

**ADDICTIVE CHARACTER  
CREATION**

**FAST PACED COMBAT**

# Squadron UK

The British Superhero Role-Playing Game  
by Simon Burley

**INNOVATIVE CAMPAIGN  
RULES**

**AND MUCH MORE...**

# Squadron UK

By

**Simon Burley**



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# Welcome to Adventure!

**T**he air was split with the shrill siren of the Bank's alarm. Dr James Benjamin knew his time had come. Pulling his battered motor cycle into a darkened corner of the car-park, he kicked down the parking stand and pulled off his leather jacket. After a quick look around to make sure he wasn't seen, he frowned in concentration.

Within seconds he felt his body begin to swell. The seams on the cheap outer clothing split as he grew into his super-powered alter-ego, POLYMER - the "pliable paragon" as a local press had nick-named him.

Pulling his mask into place, the twelve foot giant strode from the darkened recesses of the car park towards the street. He paused for a moment lift the rather battered old sports car he was passing.

He emerged to see a dozen hooded, gun-wielding, thugs running from the bank and lobbing sacks of loot into the back of an armoured van as passersby scattered in all directions.

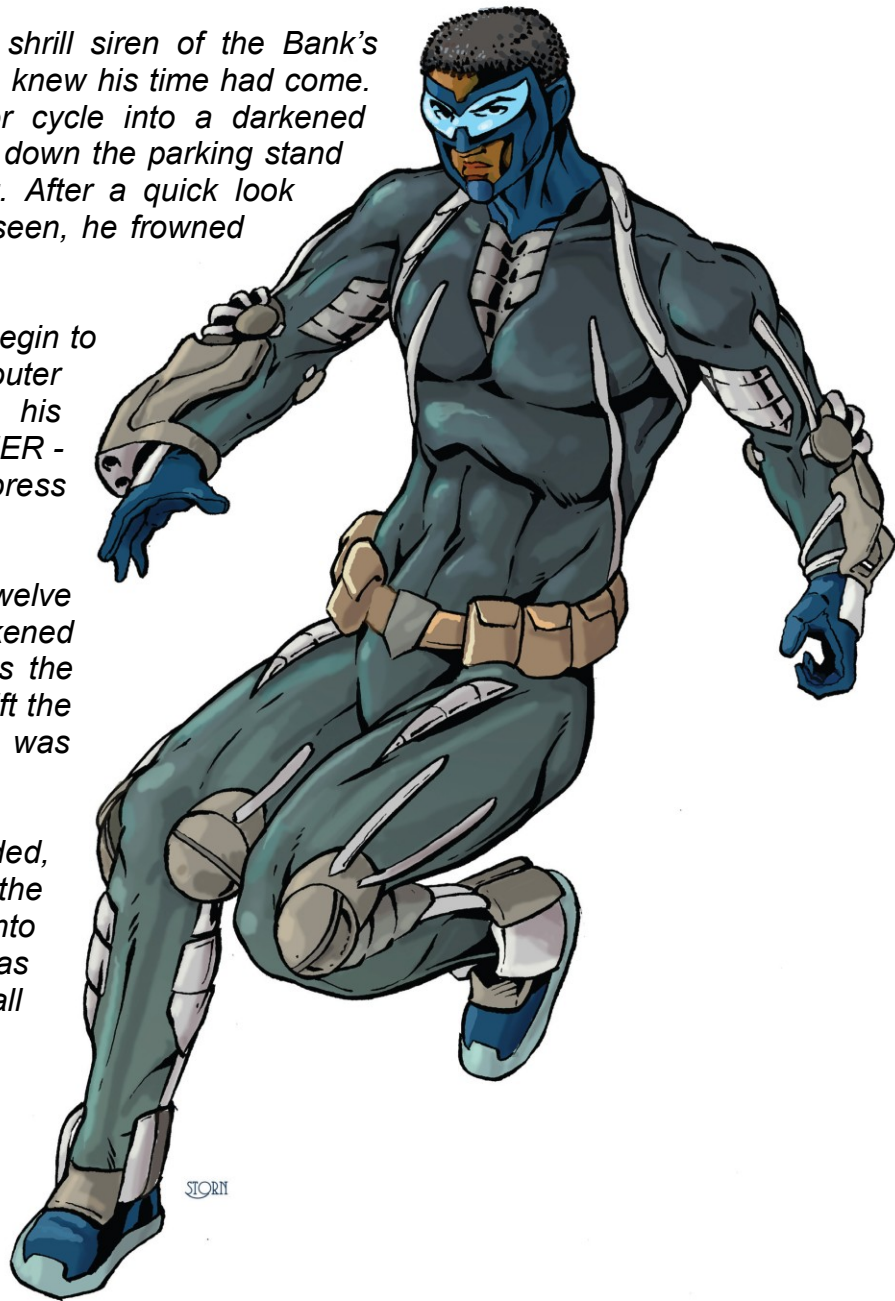
Before POLYMER could speak, there was a shrill burst of sound and one of the van's tyres exploded.

"Hey guys. CRESCENDO's here!"

Every head swivelled towards the figure at the end of the street.

From the huge, futuristic sonic pistol it was clutching, a cable ran into the large metallic belt almost hidden beneath the massive greatcoat it was wearing.

CRESCENDO's head was hidden within an equally futuristic full-face helmet.





## Welcome to Adventure!

*Sheathing his gun, he began to sprint towards the stunned criminals, his hands forming fists in anticipation.*

*With everyone's attention distracted, a slight female figure approached the driver's cabin. With a punch she dispatched its thug-like occupant.*

*Whatever, she was planning, POLYMER decided to help out. "Prepare to face the might of POLYMER!" he yelled, running forward, holding the car between himself and the villainous mob. "Can't we all be a bit more flexible about this?"*

*CRESCENDO tossed him a quick wave as they closed in together.*

*As one, the heavily armed goons opened fire, bathing the two Heroes in a hail of lead.*

*POLYMER felt the impacts as the bullets thudded into the car he was carrying.*

*The bullets didn't even reach CRESCENDO. They all stopped with a squeal an inch in front of his charging form as they came up against an invisible wall of sonic force.*

*"The bullets are just bouncing off!" shouted one of their assailants, obviously gripped by panic.*

*"Oh, come on, guys!" CRESCENDO admonished as he reached the stunned thugs, "Don't you have anything more original to say?" He flicked a switch at his belt and his force field disappeared. With a quick right-left combination, he dropped two of the erstwhile bank robbers to the ground. Sweeping the car like a baseball bat, POLYMER dispatched several more. This was too easy.*

*Out of the corner of his eye, he saw the driver of the van stepping out of his cabin. The driver he had seen smashed into unconsciousness only seconds before! It was only when he gave POLYMER a distinctly feminine wink that he realised what was going on. So he was working with a fellow shapechanger now.....*

*The day couldn't get much weirder. Could it?*

*Suddenly there was a blast of cold from the open doorway of the bank. CRESCENDO was enveloped head to foot in a giant block of ice – frozen before his face could even register surprise. As POLYMER stepped forward to help him, he slipped on the ice which had somehow formed beneath his feet, falling at the feet of the remaining gangsters.*

*As he stared into the maws of the pistols and shotguns levelled at him, an armoured figure skated from the bank on the icy floor of the street – a smoking cannon clutched in its hands.*

*"No von interferes viz mein vork," it barked in an Austrian accent. "Prepare to face the might of FROST-STORM! POLYMER. Let's find out vot happens when we freeze plastic, jah?"*

## Welcome to adventure!

You are about embark upon one of your most memorable and enjoyable experiences.

If you like Superhero comics or films and enjoy reading about or watching the exploits of these larger than life figures you'll love this game. It allows YOU to create characters and adventures of your own. If could happen in a comic or on the screen, you can make it happen here – just like the story you've just been reading. Welcome to the world of Squadron UK.

## What is Squadron UK?

Squadron UK is a classic role-playing game of Superpowered Crimefighters. It was created by British comicbook fans like me as an homage to the wonderful four colour comics produced by our American cousins.

It isn't particularly slanted towards the British perspective - except, perhaps, for a nod towards the "Comics Code". This appeals to my British sense of "fair play".

Squadron UK has several key features which make it unique amongst this type of game:

- Character creation is a perfect blend of random die-rolling and design. You can't simply make the same character over and over again. You don't need to come to the game with a preset idea for your character. The random rolling will give you an indication of the kind of Superhero you will create but there is also an element of design which lets you guide the creation process to create the exact Hero you want. This system really acts as a spur to your own imagination. Players find it really enjoyable and – to be honest – it can be slightly addictive.
- Superhero battles are fast and furious. They are based upon actual comicbook panels and feel like they've come straight from the pages of your favourite title.



- There is a system of derived characteristics which allows the actions of your Superhero in the game to directly affect the course of their lives between games. In the best comics the ongoing stories of the Heroes' lives are so much more than a series of slugfests. Be a mysterious detective or be a National Icon. Reap the rewards of your actions.
- The detailed character development rules allow your Superhero to improve in exactly the way you want. Do you want to fly faster or dodge attacks better? Do you want to develop a combined power-dive and attack or do you want a promotion at work? The choice is yours.

Like all Role-playing games, one player must take on the role of Referee.

It is their job to supervise/control the game adventures for the other players.

Everyone else will create and control a "character" who is blessed with abilities beyond those of mortal man and who has sworn to use those abilities to fight for truth and justice. The game is best suited for three or more players.

This book contains all the rules needed to play. It has enough examples and supplementary materials to allow even newcomers to the hobby to take part. However, some experience of role-playing games in general would be useful. If one of the players has this experience, they should be selected to be Referee.

To help you get going more quickly, the rule-book has been split into two main sections. The first section – THE BASIC GAME – gives you all you need to create classic Superheroes like the three described in the adventure above. It shows Referees how to run adventures - even whole campaigns - for those Heroes. This section is a complete game in itself and is all that some people will ever need.

You should read and use the Basic Game rules first and use them to run some adventures in the SQUADRON UK Universe.

It is best if the person who is planning to be the Referee uses the Character Generation rules to create a couple of practice characters for themselves. Then they should give the Combat chapter a pretty thorough read-through before inviting their players around for their first game.



The second section – THE ADVANCED GAME – gives more detailed information and rules. It also gives advice which allows the game to be extended or adapted to other settings or types of game play. You'll know when you need to read this bit.

As well as these rules, to play the game you will need, some dice – several 6-sided (d6), several 10-sided (d10) and at least one 20-sided (d20). These are readily available in toy and hobby shops.

