Combat Encounters

Step 1: Determine Initiative

To determine the Initiative order, each player character and NPC makes a Simple (–) Cool or Vigilance check. Once all Initiative checks have been made, the GM notes the results of each check and ranks them in order from the highest number of Success (✹) to the lowest. If two checks are tied, the check with more Advantage (⋀) is ranked higher. If a player character and an NPC are still tied, the player character is ranked higher.

Characters should determine their Initiative using the Cool skill when they are aware and ready for combat. For example, rolling to see who goes first in a quick-draw gunfight or springing an ambush on an unsuspecting enemy would require Cool.

Characters should determine their Initiative using the Vigilance skill when combat begins unexpectedly. Two enemies walking around a corner and running into each other would each use Vigilance to determine Initiative, for example. Likewise, someone being ambushed would also use Vigilance to determine Initiative.

Step 2: Assign Initiative Slots

Once the GM has determined the Initiative order, they note which results were generated by player characters and which results were generated by NPCs. The results generated by player characters become player character Initiative slots. The results generated by NPCs become NPC Initiative slots.

Step 3: Participants Take Turns

Beginning at the top of the Initiative order, the players and GM fill each Initiative slot one at a time with a character turn. If the Initiative slot is a player character Initiative slot, then the players agree on one player character to fill the slot from among the player characters who have not acted yet this round. That player character then takes this turn. *(Alternatively, you can keep track of every player's individual initiative roll results and assign Player initiative that way, as it is the more classic approach to doing so.)* If the Initiative slot is an NPC Initiative slot, then the GM chooses one NPC to fill the slot from among the NPCs who have not yet acted this round. That NPC then takes the turn.

Step 4: Round Ends

Once all NPCs and player characters have taken a turn, the round ends. At this point, certain effects that last until the "end of the round" may end. The GM also determines if the ongoing encounter warrants additional rounds or if it has been resolved. If the ongoing events continue, repeat step 3 using the same Initiative order generated in step 1. If the action has been resolved and the encounter is over, proceed to step 5.

Step 5: Encounter Ends

Once the action has been resolved, the GM ends the encounter. At this point, any character abilities that may only be used "once per encounter" are again available, and any abilities that last "until the end of the encounter" expire. Player characters also have a chance to catch their breath and recover from Strain.

The Turn

Each character gets one turn to act during each round. During their turn, the character can do any of a number of things. The activities the character can perform during their turn are split into three categories: **incidentals, maneuvers, and actions.**

Incidentals

Incidentals are extremely minor activities characters can undertake that require very little time or effort. Dropping an item, speaking aloud, or switching on a button are all incidentals. There is no limit to the number of incidentals a character may perform during their turn, although your GM may decide an excessive series of incidentals are complex enough to warrant counting as a maneuver. The following are examples of incidentals:

• Speaking to another character.
• Dropping an item held in one's hands.
• Releasing someone the character is holding.
• Minor movements such as shifting position, peeking around a corner, or looking behind oneself.

Maneuvers

Maneuvers are activities that aren't complex enough to warrant a skill check, but still involve time and effort on the part of a character. **Characters are allowed one maneuver during their turn, and certain circumstances may allow them a second maneuver as well.** The following are some examples of maneuvers:

• Precision-aiming a weapon.
• Moving one range band closer or farther away from
an enemy.
• Opening a door.
• Diving behind cover.
• Standing up.

Actions

Actions are important activities to a character's accomplishment of a goal. **Each character may normally only perform one action during their turn.** Actions almost always involve performing a skill check, although certain character abilities may require using an action to activate them. The following are some examples of actions:

• Hacking a computer.
• Unlocking a locked door.
• Firing a weapon.
• Punching or grappling an opponent.
• Instructing allies with a series of orders.
• Performing first aid on an ally.
• Sneaking up on a vigilant foe.
• Climbing a cliff.

Maneuvers

Maneuver Limitations

A character may perform one free maneuver on their turn. They may perform a second maneuver by suffering two points of Strain. Characters may also perform a second maneuver by spending 2 Advantage (⋀ ⋀) generated on the check, or by other means listed elsewhere. However, regardless of the source, **a single character may not perform more than two maneuvers during their turn.**

Maneuvers Outside a Character's Turn

In some cases, a character may be able to perform a maneuver when it's not that character's turn. An enemy soldier rolling horribly on a Stealth check to ambush a PC may generate a number of Threat (✵) on their check. The GM may decide that the blunder allows the would-be victim the opportunity to perform a maneuver, even though it's the soldier's turn. **Any bonus maneuvers gained outside of a character's turn do not count toward the limit**

of two maneuvers a character may perform during their turn, specifically because they occur outside of the character's turn.

