

Microlite 20 Modern-Day

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Based on the Microlite 20 Purest Essence Rules: www.microlite20.net/files/Microlite20_purest_essence.pdf

This is an adaptation of the Microlite 20 Purest Essence rules for characters in any time period. Primarily, it is designed for contemporary adventures, where characters can be police, soldiers, computer experts, wilderness explorers, pilots, rock stars, cowboys and even supernatural heroes like modern sorcerers and vampire detectives. These rules are designed for a cinematic game, one that simulates the larger-than-life adventures and heroes seen in movies, TV shows, novels and comic books.

STATS

There are 3 stats: Strength (STR), Dexterity (DEX) and Mind (MIND).

Roll 4d6, drop lowest die. Total remaining 3 dice and allocate to one of the stats. Repeat for remaining stats.

After adjusting stat scores for character focus (see below), determine your stat bonuses by using (stat score -10) /2, round down. This math is done for you here.

<u>Stat Score</u>	<u>Stat Bonus</u>
3	-4
4 – 5	-3
6 – 7	-2
8 – 9	-1
10 – 11	+0
12 – 13	+1
14 – 15	+2
16 – 17	+3
18	+4

Quick Stats (optional): To generate a character even faster, assign stat scores of 16, 13 and 11 to Strength, Dexterity and Mind any way you wish. You can increase a stat score by decreasing another stat score by the same amount.

CHARACTER FOCUS

This replaces both race and class in Microlite 20 Purest Essence. Choose a character focus, gain the listed stat and skill benefits, and select one of the special abilities – whichever one best fits your image of the character. At first level, also choose a second special ability. This ability can be from the same character focus, or any other character focus. Several modern-day class templates with suggested special abilities are listed at end of this document.

Every third level (3, 6, 9, 12, 15, 18), you gain another special ability from any character focus list, and one or more of your previous special abilities may improve as described below.

It's assumed all characters are human. To have a character of another race, see the section on Species, below.

Charisma: You are a diplomat, political leader, spy, con artist, entertainer, etc.

+1 MIND, +1 to any two skills (except Communication), +3 Comm

• ***Charming:*** You can make friends with anyone, especially those who find you appealing.

You gain a bonus equal to ½ your level (round up) whenever you try to recruit someone to your side, calm down an aggressive opponent, gather information, deceive someone into thinking you're an ally, forge an agreement

with someone, etc. Most of these actions are MIND + Comm or MIND + Subt.

- **Connections:** You can call on a friend or business acquaintance for a piece of special equipment, information or safe entry into a city or other area.

It's up to the game master to decide exactly what the results of your request are. Your connections can be called upon a number of times per day equal to your MIND bonus +1. Gain +1 use of this ability every time you gain another special ability.

- **Encourage:** You know just what to say to rally your allies in battle or stir up a crowd in protest.

All of your allies (but not you) gain a bonus to all skill, attack, damage and other rolls equal to $\frac{1}{2}$ your level (round up), for the next round. This can be done a number of times per day equal to your MIND bonus, +1 every time you gain another special ability.

- **Resources:** You are good with cash and credit — yours or other peoples'.

Add +1 to your financial status (see below). If you need a particular item not listed on your character sheet during an adventure (and the game master allows it), roll 1d6. On a result of 2 or better, you have a good-quality, working version of the item. On a result of 1, you don't have the item after all.

- **Taunt:** With insults and challenges, you enrage your enemies, making them lose control before they attack you.

Instead of making a normal attack, roll MIND + Comm vs an opponent's MIND + Comm. On a success, the opponent suffers -2 to all rolls (stat + skill, initiative, attacks, damage, etc.) for the remainder of the battle. You can taunt, succeed or fail, a number of times per day equal to your MIND bonus, +1 every time you gain another special ability.

Intellect: You are a scholar, occult expert, scientist, surgeon, computer technician, researcher, engineer, etc.

+2 MIND, +3 Know or +3 Tech

- **First Aid:** You have a background as a doctor or other healer, and can keep your allies alive when it's needed most.

You or one ally you are in physical contact with will immediately recover a number of hit points equal to $\frac{1}{2}$ your level (round up). This can be done a number of times per day equal to your MIND bonus, +1 every time you gain another special ability.

- **Magic:** You can use ancient books and mystical studies to cast spells, or you have access to psychic powers, or even gifts from a supernatural background.

You have spell points equal to your MIND bonus + $\frac{1}{2}$ your level (round up), +2 every time you gain another special ability. You can cast any spell from any spell list your game master makes available. Each spell costs a number of spell points equal to its spell level (for example, the third-level arcane spell Fireball costs 3 spell points to cast, and causes 1d6 damage for each character level you have). You regain all your spell points after a night's sleep. You cannot cast the same spell a second time until you have "recharged" your spell points.

- **Minor Super Power:** You have a superhuman abilities, though not enough to consider yourself a comic-book style costumed adventurer.

Choose one or two super powers appropriate to the game setting (typical powers include hypnosis, time travel and exceptional toughness). You can use those powers at any time the game master allows. Attacks cause 1d6 + level damage, and other powers add your level to appropriate stat + skill rolls, Armor Class or other effects. If you are using Microlite 20 Costumes, each power must have a base cost of 10 or 15 Power Points, and has a power rank equal to the character's level.

- **Research:** You know a little bit about everything, and with just a few hours time, you can learn anything you don't already know.

You can add $\frac{1}{2}$ your level (round up) to any skill ranks you have in a skill when making a non-combat roll using a skill. This can be done a number of times per day equal to twice your MIND bonus, +1 every time you gain another special ability.

- **Technical:** You're good at putting things together — and taking them apart.