It is useful to have some kind of playing surface, marked out with squares, and counters or other markers to represent the Heroes and other characters. Small models or figures may be useful or you can use the illustrations in this book to produce card counters (for your own use only). In addition, the adventure maps can be copied and enlarged to act as a playing surface or board.

You'll also need paper and writing implements. If possible, the CHARACTER SHEET from chapter 2 should be copied and given to the players. The use of all of these will become obvious as you read on. But first of all, let's see how the story of POLYMER and his comrades continues. This time, however, we'll look at it from the player's viewpoint as they enjoy their weekly game of SQUADRON UK!





## Welcome to Adventure!

### Example of play

There are three players. LEON controls a hero called POLYMER. He can distort his body to stretch, grow to giant size or imitate other people.

CRESCENDO is controlled by SIMON (that's me). Ex-military he is a bit of thug who has somehow inherited a device capable of generating beams and fields of sonic force.

The heroine of the group – SYNERGY – is controlled by DAVE. Through an arcane scientific-mystic process she is the result of the merging of four different individuals. This gives her great strength and excess bio-energy. This she can release at will. She also calls up different elements of her merged bodies to change her external form.

Each Hero is freshly created. This is their first adventure together, though the Referee – PETE – assumes that they have been active in their Heroic roles before this – stopping minor muggings and the like.

Anyway, let's see what happens when the three of them met the villainous FROST-STORM and his – so far unseen – associate

(Well you didn't think Pete would put just one Villain against three Heroes, did you?)

Pete: Right! Round three. Leon, roll for initiative.

(Leon and Pete both roll 6-sided dice to see who goes first. Leon rolls higher, so the Heroes get to act first.)

Pete: You win by two panels. Simon what is CRESCENDO doing?

Simon: I'm frozen in a block. I'll wait.

Pete: Sorry. You've just met. As you're not teammates you can't co-ordinate your actions. CRESCENDO has the highest Agility so you've got to act now.

Simon: And my blaster is sheathed and my hand's frozen nowhere near by Force-field switch, right? In that case all I can do is to try and flex my muscles to break the ice.

Pete: Roll a d20.

(Simon rolls and adds half of CRESCENDO's Strength.



Pete knows how much energy FROST-STORM put into the ice-block and what CRESCENDO's Strength is. He knows what total Simon has to roll for CRESCENDO to break out of the ice.)

Pete: 15 plus 9 is 24. The difficulty of breaking out is higher than that. Nothing happens. You are finding it hard to breathe. Roll again for your second panel.

(Simon rolls even lower the second time!)

Dave, your turn, what's SYNERGY up to?

Dave: She runs past all of them into the bank muttering "Is there any more loot, boss?" What does she see?

Pete: In the bank SYNERGY sees the bank staff and customers lying on the floor. Standing over them are a couple of thugs holding shot-guns. Hovering in the air above the doorway is a humanoid figure wreathed in flames. You have a panel left, what are you doing?

Dave: An Energy blast might hit the hostages. She'll just wander in and pretend to be looking for some more loot. However, what she's mainly doing is putting herself between the bad guys and the hostages, preferably with both the villains' backs to her.

Pete: (Turning to Leon) POLYMER? Remember you're flat on your face at the moment.

Leon: He'll grope around for something to grab and lob it at the ice surrounding CRESCENDO.





*(This takes 2 panels. One to find something and one to throw it. He rolls a 20-sided die.)*

*Pete: The only thing within easy reach is one of the unconscious thugs. You successfully grab him and lob him at the Ice-cube. Roll damage.*

*(Leon rolls some 10-sided dice. Because POLYMER is so strong, some extra points are added on.)*

*Pete: The ice is cracked and a bit falls off but CRESCENDO is still trapped. The thug's inanimate form bounces off and hits the floor with a dull thud. He doesn't look well but is still alive.*

*Now it's the bad guys' turn. Two panels, starting with FROST-STORM.*

*"Hah! Your paltry strength palls against the power of my frost cannon, nein? Now you shall feel its power!"*

*He sprays POLYMER with ice, pinning him to the floor.*

*(Dice are rolled but, this time, the villain misses!)*

*"I will waste no more time with you. FIREFLY, finish him!"*

*FROST-STORM moves towards the van. He spots the damage CRESCENDO did to its back wheel and curses.*

*A humanoid figure, wreathed in flame, emerges from the doorway of the bank and hovers above the fallen POLYMER.*

*Leon: Why is it always me?*

*Pete: "You don't freeze plastic, FROST-STORM old boy. You melt it!" Raising his arms he bathes POLYMER in a burst of flame.*

*(Dice are rolled and, this time, the villain hits!)*

*Leon: Dodge!*

*(Leon rolls a 20-sided die. The roll is affected by POLYMER's skill at dodging. A "glancing" blow is scored. This halves the damage done and this is further halved by POLYMER's ability to stretch out of the way of the attack. Dice are rolled, the results are reduced and deducted from POLYMER's hit points. He is hurt but not severely.)*



*Pete: POLYMER is burnt but not badly. However, that dodge has used up your next panel.*

*FIREFLY speaks to FROST-STORM.*

*"Stop wasting time old bean. Fix this damn van and let's away. We've got a rendezvous to keep."*

*Oh, and by the way, the last two thugs come out of the bank. The other six, well.....*

*Leon: Let me guess?*

*(All the thugs shoot at POLYMER. Some miss, some he dodges. He takes a single graze which simply annoys him some more.)*

*Pete: End of round 3, start round 4. Roll initiative, Simon.*

*The battle continues. Now that the ice around CRESCENDO loosened it is easier for him to break free, he attacks FIREFLY whilst POLYMER closes in to take on FROST-STORM hand to hand - before the villain has chance to whip up a replacement tyre out of ice.*



## Welcome to Adventure!

SYNERGY uses the area effect of her Energy Attack to defeat the thugs before joining CRESCENDO's attack upon the flying villain. Seeing that he is outgunned, he flies away, badly wounded.

Alas, as none of the current group of Heroes can fly, there is little they can do to stop him. They will have to come up with some clever tactics before they encounter him again if they are to have any hope of capturing him.

Left alone, FROST-STORM is easily subdued – even given the armour he is wearing.

Now the Heroes interrogate him and his thugs.

They want to find out details of the “rendezvous” FIREFLY mentioned.

They come up with a good plan to trick the bad-guys - with POLYMER and SYNERGY impersonating FROST-STORM and one of his thugs.

Unfortunately, by the time they make the rendezvous FIREFLY has had time to warn his employers.

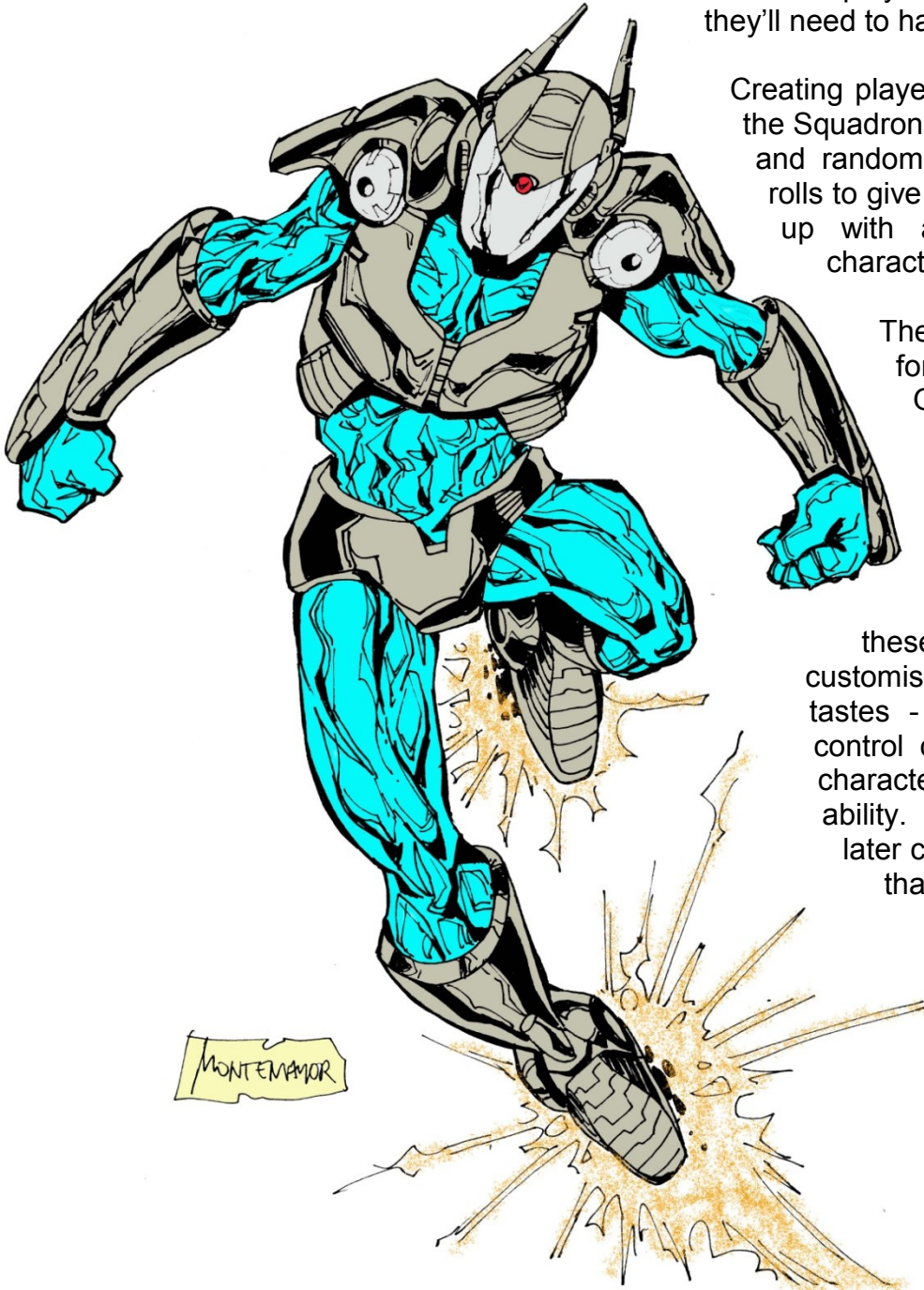
Pete decides to finish the evening's gaming session by describing the ambush the Heroes have encountered.

As well as their flaming nemesis, they are surrounded by two dozen armed and jump-suited goons led by three heavily armoured supervillains.

Merely surviving next week's SQUADRON UK adventure will be a challenge!



# Birth of a Hero



Before the players can start their adventures, they'll need to have their Heroes.