Types of Maneuvers

The following is a list of the maneuvers a character can perform during combat. Note that this list is not exclusive. The entire point of maneuvers is that they can cover any activity that is relatively easy to perform but still requires some amount of time and effort. While the maneuvers listed here are deliberately general to cover as many options as possible, if a player comes up with something they want their character to do that is not covered by this list, they should not dismiss the idea out of hand. Instead, they should explain what they'd like to accomplish to the GM, who can decide if it can realistically be performed in a single maneuver.

Some activities may require multiple maneuvers to perform. Generally, these maneuvers must be performed sequentially, without being interrupted by the character performing other maneuvers or actions, for the task to be successful.

Aim

During combat, a character can use the aim maneuver to steady a weapon or line up a hit before attacking, which grants a bonus to their next combat check. A character only gains the benefit of aiming if they remain in their current position and do not perform any additional maneuvers or actions before their next combat check. Any damage taken that exceeds the character's soak also negates the benefit of aiming.

Aiming provides the character with one of the following two bonuses:

•**Gain 1 Boost (⬜) on the next combat check.** If the character spends two consecutive maneuvers aiming, they gain 2 Boost (⬜ ⬜) on the next combat check.

•**Target a specific item carried by the opponent or a specific part of the target or opponent.** This could allow the character to attempt to strike or shoot a weapon from an opponent's hand. For example; to target an opponent's limb to hobble them. If the character spends one maneuver aiming to do this, their next combat check suffers 2 Setback (⬛ ⬛). If they spend two consecutive maneuvers aiming, the combat check suffers 1 Setback (⬛) instead.

Assist

Performing the assist maneuver allows an engaged ally to add 1 Boost (⬜) to their next check. Several characters can use the assist maneuver to add more bonus Boost (

■) to the engaged ally's next check. All awarded bonus dice must be used on the assisted character's next turn; otherwise, they are discarded.

The Game Master should use their own discretion when allowing characters to assist one another. Some actions simply do not benefit from assistance. Likewise, it is up to the GM as to how many characters can realistically assist another character.

Guarded Stance

A character who performs this maneuver adds 1 Setback (■) to any combat checks they make until the end of their next turn. However, they also gain melee defense 1 until the end of their next turn.

Interact with the Environment

Often, a single maneuver is enough to interact with the environment around a character. This is a broad category of possible interactions, such as opening a door, ducking behind a wall, pressing a specific button on a control panel, or grabbing a weapon off of the ground. The following are additional specifically designed examples of interacting with the environment:

• **Moving a large item.** Flipping over a table, shoving a barrel into a pursuer's path, hefting a crate: each of these takes a maneuver to perform.

• **Opening or closing a door.** Whether an electronic blast door or a simple door with latches and hinges, opening or closing it takes a maneuver.

• **Taking cover.** Ducking behind a door jamb, crouching behind a crate, or peeking around a tree trunk: **all of these allow the character to gain ranged defense 1** *(some cover can grant a ranged defense higher than 1, if particularly sturdy)*. It takes a maneuver to take cover, but once in cover, the character keeps the bonus unless they move out of cover or it becomes destroyed.

Manage Gear

Managing items and equipment is accomplished by this maneuver, which can cover the following options:

• **Uncaptchalogue, ready, holster, or load a weapon.** This maneuver covers the basic manipulations of most weapons, such as drawing a longsword from its sheath, reloading a laser rifle's energy cells, or drawing and arming a fragmentation grenade for use.

• **Draw something from storage or put it away.** A character can perform a maneuver to retrieve an item from their inventory, or some other accessible container. This maneuver can also be used to stow items in a similar fashion.

Mount or Dismount

Mounting or dismounting from a domesticated animal, such as a trained horse, requires a maneuver *(Successfully mounting an untrained animal, however, requires an Average [◆ ◆] Survival check and thus an action, which could be made harder depending on how ornery the GM feels the animal is).* Similarly, entering a vehicle, sliding into a cockpit, or otherwise taking position to pilot a vehicle, crew a gunnery station, or the like requires a maneuver as well.

Move

One of the most important maneuvers a character can make is to move from one piece of cover to the next. The game defines several different broad types of movement. When characters move, they do one of the following:

• **Change range increment. This maneuver allows a character to move between short and medium range relative to another person or object. Performing two move maneuvers allows a character to move between medium and long range or between long and extreme range.** When covering long distances, multiple maneuvers do not have to be performed on the same turn, but the character is not considered to be in the new range increment until all required maneuvers have been performed. For more detail on determining range, see *Range Bands*.

• **Engage or disengage from an opponent. If a target is already within short range of a character, the character can perform a maneuver to engage that target. If the character is engaged with an opponent or adversary, they must perform a maneuver to disengage from that opponent before moving to any other location.** This only changes their range relative to their opponent from engaged to short and represents the effort of backing away and avoiding their opponent's attacks. **Characters do not need to perform this maneuver to leave an engagement consisting only of friendly characters or allies.**

• **Move within short range.** Performing this maneuver allows an unengaged character to move to another position that is currently within short range of them.