You have a bonus equal to your $\frac{1}{2}$ your level (round up) + 2 to create or disassemble non-

living items (traps, vehicles, weapons, computer programs, etc.). Creating an item is usually MIND + Tech (or MIND + Know), while disassembling one is usually MIND + Tech.

- *Terrain Expertise*: You know your way around any city, or in the great untamed wilderness. Choose a terrain type, like urban, forest, mountains, jungle, arctic, etc. You have a bonus equal to your $\frac{1}{2}$ your level (round up) to any stat + skill roll (but not attack roll) in that terrain type. Each time you gain another special ability, you can select another terrain type or gain +1 to a terrain type you have already selected.

Might: You are a soldier, mercenary, professional athlete, heavy weapons specialist, survival expert, etc.

+2 STR, +3 Phys

- *Armor Training*: You can wear a heavy suit of armor and still be prepared for any kind of fight.

You do not lose your DEX bonus to AC when wearing heavy armor (AC bonus of +5 or more). You also gain an extra +1 to AC, +1 each time you gain another special ability.

- *Berzerk*: You may not look like a maniac, but you can fly into a rage when you're in battle, or when someone says the wrong thing.

Gain +2 to melee attacks and damage, +2 to STR bonus, and -2 to AC for a number of rounds in a row equal to your STR bonus (before the berzerk bonus is applied), though you can end a berzerk session early. You can shift into berzerk mode a number of times per day equal to your regular STR bonus, +1 every time you gain another special ability.

- *Combat Style*: You are an expert warrior, skilled with dozens of weapons.

Select one type of attack (melee/hand-to-hand, missile/ranged or magic/supernatural). Add +1 to all attack and damage rolls when making that type of attack. This improves by +1 every time you gain another special ability. Optionally, instead of improving the attack bonus when you gain another special ability, you can select a different type of attack and improve its bonus by +1.

- *Driver*: You are at home behind the wheel of a car, a plane, a boat or a starship.

You have a bonus equal to your $\frac{1}{2}$ your level (round up) + 2 to drive or pilot a vehicle, and a bonus equal to $\frac{1}{2}$ your level (round up) to identify what's wrong with a broken vehicle, and to fix it.

- *Heavy Hitter*: You do damage with weapons... a lot of damage.

Select one type of attack (melee/hand-to-hand, missile/ranged or magic/supernatural). Whenever you roll damage dice on a successful attack of that type and a die shows its highest result (for example, 6 on 1d6), roll that die again and add the new result to the total. If it shows the highest result again, do not roll a third time. In addition, reroll any damage die that has a result of 1 until it does not show 1.

- *Intimidate*: You have a fearsome appearance, a disturbing grin or maybe just a bad reputation.

You are immune to fear effects, and add $\frac{1}{2}$ your level (round up) to any rolls you make to intimidate or generate fear in opponents (usually STR + Phys, MIND + Subt or STR + Comm).

- *Tough*: You are hard to kill.

Add +1 to your AC, and double the number of hit points you gain each level (for example, if you roll a 3, you gain 6 hit points). Add another +1 to your AC each time you gain another special ability.

- *Two-Weapon Fighting*: You have a pair of weapons you can use in harmony.

You can make two attacks on the same turn. Each has a -3 attack penalty (decrease the penalty by 1 each time you gain another special ability, to -2, -1, and finally no penalty). You must have two of the same weapon, one in each hand, to use this ability.

Stealth: You are a killer, martial artist, thief, runner, gymnast, stunt performer, etc.

+2 DEX, +3 Subt

- *Assassinate*: You can strike a deadly blow when an opponent doesn't see you coming.

If you successfully sneak up on a foe or target an enemy with a missile/ranged attack without their knowledge (DEX + Subt vs DC of MIND + Subt), add your Subt skill rank to the damage of your first attack.

- **Dodge:** You can twist and turn to be out of the way of an attack.

If you are successfully hit by an enemy, immediately make a DEX + Phys roll (vs DC of enemy's attack roll result, including bonuses). On a success, you suffer no damage. This can be attempted, succeed or fail, a number of times per day equal to your DEX bonus + ½ level (round up), +1 every time you gain another special ability.

- **Fencing:** You rely on quickness when facing an enemy one-on-one.

Your melee/hand-to-hand attack bonus when using light, one-handed weapons is determined by DEX bonus + level, not STR bonus + level.

- **Hunt Down:** Your instincts and social skills help you track your prey – beast or bad guy.

Name a specific target (like “John Smith,” “the dog that bit me,” “the 30-year-old man seen talking to drug smugglers in this photo,” etc.). You can only select one target per day, and a target cannot be named while you or the target is in combat. You gain a +2 to attack rolls and stat + skill rolls intended for the target and the target alone (like MIND + Comm to ask around about the target's whereabouts, or DEX + Subt to follow the target silently). Add another +1 to your Hunt Down ability each time you gain another special ability.

- **Lucky:** You always seem to be in the right place at the right time.

You can automatically change any of your die roll results to a 20 (except a damage roll), as if you rolled a natural 20 for purposes of critical success or critical hit. You can also automatically change any die roll made by an opponent to a 1 (except a damage roll). You must declare you are using your lucky ability, and if it is luck for you or unluck for someone else, immediately after the die is rolled. This can be done 3 times per day, +1 every time you gain another special ability.

- **Martial Arts Training:** You have a mastery of unarmed combat techniques like karate, judo, tae kwon do, etc.

Your punches, kicks and other natural weapon attacks cause 1d6 + ½ level (round up) damage. You also gain an extra +1 to AC, +1 each time you gain another special ability.

- **Quick Draw:** You have fast reaction time, and can be armed and dangerous in just moments. You have a +2 bonus to your Initiative, +1 each time you gain another special ability.

- **Sneak:** You are quiet as a whisper and as light on your feet as a shadow.

