



The
Gamecraft
System

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Gamecraft Basics

What Is *The Gamecraft System*?

The Gamecraft System is a set of rules generic enough so that they can be applied to just about any game setting, but simple enough to be easy to learn and use. *The Gamecraft System* is a tool that you can use to create your own games. Using *Gamecraft* allows you to focus more on setting-specific material, rather than having to worry about creating the underlying rules and mechanics.

The Gamecraft System eliminates some of the more tedious aspects of creating a role-playing game. If you would rather spend your time designing the world that your game will take place in, the people that will inhabit it, and the monsters that threaten it, go right ahead. *Gamecraft* can simply plug right into your world, allowing you to focus on other things.

How Does *The Gamecraft System* Work?

The core mechanic of *The Gamecraft System* is simple: roll one six-sided die and subtract one from the result (1d6-1), add the current level of your relevant skill, add the score of your relevant attribute, apply any situational modifiers, and compare the total result against either a static Target Number (TN) or an opponent's die roll. All rolls are handled in this manner, with only a slight variation for damage rolls. This is the unifying idea that binds the entire system together.

What's An Exploding Die?

'Exploding die' is a term used by role-players to describe a certain die mechanic. When a die is 'exploding', it means that rolling a maximum result allows you to re-roll the die, adding the previous value to the new one. If another maximum result is rolled, the same effect results, ad infinitum. Occasionally, exploding dice will work in the reverse manner as well, subtracting a new roll from the minimum result.

The Gamecraft System uses a limited exploding mechanism. This means that if you achieve a maximum result on 1d6-1 (a result of 5), you re-roll the 1d6-1 and add the two results, with no further exploding occurring for another maximum result. If you achieve a minimum result (a result of 0), you re-roll 1d6-1 and

subtract the result, with no further exploding occurring for another minimum result. This generates a range of -5 to 10 on a die roll, with most results landing in the 0 to 5 range.

Attributes And Skills

Attributes are rated on a 10-point scale, with a score of 1 being the minimum a human being can have and 10 being the peak of human ability. Scores higher than 10 are technically possible, but these are superhuman ranges; it is up to you whether or not the player characters (PCs) can achieve scores above 10.

Skills are rated on a 12-point scale, with 0 being completely unskilled and 11 being Grandmaster ability. Like Attributes, it is possible to gain Skill levels higher than 11; these are considered higher levels of the Grandmaster rank, and go on infinitely. Whether or not this is appropriate for your game is entirely up to you; you may wish to cap PC skills at the Master level, or 10.

Levels Of Success And Failure

In *The Gamecraft System*, there are two levels of success and two levels of failure. Simply meeting or exceeding your TN grants you a success; you have completed the task that you set out to do. Beating the TN by 10 or more points, however, grants a critical success. This can mean any number of things in game-terms, but there is always a positive result for a critical success, above and beyond simply succeeding. In combat, for example, scoring a critical success when trying to hit someone with your club means that you deal an extra wound to your target, above and beyond any other damage you normally deal.

You fail by rolling a result that is less than your TN. This can have disastrous results in some cases; failing to diffuse a bomb in time might mean that you aren't able to get out of the blast radius before it detonates. However, simple failure does not always have overwhelmingly negative results, beyond not succeeding. Failing by 10 or more points, however, causes a fumble. A fumble always has some extra, negative result; in the above example, fumbling the diffusing of a bomb might mean that it immediately explodes in your face, twenty seconds ahead of time.

Attributes

Attributes measure the raw talent and ability of a character. Although you can increase attributes, doing so is very difficult after character creation because of the wide range of aptitudes that each attribute represents. There are two types of attributes: Primary and Derived. Primary Attributes represent your basic abilities and aptitudes, and are bought with Attribute Points during character creation. They are rated on a 1-10 point scale, and are used to determine the success of a given action. Derived Attributes represent combinations of abilities, and are always generated by adding two of your Primary Attributes together. Derived Attributes are never used to resolve actions in the same way that Primary Attributes are, although some can influence the result of a given check. Because Derived Attributes are generated by adding Primary Attributes together, they are rated on a 2-20 point scale instead of a 1-10 point scale.

Primary Attributes

There are eight primary attributes; four in the physical realm, four in the more intangible realm of mind and spirit. Attributes are rated on a scale of 1 (Abysmal) to 10 (Paragon). It is possible to gain an attribute score greater than 10, if difficult; anything greater than 10 is considered Superhuman.

- *Strength*: Strength is the measure of your physical power and muscle mass. It influences melee damage, carrying capacity, resistance to physical damage, fatigue, and tasks that require physical strength.
- *Constitution*: Constitution is the measure of how physically hardy you are. It influences resistance to physical damage, poisons, and diseases. In some settings it may influence your ability to continually use magical or supernatural powers.
- *Prowess*: Prowess is the measure of your speed, reflexes, and manual dexterity. It influences melee attacks and dodges, initiative, and a number of skills that require speed, quick reflexes, or manual dexterity.
- *Beauty*: Beauty is the measure of how physically attractive you are. It influences many social skills, especially when used on someone of the opposite gender.