Drop Prone or Stand from Prone

Dropping prone and standing from a prone position each requires a maneuver.

Dropping prone allows the character to add 1 Setback (■) to all ranged attacks made against them, although they also must add 1 Boost (▢) to all melee attacks made against them.

Preparation

Some actions require additional preparation to perform safely or effectively. The preparation maneuver is generally performed in conjunction with another ability to confer a

bonus, offset a penalty, or fulfill a requirement. The individual talents and abilities that utilize the preparation maneuver define its specific effect. It is sometimes simply referred to as "prepare."

Actions

During a character's turn, they generally have the chance to perform one primary activity. This is the character's action. Actions include any activity complex enough to warrant a skill check.

Action Limitations

A character may only perform one action in a turn. Some characters may have abilities allowing them to perform an action as a maneuver. This does not violate the limit of one action per turn, as the action now counts as a maneuver.

Types of Actions

There are four major types of actions a character can perform during their turn: exchanging an action for a maneuver, spending the action to activate an ability or talent, performing a skill check, and performing a combat check.

Exchange an Action for a Maneuver

A character may exchange their action for an additional maneuver during their turn. They may then perform any maneuver they would be able to perform normally, following all the rules that govern maneuvers. However, **they still may not perform more than two maneuvers during their turn, no matter how they gained access to them.**

Spend an Action to Activate an Ability

Certain abilities and talents require an action to activate. **When a character spends an action to activate an ability or talent** (even if spending the action does not require a check or any other activity on the character's part), **they have used their action for their turn**. They may not take a second action unless they specifically have an ability that grants them a second action.

Perform a Skill Check

The most common actions that most characters take during their turns are actions that require a skill check to resolve.

Perform a Combat Check

A PC makes a combat check when they use a combat skill to attack a target, by firing a gun, throwing a punch, or swinging a sword, for example. This is also referred to as an attack.

Keep in mind that a combat check is a skill check. It follows all of the rules and procedures for making a skill check, including the steps for assembling the dice pool. However, there are additional steps included in a combat check.

Step 1. Declare an Attack and Select Targets

The character chooses to make an attack. They select what skill they use to make the attack and, if the skill requires a weapon to use, which weapon they use. They then declare the target of their attack.

Step 2. Assemble the Dice Pool

The character then assembles the dice pool based on the skill, its characteristic, any applicable talents or other abilities, and any other external modifiers.

The difficulty of a combat check depends on whether the attack is a ranged attack or a melee attack. **Melee attack difficulties are always Average (◆ ◆).** Ranged attack difficulties depend on the distance the target is from the active character.

Ranged Attack Difficulties

RANGE BAND	DIFFICULTY
Engaged	(if One-handed Ranged) Average (◆ ◆) (if Two-handed Ranged) Hard (◆ ◆ ◆)
Short	Easy (◆)
Medium	Average (◆ ◆)
Long	Hard (◆ ◆ ◆)
Extreme	Daunting (◆ ◆ ◆ ◆)

Step 3. Pool Results and Deal Damage

Once the player rolls the dice pool for the attack, the player evaluates the results. As with any skill check, the check must generate more Success (✷) than Failure (✘) to be

successful. **When making a combat check, if the check is successful, each Success (✵) adds +1 damage to the attack. If the attack affects multiple targets, the additional damage is added to each target.**

Step 4. Resolve Advantage and Triumph

Just as they can be spent in a non-combat skill check, Advantage (⚔) and Triumph (✪) can be spent in a combat check to gain incidental beneficial effects. In combat, some of the rules detailing the spending of Advantage (⚔) and Triumph (✪) are more clearly defined. In encounters, the player controlling the active character determines how the character spends Advantage (⚔) and Triumph (✪), unless the GM has a specific reason to decide instead.

The first and foremost ways to spend Advantage (⚔) and Triumph (✪) in an attack are to activate a Critical Injury or active item quality. Each weapon has a Critical rating value. The user can spend that many Advantage (⚔) to inflict one Critical Injury on the target, in addition to regular effects and damage. A Critical Injury can only be triggered upon a successful hit that deals damage that exceeds the target's soak value *(See Critical Injuries for more information)*.

Item qualities are special effects and abilities that apply only when a character is using that particular weapon. The vicious edge of a sword, or the automatic fire capability of an assault rifle. Item qualities come in two forms: active and passive. Active qualities require the user to spend a certain number of Advantage (⚔) to trigger them. Generally, this is 2 Advantage (⚔⚔), although some qualities may require more or fewer. Passive qualities always grant their effect. Some qualities may inflict effects on a target that, unless specified otherwise, are always applied in addition to other effects, Critical Injuries, and damage.