You add ½ your level (round up) to any rolls you make to sneak, hide, or even spot others who are trying to sneak. This is usually DEX + Subt or MIND + Subt.

SPECIES (Optional)

To create a character of a non-human species, simply remove the stat bonus listed by a character focus (and the +1 to any two skills except for Communication, listed by the Charisma character focus) and select a species. It provides a +1 to one stat score, which can take the stat score above 18, and a special ability of some kind.

The character will be able to interact with others like a human (stand on two legs, speak fluently, breathe air, be roughly the same size and shape as a human, etc.), but will look like a typical member of its species, unless the player chooses differently. Several species common in fiction are listed below. Use these as examples when creating new species.

Logical Thinker: +1 Mind, Emotional Control special ability: Add +3 to any attempt to resist being psychologically or supernaturally influenced (intimidated, frightened, tricked by an illusion, mentally controlled, etc.). This is usually MIND + Know.

Lycanthrope (were-creature): +1 Dexterity, Alternate Form special ability: You can transform into a specific type of wild animal, and only that type of animal, a number of turns

per day equal to your STR bonus. You do not gain hit points for changing into your alternate form using this special ability, but use the statistics and bonuses of the creature instead of your own while in animal form. You cannot speak, use equipment or other abilities of your original form when in animal form.

Robot: +1 Strength, Durable special ability: You have DR of 2 (you lose 2 fewer hit points each time you take damage). You do not need to eat,

drink, sleep or breathe. You are immune to poisons, diseases and toxins intended for non-mechanical creatures.

Vampire: +1 Strength, Bloodsucking special ability: You have a bite melee/hand-to-hand attack causing STR bonus damage. You immediately heal hit points equal to the amount of damage the attack causes. You must successfully grab the opponent (STR + Phys vs enemy's STR + Phys roll) to make this attack.

Cat-Folk: +1 Dexterity, Claws special ability: You have a set of claws in your fingers you can instantly reveal or hide. They cause 1d4 +1 damage. On a DEX + Phys roll to leap or climb, add +3 to your roll. You also have night vision, and can see in the dark as clearly and as far as you can see in the daytime.

Dog-Folk: +1 Mind, Pack Hunting special ability: On a MIND + Know roll to smell something or to track a target, add +3 to your roll. If you and at least one ally are attacking the same enemy, add +1 to your attack roll.

Fish-Folk: +1 Dexterity, Water Native special ability: Add +3 to any roll to move silently, run or escape capture (usually DEX + Subt), but only when you are in water. You can also swim as fast as you walk on dry land, and can breathe underwater without special gear.

Hawk-Folk: +1 Dexterity, Keen Eyesight special ability: If you are attempting to spot something hidden or find something that is very tiny (usually MIND + Subt or MIND + Tech), add +3 to your roll. You can also fly as fast as you walk on dry land.

SKILLS

Each character starts with five skill points to be assigned to any skills the player chooses. Any skill points not assigned are lost. Roll higher than the Difficulty Class given in the adventure to succeed. Each time the character gains a level, the character gains another five skill points.

- Physical (Phys): athletics and acrobatics.
- Subterfuge (Subt): sleight of hand and stealth.
- Knowledge (Know): science and research.
- Communication (Comm): diplomacy and connections.
- Technology (Tech): computer programming and equipment construction/repair.

Skill rank = skill points + any character focus skill bonuses + any other bonuses. A skill's total rank cannot be more than your level +5.

Skill roll = d20 + skill rank + whatever stat bonus is most applicable to the use + situation modifiers. For example, climbing would use STR bonus + Physical. Dodging a falling rock is DEX bonus + Physical. Finding a trap is MIND bonus + Subterfuge. Disabling a trap is DEX bonus + Technology. Fast-talking a guard is MIND bonus + Communication.

APTITUDES (Optional)

The five skills Microlite 20 characters have cover nearly any activity a character might try. For characters who are especially talented in specific areas, they can select aptitudes (also called affinities). An aptitude gives the character an additional +2 when that aptitude applies to a skill use, or a character can reroll the skill attempt when an aptitude applies to a skill use. Decide whether the character's aptitudes provide a bonus or a reroll when selecting aptitudes.

For example, a character with the aptitude "Tracking," which is related to the Knowledge skill, gains +2 to MIND + Know rolls when he is attempting to track, but not when he is attempting something else using the Knowledge skill and STR, DEX or MIND.

A character can have up to three aptitudes. If you choose fewer than three, you begin with +2 hit points for each aptitude you do not select, or you can reroll any die roll you make once per game session, with one reroll per aptitude you do not select.

Suggested aptitudes include:

Physical: Climb, Endurance, Lift, etc.

Subterfuge: Drive, Move Silently, Read Lips, etc.

Knowledge: Chemistry, History, Tracking, etc.

Communication: Bluff, Intimidate, Persuasion, etc.

Technology: Computers, Device Inventing, Vehicle Repair, etc.

HEROISM (Optional)

Heroism points represent a character's determination, fighting spirit, and even a little luck. A character has a number of Heroism points equal to his or her level x 2.

Heroism points can be used to add to any attack, damage or stat + skill roll at a rate of +1 per 1 Heroism point spent. You can only spend up to your level in Heroism points on one single roll (for example, a level 10 character can only spend up to 10 Heroism points, for a +10 bonus). Heroism points do not need to be spent all at once, but when they are completely spent, they are gone for the rest of game session. A character's Heroism points are restored to their starting amount at the beginning of a game session.

COMBAT

Initiative: Equal to DEX bonus. Each hero can make two actions on a turn, usually move 30 feet (6 spaces) for a human-sized character and make one attack, use one skill, or perform one other activity.

Hit Points: STR stat (not bonus) +1d6 per level (or +4 per level). If hit points fall to 0 (zero), the character is unconscious. A character will regain consciousness with at least 1 hit point. A character will die at -10 hit points.