Creating player-character Superheroes using the Squadron UK rules is a mixture of design and random rolling. The players use die-rolls to give them a starting point but come up with all the fine detail on their characters themselves.

The rules given in this chapter are for creating Heroes for the Basic Game. These are the sort of Heroes you'll typically find in the pages of a four-colour comic or starring in a blockbuster movie.

There are loads of ways that these Hero Creation rules can be customised to suit your own personal tastes - to allow players even more control over the process or to create characters of different "levels" of ability. These are all discussed in a later chapter. However, I recommend that you start off by using these rules to make a character yourself before you let your players make any characters or before you start to make any changes to the systems given here. In fact, do it now. As you read through this chapter, start to make your own Superhero character.

Even if you don't get to play him, you can always use him as a supervillain.

Two things you'll find useful.

The first is the CHARACTER SHEET.



## Birth of a Hero

This is the piece of paper which keeps a record of all the Hero's details. You'll need this to produce a final record of what your Hero can do.

This is your own personal "bible" when playing your superhero during a game.

The other thing is the SUPERHERO GENERATION SHEET. This is a summary of the process of a creating a character using these Basic Rules. It makes the whole process a lot faster.

You probably won't need this for right now as you've got this rule-book to help you. However, it's extremely useful when all the players come around to make their first lot of Heroes.

The CHARACTER SHEET will work with all Heroes, regardless of how they are generated.

The SUPERHERO GENERATION SHEET is specifically written for the basic rules as they're presented in this chapter.

If you decide to customise or amend these rules, and want to use a Generation Sheet, you'll have to produce a modified sheet of your own.

As well as the paperwork, you'll also need some dice - 2d10 to roll both Percentages and a total from 2-20. You also need some d6's to roll characteristics and hit points.

Squadron UK characters are defined by:

- Superpowers
- Backgrounds
- Characteristics
- Skills

Skills are chosen by the player to suit their character. These are always chosen last.

Superpowers, Backgrounds and Characteristics can be generated in any order but in these basic rules, players will roll for Superpowers first.

*After all, that's the thing you remember first about a Superhero, right? Whether they can fly, fire energy blasts whatever.*

## Superpowers

The players roll percentage dice to decide what Superpowers their character will have. That is, two dice are rolled.

## Superpower Table

Acrobatics	01 - 09
Change form	10 - 13
Cloaking	14 - 16
Endurance	17 - 19
Energy Blast	20 - 28
Energy Sense	29 - 30
Enhancement	31
Fast recovery	32
Flight	33 - 41
Follower	42 - 45
Force field	46 - 49
Growth	50
Image generation	51
Impossible events	52
Increased move	53
Information	54
Marksmanship	55
Martial Arts	56 - 64
Mind Control	65
Protection	66 - 74
Regeneration	75
Shrink	76
State change	77
Strength	78 - 86
Supersense	87 - 90
Survival	91
Weapon	92 - 95
Choose	96 - 00

One is read as Units (0-9) and the other as Tens (00-90).

As Referee you can determine the level of your games by choosing how many rolls for Superpowers the players have.

However, for this basic game - and for the rest of this chapter - you and your players will be using 8 power rolls to make your characters.

They will roll the percentage dice and then look up the results on the Superpower table provided.

This single table will produce a wide range of Superheroes. Aliens, mutants, costumed crime-fighters, ancient sorcerers and many others can be created using this one single table.





## Stopping Rolling

However, though your players have 8 superpower rolls, they probably won't roll the dice 8 times. There are other things which these rolls can be used for. So the players will want to stop rolling the dice at some point.

Exactly when they stop is one of the decisions they make when creating their character.

If it's the first time they've made a character they should stop after using 3 rolls if you've got lots of time.

If you're desperate to get on with playing the game - and are using the Superhero Generation Sheet for speed - they should stop after using 4 rolls.

## Rolling the same power twice

All powers have a range of levels. When a power is rolled it is obtained at level 1.

If a power is rolled twice it automatically goes up to level 2. If it is rolled three times, it goes up to level 3 and so on.

There are other ways of raising the level of powers rolled. These are explained below.

## Backgrounds

The basic rules assume that the players are starting the game with ready-to-play Superheroes. However - as anyone who has had to sit through the first half hour of a typical Superhero film knows - the characters had a life before they developed their Superpowers. As often as not, they were simply normal people with humdrum jobs. However, sometimes they had a more interesting background.

To reflect this, there needs to be a chance for the player's character to have an unusual or useful background.

At an appropriate point, the player should take a break from rolling for Superpowers. They should roll 2d10 but this time ADD the two numbers to get a score from 2 to 20. When they have this score, they can then check the Background Table.

It is at your discretion as Referee when the players should roll for their Background. Normally this will be after about three or four power rolls have been made.

## Background Table

2	Roll twice
3	Magical
4	Choose
5	Immortal – legendary
6	Brilliant Chemist
7	Criminal
8	Rich – inherited
9	Training
10	Nothing special - no cost
11	Nothing special - no cost
12	Nothing special - no cost
13	Brilliant Physicist/Engineer
14	Rich – Business
15	Authorities
16	Brilliant Biologist
17	Immortal – mechanical
18	Choose
19	Psionic
20	Roll twice

If a special background is rolled it will usually cost one of the player's remaining power rolls. This is made clear on the Background Table.

If the character didn't have a special background then the background roll doesn't reduce the number of power rolls they have left.

### Example

*Let's suppose Pete has called a new group of players together. He's decided to use the rules given in this chapter.*

*He gives Adrian a Superhero Generation sheet and tells him to roll for Superpowers 4 times. So he does:*

*14% - Cloaking  
00% - Choose!  
73% - Protection  
02% - Acrobatics*

*The first thing Pete does is to tell Adrian that he doesn't have to use his "Choose" yet. He should save it to the end of the character creation process.*

*Adrian now rolls for a background:*

$$3 + 4 = 7$$

*Adrian's character has a Criminal Background. This costs him one of his unused power rolls.*

*He now has 3 power rolls left.*





## Birth of a Hero



### Higher level powers

At any appropriate time, usually after the Background roll has been made, the player may choose to increase the level of any power already rolled.

To increase a power by one level costs a number of unused power rolls equal to the level currently possessed.

To go from level 1 to level 2 costs one power roll. To go from level 2 to level 3 costs 2 power rolls and so on.

This is where the players can really begin to customise their characters.

### Half-level powers

Any power can be taken at half level. The details of “half level” effects are given in the Superhero descriptions. When the character is first rolled the player may choose to take two powers at half level each.

When the two powers are taken at half level, this counts as having used a single power roll

This is to allow players to “free up” an extra roll should they need it to roll again or increase the level of an existing power.

#### Example

*Adrian only has 3 power rolls left at this point. If he chose to take his Agility and Cloaking at half level, he would now have 4 powers left.*

*(He doesn't decide to take this option, however.)*

There are no half levels above level 1. ie. No powers can be taken at 1½ levels.

Once a power has been taken at ½ level it cannot be taken to a higher level later in the character generation process. It must remain at half level.

### Superpower details

Different levels of Superpowers have different effects.

Also, each level of a Superpower can be further customised by choosing some gimmicks to go with it.

One gimmick is chosen for each level of the power possessed.

In addition, any Backgrounds rolled will have their own individual effects upon the game.

Full details of Superpowers and Backgrounds are given in appendices (1) and (2).

*This is to save you having to plough through pages of notes here. You can just turn straight to the information you need.*

Once all power rolls have been used up and the levels of Superpowers determined, this should be recorded on a character sheet. The player must come up with an appropriate origin story to explain their Hero's powers.

Any other details – such as the type of energy attack, gimmicks etc. – should be chosen and agreed with you, the Referee, before being noted on the character sheet.

#### Example

*Adrian only has 3 power rolls left.*

*However he also has his “Choose”. None of the powers he has rolled so far can be used to attack opponents. They are all basically defensive.*

*If he chose to roll for some more powers, there's no guarantee he'd roll an attacking power. So he chooses to use his “choose” roll to select an offensive power.*

*The powers he has rolled so far fit with him being some kind of human chameleon/lizard, so he chooses STRENGTH as his offensive power.*

*He uses his three remaining rolls to upgrade his Protection, Acrobatics and Strength to level 2 each.*



## Disadvantages

Everyone wants to be a mutant!

That's because a mutant's powers are "natural". They always have them.

If players choose to take a power as delivered through unnatural, mechanical or cybernetic means rather than created by the Hero innately, then you may choose to give them a small bonus on the power.

This could, for example, be an additional gimmick or allowing one of the character generation die rolls for that power to be taken as maximum.

*This is totally within your control. If in doubt, don't give any bonus and reward the player later in the campaign by making it easier for them to improve their powers.*

### Example

*Adrian doesn't like the idea of his character having scaly skin all the time. So he rationalises his abilities as coming from a high-tech suit. As he isn't a brilliant engineer, he assumes that his character "acquired" the suit through nefarious means at some point in his criminal career. He chooses appropriate gimmicks such as having the suit lightweight so it doesn't affect his Acrobatics as much as a full suit of armour normally would.*

*As Adrian has chosen to have all his abilities come from a suit, Pete rewards him by making his first Strength roll a maximum – 6.*

## Characteristics

Having found out what Superpowers their character has - and what their background was - the player can now generate their Hero's characteristics.

Characteristics are a measure of the character's natural abilities - how strong they are for example.

There are four physical characteristics. To find out the level of each of these, the player should roll dice.

In the Basic Game, the player should roll 4d6 and total the highest three rolls - to get a score between 3 and 18 - to determine each of the four physical characteristics.

Each characteristic should be rolled in turn in the order they are listed on the Character Sheet, starting with Strength.

## Strength

This is useful for all Strength-based skills (eg. Battering doors open).

It also affects the amount of damage done in physical combat.

Characters do +1 damage per point of Strength above 12. The subtract 1 per point of damage for each point of Strength below 9.

## Endurance

This is useful for all Health-based skills (eg. Holding breath). It also affects the amount of damage which can be taken in physical combat.

For each point of Endurance the player rolls 1d6 and totals the result. This is the amount of Kill damage the character can take.

This should be written on the character sheet.

All the d6 dice are rolled again to determine the total Stun damage the player can take.





## Birth of a Hero



### Dexterity

This represents the manual Dexterity or Legerdemain of the character. It is useful for all skills involving the use of the hands (eg. Repair).

It is used as a default to determine the success of the majority of hand-to-hand attacks.

### Agility

This represents how lissom and acrobatic the character is.

This is used to perform physical acts such as dodging.