In addition to always counting as an additional Success (✵), Triumph (✪) can be spent to activate item qualities as well. A Triumph (✪) may be spent to inflict one Critical Injury *(no matter what the Critical rating of the weapon is)*. Alternatively, a Triumph (✪) may be spent to activate one item quality, no matter how many Advantage (⚔) it would normally take to do so.

There are other options for spending Advantage (⚔) and Triumph (✪) as well. A list of the most common can be found on the table below. Keep in mind that these are not intended to be the only options available. As always, players and GMs may invent other ways to spend Advantage (⚔) and Triumph (✪), depending on the specific circumstances of the encounter. Any option that the players and GM agree upon can be viable.

Step 4. Resolve Threat and Despair

In the same fashion in which the controlling player determines how to spend Advantage (⚔) and Triumph (✵) in their combat check, the GM then determines how to spend any Threat (⏃) or Despair (⯁) generated in the check, although in some cases *(such as checks made by NPCs)* they may give the players the option to spend these instead.

Although many weapon descriptions include options for spending Advantage (⚔) and Triumph (✵), most do not for Threat (⏃) and Despair (⯁); however, some particularly volatile or dangerous weapons do have these options, and if they do, the options are detailed in the weapon's description. As always, GMs may invent other ways to spend Threat (⏃) and Despair (⯁), depending on the specific circumstances of the encounter.

Step 6. Damage & Critical Injuries

When a character suffers damage, they reduce the damage received by their soak value. If any damage remains after this reduction, they suffer that many wounds. If the result is zero or negative, the character suffers no wounds. **If the character suffers damage from multiple hits in an attack, they apply their soak value to each hit individually.** For more information on damage and wounds, see *Wounds, Strain, and States of Health.*

An attack may also generate a Critical Injury. This may occur because the weapon's Critical rating is triggered, **or because the target suffers a number of wounds greater than its wound threshold.**

When a Critical Injury is inflicted, the attacker rolls a d100 on the table detailed in the *Critical Injuries* section. The result of the dice roll indicates which Critical Injury is inflicted.

Some weapons and talents modify this Critical Injury roll, potentially making it more or less effective. If an attack generates enough Advantage (⚔) to trigger more than one Critical Injury, the character makes a single Critical Injury roll, adding +10 to the result for each additional time the Critical rating is triggered.

Spending Results in Combat

COST	RESULT OPTIONS
⚔ or ✵	- Recover 1 strain. - Add 1 Boost (▢) to the next allied character's check.

	- Notice a single important point in the ongoing conflict, such as the location of a door's control panel or a weak point on an armored car. - Inflict a Critical Injury with a successful attack that deals damage past soak (⋀ cost may vary). - Activate an item quality (⋀ cost may vary).
⋀ ⋀ or ✸	- Perform an immediate free maneuver that does not exceed the limit of two maneuvers per turn. - Add 1 Setback (■) to the targeted character's next check. - Add 1 Boost (▢) to any allied character's next check, including that of the active character.
⋀ ⋀ ⋀ or ✸	- Negate the targeted enemy's defense (such as the defense gained from cover, equipment, or performing the guarded stance maneuver) until the end of the current round. - Ignore penalizing environmental effects such as inclement weather, zero gravity, or similar circumstances until the end of the active character's next turn. - When dealing damage to a target, have the attack disable the opponent or one piece of gear rather than dealing wounds or strain. This could include hobbling them temporarily with a shot to the leg, or disabling their radio. This should be agreed upon by the player and the GM, and the effects are up to the GM. The effects should be temporary and not too excessive. - Gain +1 melee or ranged defense until the end of the active character's next turn. - Force the target to drop a melee or ranged weapon they are wielding.
✸	- Upgrade the difficulty of the targeted character's next check. - Upgrade the ability of any allied character's next check, including that of the current active character. - Do something vital, such as shooting the controls to the nearby blast doors to seal them shut. - On an Initiative check, perform an immediate free maneuver before combat begins.

COST	RESULT OPTIONS
⬦ or ✖	- The active character suffers 1 strain. - The active character loses the benefits of a prior maneuver (such as from taking cover or assuming a guarded stance) until they perform the maneuver again.

Symbols	Effects
⚠⚠ or ⊗	• An opponent may immediately perform one free maneuver as an incidental in response to the active character's check. • Add 1 Boost (🟦) to the targeted character's next check. • The active character or an allied character suffers 1 Setback (⬛) on their next action.
⚠⚠ ⚠ or ⊗	• The active character falls prone. • The active character grants the enemy a significant advantage in the ongoing encounter, such as accidentally blasting the controls to a bridge the active character was planning to use for their escape.
⊗	• The character's weapon immediately runs out of ammunition and may not be used for the remainder of the encounter (if it fits for the setting). • Upgrade the difficulty of an allied character's next check or the next check of the current active character. • The tool, Brawl, or Melee weapon the active character is using becomes damaged.