After a battle, each hero recovers a number of hit points equal to STR bonus, and regains consciousness. More hit points have to be regained via rest or medicine. A character regains a number of hit points equal to level after a full night's sleep.

Armor Class: 10 + DEX bonus + natural armor AC bonus + purchased armor AC bonus. If a character wears heavy armor (AC bonus of +5 or more), the character does not gain DEX bonus to AC.

Attack Bonuses

Melee/Hand-To-Hand Attack Bonus: STR bonus + level

Missile/Ranged Attack Bonus: DEX bonus + level

Magic/Supernatural Attack Bonus: MIND bonus + level

A die result of 20 is automatically a hit, no matter what the opponent's Armor Class is. It is also a critical hit, causing double damage.

Likewise, a die result of 1 is automatically a miss, no matter what the attacker's attack bonus is. It is also a critical failure, causing the weapon to fail (break or jam) or the attack to hit a friend.

Automatic Firearms: Characters that use automatic weapons (marked on the equipment list with an asterisk *) don't need to keep track of each and every bullet they fire. Instead, automatic pistols have an abstract "ammo count" of 2, and automatic rifles have an "ammo count" of 4. Each type of attack a weapon makes costs some amount of this "ammo cost," and when the weapon reaches an ammo count of 0 (zero), it can only make single shots until the battle ends. It's assumed that characters always have enough ammunition to reload their weapons after a battle.

Single Shot: Ammo Count Used: 0. Causes weapon's listed damage.

Burst Fire: Ammo Count Used: 1. The attack has a -4 penalty to hit, but causes double damage (quadruple damage on a critical hit).

Full-Auto Spray: Ammo Count Used: 2. Choose a line 15 feet across (or a line of 3 adjacent spaces). Roll to hit once, with a -4 penalty to hit, and check the result against each opponent's Armor Class. Each one that is hit suffers the weapon's listed damage. Automatic pistols cannot use this attack.

NON-VIOLENT COMBAT (Optional)

The emphasis on combat rules shows how important violence is to the Microlite 20 game. That level of detail can be brought to any sort of confrontation simply by renaming a few things.

In non-violent combat, the opponents aren't trying to kill one another. Instead of making a roll of attack bonus vs. Armor Class, each combatant makes a stat + skill roll, using the same pair of stat bonuses and skills. If the attacker's result is equal or higher, he or she causes "damage" equal to 1d6 + stat bonus of the stat used in the combat. That damage is removed from a set of imaginary hit points, equal to the stat score of the stat used in the combat. When those imaginary hit points fall to 0 (zero) or less, the combat is over, and the loser is defeated (knocked unconscious, humiliated, etc). These imaginary hit points are not related to the character's actual hit points in any way. They cannot be healed, and all damage to imaginary hit points disappears when the combat is over.

For example, a boxing match would use STR + Phys rolls, and the STR stat score for imaginary hit points. A war of insults or an attempt to fast-talk a mark might use MIND + Comm rolls, and the MIND stat score for imaginary hit points.

Social Combat: In a game where characters rely more on their talents for intrigue, seduction and intimidation, the complex combat rules of standard Microlite 20 may not be appropriate. In that case, the game master and players may decide to revise the stats, combining Strength and Dexterity into Body (BOD) and splitting Mind into Mind (MIND), representing knowledge, and Charisma (CHA), representing social skills.

Attack bonuses remain the same, though both the melee/hand-to-hand and missile/ranged attack bonuses will be determined using BOD bonus + level. In the same way, other characteristics like hit points and special abilities will use the new stats. Stat + skill rolls also change to fit the new stats: A backflip over a charging bull is BOD + Subt, while calming an angry mob is CHA + Comm, and flashing a winning smile may be CHA + Phys.

LEVEL ADVANCEMENT

Instead of adding up experience points, simply count encounters. After nine encounters appropriately challenging for the characters (game master's decision), the characters advance one level, gain 1d6 (or +4) more hit points and 5 more skill points. If the level is a multiple of three (i.e. level 3, 6, 9, etc.), add +1 point to STR, DEX or MIND. Don't forget to adjust special abilities, attack bonuses, heroism, armor class, and other character information when level and stat scores improve.

Remember that each battle is an encounter — but so is a trap, an enemy that's defeated without fighting and even high-stakes skill situations (for example, a simple roll to find the right trail probably isn't an encounter, but a roll to negotiate a billion-dollar corporate takeover probably is).

MINIATURES AND BATTLE MAPS

If you have miniature figures (about 1 inch to 2 inches, or 25 to 28 mm tall) to represent the characters and their enemies, you'll need a ruler or a battle map covered in spaces (squares or hexes 1 inch or 1 ½ inches in size). Alternately, you can simply measure distances using a ruler, considering each inch a "space."

One space equals 5 feet or 2 yards, and the average character and monster moves 6 spaces per turn, even diagonally. Figures can move through the same space as another character or enemy, but cannot end

movement in the same space as another figure. Rubble, darkness, heavy growth and other difficult terrain “costs” 2 spaces of movement for each space the figure moves into.

If there’s a question whether a character could see an enemy to hit it, draw an imaginary straight line from the center of the attacker’s space to the center of the target’s space (or one of its spaces, if it takes up more than one space on the map). If there is no large obstacle or enemy in the path, the character can make the attack. Allies of the attacker do not block its path, nor do obstacles filling less than half a space in the path. Characters can attack through windows and other partial obstacles at a -2 penalty to hit.

Simplified Attacks (Optional): To avoid calculating attack ranges each turn, melee attacks must be made against an enemy in a space adjacent to the character. Thrown and short-range weapon attacks can be made against an enemy up to 10 spaces away. Long-range weapon attacks can be made against an enemy up to 25 spaces away.