- *Intelligence*: Intelligence is the measure of your ability to reason, decipher clues, and learn. It influences many mental skills.
- *Spirit*: Spirit is the measure of your willpower and devotion. It influences your resistance to pain and fatigue, as well as your ability to use magical or supernatural powers in some settings.
- *Perception*: Perception is the measure of how aware you are of your surroundings. It influences initiative, as well as any skills that require the use of the five senses to a great degree.
- *Personality*: Personality is the measure of how likeable you are, or how much fear or respect you command. Personality influences most social skills.

What the Scores Mean

Your Primary Attribute scores determine your chance of success or failure when performing a given task. All actions are resolved by rolling 1d6-1, thus generating a number between 0 and 5, or -5 and 10 in the case of an exploding result. Your attribute score is then added to this number—along with any other modifiers, such as skills—and applied to a Target Number (TN) in order to determine success or failure. Thus, an average character with a score of 5 would have a normal TN range of 5 to 10, or 0 to 15 in the case of an exploding result.

Attribute Score	Description
11+	Superhuman
10	Paragon
9	Extraordinary
8	Superb
7	Above Average
6	High Average
5	Middle Average
4	Low Average
3	Below Average
2	Terrible
1	Abysmal

Derived Attributes

There are eight Derived Attributes, as well; the Derived Attributes included depend entirely on what is appropriate for your

campaign setting. Derived Attributes are always based on two of the Primary Attributes, and in some cases represent pools of points that can be spent to improve your chances of successfully performing a single action.

- *Health (Strength + Constitution)*: Health determines how resistant you are to physical trauma, as well as poisons and diseases.
- *Savvy (Intelligence + Perception)*: Savvy is a point pool, which can be used to improve your dice pool for any Mental skill. Savvy represents a character's quick wits.
- *Charm (Beauty + Personality)*: Charm is a point pool, which can be used to improve your dice pool for any Social skill. Charm represents a character's natural charisma and ability to manipulate people.
- *Grace (Prowess + Spirit)*: Grace is a point pool, which can be used to improve your dice pool for any Physical skill. Grace represents a combination of luck, quick reflexes, and sheer determination.
- *Power (Constitution + Spirit)*: Power is a point pool, which is generally used to power magical, supernatural, psychic,
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or other special abilities, depending on your campaign setting. Depending on your campaign setting, Power may not even be needed.

- *Fatigue (Strength + Spirit)*: Fatigue determines how resistant you are to exhausting tasks, as well as to attacks that are meant to subdue rather than injure.
- *Initiative (Prowess + Perception)*: Initiative determines when you act during a combat round. At the start of a combat encounter, you roll 1d6-1 and apply your Initiative to determine the order that you act in.
- *Move (Strength + Prowess)*: Move determines how quickly you can move. You may move a maximum number of feet equal to half of your Move in a single round, and still act. If you forgo any actions other than movement, you may move up to triple your Move in a single round. You may move up to double your Move in a single round and still act, but you incur a penalty of -2.

Skills

Attributes give you a general framework on which to build your character; skills allow you to develop him or her even further. Skills represent practice, training, or study, whereas attributes represent natural talent or ability. In game terms, skills are much easier to increase than attributes, but they are not as widely applicable.

Skill Levels and Ranks

Each skill has seven ranks of mastery, with each rank encompassing two skill levels; the exceptions to this rule is the Grandmaster rank, which encompasses an infinite number of skill levels, and the Untrained rank, which encompasses only a single skill level. The ranks and their corresponding levels are as follows:

- 0 – Untrained. You may or may not be able to use this skill, but even if you can, you only use the dice pool granted by your attribute score.
- 1-2 – Novice. This is the basic level of proficiency for any skill. It represents someone who has just started learning how to use a given skill.
- 3-4 – Capable. This level represents a character who has been working with a skill for a while, and has gained a decent level of ability with it.
- 5-6 – Skilled. No longer merely capable, a skilled character really knows the ins and outs of a given skill. Most trained craftsmen operate at this level.
- 7-8 – Advanced. An advanced character has gone beyond what most people learn, and has distinguished himself in the process.
- 9-10 – Master. Masters are rare. A master is the absolute authority on her mastered skill. All bow to her knowledge.
- 11+ – Grandmaster. Very few attain the level of grandmaster. Grandmasters are the elite, more skilled than even masters. A character can gain an infinite number of levels as a grandmaster.

Skill Basics

Whenever you make a check using a specific skill, you get to add your skill level, in addition to your relevant attribute score and any other modifiers, to the roll. There are two types of skills: general and specialized. General skills are broad categories, things such as ‘Melee Combat’ or ‘Firearms’. These skills can be increased, but only so far; the maximum level of a general skill is Skilled. Specialized skills are more specific subdivisions of general skills. For instance, ‘Melee Combat’ might have such specialized skills as ‘Swords’ or ‘Clubs’. Specialized skills can be advanced past the level of Skilled, all the way up to Grandmaster. For instance, you may have the skill Melee Combat at the Skilled rank (level 6). You would not be able to increase Melee Combat past level 6; however, you could take the specialized skill, Swords, which builds off of Melee Combat. Buying a level of Swords makes you Skilled with Melee Combat, but Advanced whenever you use a sword. Skill lists should be customized to reflect the campaign setting that they are used in. After all, the skill list for a cyberpunk sci-fi game would be quite different from that of a Medieval high-seas adventure game!