It also controls the order in which characters' act when in a group.

### Swapping characteristics

In the Basic Game, players should be allowed to swap any two physical characteristics to allow them to make best use of their Superpower rolls.

### Original rolls

It is important that the original rolls are kept, noted on the character sheet, even if the characteristic is adjusted due to a Superpower roll. This information might be needed later in the game.

For example if the character is ever stripped of their super abilities.

#### Example

*So Adrian has a character who wears a suit which gives him the abilities of a chameleon-like reptile. He now needs to know how tough his character is when he isn't wearing the suit.*

*He rolls 4 six-sided dice: 4, 2, 4, 2.*

*Ignoring one of the 2's this gives a total of 10. Adrian writes this next to Strength on his character sheet.*

*4, 5, 6, 6 : His Endurance is 17.*

*4, 4, 1, 5 : His Dexterity is 13*

*1, 2, 2, 3 : Finally he has an Agility score of 7.*

*Because of his Agility Superpower, he could do with a reasonable score in that Characteristic.*

*However, he doesn't want to put the low score of 7 into Endurance because that would give him low hit points.*

*Similarly, a 7 in Dexterity would reduce his chance of hitting opponents in combat.*

*Reading the description for the Strength superpower tells him that it starts at 20 regardless of his starting roll. He, therefore, chooses to swap Strength and Agility, giving him:*

Strength:	7
Endurance:	17
Dexterity:	13
Agility:	10

*He will roll 17 six-sided dice to find out how many Kill points he has. (He gets a total of 62).*

*He will roll another 17 dice to find out how many Stun points he has. (He gets a total of 65).*

*Because of his low Strength, if he hits someone when he isn't wearing his suit, he will have to subtract 2 from the damage he does.*

*However, he can now work out what his Superstrength is. This will be 25 plus the roll of 2d6 (because he is Level 2). The first roll is 6 (see above).*

*Adrian rolls a 4 on the other die.*

*His character's Strength is 35. He adds 23 to points of damage to every physical attack he makes whilst wearing his suit.*

*He records all of this on his character sheet but keeps a note of his original roll:*

*Strength: (7) 35*

*Damage Modifier: (-2) +23*



## Psyche

Apart from the four physical characteristics, you also need to know how powerful your players' characters are mentally. How easily are they going to be hypnotised or brainwashed? Which one will be taken over the the ancient spirit?

This measure of the character's mental strength is called Psyche.

It is measured in the same range as the Heroes' physical characteristics but is not rolled. It is calculated from the four physical characteristics after they have been rolled.

Psyche is equal to 23 minus the average of physical characteristic scores.

If this generates a Psyche score which is not a whole number, then round all fractions up. (Or round the average of the physical characteristics down to the nearest whole number before subtracting from 23.)

Use the originally rolled scores to calculate the average of the physical characteristics, not any ones which have been increased due to a Superpower roll.

Note that the character's Psyche is calculated from their physical characteristics during this generation process.

Should, for any reason, any of a Hero's characteristics change at a later date, this will not have any effect upon their Psyche.

### Example

*Adrian's character has*

Strength:	(7) 35
Endurance:	17
Dexterity:	13
Agility:	10

*The average of his physical scores (using the 7 for Strength rather than 35) is:*

$$(7 + 17 + 13 + 10) / 4 = 13.75$$

*Adrian's character's Psyche is, therefore, 10. It will remain 10 even if he suffers from a debilitating disease which lowers his Endurance score.*

*Psyche is one of the "balancing factors" included to make character generation more fair.*

*Players who roll well for their physical characteristics will end up with a low Psyche roll and vice versa.*

*This reflects the comics. Powerful psychics tend to be physically weak or - even - disabled. Characters who are well-blessed physically are often more susceptible to mental assault.*





## Birth of a Hero

### Derived characteristics

In addition to four (rolled) physical characteristics (rolled) and Psyche (calculated), there are three derived characteristics:

- Esteem
- Sleuthing
- Fate

These are earned by the players through the way they play their character during games.

*Heroic characters will earn a high Esteem score, for example.*

These Derived Characteristics are not normally used in the Heroes' first adventure.

*So you should feel free to skip this section during your first few read-throughs if you wish. (Turn straight to Chapter 2 or Page 17.) The rules are included here so that both you and your players are aware that they will gain certain advantages if they choose to play their Heroes in a particular way.*

These characteristics are calculated from the Hero's actions at the first possible opportunity and as appropriate thereafter – usually at the end of each adventure, or story chapter.

Derived characteristics are each calculated from 5 sub-characteristics which each have a score from 0 through 4. So a derived characteristic can have any score from 0 through to 20.

### Esteem

This is a measure of overall charisma. It tells you how well the character is regarded by members of the public and how likely they are to follow the Hero's instructions. It is used to calculate success in skills such as Bluffing.

The five sub-characteristics which make up the Esteem score are:

#### Legality

Whether the Hero is seen to obey the law or not.

#### Memorability

How attractive or memorable the Hero is.

#### Heroism

Whether the Hero is seen to perform any brave, selfless or heroic actions.

#### Relationships

How the Hero chooses to interact with the members of the public.

#### Success

What level of crime or situation the Hero is seen as being able to tackle on behalf of us all. If they resolve a situation of a higher level than their current score, their score rises to the new level. If they fail to stop a crime at a lower level than their current score, their score drops to that level.

What the various levels of these sub-characteristics mean is summarised on the table on the page after next.

### Sleuthing

This is a measure of the Hero's ability to notice clues, detect crimes and the like. It is used whenever a character might spot something. It calculates success in skills such as Searching.

The five sub-characteristics which make up the Sleuthing score are:

#### Powers

Does the Heroes have any powers which are useful in solving a crime? How well do they use their special abilities to try and crack the case?

#### Detection

What non-superpowered effort does the Hero put into searching for clues, interrogating witnesses and the like?

#### Contacts

This is a measure of people the Hero knows who can give him useful information.

#### Exposure

How much publicity does the Hero get?

The more famous they are, the less likely they are to be able to sneak around behind the scenes and discover clues.

Exposure is calculated by dividing the Hero's Esteem score by 5, rounding to the nearest fraction, and subtracting this from 4.

#### Accessibility

How easily can ordinary members of the public contact the Hero to give them useful information?

These sub-characteristics are summarised on the table on the page after next.





## Fate

This measures how likely the Hero is to have good fortune. Some people are just lucky. Others are jinxed.

It is used as a catch-all to resolve situations when other factors don't apply.

The sub-characteristics for Fate are:

### Scruples

This is a measure of the Hero's ethics. Is there anything on their conscience? Do they care?

### Victories

This is a record of how many crimes they have solved.

Every time they succeed in stopping a crime or resolving a situation they add +1 to this score. Every time they fail it goes down by 1.

It never goes above 4 or below 0.

### Public Reaction

How people react to the Hero.

This is their Esteem score divided by 5.

## Extrovert

How outgoing and expressive is the Hero? If they are loud and bombastic – if they have a catchphrase or regularly use bon mots – they get a high score.

## Home Life

This is a measure of how safe and secure the hero's home-life is. Usually it can be freely chosen by the player at the start of the campaign based upon how they view their character's background. It will vary throughout the campaign as events unfold.

The correct way of rating these sub-characteristics is summarised on the table overleaf.

## Skills

At this point, the player should choose their character's skills.

Skills are abilities which any human can learn whether they possess Superpowers or not.

They normally represent abilities the character learnt before they became Superpowered.

*However, because this is quite a big topic, skills have been given a chapter of their own. Have a quick read of that chapter before coming back here to finish off.*



## Birth of a Hero

**Esteem Table**

	Legality	Memorability	Heroism	Relationships	Success
0	Criminal	Forgettable or monster	Evil	Hates the public	None
1	Shady	Ordinary or ugly	Dodgy	Stand-offish	Stops Ordinary Crime
2	Normal	Notable normal human	Normal	Normal	Stops supercrime
3	Co-operates with the Law	Different	Hero	Likes the public	Saves the Nation
4	Designated Official	Unique	Total Hero	Loves the public	Saves the World

**Sleuthing Table**

	Powers	Detection	Contacts	Exposure	Accessibility
0	No powers used	None	None	4 minus (Esteem/5)	Speaks to no-one
1	Powers used slightly	A bit	Media	4 minus (Esteem/5)	Hard to contact
2	Useful powers used slightly or other power used effectively	Some	Ordinary people	4 minus (Esteem/5)	Can only be contacted via authorities
3	Useful powers used	Good detection	Informed people	4 minus (Esteem/5)	Easily contact-able
4	Useful power used effectively	Turns every stone	Total in with authorities or criminals	4 minus (Esteem/5)	Web-site/phone number

**Fate Table**

	Scruples	Victories	Public reaction	Extrovert	Home life
0	Guilty secret	No. of successes	Esteem/5	Silent	Life at risk
1	Dodgy	No. of successes	Esteem/5	Laconic	Unsafe/Bit nervous
2	Normal	No. of successes	Esteem/5	Normal	Normal
3	Good guy	No. of successes	Esteem/5	Expressive	Safe
4	Saint	No. of successes	Esteem/5	Total confidence	Totally secure



## Final Calculations

Apart from Superpowers, Background, Characteristics and Skills, there are a number of other values relating to the character which have to be determined and written on their character sheet before they're ready to play.

They are summarised here:

### Movement

This is the number of Squares that the character can move in a single panel of combat (see below).

To calculate their movement rate, add up the characters original, unmodified, scores for their four physical characteristics.

Divide this total by 10, rounding to the nearest whole number.

### Attacks

All attacks do 1d to Kill and 2d to Stun or vice versa with appropriate modifiers.

The "d" represents a die or dice. Exactly which dice are used depends upon:

- Who is making the attack
- How successful the attack was

The dice used are usually d10 for Heroes/Villains and d6 for Thugs/Civilians.

If only minor successes are rolled for attacks, Heroes/Villains use d6 dice whilst Thugs/Civilian attacks are calculated as if the dice rolled were d3.

For example, a fist does 1d-5 Kill and 2d Stun. A knife will do 1d Stun and 2d Kill.