MONEY AND EQUIPMENT

Financial Status: Instead of tracking cash, credit and investments, the game master will assign each character a financial status. Characters can normally afford any equipment the game master allows, but to buy expensive or rare equipment, the character will need to make a MIND + Comm roll (to haggle with a seller) or a MIND + Know roll (to find the money in a savings plan). Add the financial status bonus listed below to these die rolls.

Not Important: +7

This character is from a society that does not care about money, like an alien race, or has the ability to create money at any time.

Multimillionaire: +5

This character is head of a major multinational corporation or foundation, or is a member of a nation’s royal family, and has almost unlimited access to funds and technology. He or she has multiple residences and forms of transportation.

Wealthy: +2

This character is a self-made millionaire or celebrity. He or she has a large house and expensive transportation (like a carriage or luxury car).

Sponsored: +3

This character works for a government agency, army or other organization that takes care of living expenses and gear.

Comfortable: +0

This character has a steady day job that brings in decent pay, or some other way of making ends meet without much worry. The character can occasionally afford a major expense. He or she has a house and access to typical transportation for the time period (horse, automobile or starship).

Struggling: -2

The character has difficulty finding enough money to pay the bills at the end of the month, and has to skip some basic necessities from time to time. The character has very little money, few items and may be homeless or nomadic. The character depends on friends and family for support. He or she has a small residence (such as a wooden hut or apartment), and an inexpensive means of transportation (mule, bicycle, old car, etc.).

The following are lists of many common weapons, armor and other equipment a character is likely to have. It’s assumed a character also has appropriate ammunition and other materials needed to maintain and use weapons and armor. A character can select any of these items, as long as the game master approves.

Eras: Game settings are divided into four general time periods. Characters usually cannot use equipment from an era later than their own, but can use any from earlier eras, if it is commonly available.

Ancient Era: This includes the earliest recorded time, to the Middle Ages, to the widespread use of guns. Prehistoric and ancient Greece and Rome settings are in the “early ancient era,” while traditional fantasy, medieval and Renaissance adventures take place during the “late ancient era.”

Historical Era: This includes the age of exploration, to the Industrial Revolution, to World War II. Settings like swashbucklers (pirates and musketeers), the Wild West and Victorian Europe take place during the “early historical era,” while stories of the world wars and pulp novels take place during the “late historical era.”

Modern Era: This includes adventures in the time after the second World War, to the present day, to the very near future. Modern era adventures may include espionage, police work, military activity, supernatural conspiracy or alien investigation. Near-future adventures often include inner-city war zones, time travel and computer intrigue. The time between World War II and the rise of the personal computer (the early 1980s) is the “early modern era.” Adventures after that time with only a small amount of fantastical technology – the present day or very near future – are in the “late modern era.”

Future Era: Science fiction worlds of after-the-disaster survival or intergalactic travel. Space opera settings have a multitude of alien races, laser weapons and starships capable of moving between planets. Post-apocalypse settings feature high-tech weapons, mutated warrior tribes and desolate landscapes.

Physical Weapons

Punch: 1d2 + STR bonus damage

This can also represent attacks from a head-butt, knee, fangs, claws, wings, spikes or quills.

Kick: 1d3 + STR bonus damage

This can also represent attacks from a large animal bite, horns, a tail or antlers.

<u>Melee Weapons</u>	<u>Damage</u>	<u>Era When It First Appears</u>
Battle Axe:	1d8	Ancient
A large single or twin-bladed chopping weapon.		
Caltrops:	1d4	Ancient
Small triangular spikes which leave one tip pointed upright, no matter how they land. These weapons are often left on the ground to injure an enemy’s feet or tires.		
Club:	1d6	Ancient
A one-handed metal, plastic or wooden bar; blackjack, police baton, hand hammer or baseball bat.		
Flail:	1d8	Ancient
A spike-covered iron ball or solid rod connected to a hand grip by a small length of chain.		
Great Sword:	1d10	Ancient
A long, heavy two-handed steel blade swung by the most powerful warriors; claymore.		
Hatchet:	1d4	Ancient
A small, one-bladed stone or steel axe; pick, cleaver or tomahawk. This weapon is balanced for throwing.		
Katana:	1d10	Ancient
The valuable and deadly sword of the martial arts warrior, often carried with a smaller second blade called a wakizashi (use as a long sword).		
Knife:	1d4	Ancient
The standard small close-combat weapon; a hunting tool, dagger, bayonet, dirk, kris or vibro-knife. This weapon is balanced for throwing.		
Long Sword:	1d8	Ancient
The standard one-handed steel sword, half the height of the average human; broad or bastard sword.		
Mace:	1d8	Ancient
A solid cudgel with a spiked or reinforced head; morning-star.		
Makeshift Hand Weapon:	1d4 + STR bonus	Ancient
Any small item like brass knuckles, lengths of chain, switchblade knives, shards of broken glass, rocks and even chairs. This weapon is balanced for throwing.		