Skill Categories

Skills are divided into three skill categories: physical, mental, and social. These categories do not directly affect which attributes can be used in conjunction with which skills, but skills in one particular category do have tendencies for certain attributes. What the categories do affect, however, are the bonus point pools that can be used to bolster your skill rolls. Your character has three point pools, each derived in some way from your Primary Attributes. These pools are Savvy (mental), Charm (social), and Grace (physical). Each pool has an associated skill category and, generally speaking, points from a given pool may only be used on skills of its corresponding category. The GM may choose to grant special exceptions, depending on the circumstances, but this is the general rule. To use points from one of your point pools, simply declare that you are doing so, and how many points you are using; the GM will decide if this is appropriate or even possible under the circumstances. Each point that you spend on your skill check results in a +1 bonus to

your check, but you may not spend more points than you have levels in the skill being checked. For instance, if you are Competent (3) in Melee Combat, you may not spend more than 3 Grace points on a single Melee Combat check. Point pools are replenished at the beginning of every game session.

Example Skills

The Gamecraft System does not include a specific set of skills; instead, it is left up to the individual world-builder to create a skill list representative of the characters’ abilities in his or her world. However, to provide some guidance and idea fodder, here is a sample skill list, for a modern world RPG. This is not a complete skill list, by any means. It does, however, provide a few examples.

the TN at 13. Wanting to make sure that she succeeds, Joline decides to turn on the charm; she spends 1 Charm point, increasing her base check to 11. She rolls, getting a result of 3 on her die, for a total of 15. She has beaten the GM’s Target Number, successfully convincing the police officer to let her off with a warning.

Later, Joline must climb the side of a building in order to get away from a group of thugs. The GM decides that this will be a Very Difficult task, with a TN of 22, based on Strength + Athletics (Climb). Joline has a Strength of 4 and an Athletics skill of 4, for a total of 8; fairly average. It would be impossible for her to climb the side of the building without spending 4 points of Grace on the roll (which happens to be the maximum she can spend on an Athletics roll, because of her level of 4). Even if

Skill Name	Example Specializations	Untrained?	Category
Melee Combat	Swords, Knives, Clubs, Unarmed Combat	Yes	Physical
Combat Defense	Melee, Ranged, Firearms, Explosives	Yes	Physical
Firearms	Pistols, Shotguns, Rifles, Submachine Guns	Yes	Physical
Athletics	Acrobatics, Gymnastics, Running, Swimming	Yes	Physical
Computers	Programming, Internet, Hacking	Yes	Mental
Driving	Cars, Motorcycles, Trucks	Yes	Mental
Mechanics	Automobile, Airplane, Heavy Equipment	No	Mental
Medicine	First Aid, Surgery, Pharmaceuticals	No	Mental
Convince	Coerce, Seduce, Intimidate, Persuade	Yes	Social
Mislead	Lie, Misdirect, Confuse	Yes	Social
Mercantile	Buying, Selling, Trading	Yes	Social
Handle Animal	Calm, Empathize, Train	No	Social

Skill Checks

A skill check is a roll made by rolling 1d6-1 and subtracting one die from the other, generating a result of 0 to 5 or -5 to 10. This is then added to your skill level plus your relevant attribute score, the final result being applied to a pre-set Target Number, ranging from Very Easy to Nigh Impossible. Target numbers are calculated by taking into account the average person, who has an attribute score of 5 and 3 ranks in the relevant skill, for a total of 8. This is what the Roll Required to Succeed column represents.

For example, Joline is trying to convince a police officer to ignore the fact that she was speeding. The GM rules that this is a Convince (Persuade) check, based on Personality. Joline has a Personality of 7 and a Convince skill of 3, for a total of 10. The GM rules that this will be a Moderate task, as the police officer is torn between his need to perform his duty and his desire to finish his donut; he sets

she were to spend 4 Grace points on the roll, she would still need to roll a result of 10 in order to succeed. Joline spends her points and prays for a miracle.

Difficulty Level	Target Number
Very Easy	1-5
Easy	6-10
Moderate	11-15
Difficult	16-20
Very Difficult	21-25
Heroic	26-30
Nigh Impossible	30+

Opposed Checks

Sometimes it is more appropriate to have two characters roll against each other, rather than assigning a static TN. In this case, each character’s roll effectively sets the TN for the other character’s roll, with the higher of the two rolls being the victor. The above example with Joline and the police officer could have

been handled with an opposed check rather than a static TN. For instance, the police officer might have rolled his Convince (Persuade) roll, coupled with Spirit or Perception rather than Personality, to indicate that he is trying to resist or see through Joline's sweet-talk. In this case, the GM might allow him to apply Savvy points rather than Charm points to his skill check.

