, phrases, flashes of images, and so on. Note that the Paladoi are able to stream their thoughts as a **zone effect** (page 230).

★ *Suggestion*

Use Willpower + Provoke to suggest a course of action to a target. This is an aspect which may be invoked or compelled for the rest of the scene; the first is free.



Zoic Science

While the rudiments of the zoic science and lore of the Hsun Spider Folk can be learned by any kindred, the talents below have a psionic component, and normally require you to actually belong to the Hsun kindred, or to have a really special permission (*Friend of the Hsun*, *Raised on the Isles of Zor*, etc), before you can learn them.

✦ Zoiculture

Requires the Zoic Science Devise stunt (page 147)

You're a Hsuntach Gardener, a type of Hsuntach Scientist (page 117), tending the alagin farms and zoic culture beds of the legendary Hsuntach Gardens. You act at a +2 skill level when performing Zoic Science (page 147), and have a Zoic Garden workspace (see the *Chronicler's Guide*).

✦ Shaping

Requires Zoiculture

You're a Master Shaper of the Hsun, a type of Hsuntach Scientist (page 117). You can invent your own zoans, and otherwise create items of hsuntach. You get an additional Hero Die on any Zoic Science rolls, as well as the skill level bonus from Zoiculture. See page 248 for more on zoans, and the *Chronicler's Guide* for full rules on creating and interacting with hsuntach.



THE MYSTICS

Here are some examples of how mysticism is used in the Springtide Civilisations. There are many more.

Hsun Shapers

Requires an appropriate permission

The Zoic Science of the Hsun Spider Folk (page 76) is used to create works of **hsuntach**, a form of biotechnology involving artificial and often symbiotic life forms. Although it's the specialty of the Hsun, in theory anyone can learn the rudiments by acquiring the Zoic Lore and Zoic Science stunts of the Lore and Devise skills (see pages 154 and 147); to do so, you need an appropriate **permission**, such as access to a teacher, or selecting an occupation such as Zoic Healer (page 108) or Hsuntach Scientist (page 117).

The Hsun themselves use their innate abilities of Zoiculture and Shaping (the talents described above) to accomplish of greater feats of hsuntach. Usually only Hsun may choose these abilities, although very rarely non-Hsun with latent or active psionic potential **and** access to Hsun teachers may also acquire them.

See "Hsuntach" in the *Chronicler's Guide* for much more on creating items of Zoic Science.

The Paladoi Consensus

Requires the Paladoi Consensus permission

The Protean Paladoi (page 81) are strongly psionic, and many have the ability to enshrine parts of their psionic power in the **mindstones** which they secrete. All have the Stream of Thought telepathy talent (page 349)—it's a mandatory spend when you create a Paladoi character (see page 83)—as well as the permission to take the Mindstone talents, beginning with Gland Mindstone (see below). Paladoi belonging to the Psionicist (page 102) and Paladoi Glander (page 92) occupations specialise in these abilities.

Paladoi psionics only function within the Paladoi Consensus, ie when within 100m of 9 or more Paladoi. You'll frequently get teamwork bonuses (page 202) when you do so.

Disciplines and Talents

Depending on their occupation, Paladoi characters may have access to the following disciplines and talents.

Empathy: Emotion Control.

Paladoi Mindstone Talents (see below): Gland Mindstone, Gland Power, Gland Skill, Gland Spell, Gland Stunt, Gland Talent.

Sensitivity: Intuition, Precog, Psychometry, Psychotopometry.

Telepathy: Mental Control, Mental Shield, Mind Blast, Stream of Thought (zone effect, broadcast version).

The Paladoi Mindstone Talents

Not all Paladoi have these talents, but they're required if you want to be a Glander capable of creating Paladoi mindstones. See page 254 and the *Chronicler's Guide* for more on creating and using mindstones.

✦ Gland Mindstone

You must be a Paladoi

All Paladoi may develop this talent. It lets you create a basic mindstone called a **memory stone**, a carbuncular excrescence from the Paladoi dorsal carapace cleft imbued with a selection of your memories. You must spend 8AP to create the memory stone, which has an aspect describing the memories within; the AP are invested in the mindstone until you "reabsorb" the stored memories, which kills the mindstone.

Paladoi invoke memory stones to resist the Death of Loneliness, although you can only do this with a memory stone you yourself haven't created. Expert Paladoi—the **Glanders**—create other types of mindstone, too, using the following mindstone talents.

✦ Gland Skill

Requires Gland Mindstone

You may create a **skill stone** containing a skill you know; the stone costs 2AP per skill level placed in it. Anyone attuning the skill stone may use the skill as a relationship skill.

✦ Gland Stunt

Requires Gland Mindstone, Gland Skill

You may create a **stunt stone** containing a stunt you know, costing 4AP. Anyone attuning the stunt stone may use the stunt as a relationship stunt.

✦ Gland Spell

Requires Gland Mindstone

You may create a **spell stone** containing a sorcery spell you know, costing 4AP. Anyone attuning the spell stone may use the spell as a relationship spell.

✦ Gland Talent

Requires Gland Mindstone, Gland Stunt

You may create a **talent stone** containing a psionic talent you know, costing 4AP. This may not be a Paladoi mindstone talent. Anyone attuning the talent stone may use the talent as a relationship talent.

✦ Gland Power

Requires Gland Mindstone

You may create a **power stone** which acts like the Power Source (Manatine Energy) special ability (see the *Chronicler's Guide*). Each 2AP invested gives the power stone a 10-charge maximum (6AP creates a power stone with a maximum 30 charges). A newly created power stone is fully charged; a discharged power stone may be recharged by placing it next to a **manatine** (page 365). Anyone attuning the power stone may use it to power an artefact operating on manatine energy.