Net:	see note	Ancient	When wrapped around enemies, a net interferes with movement; lasso. This weapon is balanced for throwing. Note: A character hit by a net loses a turn, then can make a DEX + Phys roll each turn to escape as the only action the character can take on that turn.
Nunchaku:	1d6	Ancient	A small pair of rods connected by a string or chain and lashed at enemies, or used to entangle weapons.
Pike:	1d8	Ancient	Used mostly as a banner, pikes are extended-length spears; jousting lance.
Polearm:	2d4	Ancient	A large curved blade attached to the end of a staff; scythe, bisento or halberd.
Sai:	1d4	Ancient	Three-pronged short knives used in pairs to both attack and parry. This weapon is balanced for throwing.
Scimitar:	1d6	Ancient	A curved-blade sword; kopesh.
Short Sword:	1d6	Ancient	A short, sharp chopping weapon, often made of bronze or iron; pirate cutlass, sickle, machete, gladius or cinquedeas.
Spear:	1d6	Ancient	A short staff with a sharp metal or stone tip; trident or harpoon. This weapon is balanced for throwing (often called a javelin).
Staff:	1d6	Ancient	A pole slightly taller than the average human and often made of wood or steel; quarterstaff or bo.
War Hammer:	1d8	Ancient	A giant mallet used to crush enemies; maul.
Whip:	1d3	Ancient	A long, thin strand of leather or monofilament wire (in the future era) used to lash at foes from a distance, entangle weapons or swing into action.
Cavalry Saber:	1d6	Historical	The thin, single-edged steel blade used by military commanders from the Victorian age to modern times, more as a symbol of rank than a weapon.
Fencing Sword:	1d6	Historical	The narrow, delicately crafted blade used in duels; epee, rapier or sabre.
Chainsaw:	3d6	Modern	An industrial-strength blade swung randomly at enemies.
Taser:	1d3 (see note)	Modern	A hand-held unit which fires high-voltage blasts of electricity through wires. Note: After taking damage, a character hit by this attack must roll STR + Phys vs DC 15 or be paralyzed for 1d4 turns/minutes.
Laser Sword:	2d8	Future	A blade surrounded by (or made of) laser energy.
Stun Baton:	1d3 (see note)	Future	A small rod which discharges energy on contact. Note: After taking damage, a character hit by this attack must roll STR + Phys vs DC 15 or be paralyzed for 1d6 turns/minutes.

Ranged Weapons **Damage** **Era When It First Appears**

Blow Gun:	1d2	Ancient	A small, thin tube which uses air power to fire spiked darts a short distance.
Bola:	1d6	Ancient	Triple weights connected by a line, whirled around the head and used to entangle a foe. This weapon is balanced for throwing.
Boomerang:	1d4	Ancient	A curved or circular blade which returns to the thrower after striking a target. This weapon is balanced for throwing.

Crossbow, Large:	1d10	Ancient	A full-size weapon which requires two hands to use and a pause to reload.
Crossbow, Small:	1d4	Ancient	A wrist-mounted or one-handed bow which is fired like a gun.
Longbow:	1d8	Ancient	A bow made from natural fibers (wood and sinew or plant material) which can be used while riding or to hit an enemy from a great distance.
Shuriken:	1	Ancient	Small hurled "throwing stars." This weapon is balanced for throwing.
Sling:	1d4	Ancient	A weapon which hurls a small item (usually a stone) after being whirled around the head.
Slingshot:	1d4	Ancient	A Y-shaped handle which supports an elastic sling and fire small stones.
Carbine:	2d8	Historical	The breechloading buffalo rifle used in the American Civil War (.44 Sharps, .44 Winchester, etc.).
Derringer:	1d6	Historical	A very small pistol which can fire only one shot, but is easy to conceal.
Double-Barreled Shotgun:	2d8	Historical	The 12-gauge range rider's weapon found in Wild West settings, with a break-open stock.
Dueling Pistol:	1d8	Historical	A small, wide-barreled gun; used for duels in the time of the American Revolutionary War.
Flame-thrower:	3d6	Historical	A fuel-filled backpack and a high-pressure hose which fires blasts of fire that continue to burn; napalm.
Gas Gun:	see note	Historical	This pistol fires gas bursts from canisters; flare gun. Note: the damage of this weapon depends on the type of gas canister placed into the weapon.
Grenade:	3d6	Historical	A fragmentation explosive that injures by concussion and shrapnel. This weapon is balanced for throwing. This weapon causes damage in a 10 foot (2 space) circle.
Infantry Rifle:	2d8	Historical	The basic bolt-action soldier's armament in both of the World Wars.
Large Pistol * :	2d6	Historical	A large, semi-automatic weapon used by military officials and individuals in intense combat situations. Most are .357, .44 or .45 caliber (.45 A.C.P., .44 Magnum, Glock 17, Desert Eagle, etc.).
Musket:	1d10	Historical	The black powder rifle used during the time of the American Revolutionary War; blunderbuss, flintlock.
Machine Pistol:	2d6	Historical	The personal firearm carried by officers in the World Wars (Mauser, .22 caliber, etc.).
Matchlock Rifle:	1d10	Historical	The earliest gun, with a wide barrel and flame-lit firing mechanism; harquebus. This weapon may be found in the late Ancient Era.
Tommy Gun * :	2d8	Historical	A rapid fire sub-machine gun made popular by the gangsters of the 1920s.
Air Rifle:	1d10	Modern	A small pellet-firing weapon; BB gun, .22 single-shot rifle.
Assault Rifle * :	2d8	Modern	The standard-issue automatic rifle used by modern military forces and militias (M-16, AK-47, etc.).
Composite Bow:	1d8	Modern	A contemporary recurve bow, made of fiberglass and equipped with sights and an adjustable draw.
Hunting Rifle:	2d10	Modern	The standard target-shooting rifle; sniper weapon (Winchester .30-06, .308, etc.).
Mini-Gun * :	3d8	Modern	A rapid-fire weapon that can only be carried by the strongest warriors (STR 16 or more).

(Regular) Pistol * : 2d6 Modern
A handgun with a clip- or revolver-style cartridge, used as the modern law enforcement sidearm. Most are .38, 9 mm or 7.65 mm caliber (.38 special, Walther PPK, etc.).

Rocket Launcher: 10d6 Modern
A shoulder-mounted weapon that launches small explosive missiles; bazooka.

Sub-Machine Gun * : 2d6 Modern
An easily concealed rapid-fire gun (Uzi, Mac-10, etc.).