Defense

A Defense rating is one of the factors determining how difficult it is to land a successful attack during combat.

A character adds a number of Setback (⬛) equal to their defense rating to all combat checks directed against them.

No character can have a defense rating higher than 4.

Melee and Ranged Defense

A character's defense rating can be classified as one of three types: general defense rating, melee defense rating, or ranged defense rating. A general defense rating applies against all combat checks directed against the character. A melee defense rating only applies against close combat checks directed against the character. A ranged defense rating only applies against ranged combat checks directed against the character.

There are two sources of defense: sources that stack, and sources that do not stack.

Sources that provide defense *(such as most armor)* list the defense provided as a number, or say that they "provide" defense. Some examples include:
• Armor
• Cover
• Certain talents

• Guarded Stance maneuver

These sources do not stack with each other. If a character could benefit from more than one of these sources of defense, you choose the best one.

However, other sources increase defense. These sources say they "increase" defense, or they list the defense provided as a number with a "+" sign in front of it. These sources of defense stack, both with each other and with any sources that provide defense.

If multiple sources that increase defense would increase a character's defense higher than 4, the rating remains at 4.

Soak

A character's soak value helps protect them from incoming wounds.

When taking damage from attacks or other sources of physical damage, the character may reduce the damage taken by their soak value. After calculating the total amount of damage inflicted, subtract the total soak value from that damage total. The result is the number of wounds the character suffers. If the soak reduces the damage to zero or less than zero, then the character takes no damage. If the character suffers multiple hits from a single attack *(such as from a weapon with Auto-fire)*, they apply their soak to each hit separately.

Soak stacks when it is from different sources, such as heavy assault armor and natural brawn. Multiple applications of the same source do not stack, however. A character cannot wear three suits of heavy assault armor and stack the soak bonuses from each.

Soak does not reduce strain inflicted on a target, except in specific instances *(such as when hit by a weapon with the Stun Damage item quality)*.

Range Bands

Genesys relies on broad terms to describe ranges and distances. Rather than have a player's attention focused on a battle grid, *Genesys* uses more abstract means to represent positions, distances, and ranges.

Engaged

To reflect two or more targets who are grappling or otherwise engaged in melee combat, there is a special range status called engaged. Two characters engaged with each other are in very close proximity. A character needs to be engaged with a target to hit them with their sword.

Engaged is also used to indicate that a person is close enough to an item to use it. The engaged status simply indicates that two things are close enough to each other to directly interact.

Consider engaged as a subcategory of short range. Obviously, someone can be slightly farther away if they're at short range, instead of being engaged with someone else. However, the difference in distance is relatively minor. Thus, spending a maneuver to move to engage someone or something is as much a matter of moving into combat cautiously enough to avoid receiving a blow unnecessarily as it is moving a physical distance.

Short Range

Short range indicates up to several meters between targets. Many thrown weapons and small firearms are most accurate at short range. Two people within short range of each other can talk comfortably without raising their voices. Moving to another spot within short range is usually easy to do and generally only requires one maneuver.

Medium Range

Medium range can be up to several dozen meters away. More reliable pistols can reach to medium range, but few thrown weapons can reach this far. Two people within medium range of each other need to talk loudly to hear each other. Moving from short range to medium range takes little exertion and generally requires one Maneuver.

Long Range

Long range is farther than a few dozen meters. Rifles and mounted weapons can reliably reach this far without too much trouble. Two people within long range of each other need to yell loudly to hear each other. Moving from medium range to long range requires two maneuvers, as it involves a greater distance and takes more time than moving between medium range and short range.

Extreme Range

Extreme range is the farthest range at which two targets can interact. High-tech sniper weaponry and some vehicle-mounted armaments may reach out to this range. Two people at extreme range may not be able to hear each other even if they shout. Moving between long range and extreme range can be time consuming and exerting, and it requires two maneuvers.

Additional Combat Modifiers

Ranged Attacks at Engaged Targets

When attacking a target engaged with an ally, the attacker upgrades the difficulty of the check once. In addition, if the attacker's check succeeds but generates at least one Despair (⊗), that Despair (⊗) is automatically spent to make the attacker hit one of the individuals engaged with the target *(of the GM's choice)*, instead of hitting the target.

Prone Targets and Attacking While Prone

A character who is knocked down, unconscious, or willingly drops prone is considered prone.

A character gains 1 Boost (▢) when attacking a prone target with a Melee check. A prone character suffers 1 Setback (◼) when making a melee attack from a prone position.