The Tiridat Masters

Requires the Ten Jau Tei permission or other permissions

The mystical arts of Tiridat originate with the Tung Mai mantis people, but are available to all kindreds, to varying degrees. Tiridat abilities are of three types:

- **The Tiridat Martial Art:** Non-Tung Mai can be taught the Tiridat martial art stunts if they belong to the Tiridat Fighting School. See page 102 for the school and its stunt descriptions.
- **The Body Mastery Discipline:** While martial artists of different schools may be taught this discipline, some of its talents are available to all practitioners of Tiridat, whether Tung Mai or not. See below.
- **The Tung Mai Kindred Special Abilities:** Only the Tung Mai have access to these kindred special abilities; they're described on page 86.

Disciplines and Talents

Students of Tiridat may learn the following talents from the Body Mastery discipline:

Body Mastery: Fast Healing, Slow Bleeding, Toughened Skin, Uncanny Climb, Withstand Wounds and Pain.

Virikki Psionics

Requires the Virikki permission

Special Feature: You can burn mental stress (page 215) to improve rolls.

While the Virikki are often associated with the Temple of Vareltias (and particularly the trader cult of Jestis Speaker), they get no sorcerous or divine powers from that association. Their uncanny powers of communication and remote sensing are instead a result of **Virikki psionics**. Virikki with Audience, Parlance, and Voyance often join the Autocracy's Chancery of Mirrors (see the *Guide to Future Earth*), as the Mirrors of the Autarchs act as foci boosting the range of their talents.

Disciplines and Talents

In theory, any Virikki may select any of the following talents, representing their psionic powers. In practice, most Virikki just have one or two; it's the Virikki belonging to the Psionics occupation (page 102) that pick them most freely.

- **Awareness Talents:** Audience, Energy Sense, Enhanced Recall, Parlance, Telepresence, Voyance.
- **Body Mastery Talents:** Boost Skill, Fast Healing, Feign Death.
- **Sympathy Talents:** Atavistic Elicitation, Emotion Control, Read Emotions.
- **Telekinesis Talents:** Cryokinesis, Fine Manipulation, Push, Pyrokinesis, Sense Mechanism.
- **Telepathy Talents:** Illusions, Mental Shield, Mind Blast, Probe, Suggestion.

The Chronicles of FUTURE EARTH

Name: _____
 Homeland: _____
 Kindred: _____
 House: _____
 Social Class: _____
 Occupation: _____
 Native Language: _____
 Size: _____
 Age & Birthdate: _____
 Consequences: _____
 Builds: _____
 Relationships: _____

PERSONAL STRESS

Physical: 1 2 3 4
 Mental: 1 2 3 4
 Status: 1 2 3 4
 Wealth: 1 2 3 4

Mild: _____
 Moderate: _____
 Severe: _____

Mild: _____
 Moderate: _____
 Severe: _____

SOCIAL STRESS

Fate Points

Refresh: _____

Advancement
Points

Treasure

Encumbrance

Max: _____

SKILLS

Level 5+: _____

 Level 4: _____
 Level 3: _____

 Level 2: _____

 Level 1: _____

ASPECTS

Doom: _____

 Essence: _____

 Shadow: _____

 Blood: _____

 Origin: _____

 Companion: _____

 Game Aspects: _____

STUNTS & SPECIAL ABILITIES SPELLS & CANTRIPS

Improvised: _____

WEAPONS

SI RG Notes

Enc

ARMOUR

Enc: _____ SR: _____

EQUIPMENT

The Chronicles of FUTURE EARTH

RELATIONSHIP

Size: _____

Aspects: _____

Skills: _____

Stunts & Special Abilities:

Stress

Physical: (1) (2) (3) (4) Status: (1) (2) (3) (4)

Mental: (1) (2) (3) (4) Wealth: (1) (2) (3) (4)

Consequences: _____

RELATIONSHIP

Size: _____

Aspects: _____

Skills: _____

Stunts & Special Abilities:

Stress

Physical: (1) (2) (3) (4) Status: (1) (2) (3) (4)

Mental: (1) (2) (3) (4) Wealth: (1) (2) (3) (4)

Consequences: _____

RELATIONSHIP

Size: _____

Aspects: _____

Skills: _____

Stunts & Special Abilities:

Stress

Physical: (1) (2) (3) (4) Status: (1) (2) (3) (4)

Mental: (1) (2) (3) (4) Wealth: (1) (2) (3) (4)

Consequences: _____

RELATIONSHIP

Size: _____

Aspects: _____

Skills: _____

Stunts & Special Abilities:

Stress

Physical: (1) (2) (3) (4) Status: (1) (2) (3) (4)

Mental: (1) (2) (3) (4) Wealth: (1) (2) (3) (4)