### Example

*If Billy Palmer - a noted local tough - tries to attack the hero FREEWHEELER with his bowie knife, he will roll 1d6 Stun Damage and 2d6 Kill damage if the attack succeeds fully.*

*If he only succeeds in making a glancing blow it will do 1d3 Stun and 2d3 Kill damage.*

*More Kill than Stun damage because a knife is a nasty edged weapon which does lethal damage.*

*Being a Hero, Freewheeler choses to defend himself with his bare hands.*

*If he hits, he will do 2d10 Stun damage and 1d10 Kill damage.*

*However, he will have to subtract 5 from the Kill damage roll. Fists don't tend to do much permanent damage.*

*If Freewheeler only scores a glancing blow on Billy, he will use d6's instead of d10's.*

*Freewheeler disarms Billy. Billy is now reduced to using his fists, which will do 2d6 Stun and 1d6 minus 5 Kill, even if he scores a perfect it.*

*Should Freewheeler choose to use Billy's knife (tut tut!) he would do 2d Kill and 1d Stun damage when he strikes.*

This is explained more fully in the chapter on combat.

Players should refer to that chapter and their Superpower descriptions and the combat rules (below) to determine the effects of their usual attacks.

These should be noted on their Hero's character sheet. This saves a lot of time during play.





## Birth of a Hero

### Knock-back

If a character takes a lot of damage in a single attack, then they may be knocked flying.

How easily this happens is determined by their Knock-back score. This is the amount of damage they can take before they are sent flying.

Knockback is usually calculated by adding the character's Strength and Endurance scores. You should usually use the Strength and Endurance scores originally rolled for the character.

If the character has a Superpower which has enhanced their Strength then they may sometimes use this enhanced Strength. If they are aware of the attack they can brace themselves against it (taking no time). They may then use their enhanced or superpowered Strength total instead. If they are caught by surprise, they use their natural Strength.

So Superstrong characters should note down two knockback scores on their character sheets. One is based on their normal Strength and one using their enhanced total.

Enhanced Endurance does not usually affect the knockback total. However, exceptionally large characters (from the Growth Superpower, for example) may use their enhanced Endurance score to calculate their Knockback score. This is always in effect for as long as the remain large. (Again it may be necessary to write down two different totals on the character sheet.)

### Equipment

Some characters will have acquired some items of equipment through their Superpower rolls. For example, they may have a weapon.

In addition they may be carrying a number of standard items with them that any normal person would typically have with them. A typical example here is a watch.

However, situations often arise during a game when a player may announce that their character is pulling out some really useful gadget claiming it is something anyone could be carrying.

So it's important to make the players specify exactly what equipment their character is carrying.

It's up to you what you allow.

However, in the basic game, it you should allow the characters to have any items they obtained as part of the character creation process (Adrian's special suit for example) plus any really common item (such as a watch) and three additional special items.

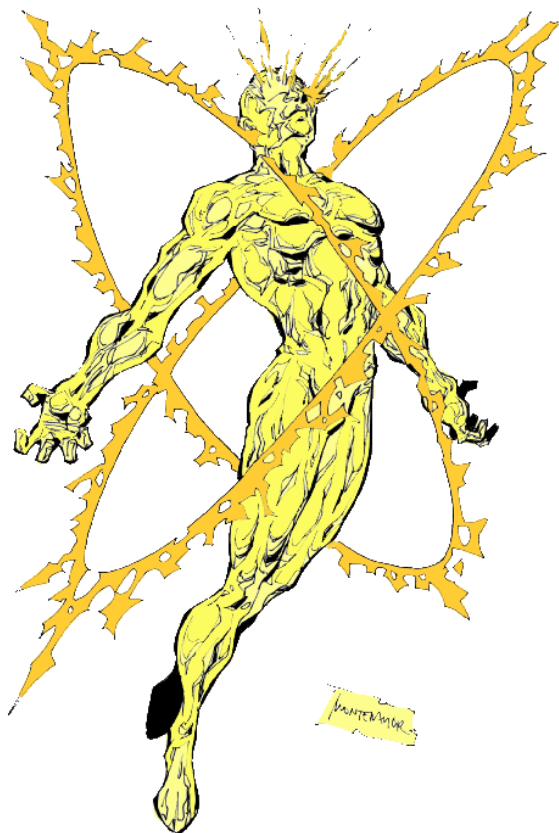
In general, these items should relate specifically to a character's Superpowers or skills.

### For example

*A character with Acrobatics might have a line slinger or rope and grapple. One with special senses might have some tracking equipment related to that sense. Someone with the driving skill might have a car. A computer specialist might have a laptop.*

Don't allow our characters to have anything which duplicates a Superpower. The typical example here is "night vision" goggles.

*The biggest argument these days is about mobile phones. I generally assume that everyone can be expected to be carrying a phone. However, if the player wants their character to have a "smart" phone then I insist that they have a relevant skill to make full use of it and it counts as one of their three items of equipment.*





## Costume

It's traditional for a Superhero to wear a costume.

If your players choose to follow this custom, they have two choices. The Hero may either wear a Protective costume or a Lightweight one.

### Protective costumes

These add +1 to any protective dividers versus Kill damage. If characters do not have a Protection Superpower (or similar) then all Kill damage taken is divided by 2.

Protective costumes have no effect upon the Stun damage done to the character.

### Lightweight costumes

These give the Hero an effective +1 on their Agility roll when attempting to Dodge attacks made against them.

They do not give any other bonuses to Agility rolls, but do not impede the Hero's movement in any way.

## Identity

Assuming they've chosen all their skills (see chapter 2), all the player has to do now is to pick two names for their Hero (a Hero name and a Secret Identity) and they're ready to go.

### Example

*Having written his Superpowers, Background, Characteristics, Stun points, Kill points and Skills on his character sheet, Adrian now fills in the rest. Adrian's character has*

Strength:	(7) 35
Endurance:	17
Dexterity:	13
Agility:	10

*His MOVEMENT score is:*

$$(7 + 17 + 13 + 10) / 10 = 4.7.$$

*He can move 5 squares in every panel of combat.*

*He has two KNOCKBACK scores. If he is taken by surprise the score is:*

$$7 + 17 = 24.$$

*However, if he sees the attack coming, and can use his Strength to brace against it, this goes up to:*

$$35 + 17 = 52.$$

*He writes this on his character sheet as:*

$$(24) 52.$$

*His DAMAGE modifier is:*

$$(-2) + 23$$

*The character can really only attack by using his Fists, so Adrian simply fills in his damage modifier after the Fist Attack already given on the character sheet.*

*For his COSTUME Adrian selects the Lightweight option. The suit still gives level 1 protection and impedes his Acrobatics but less so than it would have done otherwise.*

*For his EQUIPMENT Adrian chooses a small set of lockpicks/thieves tools, a light-weight rope and grapple and a small hatchback car.*

*He fills in a quick description of how his character got his powers.*

*(He was criminal working for a powerful gang when he came across the suit and liberated it. He delivered it to his bosses. However, when they started to use it to commit murders, the character felt guilty and stole it back. He now works to atone for the evil done through misuse of the suit which he was responsible for stealing.)*

*He calls his character Gary Grant ("Little" Gary Grant). Though he tries REALLY hard, he can't think of a Hero name other than CHAMELEON. To distinguish him from other similar characters, he refines this into THE DARK CHAMELEON.*

*His character is now ready to play.*





# Skills

Skills are abilities which anybody can learn whether they possess Superpowers or not.

They normally represent abilities the characters had learnt and possessed before they became Super-powered.

Whenever anyone attempts to perform an action in Squadron UK, they must make a SKILL ROLL to see if they succeed.

This is the single central rule system for the game. Almost all actions taken during the game will require a skill roll to succeed.

Once your players understand how to strike someone in combat, they will know what to roll to program a computer or drive a car and so on.

## Skill modifier

How effective a character is with a skill is reflected by their Skill Modifier with that skill. A higher skill modifier means that the character is more likely to succeed.

Skill modifiers are calculated from characters' characteristics. Each characteristic has an associated Skill modifier. To calculate the skill modifiers, halve each characteristic (rounding halves up).

These should be noted on the character sheet alongside the characteristics.

They are going to be referred to a lot whilst playing the game.

Different skills require different skill modifiers based upon different characteristics.



STORM



## Example

The Dark Chameleon has:

Strength:	(7) 35
Endurance:	17
Dexterity:	13
Agility:	10
Psyche:	10

His skill modifiers will be:

Strength:	(4) 18
Endurance:	9
Dexterity:	7
Agility:	5
Psyche:	5

If he tries to lift or throw anything (Strength), he will add 18 to the Skill roll as long as he is wearing his Chameleon suit. If he is not in his suit, he will only add 4.

If he is holding his breath underwater (Endurance) he will add 9 to the roll.

Whenever he tries to hit someone in combat (Dexterity) he adds 7 to the roll.

If he is trying to Dodge an attack (Agility) he adds 5 to the roll. (This is heavily modified, though, by the effects of his suit and his Acrobatics Super-power).

Finally, if he is using his brainpower - to resist being hypnotised, say - (Psyche) he will add 5 to the roll.

## Skill Roll

Whenever a character tries to use a skill, their player rolls a d20 and adds the relevant skill modifier.

If they get a total of 18 or more they are completely successful.

If they get a total of 15, 16 or 17, they succeed but in a minor fashion. This normally means that they have succeeded in a limited way or have succeeded but that there are minor negative consequences.

## Example

The Dark Chameleon is trying to batter down a solid, steel door. Adrian rolls a d20 and adds the +18 Skill modifier for Strength. The Referee takes a number off the roll to represent how tough the door is - in this case 15.

(There is no way an ordinary person would ever be able to bash this door open.)

Adrian rolls a 13.

$$13 + 18 - 15 = 16.$$

This is a minor success. Dark Chameleon bashes the door open but stumbles through into the darkness behind.....

## Critical Success

A natural, unmodified roll of 20 is always a success of some kind.

If the roll was otherwise impossible for the player to succeed at, then a roll of 20 is simply a success and no further benefits accrue.

This may not be exactly the outcome which was attempted.

It is up to you as Referee to decide the outcome of such a success.

Wherever possible it should allow a character to succeed at something which was otherwise impossible. If this doesn't seem likely, then give them some kind of positive lucky outcome.

A blast which was impossible due to being out of range might just hit - a "lucky shot".

On the other hand, an ordinary person won't be able to throw a car no matter what they roll but they may be able to tear part of it off.

If there was a possibility of success without rolling a 20, then a roll of 20 is a Critical Success.

Extra benefits will accrue to the Hero.

As Referee you'll need to determine these as appropriate to the situation.

## Example

Dark Chameleon is picking a lock and Adrian rolls a 20 on the skill roll.

Not only is the lock picked, but he manages it in total silence and has a complete understanding of the mechanism. He will be able to lock or unlock this particular door in the future without making a skill roll.

Because Critical "hits" are so important in combat, a table of possible outcomes is provided later.