Advanced Skills

Advanced skills differ from normal skills in two fundamental ways. The first is that they cannot be used untrained under normal circumstances, and if they are they are of limited use. The second is that they can only be purchased as specialized skills. That is, no general skill exists for an advanced skill. An example of an advanced skill would be the skill Knowledge. You cannot simply increase your general knowledge of everything, but you can increase your knowledge of specific topics, such as Knowledge (Criminal Organizations) or Knowledge (Ancient History). Likewise, if you attempt to recall knowledge of something that you do not have a Knowledge skill for, you might simply make an Intelligence check with a very high TN, and your check would only yield limited information in comparison to what you might learn with the appropriate Knowledge skill.

Cooperation

Sometimes a group of characters comes up against an obstacle that is too difficult for them to overcome individually. Together, however, they might stand a chance. In this case, one character is chosen as the leader; this character is the one who will make the final skill check to overcome the obstacle. The rest of the characters each make cooperation checks: special skill checks using the same skill and attribute combination as the leader (although different combinations could conceivably be used, at the GM's discretion), against a TN of 10. Each character who succeeds grants a +1 bonus to the leader's skill check; a critical success grants a +3 bonus. The GM can feel free to limit the number of characters allowed to help; after all, too many characters trying to help could do more harm than good.

Example of cooperation: Fred needs to do some research in the library. He is trying to decipher the meaning of an obscure occult reference; the GM assigns a TN of 20. Fred has an Intelligence of 6 and a Research (Library) of 3, for a total of 9. Even if he were to score a

perfect 10 on his roll, he'd still come up one short. He could spend as many as 3 Savvy points on the roll, but he would still need to roll an 8 in order to succeed. Seeing his plight, Fred's friends Tiffany and Steve decide to help him out. Steve gets a pretty good roll on his cooperation check, granting Fred (the leader) a +1 bonus to his check. Tiffany fares much better, however, gaining a critical success! With Tiffany's +3 factored in, Fred's friends have provided him with a total bonus of +4 to his check! Now, if Fred spends 3 Savvy points as he had originally planned to, he only needs to roll a 4 or better in order to find the information that he's looking for!

Diceless Resolution

Some tasks are so easy that rolling becomes tedious or unnecessary. In any case where there is no possibility of failure or success, there is no need to roll. Furthermore, you can *settle* or *focus*.

Settle: When you settle, it means that you forgo your die roll, opting instead to simply use your relevant skill/attribute combination as your total check result; essentially, you assume a die result of zero. You cannot settle during periods of stress, when there is a significant risk involved with failure. For instance, diffusing a bomb, shooting at an enemy (or any attack or defense roll, for that matter), or jumping from one rooftop to another are all considered risk situations or periods of stress. If you are simply playing your guitar for some friends, however, and you don't feel like rolling, you can settle. For instance, Sam is trying to pick a lock. The owner of the apartment won't be back for hours, and there's no real risk in failure, so he decides to settle because he is confident in his skills. Sam's Prowess is 8 and his Mechanics (Locks) is 6, so his final check result is 14. If that weren't enough he could try again, either rolling a die or spending some Savvy (or perhaps Grace) points to increase his result.

Focus: Focusing allows you to take your time doing something, to make sure that you get it right. This can only be done if there is no penalty for failure, and if you have plenty of time. The GM first must decide how long it would normally take to use the skill. Then, you continue to settle until you succeed, adding a +1 bonus for each time increment past the first. The GM can always rule that certain tasks cannot be focused upon in this manner. For example, if you had to roll a two-ton boulder up a hill, no amount of focusing would help you if you only

had a Strength of 5. An example of focusing: Sam was not able to pick the lock above (it is very complex, with a TN of 19, and he only has 2 Savvy points left. He decides to focus on the lock, taking his time to pick it. The GM rules that there is no penalty for failure, and that a single lock-picking attempt takes two rounds. After his first two rounds have passed, Sam adds a +1 bonus to his next attempt, then a +2 to the

attempt after that, and so on, until he finally picks the lock after 10 rounds. Note that if you are attempting an action that you would fumble (fail by 10 or more points) by settling, you cannot focus. For instance, if Sam's lock had a TN of 25, he would automatically fumble his lockpick attempt, probably breaking his picks. He would not be able to pick this lock by focusing.

Character Generation

Character creation in *The Gamecraft System* is a point-based, skill-and-attribute system. Although experience points are gained as you adventure, there are no levels or classes to be had.

Generating Attribute Scores

Characters have a total of 45 points to distribute amongst their eight attributes. Each point spent converts directly into one attribute point, and you may spend as many points on a given attribute as you want, with the following restriction: no starting attribute may be less than 1 or greater than 10. Depending on how realistic you want your campaign world to be, you could raise or lower the total number of points granted to each player, or raise (or even eliminate all together) the upper limit of a starting character’s attributes.