Prone characters are harder to hit with ranged attacks but suffer no penalties when making ranged attacks. When a character attacks a prone target with a ranged attack, they suffer 1 Setback (◼).

Two Weapon Combat

A character may opt to carry a pistol or a one-handed Melee weapon in each hand, increasing their volume of attacks at the expense of accuracy.

When attacking with two weapons, the character must be using weapons that can each be reasonably held and wielded in one hand. Generally, these weapons are Light or Brawl weapons.

To make the attack, the player performs a combined check. First, the player designates one weapon as the primary weapon. When making the combined check, the character attacks with this weapon. The player then determines which skills and characteristics the character uses when making attacks with the primary weapon and which are used with the secondary weapon. Finally, they determine the target.

To assemble the dice pool for this check, the player compares the skills that would be used to make an attack with each weapon by itself, and then compares the characteristics that would be used to make an attack with each weapon by itself. They then take the skill that they

have fewer ranks in, and the characteristic that they have fewer ranks in, and use this skill and characteristic to assemble their dice pool.

They then compare the difficulty of the two combat checks they would make with each of their two weapons to hit their target, and select the check with the higher difficulty. Then, they increase the difficulty of the combat check by one. Finally, they make the check.

If they succeed, they hit with their primary weapon in the normal manner. They may spend 2 Advantage (⋀ ⋀) or 1 Triumph (✸) to hit with their secondary weapon as well. If both weapons hit, they may spend additional Advantage (⋀) or Triumph (✸) to activate item qualities from either weapon. Each hit deals its weapon's base damage plus one point of damage per uncanceled success.

Size Differences (Silhouettes)

Generally, it's a character's skill that governs their chances of hitting a target. However, some targets are easier to hit than others, usually because of their size.

When a character makes an attack against a target with a silhouette two or more points larger than they are, they decrease the difficulty of the check by one. When a character makes an attack against a target with a silhouette two or more points smaller than they are, they increase the difficulty of the check by one.

Silhouettes and Characters

SILHOUETTE	EXAMPLE
0	Cats, Dogs
1	Humans, Trolls, Imps, Carapacians
2	Most riding animals, bears, cars, trucks
3	Drakes, giants, tractor-trailers, dirigibles, jet fighters, starfighters
4	Dragons, zeppelins, three-masted sailing frigates, long-range space-going patrol craft
5	A ship of the line, modern destroyers, space-going transport ships
6	Modern cruisers, space-going star-frigates
7	Oil tankers, aircraft carriers, space battleships
8+	Star-dreadnoughts, orbital defense platforms

Environmental Effects

Concealment (Darkness, Smoke, and Intervening Terrain)

Concealment is a situation that occurs when a character is hard to spot because of environmental effects such as darkness, smoke, tall grass, or mist. Concealment imposes penalties on ranged attacks and sight-based skill checks such as Perception checks. Additionally, it can provide bonuses for checks on other skills, such as Stealth.

The exact bonuses and penalties can be modified by the GM. However, in general, concealment can be divided into levels based on how obscuring the concealment is. See the table below for examples of different types of concealment. In each case, the type of concealment adds a number of Setback (■) equal to the entry to any ranged combat checks, Vigilance checks, or Perception checks against targets with concealment. Additionally, it adds a number of Boost (▢) equal to the entry to any Stealth checks made by a character with concealment.

Concealment Table

DICE ADDED	EXAMPLES
+1	Mist, shadow, waist-high grass
+2	Fog, the darkness of early morning or late evening, thick, shoulder-high grass
+3	Heavy fog; thick and choking smoke; the darkness of night; dense, head-high underbrush; thick grass

Cover

To keep things simple, being behind some sort of cover allows the character to gain a ranged defense of 1 and adds Setback (■) to certain skill checks, such as Perception. A single Setback (■) is sufficient for most situations, although the GM may add additional Setback (■) if the target is particularly well covered. The same holds true for the increase in ranged defense.

Difficult Terrain

Characters entering or moving through difficult terrain must perform twice as many maneuvers to move the same distance they would in normal terrain.

Water and Swimming

The GM may decide that some bodies of water, such as a river with a swift current or an ocean in a storm require a successful Athletics check to swim in. In this case, it requires at least one action as well as any number of maneuvers to swim through the water from one location to another.

If completely submerged in water, a character can hold their breath for a number of rounds equal to their Brawn characteristic. Once this number is reached, the character starts to drown and is treated as suffocating on each successive round until they surface or find some other source of air.