## Skills



*Dark Chameleon attempts to stop some fleeing thugs by using his Acrobatics ability to vault an intervening car and cut off their escape. Usually this is quite easy for for him.*

*Unfortunately, this time Adrian rolls a 1. Not only does the vault fail, but Chameleon ends up sprawled on the floor at the feet of the heavily armed criminals.....*

## Task Difficulty

Not all things are equally easy to accomplish.

Modifiers are applied to skill rolls to reflect how difficult the task is to complete.

Some standard skill modifiers are summarised on this table

### Task Difficulty Table

Difficulty Rating	Modifier to die roll
Very Easy	+15
Easy	+10
Quite Easy	+5
Normal	0
Difficult	-5
Extremely Difficult	-10
Impossible	-15

### Examples

*If a car isn't starting, it is Very Easy for a mechanic to find out that this is due to faulty spark plugs and replace them.*

*On the other hand, if the car isn't starting due to having been influenced by an alien energy field this might be Very Difficult to diagnose and fix.*

Choosing the right Skill Modifier for a given situation is key to running the game successfully. Lean on this table and refer to it a lot during your first few games.

However, as Referee you need to develop a "feel" for what is the right modifier to apply in different situations.

When you're preparing your own games and adventures, specify as many skill modifiers as you can in your notes before play.

*How strong are the doors? How difficult will it be to "hack" the computer program? How heavy is the flying saucer?*

## Critical Failure

A natural, unmodified, roll of 1 is always a failure.

If the roll was otherwise impossible for the player to fail at then a roll of 1 is simply a failure.

### Example

*Anyone can open a car door and get in without a problem. However, you try doing it whilst you're hurrying and dodging a hail of bullets.*

*In this case you can ask the player to make a skill roll to succeed in opening the door. On a roll of 1, they fail.*

If there was a possibility of failure without rolling a 1, then a roll of 1 is a Critical Failure. Extra consequences will afflict the Hero.

As Referee you'll need to determine these as appropriate to the situation.

### Example



## Types of Skill

There are two types of skill – Common and Trained.

Common skills are ones which anyone can demonstrate. Eg. Computer Use.

Anyone can use a common skill at any time.

Trained skills are skills which can only be developed through education, training and practice.

They usually represent the character's professional talents. Eg. Computer programming.

No-one can use a trained skill unless they have received specific instruction in its use and are experienced in using the skill.

For reference, lists of possible Common and Trained skills are given below.

These are only suggestions. If you or your players come up with any different ones you should feel free to use them instead.

*And please drop me an e-mail so I can include them in any future updates of the rules.....*

The effects of most skills are self-evident but some examples are given throughout these rules.

## Common Skills

Anyone can use a common skill at any time. Usually they refer to an innate ability based upon a specific characteristic.

Generic uses of skill modifiers based upon characteristics are defined as skills because some people develop particular ability with them.

### Example

*When someone is Searching a room, most people make a d20 roll and add the Sleuthing skill modifier. However, some characters - such as the World's Greatest Detective - develop great skill in searching. They will add an additional modifier when making searches on top of their Sleuthing score.*

To succeed in using a common skill, the player must make a Skill Roll as always. That is, they roll a d20 and add the relevant skill modifier.

## Example Common Skills

Skill	Characteristic
Business	Psyche/Esteem
Climbing	Strength/Agility
Computer Use	Psyche
Demolition/Piano Smashing	Strength
Door bursting	Strength
Etiquette	Esteem
First Aid	Psyche
Gambling	Psyche/Esteem
Impress	Esteem
Juggling	Dexterity
Jumping	Strength/Agility
Language- native	Psyche
Literacy	Psyche
Make-up	Dexterity
Negotiation	Esteem
Pot-holing	Agility
Riding	Agility
Scrounging	Esteem
Singing	Esteem
Searching	Sleuthing
Spotting/Notice	Sleuthing
Stealth	Agility
Swimming	Strength/Agility
Teamster	Esteem/ Psyche
Weightlifting	Strength

If the total is 15, 16 or 17 the roll has succeeded in a minor way.

If the total is 18 or higher, the roll has succeeded completely.

An unmodified roll of 1 is a Critical Failure. An unmodified roll of 20 is a Critical Success.

On the next page is a list of some possible Common Skills and their associated Skill Modifier.

Where two skill modifiers are listed, the character uses whichever one is highest.

### Example

*Dark Chameleon attempts to climb a wall. The climbing skill is based on Agility or Strength. Dark Chameleon has a Strength Modifier of (4) 18 and an Agility Modifier of 5 (with some bonus for his Acrobatics superpower and a minus for his suit). When he is wearing his suit, he adds his Strength skill modifier of 18.*

*When he is not in his suit, he adds his Agility skill modifier of 5.*





## Skills

### Specialised Common Skills

Characters may choose to specialise in a common skill. They gain a skill modifier whenever they use that skill in addition to the skill modifier based upon their characteristic.

#### Example

*An Olympic long jumper would gain a bonus on their Jump Skill.*

These will vary from character to character. Some will be determined when the character is first created, others will develop through the use of "Montage Panels" during the campaign.

### New characters

When the character is first created, each player can freely select 5 specialised common skills for their Hero. However, it makes sense for the players to select skills which fit in with the Hero's abilities and background.

They use these skills with a +5 modifier on all rolls.

These 5 skills should be listed on their character sheet along with the associated skill modifier(s). (This will save time during play.)

### Derived characteristics

Ideally, you, as Referee, will have designed the characters' first adventure in such a way that it does not require the use of Derived Characteristics. If a situation arises when characters need to use Derived Characteristics you should consider stopping the game to award them if at all possible.

However, if during their first game, prior to Derived Characteristics being given for the first time, a character wishes to use a skill based upon a derived characteristic use the following rules:

1) If they are using a skill with two associated skill modifiers, use the modifier which is not a derived characteristic.

#### Example

*Freebooter has stopped some thugs stealing high-tech components. He tries to use his Business Skill to recall if there is a market in these devices. He will use his Psyche modifier as he does not yet have an Esteem score.*

2) If the skill only has a Derived Skill Modifier associated with it, the player makes a d20 roll without any modifiers - unless the character is specialised in the skill in which case they add 5.

#### Example

*If The Dark Chameleon searches for clues in his first game (before his Sleuthing total is worked out), Adrian will roll a d20 and add 5 as he is specialised in it.*

As soon as a character is given their Derived Characteristics any and all skill rolls associated with them will immediately start to make use of them.

#### Example

*The Dark Chameleon has a Criminal Background. He has "acquired" a suit which gives him Agility and Cloaking abilities.*

*Many of Adrian's choices of Common Skill make themselves.*

*Climbing - from his criminal career. It also fits with his Acrobatics Superpower.*

*Negotiation - for "fencing" stolen goods.*

*Scrounging - an ability acquired during his life as a criminal.*

*Searching - again from his criminal career.*

*Stealth - again from his criminal career but useful with his Acrobatics and Cloaking Superpowers*







## Trained Skills

These are skills which can only be developed through education, training and practice. They usually represent the character's professional talents. Eg. Computer programming.

Nobody can use a trained skill unless they have bought levels in that skill through spending skill points on it.

The skills are – again – based upon specific characteristics but – in this case – the skill modifiers of those characteristics represent a top limit on the number of skill points which may be allocated to that skill. The number of skills points allocated must be no higher than the skill modifier for that characteristic. The Skill Modifier for the skill is the level which has been bought using Skill Points rather than the associated Skill Modifier from a characteristic.

To succeed in using a trained skill, the player must make a Skill Roll as always. That is, they roll a d20 and add the relevant skill modifier.

If the total is 15, 16 or 17 the roll has succeeded in a minor way.

If the total is 18 or higher, the roll has succeeded completely.

An unmodified roll of 1 is a Critical Failure. An unmodified roll of 20 is a Critical Success.

In the next column is a list of some possible Trained Skills and their associated Skill Modifier.

Where two skill modifiers are listed, the character uses whichever one is highest as their limit for the expenditure of Skill Points.

Skill points are acquired when the character is first created and - later in the campaign - through the use of "montage panels".

## New Characters

Each character starts with 5 trained skills and a number of Skill Points.

The number of Skill Points is calculated by adding up their unenhanced skill modifiers for Strength, Endurance, Dexterity, Agility and Psyche and subtracting the total from 55.

These must be distributed between the 5 chosen specialist skills so that no score is higher than the associated skill modifier or less than 1.

Players unable to spend all their skill points must reselect their 5 skills to ensure that they can spend them all.



## Skills

### Derived Characteristics

When the players are making their characters, they don't know what their Esteem, Sleuthing or Fate scores are.

If a player wants to pick a Trained Skill for their character which is based upon a Derived Characteristic, use these rules:

1) The number of skill points they put into the characteristic is limited to the highest skill modifier they possess.

2) If, when Derived Characteristics are awarded, the character's Derived Characteristic Skill modifier isn't as high as the number of skill points allocated, the character's ability falls to the level of the Skill Modifier rather than the amount of skill points allocated.

If the Derived characteristic later increases, the character can use the higher Skill Modifier this brings until the Skill Modifier exceeds the number of skill points.

### Specific and Related Skills

Some skills are listed as "specific" - for example Environment Lore - specific.

The player must specify the exact item to which the skill refers.

Others have some obviously related skills - people with a skill in Inorganic Chemistry will have some knowledge of Organic Chemistry.

Characters who possess a specific skill or one with related skills can make a skill roll for a related skill area with a Skill modifier of zero.

#### Example

*CLIFFHANGER is knowledgeable about Arctic Environments. He has a Skill Modifier of +5 when rolling to succeed in Freezing situations.*

*If he is captured and abandoned in the Gobi Desert, he can make appropriate survival rolls but may add no Skill Modifier.*

*BLACKNIGHT is a skilled Organic Chemist. He has a skill modifier of +6 when mixing organic compounds.*

*If he were analysing completely inorganic minerals he could make an unmodified skill roll.*

### Example Trained Skills

Skill	Characteristic
Anatomy	Psyche
Biochemistry	Psyche
Biology	Psyche
Blacksmith	Strength/Dexterity
Computer Programming	Psyche
Criminology	Psyche
Cryptography	Psyche
Design	Psyche
Diplomacy	Esteem
Disguise	Psyche/Dexterity
Driving	Psyche/Dexterity
Electronics	Psyche
Engineering	Psyche
Entrepreneur	Psyche
Environment Lore – specific	Psyche
Hacking	Psyche
High Society	Esteem
History – specific era	Psyche
Inorganic Chemistry	Psyche
Language – foreign	Psyche
Locksmith/pick	Psyche/Dexterity
Metallurgy	Psyche
Mimicry	Psyche/Esteem
Mythology	Psyche
Occult Knowledge	Psyche
Organic Chemistry	Psyche
Particle Physics	Psyche
Pharmacology	Psyche
Pilot	Psyche/Dexterity
Research	Psyche
Sea diving	Psyche/Agility
Sky diving	Psyche/Agility
Surgery	Psyche/Dexterity
Weapon Smith/Repair-specific	Psyche/Dexterity
Weapon Skill – specific	Strength/Dexterity

### Brilliant Scientists

Some characters have a background in Science. These characters are already the best they can be in their field and have Skill modifiers which reflect this ability (qv).