Wound Levels

All characters have six wound levels, representing how badly injured they are. Each wound level has a number of points assigned to

points that go in each wound level. If your Health score is larger than the sum total of all points in your wound levels, then you gain a number of bonus points equal to the difference, which you can assign to any wound level, provided that no more than two bonus points are assigned to a single wound level. Note that no wound level can have fewer than one point. Note also that any permanent increase to either Strength or Constitution results in a permanent increase to wound level points and Health. To facilitate understanding, refer to the following table:

In addition to the obvious perils of losing wound levels, each wound level has a name and an associated detriment, as follows:

- *Healthy*: Completely uninjured; no detriment.
- *Injured*: Cuts and bruises; -1 penalty to all rolls.
- *Wounded*: A moderately serious injury; -2 penalty to all rolls.
- *Badly Wounded*: A serious wound, in need of medical attention; -3 penalty to all rolls, cannot move faster than Move score, bleeding.
- *Critically Wounded*: A near-fatal wound; -4 penalty to all rolls, cannot move faster than Move score, Move score cut in half, bleeding.
- *Incapacitated*: On death’s door; must make a Constitution roll (with above penalties) with a TN of 5 or lapse into unconsciousness, bleeding. If conscious cannot move more than 3 feet per round or reduced Move score, whichever is lower.
- *Dead*: You have died. Make a new character.

Health	Base Points	Bonus Points
20	3	2
19	3	1
18	3	0
17	2	5
16	2	4
15	2	3
14	2	2
13	2	1
12	2	0
11	1	5
10	1	4
9	1	3
8	1	2
7	1	1
6	1	0
5	1	0
4	1	0
3	1	0
2	1	0

it, determined by your Health score; these points represent your basic resistance to damage. To determine how many points go in each wound level, divide your Health score by six, dropping any fraction. The result is the base number of

Starting Skills

You start the game with a small selection of skills of your choice. Upon character creation, you are given 25 points to spend on skills; each point translates directly into one level of a given skill. There is one

restriction placed on starting characters, however: no starting character may start with a skill of Master level or above. That is, you cannot use your 25 starting skill points to increase the level of any skill above Advanced.

Traits

Traits allow you to customize your character even further. No character is required to select any traits, but they are there nonetheless, for any who wish to select them. Traits can give you an advantage or a flaw, or sometimes both at the same time. Each trait has a point value assigned to it; you have 5 points to spend on your traits. Advantageous traits subtract from this point pool, while traits that give you a flaw of some sort add to it. Traits are often very specific to the campaign setting; you should generate your own list of traits for your own campaign setting. Note that traits can only be taken during character creation. Once a character enters play, traits are off-limits, and cannot be purchased with experience points.

Advancement

As characters adventure, they gain experience with which they can improve their abilities. There are no character ‘levels’ in *Gamecraft*. Instead, character advancement uses a point-buy system, similar to that of character creation. At the end of an adventure, or a session, or even on the fly during the adventure, the Game Master hands out experience points, typically one at a time. An experience point may be handed out for a variety of reasons, including:

- The character has solved a key mystery of the adventure
- The player has been doing a good job of playing in-character

- The character has just performed a particularly spectacular or important action
- The character has survived a very difficult encounter

These are merely examples and guidelines. In general, the Game Master should hand out experience points whenever he or she feels it is appropriate to reward the characters.

Game Masters should be wary of handing out too many experience points at once, or too fast. This can cause characters to advance much more quickly than you may be ready for. Typically, no more than 5 experience points should be given to a single character during the course of a single four-hour game session.

Spending Experience Points

Experience points may be spent to either increase one of your primary attributes, or to increase a skill. Note that you cannot directly increase a derived attribute, but any time you increase a primary attribute, any derived attributes based on it increase as well. Because attributes are so much more powerful than skills, they are harder to increase. The cost, in experience points, to increase an attribute by one point is equal to 3 x your intended score. For instance, if you wanted to increase your Prowess from 6 to 7, it would cost you 21 points (7 x 3 = 21). Increasing skills is much easier, because they are far less potent than attributes are. The cost to increase a skill by one level is equal to 2 x your intended level for general skills, and simply your intended level for specializations. For instance, if you wanted to increase your

Athletics skill from Capable (4) to Skilled (5), you would have to spend 10 points. Purchasing a skill at the first Novice level would likewise cost 2 points. Specializing in Athletics (Swim) instead of increasing Athletics from 4 to 5 would cost 5 points.

Attribute Level Purchased	Cost in Experience Points
2	6
3	9
4	12
5	15
6	18
7	21
8	24
9	27
10	30
General Skill Level Purchased	Cost in Experience Points
1	2
2	4
3	6
4	8
5	10
6	12
Specialized Skill Level Purchased	Cost in Experience Points
1	1
2	2
3	3
4	4
5	5
6	6
7	7
8	8
9	9
10	10
11	11

Combat

Combat is a fact of life in just about any role-playing game. Whether or not it features prominently in your campaign is entirely up to you, but it is a fairly safe bet that it will occur at some point during the game. Because of this, *The Gamecraft System* provides rules to facilitate combat and make it easy to arbitrate for the GM.

Attack

Attacking someone is very similar to any other skill check; you roll 1d6-1 and apply your relevant skill and attribute, pitting the result against a TN. Various things, however, can modify both your die pool, and the TN. Normally, your TN for attacking someone in melee combat is equal to his or her Prowess score plus her Combat Defense level, with any appropriate specializations factored in. This, however, can be modified by active dodging, or by taking the full dodge action. Similarly, your distance from your target can affect the TN when you are attacking with a ranged weapon. This depends on the distance category that your target falls into.