Wounds and Strain

Exceeding Wound Threshold

When a PC suffers wounds greater than their wound threshold, they are knocked out and incapacitated until their wounds are reduced so that they no longer exceed their wound threshold *(likely through healing)*. **They also immediately suffer one Critical Injury.**

When non-player characters and creatures suffer wounds greater than their wound threshold, they are defeated *(unless they are a high-level opponent such as a nemesis)*. Being defeated by exceeding their wound threshold usually means death, but the overall interpretation is up to the GM. The GM can decide that they pass out due to shock, are so injured that they can no longer fight, or are knocked unconscious. Since **non-nemesis adversaries do not track strain separately, but apply strain damage as wounds to their wound threshold**, what happens once they are defeated may also depend on whether they were defeated due to strain damage or wound damage.

When wounds exceed a character's wound threshold, **the player should track the number of wounds by which their character has exceeded the threshold, to a maximum of twice the wound threshold. The character must heal wounds until the number of wounds they are suffering is below their wound threshold before the character is no longer incapacitated.**

Exceeding Strain Threshold

When a character has suffered strain greater than their strain threshold, they become incapacitated until their strain is reduced so that it no longer exceeds their strain threshold. **They are likely unconscious, or they may just be so dazed and staggered that they're completely unaware of their surroundings and unable to interact with them.**

When non-player characters and creatures suffer strain, they generally apply the strain directly to their wound threshold *(unless they are nemeses and track strain separately).*

Critical Injuries

Each time a character suffers a Critical Injury, the player rolls d100 on the Critical Injury Result table to determine the injury's severity rating and effects.

The short-term effects of some injuries are temporary, and may only disorient or afflict the character for a brief amount of time. Other injuries are more serious and represent some sort of long-term debilitation or impairment. **These injuries continue to affect the character until they receive the proper medical treatment to recover from the injury.**

Regardless, **a Critical Injury remains with the character until properly healed; even if the short-term effect of the Critical Injury has passed, the status of having a Critical Injury remains. Each Critical Injury a character suffers from adds +10 to any subsequent Critical Injury roll.**

Critical Injury Results

D100	SEVERITY	RESULT
01-05	Easy (◆)	**Minor Nick:** The target suffers 1 strain.
06-10	Easy (◆)	**Slowed Down:** The target can only act during the last allied Initiative slot on their next turn.
11-15	Easy (◆)	**Sudden Jolt:** The target drops whatever is in hand.
16-20	Easy (◆)	**Distracted:** The target cannot perform a free maneuver during their next turn.

21-25	Easy (◆)	**Off-Balance:** Add 1 Setback (■) to the target's next skill check.
26-30	Easy (◆)	**Discouraging Wound:** Move one player pool Story Point to the Game Master pool (reverse if NPC).
31-35	Easy (◆)	**Stunned:** The target is staggered until the end of their next turn.
36-40	Easy (◆)	**Stinger:** Increase the difficulty of the target's next check by one.
41-45	Average (◆ ◆)	**Bowled Over:** The target is knocked prone and suffers 1 strain.
46-50	Average (◆ ◆)	**Head Ringer:** The target increases the difficulty of all Intellect and Cunning checks by one until this Critical Injury is healed.
51-55	Average (◆ ◆)	**Fearsome Wound:** The target increases the difficulty of all Presence and Willpower checks by one until this Critical Injury is healed.
56-60	Average (◆ ◆)	**Agonizing Wound:** The target increases the difficulty of all Brawn and Agility checks by one until this Critical Injury is healed.
61-65	Average (◆ ◆)	**Slightly Dazed:** The target is disoriented until this Critical Injury is healed.
66-70	Average (◆ ◆)	**Scattered Senses:** The target removes all Boost (■) from skill checks until this Critical Injury is healed.
71-75	Average (◆ ◆)	**Hamstrung:** The target loses their free maneuver until this Critical Injury is healed.
76-80	Average (◆ ◆)	**Overpowered:** The target leaves themself open, and the attacker may immediately attempt another attack against them as an incidental, using the exact same pool as the original attack.
81-85	Average (◆ ◆)	**Winded:** The target cannot voluntarily suffer strain to activate any abilities or gain additional maneuvers until this Critical Injury is healed.
86-90	Average (◆ ◆)	**Compromised:** Increase difficulty of all skill checks by one until this Critical Injury is healed.