Consequences: _____

APPENDIX TWO: REFERENCE SHEETS

TABLE 2-1: THE GODS OF THE GREAT COMPACT

DEITY	MYSTICAL PRINCIPLE OF...	COMMENTS
Ankadar	Law	Bringer of Order From Chaos, Venerable Autocrator, Great Springtide.
Babisiya	Darkness	Crone, Night Hag, the Maid of Darkness.
Belom	Death	Lord of Death, Decay, and Corruption; Destroyer of the Undead.
Belorias	Turmoil	Lord of Storm, Turmoil, and the Winds.
Dafur	Change by Fire	Lord of Flame and the Fire Beneath the Earth; God of Earthquakes, Volcanoes, and the Forge.
Emeldias	Growth	She Who Springs Forth From the Earth, Goddess of Growth, Light, and the Spring.
Entos	Animality	The Horned God.
Eshtikar	Fate	Horse and Rider, God of Fate.
Khosht	Realisation of the Will	The Great Architect, Builder of Cities.
Konfu	Wisdom	God of Healing, Master of Zofi, Listener to the Silent Song.
Madiz	Destruction	Lord of the Iron Legions, God of Vengeance, the Temple Laid Low.
Minisia	Narcissism	The Empty Smile, Goddess of Winter, Ice Queen.
Nimur	Cyclicity	Moon Goddess, Mistress of the Ebb and Flow, Mother Ocean.
Payorian	Passion	God of Love and the Vine, Bard and Archer.
Pline	Void	The God of Empty Spaces.
Qal	Unification of Opposites	The Two-Faced God, the Light That Is Darkness.
Regos	Command	Lord of War and Rule, the Conqueror.
Staros	Eternity	God of the Ages, the Everlasting.
Unthar	Time	Chronicler and Timekeeper.
Vareltias	Communication	God of Trade, Traveller and Mediator.

TABLE 3-1: THE LADDER—WHAT THE NUMBERS MEAN

NUMBER	WHAT THAT NUMBER CAN REPRESENT
-5	A disastrously bad dice roll—most likely a fumble!
-4	An abysmal roll.
-3	A terrible roll.
-2	A very poor roll.
-1	A poor roll.
0	The difficulty of an easy task; an average dice roll; an unskilled character attempting a mundane task.
+1	A straightforward task performed without pressure; a moderately decent dice roll; an apprentice-level skill.
+2	A somewhat challenging task, or a straightforward task performed under pressure; a fair dice roll; a competent-level skill.
+3	A challenging task; a good dice roll; a professional-level skill.
+4	A very challenging task; a great dice roll; a journeyman-level skill.
+5	A difficult task; a superb dice roll—most likely a critical success; a master-level skill which is the maximum achieved by most people.
+6	A very difficult task; an advanced master-level skill achieved by exceptional individuals.
+7	A daunting task; a champion-level skill.
+8	A very daunting task; a heroic skill level.
+9	An utterly daunting task; a legendary skill level.
+10	An almost impossible task; a superhuman skill level.

The Time Ladder

- *Half a Second*
- *A Second*
- *A Few Seconds*
- *Several Seconds*
- *Half a Minute*
- *A Minute*
- *A Few Minutes*
- *Several Minutes*
- *Half an Hour*
- *An Hour*
- *A Few Hours*
- *Several Hours*
- *Half a Day*
- *A Day*
- *A Few Days*
- *Several Days (A Week)*
- *Half a Month (A Few or Several Weeks)*
- *A Month*
- *A Few Months*
- *Several Months*
- *Half a Year*
- *A Year*
- *A Few Years*
- *Several Years*
- *Half a Decade*
- *A Decade*
- *A Few Decades*
- *Several Decades*
- *Half a Century*
- *A Century*

TABLE 10-2: MELEE AND RANGED COMBAT ZONES AND RANGE BANDS

RANGE	NAME	COMMENTS
R-1	Hand-to-Hand	0-1 metres away. In the same zone. Grapples, knife fights, animal attacks, etc.
R0	Close Range	1-2 metres away. In the same zone. Normal melee range.
R1	Short Range	3-10 metres away. 1 zone apart. <i>Extreme Reach</i> melee weapons may make melee attacks at this range.
R2	Medium Range	10-50 metres away. 2 zones apart. Ranged combat range.
R3	Long Range	51-100 metres away. 3 zones apart. Ranged combat gets tricky.
R4	Extreme Range	101-500 metres away. 4 zones apart. Even ranged combat is unlikely!

TABLE 10-3: INITIATIVE DETERMINATION

TYPE OF ACTION	INITIATIVE DETERMINED BY...	TIE-BREAKER
Physical	Notice	Athletics
Magical	Power skill	Willpower
Mental	Empathy	Rapport / Deceive
Status	Pillar skill	Social class
Wealth	Resources	Contacts

TABLE 10-11: SIZE

SCALE	TYPICAL LABEL	EXAMPLES
-5	Infinitesimal	Molecules, bacteria, atoms.
-4	Microscopic	Microscopic objects, visible to chemickers, magic, etc.
-3	Tiny	Gemstones, etc.
-2	Very Small	Weapons, clocks, mice, gimmerlings, etc.
-1	Small	Smaller animals, dogs, cats.
0	Human-Sized	Humans, most jeniri and esteri.
1	Large	Some jeniri and esteri; larger animals like horses, chariots, carts, flyers, etc; NPC groups.
2	Very Large	Boats, small ships, very large animals.
3	Huge	Huge vessels, juggernauts.