They do not need to select skills in their specialist field and are not allowed to do so.

*Basically some players, not happy with their +15 skill modifier in - say Biology - try to increase it by taking Biology as a Skill to gain an modifier in addition to their existing +15. Talk about overkill!*

Brilliant Scientists don't need the Research skill or any general skills to do with Science.



However, Scientists may take a Trained Skill in science which is different from their own.

## Example

*THE CREEPER is a Brilliant Biologist - which is how he gained his plant-based powers. He makes all Biology rolls at +15 and any skills outside his field at +8.*

*If he were to spend 3 skill points on the Particle Physics skill, he would make all skill rolls related to Particle Physics at a total of +11.*

*Why would a Biologist be so interested in Nuclear Reactors? Has he got some scheme involving genetic mutation in mind? We all know where THAT leads.....*

## Example

*The Dark Chameleon's Skill modifiers are:*

Strength:	(4) 18
Endurance:	9
Dexterity:	7
Agility:	5
Psyche:	5

*The 18 for Strength is an enhanced characteristic and is ignored. The rest are added and subtracted from 55:*

$$55 - (4 + 9 + 7 + 5 + 5) = 25$$

*Adrian has 25 skill points to allocate.*

*He chooses 5 skills and allocates points between them:*

*Locksmith/Pick 7:*

*(This is obvious and from his Criminal Background. He uses his Dexterity as the limit on this rather than Psyche.)*

*Research 5:*

*(From his Criminal Background. He used to Research "marks" before undertaking his robberies.)*

*Disguise 5:*

*(From his Criminal Background. Not needed so much now that he has cloaking.)*

*Electronics 5:*

*(Originally this was for circumventing modern alarm systems. Now it's useful for maintaining his suit.)*

*Driving 3:*

*(He isn't the best driver in the world but at least he can get around.)*



# Basic Game: Character Generation Sheet

## Superpowers/Backgrounds

1) You have 8 Superpower rolls, as you use them up cross them off here:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

2) Roll percentage dice 4 times. Look the rolls up on the Superpower table and write down the Superpowers you roll here:


### Superpower Table

Acrobatics	01 - 09
Change form	10 - 13
Cloaking	14 - 16
Endurance	17 - 19
Energy Blast	20 - 28
Energy Sense	29 - 30
Enhancement	31
Fast recovery	32
Flight	33 - 41
Follower	42 - 45
Force field	46 - 49
Growth	50
Image generation	51
Impossible events	52
Increased move	53
Information	54
Marksmanship	55
Martial Arts	56 - 64
Mind Control	65
Protection	66 - 74
Regeneration	75
Shrink	76
State change	77
Strength	78 - 86
Supersense	87 - 90
Survival	91
Weapon	92 - 95
Choose	96 - 00

Remember to cross 4 rolls off your total.

3) Roll 2d10 and add them. Look on the Background Table. If you get a background, put it here and cross off a power roll:

--

### Background Table

2	Roll twice
3	Magical
4	Choose
5	Immortal – legendary
6	Brilliant Chemist
7	Criminal
8	Rich – inherited
9	Training
10	Nothing special - no cost
11	Nothing special - no cost
12	Nothing special - no cost
13	Brilliant Physicist/Engineer
14	Rich – Business
15	Authorities
16	Brilliant Biologist
17	Immortal – mechanical
18	Choose
19	Psionic
20	Roll twice

4) Your remaining 3 or 4 rolls can be used to roll more powers or to buy higher levels in powers already rolled. It costs one roll to turn level 1 into level 2, two rolls to turn level 2 into level 3 etc.

*(Typical example: If you roll 4 powers and a background you'll have three rolls left. These can be used to put three powers up to level 2 or one up to level 3.)*

If you need an extra roll, two powers can be taken at ½ level.

Now is a good time to read the descriptions of the powers you rolled in the rule book. All powers must be compatible. Use all your remaining rolls now.

If you roll any more powers, write them here:




# Basic Game Character Generation Sheet (2)

## Characteristics

1) Roll 4d6 four times. Add up the highest three numbers each time to get a total from 3-18. Write them here:

Strength	Endurance	Dexterity	Agility

2) You can swap TWO of these to suit your Superpowers.

3) Work out the total of the four rolls and write it here:

4) Work out the average of the four rolls and write it here:

5) Subtract the average from 23, round the result up to a whole number and write it here:

This is your PSYCHE.

6) Write your Superpowers and characteristics on your character sheet.

Halve each characteristic and write the result in the triangle next to the main score.

## Hit points

Roll 1d6 for each Endurance point you have. This is your total KILL score.

Roll the d6's again. This is your total STUN score.

## Move

Divide the total of the four physical characteristics (see above) by 10. This is your Move.

## Knockback

Add your Strength to your Endurance. This is your Knockback Score.

## Skills

1) Choose 5 common skills and list them on the character sheet along with their associated characteristic modifier + 5.

2) Choose 5 trained skills and write them on the character sheet.

3) Add up all 5 of your Skill modifiers (half the characteristics, the numbers in the lower triangles):

4) Subtract the total from 55:

5) Divide these points between your trained skills.

No trained skill can have a total its associated characteristic skill modifier. (No more than your highest skill modifier if it is based upon Esteem, Sleuthing or Fate.)

## Example Common Skills

Skill	Characteristic
Business	Psyche/Esteem
Climbing	Strength/Agility
Computer Use	Psyche
Demolition/Piano Smashing	Strength
Door bursting	Strength
Etiquette	Esteem
First Aid	Psyche
Gambling	Psyche/Esteem
Impress	Esteem
Juggling	Dexterity
Jumping	Strength/Agility
Language- native	Psyche
Literacy	Psyche
Make-up	Dexterity
Negotiation	Esteem
Pot-holing	Agility
Riding	Agility
Scrounging	Esteem
Singing	Esteem
Searching	Sleuthing
Spotting/Notice	Sleuthing
Stealth	Agility
Swimming	Strength/Agility
Teamster	Esteem/ Psyche
Weightlifting	Strength

## Example Trained Skills

Skill	Characteristic
Anatomy	Psyche
Biochemistry	Psyche
Biology	Psyche
Blacksmith	Strength/Dexterity
Computer Programming	Psyche
Criminology	Psyche
Cryptography	Psyche
Design	Psyche
Diplomacy	Esteem
Disguise	Psyche/Dexterity
Driving	Psyche/Dexterity
Electronics	Psyche
Engineering	Psyche
Entrepreneur	Psyche
Environment Lore – specific	Psyche
Hacking	Psyche
High Society	Esteem
History – specific era	Psyche
Inorganic Chemistry	Psyche
Language – foreign	Psyche
Locksmith/pick	Psyche/Dexterity
Metallurgy	Psyche
Mimicry	Psyche/Esteem
Mythology	Psyche
Occult Knowledge	Psyche
Organic Chemistry	Psyche
Particle Physics	Psyche
Pharmacology	Psyche
Pilot	Psyche/Dexterity
Research	Psyche
Sea diving	Psyche/Agility
Sky diving	Psyche/Agility
Surgery	Psyche/Dexterity
Weapon Smith/Repair- specific	Psyche/Dexterity
Weapon Skill – specific	Strength/Dexterity

## Costume/Equipment

Choose a light costume (helps dodging) or a heavy costume (stops some kill damage.) Choose three items of equipment.

Choose a name and an alias and fill in your character sheet.

# Character Sheet

Hero Name:

Secret ID:

Player:

Strength

Endurance

Dexterity

Agility

Psyche

Esteem

Sleuthing

Fate

Common Skills	Level

Trained Skills	Level

Legality	
Memorability	
Heroism	
Relationships	
Success	

Powers	
Detection	
Contacts	
Exposure	
Accessibility	

Scruples	
Victories	
Public Reaction	
Extrovert	
Home-life	

Move

Knockback

Damage  
Modifier

Kill

Stun

Background, Superpowers, Abilities

Origin Story

Attack	Kill	Stun	Mod.	Notes

Costume and Equipment

## Example Character Sheet

Hero Name: The Dark Chameleon		Secret ID: "Little" Gary Grant		Player: Adrian	
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Strength (7) 35 <hr style="width: 50%; margin: 0 auto;"/> <div style="text-align: right; padding-right: 5px;">(4) 18</div>	Endurance 17 <hr style="width: 50%; margin: 0 auto;"/> <div style="text-align: right; padding-right: 5px;">9</div>	Dexterity 13 <hr style="width: 50%; margin: 0 auto;"/> <div style="text-align: right; padding-right: 5px;">7</div>	Agility 10 <hr style="width: 50%; margin: 0 auto;"/> <div style="text-align: right; padding-right: 5px;">(5) 6/4</div>	Psyche 10 <hr style="width: 50%; margin: 0 auto;"/> <div style="text-align: right; padding-right: 5px;">5</div>	Esteem <hr style="width: 50%; margin: 0 auto;"/>	Sleuthing 4 <hr style="width: 50%; margin: 0 auto;"/> <div style="text-align: right; padding-right: 5px;">2</div>	Fate <hr style="width: 50%; margin: 0 auto;"/>
--	--	--	--	---	---	---	---

Common Skills	Level	Trained Skills	Level	Legality	Powers	Scruples
Climbing	(9) 23	Disguise	5	Memorability	Detection	Victories
Negotiation	5	Driving	3	Heroism	Contacts 4	Public Reaction
Scrounging	5	Electronics	5	Relationships	Exposure	Extrovert
Searching	5	Lockpick	7	Success	Accessibility	Home-life
Stealth	(10) 16	Research	5			

Kill 62	Stun 65
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Background, Superpowers, Abilities

**Criminal (Contacts 4)**

**Acrobatics 1** (+2 on dodges\*, +5 on Agility rolls\*. Gimmicks: +5 on Stealth, +5 on combined actions)

**Cloaking 2** (Invisibility without concentration, -10 on sleuthing rolls. Gimmicks: suit changes with him, can change whilst moving.)