91-95	Hard (◆ ◆ ◆)	**At the Brink:** The target suffers 2 strain each time they perform an action until this Critical Injury is healed.
96-100	Hard (◆ ◆ ◆)	**Crippled:** One of the target's limbs (selected by the GM) is impaired until this Critical Injury is healed. Increase difficulty of all checks that require use of that limb by one.
101-105	Hard (◆ ◆ ◆)	**Maimed:** One of the target's limbs (selected by the GM) is permanently lost. Unless the target has a cybernetic or prosthetic replacement, the target cannot perform actions that would require the use of that limb. All other actions gain 1 Setback (■) until this Critical Injury is healed.
106-110	Hard (◆ ◆ ◆)	**Horrific Injury:** Roll 1d10 to determine which of the target's characteristics is affected: 1-3 for Brawn, 4-6 for Agility, 7 for Intellect, 8 for Cunning, 9 for Presence, 10 for Willpower. Until this Critical Injury is healed, treat that characteristic as one point lower.
111-115	Hard (◆ ◆ ◆)	**Temporarily Disabled:** The target is immobilized until this Critical Injury is healed.
116-120	Hard (◆ ◆ ◆)	**Blinded:** The target can no longer see. Upgrade the difficulty of all checks twice, and upgrade the difficulty of Perception and Vigilance checks three times, until this Critical Injury is healed.
121-125	Hard (◆ ◆ ◆)	**Knocked Senseless:** The target is staggered until this Critical Injury is healed.
126-130	Daunting (◆ ◆ ◆ ◆)	**Gruesome Injury:** Roll 1d10 to determine which of the target's characteristics is affected: 1-3 for Brawn, 4-6 for Agility, 7 for Intellect, 8 for Cunning, 9 for Presence, 10 for Willpower. That characteristic is permanently reduced by one, to a minimum of 1.
131-140	Daunting (◆ ◆ ◆ ◆)	**Bleeding Out:** Until this Critical Injury is healed, every round, the target suffers 1 wound and 1 strain at the beginning of their turn. For every 5 wounds they suffer beyond their wound threshold, they suffer one additional Critical Injury. Roll on the chart, suffering the injury (if they suffer this result a second time due to this, roll again).
141-150	Daunting (◆ ◆ ◆ ◆)	**The End Is Nigh:** The target dies after the last Initiative slot during the next round unless this Critical Injury is healed.
151+		**Dead:** Complete, obliterated death.

Other Ongoing Status Effects

Staggered

A staggered character cannot perform actions *(including downgrading actions to maneuvers)*. Most effects that stagger a character last for a set duration. If a set duration is not specified, the staggered effect lasts until the end of the character's next turn. If a character is staggered multiple times, each instance increases the total duration of the effect by the instance's specified duration, but may not increase the total duration beyond the scope of the present encounter.

Immobilized

An immobilized character cannot perform maneuvers *(including maneuvers purchased via strain or by spending Advantage [▲])*. Most effects that immobilize a character last for a set duration. If a set duration is not specified, immobilization lasts until the end of the character's next turn. If a character is immobilized multiple times, each instance increases the total duration of the effect by the instance's specified duration, but may not increase the total duration beyond the scope of the present encounter.

Disoriented

A disoriented character adds 1 Setback (■) to all checks they make. Most effects that disorient a character last for a set duration. If a set duration is not specified, disorientation lasts until the end of the character's next turn. If a character is disoriented multiple times, each instance increases the total duration of the effect by the instance's specified duration, but may not increase the total duration beyond the scope of the present encounter.

Recovery and Healing

Natural Rest

For each full night's rest, the character heals one wound, regardless of the character's current state of health. At the end of each full week of rest, the character may attempt a Resilience check to recover from one Critical Injury. The difficulty is equal to the Critical Injury's severity rating. On a successful check, the character recovers from the Critical Injury and is no longer affected. On a failed check, the character retains the

Critical Injury, but still heals one wound. A Triumph (⊛) result means the character can heal one additional Critical Injury.

Medical Care

A character may attempt a Medicine check to help a character heal wounds. Each character may only receive one Medicine check each encounter.

The difficulty of the check is based on the target's current state of health *(see the table below)*. **On a successful check, the target heals a number of wounds equal to the number of Success (✷) generated by the Medicine roll and heals an amount of strain equal to the number of Advantage (⋀) generated.**

A character may also attempt to help someone recover from a Critical Injury by making a Medicine check with a difficulty equal to the severity rating of the Critical Injury. **A character may attempt one Medicine check per week per Critical Injury.**

A character may attempt to heal their own wounds or Critical Injuries with Medicine, but doing this themselves increases the difficulty of the Medicine check by two. In addition, attempting **a Medicine check without medical equipment of some kind** *(such as a first aid kit or doctor's tools)* **increases the difficulty of the check by one.**

Medical Check Difficulty

STATE OF HEALTH	DIFFICULTY
Current wounds equal half or less of wound threshold	Easy (◆)
Current wounds equal more than half of wound threshold	Average (◆ ◆)
Current wounds exceed wound threshold	Hard (◆ ◆ ◆)
Critical Injury	Critical Injury severity rating

Recovering From Strain

At the end of an encounter, each player can make a Simple (–) Discipline or Cool check. Each Success (✷) recovers 1 strain. A good night's rest generally removes all strain a character has suffered.