TABLE 10-4: EXAMPLES OF PHYSICAL WOUNDS

CONSEQUENCE TYPE	WOUND SEVERITY	EXAMPLE ASPECT WORDINGS
Mild	Light wound	<i>Stunned, No Feeling in Limb, Cuts and Bruises, Bloody Nose, Ears Ringing, Blood in the Eyes, Painful Slash, An Arrow Sticking in the Leg, Pulled Muscles, Singed and Sore, First-Degree Burns</i>
Moderate	Moderate wound	<i>Concussed, Dislocated Limb, Heavy Bleeding, Broken Nose, Inner Ear Balance Problem, Temporary Tunnel Vision, Gaping Flesh Wound, Impaled, Torn Ligaments, Second-Degree Burns</i>
Severe	Serious wound	<i>Fractured Skull, Broken Limb, Bleeding Out, Nose Smashed Up Into Skull, Deafened, Blinded, That Spear Goes Right Through, Snapped Tendons, Third-Degree Burns</i>
Extreme	Critical wound	<i>Comatose, Severed Limb, Gushing With Blood, Brain Injury, Ears Ripped Off, Eyes Torn Out, Gaping Hole In Body, Hideously Maimed, Fourth-Degree Burns</i>

TABLE 10-6: EXAMPLES OF MENTAL DAMAGE

CONSEQUENCE TYPE	DAMAGE SEVERITY	EXAMPLE ASPECT WORDINGS
Mild	Mild Agitation	<i>Dumbstruck, Taken Aback, Confused, Startled, Preoccupied</i>
Moderate	Moderate Disturbance	<i>Reduced to Tears, Bewildered, State of Shock, Frightened, Obsessive</i>
Severe	Serious Trauma	<i>Nervous Breakdown, Depressed, Burned Out, Terrified, Neurotic</i>
Extreme	Critical Breakdown	<i>Complete Mental Collapse, Suicidal, A Total Wreck, Harrowed to Your Soul, Psychotic</i>

TABLE 10-10: CONSEQUENCE TREATMENT AND RECOVERY

CONSEQUENCE TYPE	DIFFICULTY TO TREAT	TIME TO REMOVE ONCE TREATED
Mild	2	End of next scene, or <i>Several Hours</i> .
Moderate	4	This point in the next session, or <i>Several Days</i> .
Severe	6	This point in the next adventure, or <i>Several Weeks</i> .

TABLE 12-1: ADVANCEMENT POINT SPENDS

ADVANCEMENT POINT SPEND	RESULT
1	<p>Change a stunt for another stunt, or reword an aspect on your character sheet.</p> <p>Swap the position of two adjacent skills on your character sheet, or remove a level 1 skill and replace it with another.</p> <p>Change one sorcery spell you've memorized for a new one, effectively "forgetting" the old one. See page 260.</p>
2	<p>Increase one of your skills by 1 level, or add a new level 1 skill. You must adhere to the Skill Column rule (page 42).</p> <p>Learn a new sorcery spell, if you're a sorcerer (page 260). You must have access to the spell in question.</p>
4	Add a new stunt. This reduces your Refresh by -1 (page 44) unless it's a relationship stunt.
8	Add a new aspect to one of your relationships.
16	Increase your Refresh by +1.

TABLE 12-2: ADVANCEMENT POINT AWARDS

MILESTONE	AP AWARDED	DESCRIPTION
Minor	1	At the end of any game session.
Significant	2	At the end of a session marking a significant event like the end of an adventure.
Major	4	At the end of a session concluding an adventure tying up the current campaign arc.

TABLE 12-3: MILESTONE CHANGES

MILESTONE TYPE	MAGNITUDE OF ADVANCEMENTS POSSIBLE
Minor	A single small change: buying a new stunt or other ability, raising a skill level by 1 point, changing one stunt for another, swapping two skills round.
Significant	Level up! Up to 5 small changes—tweak an aspect, increase a couple of skills, buy a couple of new stunts, etc.
Major	As many changes as you can afford in AP! Your Chronicler may declare they require a certain amount of time.

TABLE 13-2: MAGIC USE RANGE SUMMARY

MAGIC TYPE	RANGED USE
Cantrips, Power Stunts, and Divine Magic	Default range is R0. For each additional zone of range, increase difficulty by +2. Maximum range is equal to your skill level.
Sorcery	Default range is R0. For each additional zone of range, burn 1 point of mental stress and increase difficulty by +2. Maximum range is R4; beyond that requires a Very Long Range sorcery spell.
Very Long Range Sorcery	The spell must include the Very Long Range spell effect stunt (see page 325). Each additional zone above R4 requires you to burn 1 mental stress, and increase difficulty by +1.

TABLE 13-4: MAGICAL TARGETING SUMMARY

TYPE OF MAGIC	TARGET(S) AFFECTED
Cantrips, Power Stunts, and Divine Magic	Affects 1 target by default, but you may use the rules for “Affecting More Than One Target” (page 229). Zone effects require a specific power stunt.
Sorcery	Affects 1 target by default, plus +1 target for each 1 point of mental stress incurred. Zone effects require the Zone Effect spell effect stunt, and difficulty is +2.
Power stunt zone effect	Affects a single zone. On a special success, it may also affect zones adjacent to the target zone. On a critical success, it may affect zones adjacent to those zones, too.
Sorcery spell zone effect	See page 325.

TABLE 13-3: EXPANDED RANGE TABLE

RANGE IN ZONES	APPROXIMATE DISTANCE FOR MISSILE AND SPELLCASTING PURPOSES
R-1	Hand-to-hand, touching.
R0	1-2 metres.
R1	3-10 metres.
R2	10-50 metres.
R3	51-100 metres.
R4	101-500 metres.
R5	501-1000 metres.
R6	1-10 kilometres.
R7	11-100 kilometres.
R8	101-1000 kilometres.
R9	1001-10000 kilometres.
R10+	10000 kilometres and up!

TABLE 13-9: SORCERY SPELLS KNOWN PER POWER SKILL LEVEL

POWER SKILL LEVEL	MAXIMUM SORCERY SPELLS KNOWN FOR THAT POWER SKILL
1	1 spell
2	3 spells
3	6 spells
4	10 spells
5	15 spells
6	21 spells
7	28 spells
8	36 spells

TABLE 13-5: POWER USE CRITICAL SUCCESS EFFECTS (PICK ONE)

Increase the range of the effect by +1 range.