12-Gauge Shotgun: 2d8 Modern
A modern pump-action weapon, sometimes sawed-off to conceal it.

Tranquilizer Gun: see note Modern
A weapon which fires darts full of a “sleep” toxin potent enough to knock a target unconscious. Note: a character hit by this weapon immediately makes a STR + Phys roll vs DC 20 or falls asleep for 1d10 turns/minutes.

Ion Gun: see note Future
A weapon used to disable electronic devices. Note: non-electronic targets are not hurt by this weapon, but electronic targets are shut down until they are repaired.

Laser Pistol * : 2d6 Future
A handgun which fires concentrated shots of laser energy; raygun, phaser or blaster.

Laser Rifle: 2d8 Future
A larger form of the laser pistol; the standard science fiction military weapon.

Needler: 2d4 Future
A small firearm which throws narrow metal shards or short pulses of laser energy.

Pulse Rifle: 2d10 Future
A weapon which fires massive bursts of laser energy.

Rail Gun: 3d10 Future
A hand-held cannon which fires large projectiles at a very high velocity; “tank killer” or BFG.

Stun Gun: 1d4 Future
A special gun which dizzies targets with each successful hit. Note: After taking damage, a character hit by this attack must roll STR + Phys vs DC 15 or be paralyzed for 1d6 turns/minutes.

Other Weapons Damage Era When It First Appears

Acid: 1d6 Ancient
Capsules of a burning fluid which can dissolve metal and flesh; disease-bearing vials.

Bomb: 4d6 Ancient
A one-time explosive triggered by pressure, a timer or a tripwire; must be set up to use.

Poison: 1d6 (see note) Ancient
A debilitating gas or liquid often applied to weapons or food. The effects last until the poison is counteracted, the affected body parts are healed or the target is killed. Serious poisons can kill instantly. Note: after applying damage, the target of this attack must roll STR + Phys vs DC 15 or more, or suffer another 1d6 damage on the target’s next turn.

Dynamite: 2d6 Historical
A single stick of TNT. This weapon is balanced for throwing.

Smokescreen: see note Historical
Note: This gas produces smoke which obscures all normal sight for 1d8 turns/minutes. Can be used in a gas gun.

Nerve Gas: see note Modern
A gas which stings the nervous system; mace spray. Can be used in a gas gun. Note: the target of this attack will be blind for 1d4 turns.

Sleep Drug: see note Modern
Targets who inhale this gas or powder fall unconscious for a short time. Can be used in a gas gun. Note: a character hit by this weapon immediately makes a STR + Phys roll vs DC 20 or falls asleep for 1d6 turns/minutes.

Tear Gas: see note Modern
A lung-burning smoke used by police to break up riots. Note: a character hit by this weapon immediately makes a STR + Phys roll vs DC 15 or suffers -1 to all die rolls for 1d6 turns/minutes.

<u>Armor</u>	<u>AC Bonus</u>	<u>Era When It First Appears</u>
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Leather:	+2	Ancient
A layer of toughened leather or heavy fur, sometimes strengthened with metal studs. Often biker leather jackets, military “bomber jackets” and even protective sports gear in the modern and future eras.		
Note: this armor does not protect against bullets or lasers.		
Chainmail:	+5 (Heavy)	Ancient
Standard medieval body armor — a coat of small, interlinked steel rings worn over a sturdy cloth layer. Also bronze plate armor.		
Note: this armor does not protect against bullets or lasers.		
Full Plate:	+8 (Heavy)	Ancient
A series of flat steel pieces overlapping one another, worn by medieval warriors.		
Note: this armor does not protect against lasers, but does protect against bullets.		
Shield:	+2	Ancient
A special torso-length wood, steel, plastic or energy-based armor plate which is carried separately.		
Note: shields in the ancient and historical eras do not protect against bullets or lasers, and shields in the modern era do not protect against lasers, but do protect against bullets.		
Gas Mask:	see note	Historical
A special face covering that protects against gas attacks. Note: fully protects against weapons that require a target to breathe in a harmful gas, but does not offer any other protection.		
Bulletproof Vest:	+3	Modern
A lightweight coat worn under normal clothing and used to stop bullets; flak jacket.		
Note: this armor does not protect against lasers, but does protect against bullets.		
Military:	+5 (Heavy)	Modern
Standard contemporary body armor — a flexible body suit of plastic plates inside padded clothing.		
Riot Gear:	+7 (Heavy)	Modern
Super-heavy armor made of multi-layered durable metal and plastic materials, used by elite combat forces. Found in the modern era as the highest level of protection and in the future era as standard military armor.		
Power:	+10 (Heavy)	Future
The hard-core science fiction computerized full-body, environmentally sealed battle suit.		

<u>Adventuring Gear</u>	<u>Era When It First Appears</u>
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Bag:	Ancient
Canvas, vinyl or leather backpack or sack used to carry treasure, additional items, etc.	
Camp Gear:	Ancient
Typical wilderness basics — small stove, rations, tent, sleeping bag or blanket, etc.	
Grappling Hook:	Ancient
A three-pronged metal hook with a wire cable or heavy rope used for support when climbing.	
Light Source:	Ancient
A reusable light source such as a flashlight, lantern or torch; also materials needed for light (batteries or flint and steel).	
Lock Picking Kit:	Ancient
A set of small tools used for picking locks (+1 to rolls to pick locks).	
Rope:	Ancient
25 feet of coiled, inch-thick hemp rope.	
Survival Gear:	Ancient
Basic emergency equipment — small knife/flare gun (not a weapon), matches or	

<u>Adventuring Gear</u>	<u>Era When It First Appears</u>
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	flint and steel, compass, miniature first aid kit, fishing line, etc.
Disguise Kit:	Historical
Makeup, clothing and language guides to help make false identities convincing (+1 to rolls to disguise). May also include fake identification and full-face masks (in the modern era).	
First Aid Kit:	Historical
Used for instant medical care. Provides temporary support until trained professionals are on the scene (+1 to rolls to treat injury).	
Hand-held Communicator:	Historical
A two-way voice transmitter/receiver; a “walkie talkie” or miniaturized in a wristwatch, earpiece or similar gadget.	
Toolkit:	Historical
Set of basic tools used to repair machines and equipment (+1 to rolls to repair items).	