Range

All weapons that attack from a distance further than melee have a Range attribute. This includes weapons such as firearms, bows, crossbows, thrown daggers, grenades, and other such items. This Range attribute is expressed as one of four Range Categories: Short, Medium, Long, and Extreme. These Range Categories correspond to the Distance Categories listed in the above table; no weapon has a Range of Point Blank (which is defined as being the equivalent of melee range). The Range of a weapon essentially determines at what distance the weapon's effectiveness ends. It is still possible to attack a target in a Distance Category greater than your weapon's range, but the TN Modifier is doubled. Note, however, that certain weapons—such as flamethrowers—do have a maximum range, beyond which it is impossible to reach. For instance, Jack wants to throw a dagger at his opponent. A thrown dagger has a Range of Short, making it very difficult to hit at longer ranges. His opponent, however, is in Medium range. The target's normal defensive TN is 10; if he were in Short range, Jack would have to roll against a TN of 12. However, because his target is in Medium range (which is

greater than the dagger's Range of Short), he must hit a TN of 18 ($4 \times 2 = 8$).

Exact distances do not need to be calculated in *Gamecraft*. This is often time-consuming and tedious, and difficult without the use of miniatures and some sort of battle map. *The Gamecraft System* deals in abstract ranges; it is up to the GM to decide what Distance

Distance category	TN Modifier
Point Blank	+0
Short	+2
Medium	+4
Long	+8
Extreme	+12

Category a target falls into.

Defense

Every character has a basic defense score, determined by adding her Prowess score to her Combat Defense level, and factoring any appropriate specializations depending on the circumstances. For instance, Jack has a Prowess of 5 and a Combat Defense of 6. He has also specialized in dodging Melee attacks, bringing his level in Combat Defense (Melee) up to 8. His defense score (or the TN for someone else to hit him in combat) is 11, or 13 against melee attacks. If someone were trying to hit him with a ranged attack from Long range, the TN would be 19 ($11 + 8$).

If Jack wants to increase his chance of avoiding an attack, he can take the dodge action. Using the dodge action counts as a normal action, so attacking in the same round would force Jack to use the Multiple Actions rule, described below. The benefit of using the dodge action is that it allows him to roll 1d6-1 as normal, adding the result to his defense score. Using the dodge action is a risk, as you may wind up with a lower defense score because of it. However, you might increase your defense by up to 5 points (or 10, in the case of a re-roll) by using the dodge action.

Sometimes, however, you just have to dive for cover. In circumstances like these, you can use the full dodge action. Using the full dodge action forces you to move at least half of your Move score (but no more than your full Move score) during the same round, and precludes any other actions that round; if you use the full dodge action, that's all you can do during

that round. The advantage of the full dodge action, however, is that it gives you a +10 to your defense score for that round. So, if Jack had used a full dodge in the example above, the TN to hit him would increase to 21 normally, 23 against melee attacks, and 29 against that shooter at Long range. If Jack were smart, he might also take advantage of the forced move to get behind some sort of cover.

Multiple Actions

Normally, most characters only take a single action in a given round. There is no penalty for doing so. However, if you want to take more than one action in a round, you may do so. There is no limit to the number of actions that may be taken in a single round, but for each action you take, you incur a penalty of -1. You can apply all penalties to a single check, or divide them amongst all of the checks that you're making during that round, but all penalties must be accounted for. For instance, if Jack (from the above example) had wanted to take both the dodge action and make a melee attack against one of the thugs, he would have incurred a -2 penalty for taking two actions. He could apply the entire penalty to either his Melee Combat check, or to his Combat Defense check, or he could apply a -1 to each.

Simultaneous Actions

In addition to taking multiple actions in a single round, you may declare a number of actions to be simultaneous. Doing so incurs a -1 penalty to each action (in addition to any other penalties) for every action past the first being performed during the same action phase. However, simultaneous actions have the advantage of being resolved at the same time. For instance, Laura wins the Initiative check at the beginning of combat, indicating that she will go first. When it comes time for her to declare her actions, she declares that she is going to fire both of her guns at one of her opponents, two separate actions normally. However, she also declares that she will perform both actions simultaneously. She receives a -2 penalty for performing two actions during the same round,

which she divides evenly among her actions (each gets a -1 penalty). In addition, because they are simultaneous actions, she imposes another -1 penalty to each action, for a total penalty of -2. However, she gets to fire twice at her target before anyone else gets to perform their actions, whereas she would normally have to wait until everyone had acted once before taking the second shot.

Note that actions that cannot reasonably be performed simultaneously cannot make use of this rule. For instance, you could not declare that you were firing two shots from one gun simultaneously, as the gun is likely not built to handle such a feat.

Also note that any action performed with your off-hand (i.e., your left hand, if you're right-handed) incurs a -2 penalty. This does not apply if it is an action that utilizes both hands equally, and being ambidextrous (see Traits) can negate this penalty.