Increase the duration of the magical effect; instead of a situation aspect lasting one scene, it lasts for the rest of the session, and so on. For a consequence, increase its severity by one step; a mild consequence becomes a moderate consequence.

If you were targeting multiple targets (page 229), you don't have to divide your shifts among them; each target is affected by the shifts you rolled.

If you were using a Zone Effect (page 230), increase the effect by +1 zone. So, if you were affecting your zone and each zone adjacent, you actually affect an area 2 zones out from your current zone.

The magical effect incorporates a second action: if it was a manoeuvre, maybe it also acts as an attack. If it was an attack, maybe it also creates a situation or condition aspect.

The magical effect increases in magnitude; if it was a cantrip, it acts like a power stunt; for a fate point, you may immediately cement this as a new power stunt. If it was a power stunt already, you double its effect; you may also cement this as a new stunt, with the original stunt as a prerequisite. In both cases, reduce your Refresh accordingly.

TABLE 13-6: POWER USE FUMBLE EFFECTS (PICK ONE OR ROLL)

COSMIC FATE DICE ROLL	FUMBLE EFFECT
-5 to -3	The power's effect is reversed!
-2 to 0	The power affects you instead! If it was intended to affect you, it affects a random opponent or other character instead.
+1 to +3	You suffer a <i>Magical Backfire</i> consequence; not only is this alarming and painful, it acts as an obstacle to all your subsequent power skill rolls until removed.
+4 to +5	A completely different magical effect occurs which causes you trouble in some way, possibly another cantrip or power stunt.

TABLE 13-10: THE THEORY OF ELEMENTAL CORRESPONDENCES

ELEMENT	NUMBER	ELEMENTAL / DEMON	GOD	LORD	PLANET	COLOUR	INSTRUMENT	MUSICAL MODE
The Forbidden Void	0	Flay	Pline	Vile	Eplanai	White	Voice	Kiyo Plainchant
Darkness	1	Shade, Umbrai	Babisiya	Bab	Sayib	Black	Drum	Dambu
Aether	2	Hellion, Serapai	Regos	Hel	Rasha the Sun	Gold	Trumpet	Filaun
Fire	3	Salamander, Agnapei	Dafur	Agni	Devrak	Red	Cymbal	Daragai
Earth	4	Gnome, Urthai	Emeldias	Malud	Malud	Ochre	Bullroarer	Thamish
Water	5	Undine, Ichthai	Nimur	Nim	Yala the Green Moon	Green	Strings	Shanshi
Air	6	Sylph, Ulmai	Belorias	Bel	Balor	Azure	Pipes	Alu

TABLE 10-1: INDICATIVE DIFFICULTIES

DIFFICULTY	DESCRIPTION
0	A really easy task. You probably don't even need to roll, unless there's something vital riding on you succeeding. <i>Attacking an unsuspecting target, jumping a 2-metre gap.</i>
1	A straightforward task performed without pressure, something an average person might find tricky, but done under optimal conditions. Again, you might not need to roll. <i>Lifting a person over your shoulders, jumping over a steep-banked stream.</i>
2	A somewhat challenging task; a straightforward task performed under pressure. A pro should pull this off without trouble. <i>Shooting someone with a bow in combat, jumping a steep-banked stream while under fire, deciphering an ancient inscription while the room fills with water.</i>
3	A challenging task. A skilled professional succeeds half the time, but amateurs need support. <i>Climbing a sheer wall using pitons and rope, intimidating an armed guard to back down.</i>
4	A very challenging task. A skilled pro needs to focus, and amateurs need luck and support. <i>Deciphering an ancient inscription by touch in the dark while the room fills with water.</i>
5	A difficult task. A skilled pro will want plenty of time, luck or support! <i>Climbing a sheer wall without ropes or pitons.</i>
6	A very difficult task. An expert has a good chance of success. <i>Leaping over a river of lava with steep banks while under attack.</i>
7	A daunting task. Only heroes with magical support will succeed at this reliably! <i>Climbing a sheer vertical without rope or pitons; deciphering an ancient inscription in the dark before the lava reaches you.</i>
8	A very daunting task. There's an outside chance you'll succeed, but only heroes with luck and support can be confident. <i>Resisting demon-fire as you balance across a tightrope; shooting the gargamand in the eye from a hundred paces.</i>
9	An utterly daunting task. Even a hero with magical support will fail half the time.
10	An almost impossible task. A hero with magical support will rely on chance more than skill!
Difficulties can go higher—some things really are that hard, especially rolled difficulties. Don't forget, though, that your characters are striving to generate shifts, get special successes, and so on, and higher difficulties make that harder, so are reserved for special occasions!	
11	A beginning character with good luck and support and using his peak skill can just about hope for this.
14	The best a beginning character can achieve, with maximum support and an excellent dice roll.
18	The best a character with a skill level of 6 can hope for.
19	A legendary feat! Only an advanced character with skill 7, maximum support, and a great dice roll can hope to achieve this.
20	A feat worthy of the gods! Even an advanced character will rarely achieve this—it's more the province of superhuman characters with skills of 8 or higher!