Binoculars: Modern
Used for extended vision (3 times normal sight). May appear in earlier eras as a spyglass.

Computer System: Modern
A small personal computer, complete with communications software and standard operating programs for its purpose. May be desktop, laptop or hand-held device (like a phone). May be attached to a larger organization's network.

Homing Beacon: Modern
Small tracking devices that can be hidden on targets. Includes hand-held unit used to monitor tracking devices.

Infra-Red Goggles: Modern
A special pair of glasses that provide vision in the infra-red spectrum (heat vision or "night sight").

Re-breather: Modern
Headgear that contains temporary oxygen supply, about 15 minutes worth.

Surveillance System: Modern
A wired microphone and hidden digital video and still camera used in remote investigation.

Weapon Targeting: Modern
High-tech sights and/or scope used to increase accuracy with bows, rifles and pistols (+1 to hit with weapon the targeting gear is attached to).

CLASS TEMPLATES

Characters of every type can be found in historical, modern and near-future fiction, but they often fit into a few general "templates." Each includes a suggested character focus and several special abilities that fit the template, as well as an appropriate financial status, and common equipment used by characters of that type.

Activists are political leaders, business managers, royal authorities, even musicians and artists — anyone knowledgeable about the world around them, and trained in the art of diplomacy, the ability to convince others their cause is best for the good of everyone. Always ready to explore new ideas and to make their opinions be heard, activists are idealistic and determined. They have an intense desire to make things better for the whole of their world, by making political moves or by using their artistic talents to bring attention to an issue.

Character Focus: Charisma

Special Abilities: Connections, Encourage, Research

Financial Status: Working with the government brings financial reward (Wealthy), while protesting business and political leaders is more about doing what's right than what's profitable (Struggling).

Equipment: Activists aren't fighters, instead relying on their powers of persuasion to get others to bend to their will. They dress the part very well, however, in a suit or a performer's costume.

Investigators are often charming and clever, and always athletic and quick-thinking. They bend the rules to get what they want — and some take that mission a step farther, above the law. Much of the work of an investigator involves discovering things others have tried to hide, and not everyone they talk to is always willing to cooperate. But an investigator wouldn't dream of leaving the life far behind; nothing else provides the same kind of thrill.

Investigators are detectives, thieves, secret agents, journalists, explorers — anyone who wants to know all the secrets.

Character Focus: Stealth

Special Abilities: Connections, Hunt Down, Lucky, Research, Sneak

Financial Status: Pursuit of the truth often doesn't leave much time for making money (Comfortable), though some investigators are happy to spend as much as they can, as long as they don't have to pay for it (Sponsored).

Equipment: Loose, easy-to-move-in clothing; a small, easily concealed weapon such as a knife or handgun; and a large amount of cash for bribes and unpaid debts.

Scholars are researches and inventive geniuses, skilled in various areas of obscure knowledge, and gadgets from a simple lock to a complex supercomputer. A scholar will often involve him or herself in dangerous, experimental technology or attempt to break into heavily guarded offices to learn private information – and to prove he or she can do it. Scholars are not known for their social skills; many are more comfortable surrounded by tools and machines than in crowds of people.

Doctors, mechanics, inventors, computer hackers, occultists and almost anyone with a scientific mind can be a scholar.

Character Focus: Intellect

Special Abilities: First Aid, Research, Technical

Financial Status: Technical know-how is worth money, no matter where or when you're living (Comfortable or Wealthy).

Equipment: Scholars carry the tools of their research, and some survival gear when in the field.

Soldiers are good to have as allies and terrifying to have as enemies. Whether driven by money, a desire to redeem themselves for a criminal past or simply a feeling that their brute strength and quickness are best meant for a life of adventuring, soldiers spend their time defending others, practicing their skills and making sure their next fight is their opponent's last.

Soldiers aren't always part of a military organization: knights in shining armor, martial artists, police officers, sharpshooters, mercenaries, bodyguards, gladiators, tournament fighters, bouncers, outdoor guides and even pilots have the skills and talents of soldiers.

Character Focus: Might

Special Abilities: Assassinate, Combat Style (any), Driver, Quick Draw, Tough

Financial Status: Warriors are usually always willing to fight, both because they constantly need money and because it's what they're best at (Comfortable), though some soldiers are members of well-supported military organizations (Sponsored).

Equipment: Soldiers prefer not to be weighed down by a large number of possessions, relying instead on pure force to protect them with what they need. Soldiers often specialize in some kind of weapon – a sword, a gun or their own two fists.

Supernaturals have exotic powers – magic spells, gifts from divine sources, psychic talents of the mind, or simply heroic abilities that break the laws of physics. They can change the very essence of reality – and use that power in many ways. They can strike fear in the hearts of “mundanes” (non-adventurers without supernatural powers), use their gifts to battle evil forces, or turn their powers to helping those less fortunate, by solving crimes, healing the injured, or making new discoveries.

Character Focus: Intellect

Special Abilities: Charming, Intimidate, Lucky, Magic, Minor Super Power, Research

Financial Status: Those with mystic powers come from all walks of life (any status).

Equipment: Many who have supernatural abilities wear ordinary clothing to hide their talents, while a few embrace their uniqueness, and highlight how strange and rare they are.

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