Damage

Damage for melee weapons and thrown weapons is based on Strength, while damage for ranged weapons is based on Perception. Explosives, acids, and other similar forms of damage are not based on any attribute, but deal their own damage. When attacking with a weapon, you are given a damage bonus, which is dependant on the weapon being used. For instance, if you successfully hit an opponent with a melee weapon that deals +4 damage, you would add your Strength to the weapon's damage to determine your base damage, then roll 1d6-1 as normal and add the result. Thus, a character with a Strength of 8 attacking with the above weapon

would deal 12 points of damage, plus 1d6-1. Note that an attack cannot actually deal negative damage; that is, if your total result is negative, you do not actually give your target back Wounds. Instead, you simply deal no damage.

Characters being dealt damage have an opportunity to resist it, provided they are sufficiently prepared for the attack. This means that you get to make a Constitution roll, subtracting your result from the amount of damage dealt; the final result is the amount of damage you actually sustain, which is applied to

Weapon	Damage Bonus
Dagger	+1
Sword	+3
Longbow	+3
War Axe	+4
Light Pistol	+8
Heavy Pistol	+12
Shotgun	+15
Sniper Rifle	+18
Fragmentation Grenade	30
Armor Type	Resistance Bonus
Leather	+2
Chain Mail	+3
Splint Mail	+4
Plate Mail	+5
Flak Jacket	+8
Tactical Plate Armor	+10
Biomechanical Power Armor	+15

your wound levels. Armor can significantly increase your resistance to damage.

Although you always get the resistance bonus of any armor you are wearing, you only get your Constitution roll if you are sufficiently aware of the attack. If your opponent attacks from behind without warning, you would not get to use your Constitution to resist the damage. If, however, you were hit in combat with someone who you had been fighting for the past couple of rounds, you would be able to attempt to resist it as normal. Note that if you are only able to use your armor bonus, you do not roll 1d6-1; you simply subtract the armor's resistance bonus from the damage dealt.

Bullet Weapons

Because of the speed at which a bullet travels, it is very difficult to dodge a gunshot. Thus, anyone attacking with a gun receives a +2 bonus to his or her attack roll.

Spread Weapons

Some ranged weapons fire ammunition that spreads out as it travels, such as the shot from a shotgun. At Point Blank range this has no effect, as the ammunition has not had a chance to spread yet. At Short range, the attacker receives a +1 penalty to his attack roll, but a -2 penalty to damage. Medium range increases this to +2 and -4, respectively. In addition, any adjacent characters are also affected by the attack. At Long range, the damage modifier becomes -6 and the attack

Distance Category	Damage Modifier	Attack Modifier	Adjacent Targets?
Point Blank	+0	+0	No
Short	-2	+1	No
Medium	-4	+2	Yes
Long	-6	+1	Yes
Extreme	-8	+0	Yes

modifier becomes +1, and any adjacent characters are also attacked. At Extreme range, the weapon deals -8 damage, gains no bonus to attack, and affects all adjacent characters.

Automatic Weapons

Some guns have semi- and fully-automatic capabilities, allowing them to fire large sprays of bullets in relatively short periods of time. There are a

number of different actions that can be taken with an automatic weapon.

Burst: A tight, short, controlled attack, a burst usually consists of three to five rounds fired in close succession. A burst can only target a single character, but inadvertent hits are possible. A burst essentially turns the weapon into a spread weapon (as described above), and increases the weapon's damage by half, rounded up. For instance, a sub-machinegun with a Damage Bonus of +6 would deal +9 damage during a burst, and would be considered a spread weapon.

Controlled Spray: A controlled spray expends half or more of a weapon's ammunition, but triples its Damage Bonus. A controlled spray is generally focused on a single target or a small group of targets; at any rate, choose one target to be your primary target. A weapon being used for a controlled spray is considered a spread weapon, as above, except that the Point Blank Distance Category is removed (the lowest distance category useable would be Short, even at Point Blank range).

Strafe: A strafe is like a controlled spray, but focused on an entire area rather than a group or individual. Choose an area to affect; the GM will decide whether the area is Small, Medium, or Large. You make a single attack roll for your entire strafe, applying a -2 penalty for a Small area, -4 for a Medium area, or -6 for a Large area. Everyone within the area whose defensive TN is lower than your final attack roll is hit for the normal damage of the weapon. On a critical success, double damage is dealt.

Explosions

Explosions deal damage to an area rather than an individual target. Every explosive device has an Area attribute, rated as either Small, Medium, or Large. In addition, every explosion has three Ranges: Short, Medium, and Long. By comparing the device's Area to the Range that an affected target is

	Small Device	Medium Device	Large Device
Short TN	16	18	20
Medium TN	12	16	19
Long TN	8	14	18

currently in, you can derive both the damage inflicted on the target, and the TN required to avoid that damage. All explosions deal full

damage at Short range, half damage at Medium range, and one-quarter damage at Long range.

If you succeed in beating the TN for the explosion, you move away from the center by one Range level. For instance, if you are in Medium range and succeed in beating the TN required, you would move out to Long range, avoiding some of the damage. A critical success indicates that you have moved two Range levels away from the center, possibly avoiding damage altogether. A critical failure indicates that you do not move and are unprepared for the blast, unable to use your Constitution to absorb it.