APPENDIX THREE: GLOSSARY

Here's a quick alphabetical guide to some of the key concepts describing the world of Future Earth.

alagin: *an organic substitute for iron and steel, similar to fibre-glass, created by the Hsun spider folk.*

Amadorad: *an imperial exarchy or protectorate in the north of Hivernium, and a buffer zone with the Entropic Wastes of Yurasha.*

archaeopolis: *one of the Great Cities of the Springtide Civilisations (and particularly the Venerable Autocracy), an ancient city surviving from the Time of Snows, comprising an Old City or Citadel stranded inland when the seas retreated, and a New City or Tentellenane built on the new coast.*

artefact: *a catch-all term referring to an exotic item with sophisticated functions, and which may often appear to be magical (even though it is based on scientific principles which may have been forgotten). See also hsuntach, mechanism, and pereprae.*

asari: *a Kesh grain used for baking Yesel bread.*

astrigers: *a human phenotype exclusively forming the aristocracy of the Venerable Autocracy. Astrigers are very tall. See also parigers.*

autarch: *the ruler of a province (or "autarchy") of the Venerable Autocracy.*

autarchy: *one of the provinces of the Venerable Autocracy, eg Korudav, Elikan, etc.*

Autocrator, Venerable: *absolute ruler of the Empire of Sakara. See Venerable Autocrator.*

avatar: *a small portion of a deity's being which a skilled priest is able to incarnate in his or her person.*

Avatar, the: *the supreme monarch of the Empire of Sakara, a human being who is the mortal incarnation of the god Ankadar the Lawgiver, the Venerable Autocrator. The current Avatar is Enessi XXI.*

bantoor: *triceratops-sized, six-legged beast of burden of the Springtide Civilisations.*

Bayal: *the planet Saturn, one of the five known planets.*

bayuri: *a wool-bearing herd animal, similar to a giant goat or sheep.*

bellarch: *a warlord, one of the tribal rulers of the hordes of the Rabaq Hor and Rabaq Nun wastes.*

belogost: *a necropolis, a City of the Dead associated with one of the Empire's archaeopolises.*

Benel: *the planet Mercury, one of the five known planets. Associated with the god Vareltias.*

beteliads: *the raised "road walls" or "battle walls" that surround Sakari archaeopolises.*

bordoi: *the "new-city" of a Sakari archaeopolis.*

cambriother: *a dinosaur-like bipedal riding animal, agile and good in rugged and mountainous terrain.*

cambriotheria: *a stable for cambriother riding animals.*

capalus: *the "old-city" of a Sakari archaeopolis. Also known as a citadel.*

chelother: *a riding beast like a horse with fangs and claws. Chelothers have terrible tempers and are used as war horses by the temple of Regos and his legions.*

chemick: *the Future Earth equivalent of chemistry and alchemy.*

citadel: *see capalus.*

cycliad: *a period of five thousand years, also called an "Age", used to measure Sakari history. The current year is 2993CV, at the end of the Fifth Cycliad.*

Devrak: *the planet Mars, one of the five known planets. Associated with the god Dafur.*

dinar, silver: *a small silver coin used in the Venerable Autocracy. It represents a day's pay for a labourer, and is worth 10 copper minims.*

dragonel: *a great dragon-headed energy cannon of the Ancients. Many still protect the citadels of the Empire's archaeopolises.*

duwafi: *a ceremonial trumpet used by the temples of the Great Compact.*

elenisor: *dragon-like flying steeds of the Kesh jeniri.*

Entropics, the: *marauding hordes of mutated monsters of many types and forms, some intelligent, some not. It's said that being injured by an Entropic can infect you with the Gift of Gumazhdu, transforming you into an Entropic. The ancient foes of humankind, and followers of the Reaver Gods. See also Shakh.*

Eplanai: *the planet Venus, one of the five known planets. Associated with the god Pline.*

esteri: *non-human kindreds that share Future Earth with humans and jeniri. There are many types, some exceedingly inimical. Esteri kindreds include the Hsun spider folk, the Ing Shu, the Tung Mai mantis men, and the protean Paladoi. Also called the Not-Humans of Earth.*

exarch: *the ruler of an exarchy, also known as a "duke".*

exarchy: *an Imperial protectorate, ruled by an exarch or duke. The Amadorad Protectorate is an imperial exarchy.*

False Avatar: *the avatar Aglaya, deposed by Enessi XXI a century ago. Neither Ellib nor Amadorad consider that she was a pretender, instead maintaining Enessi was a usurper.*

Firecloud, the: *the recent destruction which annihilated part of the precincts of the archaeopolis of Korudav. Thought to have been caused by the explosion of a thermifex and its manatine.*

flamelance: *the most common energy weapon used in the Autocracy. True flamelances are extremely rare artefacts of the Ancients, but most flamelances today are poorly-understood copies made by the Artificers of Khosht.*

Gebrahil of Nayarak: *mythical figure from the Empire of Tlan, and one of the Sakari cultural heroes.*

Great Compact: *the agreement between mortals and the gods which saved the Cosmos from domination and destruction at the hands of the Great Hegemonist and Reaver Gods.*

Great Hegemonist: *the cosmic force for evil and domination, opponent of the Great Compact and of all right-thinking mortals. Banished from the world, he always seeks to re-enter and regain his power. His servitors are the Helemor.*

Green Moon: *Future Earth's natural satellite and a byword for breathtaking beauty. It's a world of its own, with mountains, forests, and seas. Just look up!*

havas: *a potent distilled alcoholic drink produced by the Magigi and Virikki, similar to brandy.*

Helemor: *demonic jeniri and servitors of the Great Hegemonist. They are banished Beyond the Veil, where they travel endlessly in vast voidships.*

Helemoriad, the: *the holy book of the Springtide Civilisations, recounting the Armageddon of the Gods, the battle with the Great Hegemonist and Reaver Gods, and the Great Compact which saved the world.*

Hivernium: *the cool temperate northern peninsula of the Venerable Autocracy, corresponding to the modern-day Iberian Peninsula.*

hsuntach: *the organic technology of the Hsun spider folk, including the zoan prostheses and alagin.*

inidia: *vast urban areas enclosed by the beteliad battle walls of imperial archaeopolises. Also known as precincts, they often include farmland and forests.*

jeniri: *humanoid kindreds related to human beings. There are many jeniri kindreds, including the Virikki, Magigi, P'Tek, Kesh, and Che Kwa. Also called the Cousins of Humankind.*

Kados: *capital city of the Venerable Autocracy.*

katarab: *a common type of trading vessel of the Springtide Civilisations.*

kenek: *a meat and milk herd animal, like a hybrid of ox and giant boar.*

khalub: *boiled wheat mixed with raisins, pomegranate seeds, herbs and a sprinkling of roasted flour and sugar. A popular staple throughout the Venerable Autocracy.*

kladia: *the heraldic symbols of the houses and legions of the Autocracy.*

lucical: *the glowglobe artefacts of the Ancients, used as street lighting in some of the citadels of the Autocracy's archaeopolises. Some are portable and charged by proximity to manatines.*

manatine: *highly decorated columnar energy conduits found in and (usually) beneath the archaeopolises of the Springtide Civilisations. Some are still functional, and can be used to recharge pereprae artefacts.*

man shu: *an apricot brandy popular throughout the Springtide Civilisations.*

mechanism: *a type of artefact which operates on known principles, it might be ancient or something created more recently by an artificer.*

mentalith: *a pereprae "thinking stone". Extremely rare, and often very suspect. Some are insane. Possibly a form of demon.*

mindstone: *a carbuncular excrescence produced by the Paladoi proteans, capable of holding psychic impressions and making certain of their psionic abilities available to non-Paladoi.*

minim: *a copper coin used in the Venerable Autocracy. There are 10 minims in a silver dinar.*

mystikai: *a sorcerer, usually without affiliation to legion, temple, or school.*

oloriact: *one of the gladiatorial fighters of the oloriad arenas.*

oloriad: *one of the gladiatorial arenas of the Venerable Autocracy; also the name for the regular bouts which take place there.*

ornither: *an elegant, bird-like riding beast, with iridescent plumage. Expensive and classy, and generally only used by the well-off.*

palatid: *one of the trading ships of the Springtide Civilisations.*

papak: *a leafy tree found in northern Sakara, sacred to the goddess Emeldias.*

parigers: *a human phenotype comprising the gentry of the Venerable Autocracy, and also the offspring of a standard human and an astriger (see above). Parigers are somewhat taller than standard humans, but not as tall as astrigers.*

pelati: *a long-grain rice and a staple in the Sakari Heartland Provinces.*

Pentalogiat, the: *an arrangement of floating lights in the sky that spell out a glyph or word in an ancient language. About the width of a thumb at arm's length, and coloured red and silver, it has an orbital period similar to that of the Green Moon.*

pereprae: *an ancient technological device, an artefact.*

pilogiarch: *a Venerated High Priest (-ess), a senior title in the hierarchies of the Temples of the Great Compact.*

plutarch: *the ruler of a plutarchy, also known as a "count".*

plutarchy: *administrative subdivision of a province or autarchy, also known as a county.*

radium pistol or rifle: *a type of firearm commonly employed by the Kesh jeniri (especially their elenisor pilots). Radium weapons use lozenge-shaped bullets powered by chemick. They make a characteristic "chirp" sound when fired.*

Rasha: *the planet Jupiter, one of the five known planets. Associated with the god Regos.*

Reaver Gods: *the rapacious godlike entities that would destroy the cosmos; they may be allies or servitors of the Great Hegemonist.*

Rust Deserts, Rust Marshes: *vast polluted wastes which dot the Springtide Civilisations, in which rusted and rotten artefacts of the Ancients can sometimes be found. You're more likely to die of strange illness or eaten by some mutated monstrosity, however.*

Sakara: *also known as the Empire of Sakara; see the Venerable Autocracy.*

Shakh, the: *the Chekwa word for “Entropics”, and specifically the Entropic Hordes of the Yurashan Wastes which lie beyond the Kadram Mountains. See also Entropics.*

silver shield: *a large silver coin used in the Venerable Autocracy, worth 10 silver dinars or 100 copper minims.*

Springtide Civilisations: *human-dominated city-builder cultures that arose fifteen thousand years ago on the shores of the Middle Sea following the Time of Snows. Includes the Venerable Autocracy.*

templar: *the main golden coin used in the Venerable Autocracy, also called a tharius. It's worth 10 silver shields, 100 silver dinars, or 1000 copper minims.*

tenafa: *Mukhari bread, a staple in the Heartland Provinces.*

tharius: *see templar.*

thermifex: *one of the “waystones” of the Ancients, an often ring-shaped standing stone that gives off heat and is seemingly indestructible. They're often used as hostels for travellers, especially in the wilderness, and are said to hide manatines beneath.*

Time of Snows: *a dark age caused by the massive climate disaster of the Doom of Nayarak (some say the disaster was a result of the Doom of Nayarak, but the point is moot). It lasted millennia and was a time of great migrations, and ended in an ice age and the rise of the Springtide Civilisations.*

tiridat: *the “Sixfold Way”, martial art of the Tung Mai mantis people, also studied by other kindreds in the Autocracy. A form of mysticism.*

Tlan, Empire of: *the great predecessor empire to the Springtide Civilisations, it extended beyond the Ocean of Tlan and lasted twenty millennia, before succumbing to the Doom of Nayarak.*

tzungat: *a ball game of Shuashi origin, played on horse-back or other steed; popular in the eastern provinces of the Autocracy.*