Bleeding

A character who is bleeding is slowly losing Wound levels as time passes, and will die without medical attention of some sort. When you are bleeding, you must make a Constitution check once per minute or lose an entire Wound level. You or someone else can attempt to stop the bleeding with a Medicine (First Aid) or similar skill check; the TN is equal to the number of Wound levels you have lost plus 5. For instance, a Critically Wounded character has lost four Wound levels, so the TN would be 9 to stop the bleeding. Note, however, that an Incapacitated character cannot be treated in this way to the same effect. A Medicine (First Aid) check simply slows the bleeding so the character need only make a Constitution check once every ten minutes to avoid death. In order to save such a badly wounded character, either hospitalization or healing magic of some sort is needed.

Non-Lethal Combat

Characters can engage in non-lethal combat if they are trying to render each other unconscious. A character with a Melee Combat (Unarmed) skill of Novice or below automatically deals non-lethal damage when fighting unarmed; a character with a higher skill level deals damage as normal. Non-lethal damage is calculated in the same way as lethal damage, but is subtracted from the target's Fatigue instead of her Wound levels. When you fall below half of your Fatigue, you receive a -2 penalty to all rolls. When you fall to 0 or below, you are unconscious.

Characters can choose to deal non-lethal damage with normally lethal weapons. In order to do so, you must take a -1 penalty on your attack rolls. The exceptions to this are unarmed combat, which (when a character is Competent

or above) can deal either lethal or non-lethal damage equally easily, and firearms, explosives, acids, and other such weapons, which always deal lethal damage, except in very rare circumstances (such as riot shots for a shotgun, or a knockout grenade).

Healing

Characters heal naturally at specific rates, depending on how badly wounded they are. A character who has lost a few Wound points, but is still considered Healthy, heals all damage after one minute of rest (no strenuous activity). An Injured character becomes Healthy after two days, minus the character's Constitution score in hours. A Wounded character becomes Injured After five days, minus the character's Constitution score in hours. A Badly Wounded character becomes Wounded after two weeks, minus the character's

Wound Level	Time to heal one Level	Constitution Modifier
Healthy	1 minute	N/A
Injured	2 days	Hours
Wounded	5 days	Hours
Badly Wounded	2 weeks	Days
Critically Wounded	1 month	Days
Incapacitated	6 weeks	Days

Constitution score in days. A Critically Wounded character becomes Badly Wounded after one month, minus the character's Constitution score in days. Finally, an Incapacitated character becomes Critically Wounded after six weeks, minus the character's Constitution score in days. So, a character who is Badly Wounded can expect to be completely Healthy after a total of 15 days, 14 hours, and 1 minute, given a Constitution score of 5. Note that these healing rates assume bed rest and proper medical attention. Lack of these things doubles the amount of time it takes to heal. Non-lethal damage heals at a constant rate equal to half of your Spirit score in points for every 2 minutes of rest.

Combat Rounds and Initiative

In *The Gamecraft System*, the default length of a single combat round is 5 seconds. At the beginning of combat, all participants roll 1d6-1 + Initiative to determine who acts in which order. Ties default to the person with the highest Initiative, Prowess, or Perception, in that order. Once initiative order has been decided, all combatants declare all actions that they are

taking, in reverse order of initiative (i.e., the person with the lowest Initiative result declares first, with the highest result declaring last). Once actions have been declared, all combatants resolve their first action, in order from highest to lowest Initiative. Once everyone's first actions have been resolved, those who declared second actions resolve them, in the same order. After that, third actions are resolved, then fourth, et cetera. When all actions have been resolved, the round ends and the next round begins; all combatants once more declare their actions.

Reserved Actions

When declaring actions, you can choose to reserve an action. A reserved action is basically an action set aside until its needed, left undeclared until it is used (which can be at any time, even if it isn't your turn to act). For example, Sheila declares an attack action against an opponent with whom she is engaged in melee, and declares a reserved action in addition. She now uses her attack action during her normal initiative sequence, but can use her reserved action at any time, for any action. If her opponent decides to turn and run on his initiative, she can use her reserved action to throw her weapon at him to prevent his escape. Because a reserved action is so open-ended, they

require you to pay more attention to everything that's going on, which distracts you somewhat from what you are doing. This means that, as with any other action, a reserved action inflicts the normal penalty for multiple actions. Not only that, but you can only take one reserved action per round; any reserved action not used by the end of the round is lost, with penalties still enforced.

Movement in Combat

Movement during combat is based on your Move attribute. You may move a number of feet in a single round equal to half of your Move without incurring any penalties to your actions. You may move up to a number of feet equal to double your Move and still act, but doing so counts as an action, thus incurring a penalty as described under Multiple Actions. Unlike normal actions, however, you incur only a -1 penalty if one of your actions is a move action, with an additional -1 penalty for each additional action past the second. If you decide to forgo acting altogether, you may move up to triple your Move in a single round, in feet. Attacking a moving target (i.e., someone taking a move action during the same action that you attack) raises the target's to hit TN by 2 points.