Venerable Autocracy, the: *also called the Sakari Empire or Empire of Sakara; the greatest and oldest of the Springtide Civilisations, a human-dominated culture occupying what was formerly the western part of the African continent and the Iberian peninsula.*

Void Cult: *one of the more obvious infestations of Reaver God worship in the Venerable Autocracy. Void witches are rooted out and slain wherever they're found.*

yesel: *strong tasting Kesh bread.*

yokarat: *Sakari beverage prepared from pepper, cumin, and anise by infusion with boiling water.*

Yurasha: *barren and semi-frozen wastes to the north of Hivernium and the Middle Sea, infested with hordes of Entropics.*

zoans: *smaller products of the hsuntach of the spider folk, these are symbiotic living prostheses that form the mainstay of medical replacements and augmentations in the Springtide Civilisations. Some are a bit icky.*

Zofi: *the “Silent Song” of the Zofi Monks, worshippers of the god Konfu the Healer.*

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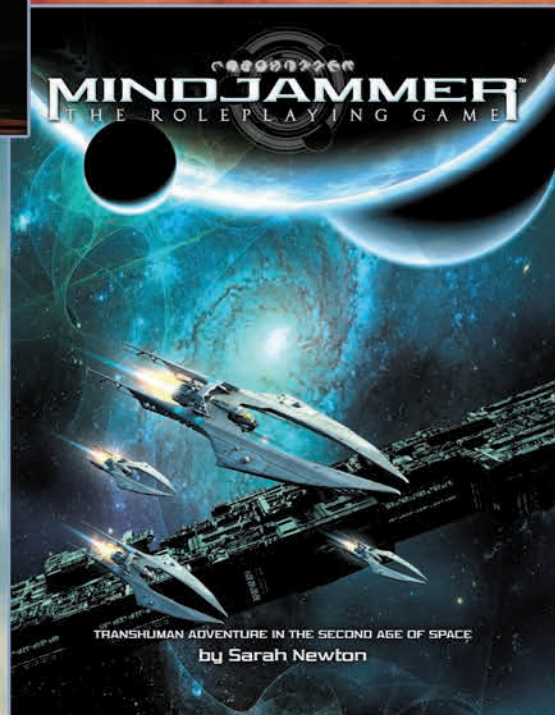
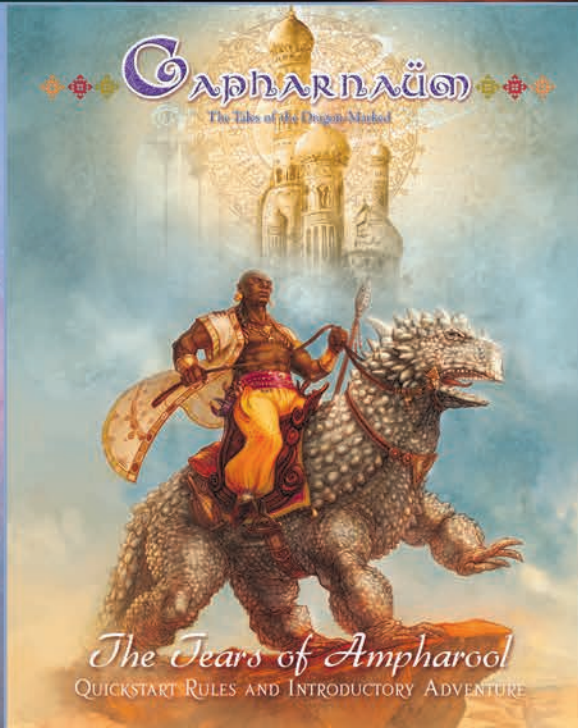
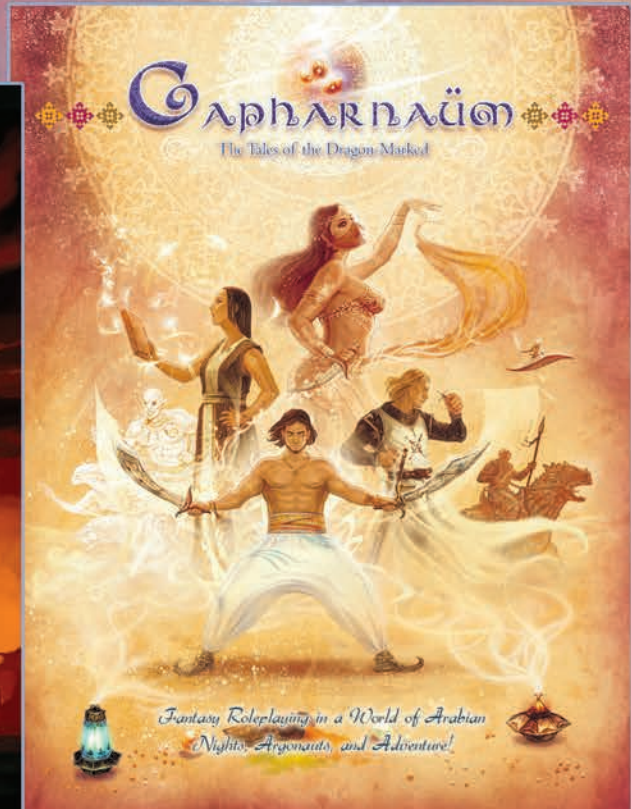
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All new rules elements in Chapter 10: How To Do Things, Chapter 11: Relationships, Chapter 12: Advancement, Chapter 13: Magic, and Chapter 14: Mysticism.

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SKU: TGP00100

ISBN: 978-1-7385423-0-7