**Protection 2** (Kill and Stun damage divided by 3, -6\* on Agility Rolls. Gimmicks: 2 x +1 to Agility Rolls\*)

**Strength 2.** Gimmicks: Slight build, -5 to opponent's knockbacks

\* Total Agility Modifier = 5 + 5 - 6 + 2 = 6  
Total Dodge Modifier = 5 + 2 - 6 + 2 + 1 = 4

Origin Story

Gary Grant was criminal working for a powerful gang when he came across the suit and liberated it. He delivered it to his bosses.

However, when they started to use it to commit murders, he felt guilty and stole it back.

He now works to atone for the evil done through misuse of the suit which he was responsible for stealing.

Apart from his criminal skills, all the abilities come from the stolen suit.

Attack	Kill	Stun	Mod.	Notes
Fist	1d-5	2d	+23	-5 on Knockbacks

Costume and Equipment

Light costume (+1 dodge\*)

Small set of lockpicks/thieves tools  
Light-weight rope and grapple  
Small hatchback car

# Combat

## Playing the game

Now that you've got your characters you'll want to know how to play the game.

First things first. Although Superheroes have made the jump to TV programmes and films – their origins lie in comics. Because of this, the game is played out in PANELS.

There are three types of PANEL:

### Plot panels

Most of the game is played out in Plot panels.

These are of variable length to suit the story-telling part of the game which occurs between combats within the characters' adventures.

### Combat Panels

These are the more strictly controlled panels that track actions within combat.

### Montage Panels

These are panels which are used to keep track of the characters' training/development between adventures.



## The Core System

This was actually explained above – in chapter 2. The central system is:

- Roll a d20.
- Add the skill modifier of the relevant characteristic.
- A score of 15, 16 or 17 is a minor success.
- A score of 18 or more is a complete success.
- An unmodified 1 is a critical failure.
- An unmodified 20 is a critical success.

### For example

*STARLIGHT is trying to deactivate a bomb. She uses her Engineering skill – of 7.*





*The Referee rules that this is a difficult task (-5 to the roll). STARLIGHT's player rolls a d20 and gets a 15.*

*15 (the roll) + 7 (the skill modifier) – 5 (the difficulty) gives a total of 17. A normal success.*

*STARLIGHT is able to stop the bomb from exploding but not, at this stage, render it completely harmless.*

*If the total had been below 15, the roll would have been a failure.*

*If it had been 18 or more STARLIGHT would have been able to completely de-activate the bomb and ensure that it couldn't be set off at some point in the future.*

*On a roll of 1, the bomb would have exploded (or, if the Referee was in a generous mood - the countdown would have been extremely accelerated.)*

*On a roll of 20 she would have been able to speculate upon the origin of the bomb - who is likely to have made it and where they got their components from..*

This system is enough to handle 90% of events within the game. Occasionally you'll need a few more rules. This is mostly evident when your players get into combat situations.

*Squadron UK is a ROLE-PLAYING game. However - as anyone who has had to sit through over half an hour character interaction in a so-called "blockbuster" knows - you can't have Superheroes without the slugfests.*

## Handling combats

When your players' characters come into conflict with some of the many forces ranged against them, you'll need to use the following system(s) to resolve that combat.

As Referee, it's up to you to decide exactly when a combat starts and when you need to switch from story-telling mode into combat mode.

## Rounds and Panels

Combat is played out in rounds. In every combat round each character gets a number of "panels" in which to act.

The exact number of panels each combatant gets is determined by the initiative score. It can vary from round to round.

*I want to stress that and make sure you're clear on it. Different rounds can be of different lengths through having different numbers of panels in them. The tendency in most games is to have rounds of fixed length. The concept of variable length rounds might take some getting used to.*

Unless otherwise specified, all actions in combat take a single comic-book panel to execute.

## Initiative

To decide who acts first and how many panels there are in a round, each side rolls 1d6.

The Referee rolls a d6 for the bad guys and one player rolls a d6 for the Heroes.

The side with the highest score acts first.

The number of panels each side gets in a round is the difference between the Initiative die rolls.

### For example

*The Referee rolls 3 and Adrian, rolling for the Heroes, rolls 6. The Heroes go first and get 3 panels of action each. Then the Villains get 3 panels of action apiece.*

Unless they have devoted Montage Panels to training together (see below) the characters will act in order of Agility. The character with the highest Agility on a given side will act first and the one with the lowest Agility will act last.

Players may not choose to defer their actions until after one of their team-mates has acted.

They cannot wait or reserve actions until the bad guys have acted. If they do not choose to use their panels when it is their turn, then they lose them.

If the die rolls are equal then both sides get two panels of action and act simultaneously - in strict order of Agility. The character, on either side, with the highest Agility will act first.

*When I Referee a game, I ask the players to sit around the table in the Agility order of their characters. It makes it a lot easier to keep track of who is going next.*



## Combat

### Responses to attacks

If a character is attacked they may choose to respond to the attack (see below). This uses panels out of their future actions. They may not use more than 5 panels in advance in this way. When they are 5 panels in arrears they may make no further actions or responses until they gain some more panels in the usual flow of combat.

#### Example

Let's suppose three Heroes are up against a Supervillain and a bunch of thugs. DARK CHAMELEON has an Agility of 10, FREEBOOTER has an Agility of 16 and SYNERGY has an Agility of 12. The supervillain, CUT-THROAT has an Agility of 15 – though the players don't know this. The Referee hasn't bothered to determine the Agility of the thugs and just assumes that it is low.

The Heroes have tracked the crooks to a warehouse they'd been using to stash their loot.

In the first round, Adrian player rolls a d6 for the players. He gets a 5. The Referee gets a 4. Each side gets one panel with the players' characters acting first.

FREEBOOTER (Agility 16) goes first. He charges towards the Thugs. SYNERGY (Agility 12) goes next. She fires a one dice Energy Blast into the air and calls upon the bad guys to surrender.

Dave, her player, makes an "Intimidate" roll using a d20 but fails to frighten her opponents.

DARK CHAMELEON (Agility 9) goes last and uses his Acrobatic abilities to bound up on top of a pile of crates to confront CUT-THROAT.

It is now the bad guys' go. CUT-THROAT chooses to thump DARK CHAMELEON. (A d20 is rolled and it turns out that he misses). All the thugs draw guns.

Both sides roll a d6 again. This time FREEBOOTER's player rolls and gets a 1. The Referee rolls a 4. The Bad Guys win by three panels.

CUT-THROAT backs away from DARK CHAMELEON (1 panel), and draws and throws a Knife. This only takes his second panel because he possesses the "quick draw" gimmick. A d20 is rolled and the knife is on target.

DARK CHAMELEON chooses to dodge aside. This costs him a future panel. A d20 is rolled and the dodge is a minor success. He is grazed by the knife. CUT-THROAT draws and throws a second knife. This time DARK CHAMELEON dodges it completely.

The thugs choose to fire their guns. This takes two panels because - well - they're thugs. Most of the shots miss and those which are on target are easily dodged by the two Heroes. This doesn't cost them any future panels because - well - they're dodging attacks from thugs! In their third panel, the Thugs back off, intimidated by their lack of success.





The characters now have their 3 panels.

*FREEBOOTER uses one panel to move behind a pile of boxes between him and some of the thugs. In his second panel he attempts to topple the pile. A d20 is rolled but the effort fails. In the third panel, he tries again. This time he manages to tip the boxes on to the hapless goons, rendering them unconscious.*

*SYNERGY hits the remaining thugs with a wide-angle Energy Blast rendering them unconscious. This takes her first Panel. In her second panel she blasts one of the crates at the bottom of the pile under DARK CHAMELEON and CUT-THROAT. She uses her Third panel to move out of the way as the pile collapses.*

*DARK CHAMELEON and CUT-THROAT both make d20 rolls to respond to SYNERGY's actions. CHAMELEON succeeds and manages to grab a loading hook hanging from the ceiling. CUT-THROAT fails and falls to the floor. This takes a panel from both of them.*

*It is now DARK CHAMELEON's turn to act, but he has already used all his three panels for this round and cannot act. (He used two dodges and grabbed the loading hook.)*

*Both sides roll again. Both roll a 5. This is a 2 panel round with people acting in strict Agility order. FREEBOOTER has the highest Agility and goes first. He moves towards the fallen thugs. He uses his second panel to check that they aren't too badly injured.*

*CUT-THROAT has the next highest Agility (15). He only has one panel. (He tried to avoid falling off the boxes last round.) From his place on the floor, he draws a knife and throws it at SYNERGY. He hits and she fails to dodge (costing her a future panel).*

*Now it is SYNERGY's turn. She has used one panel to dodge and so has one panel left. She fires an Energy Blast at CUT-THROAT and hits. He attempts to Dodge but fails.*

*It is now DARK CHAMELEON's turn. He uses his two panels to move towards (drop on) CUT-THROAT and attack him. Given his great Strength, the bonus for falling and SYNERGY's earlier energy blast, this is enough to knock CUT-THROAT out.*

*The Thugs now have their turn, or they would if any of them were still conscious.*

## Combat Scale

Combat is played out using figures, or similar, on a surface marked in squares (or hexagons). The dimensions of each square should be roughly the height of an average figure.

*This game does not have an exact scale. If you are using 25mm/20mm figures then one inch squares might be suitable. If you are using "Heroic" scale figures, 3cm/1.5 inch squares would be appropriate. Dimensions and ranges are always given in squares, but this can be taken to mean hexagons if you prefer to use those to mark out your playing surface.*

*Squares are a lot easier to draw.....*

## Rolling to Hit

Whenever a character tries to attack another character with a physical attack, the player must roll a d20, add their Dexterity skill modifier and get equal to or higher than 18.

On a full success, significant characters use d10's to calculate damage. Ordinary characters use d6's.

If they score 15, 16 or 17 the attack is a success but damage is reduced.

On minor successes, player-characters use d6's to calculate damage. Ordinary characters use d3's.

*For speed, instead of rolling d3's you might find it easier to work out the damage using d6's and then halve the totals.*

The rules for automatic and critical successes and failures apply as usual.

There are modifiers to the roll. Some of these are

Modifiers to hit rolls	
Circumstance	Modifier
Target is static	+5
Target is unskilled in combat	+2
Striking from behind	+3
Striking from above	+3
Target is unaware of attack	+5
Target is in cover (depending upon the degree of cover)	-1 to -15
Vision obscured – e.g. by smoke	-1 to -10
Missiles at extreme range	-1 per 10% of extra range up to -10 max.

shown on the table.



## Combat

### Example

*DARK CHAMELEON has been cornered by an android and has lost the initiative roll.*

*The android attacks and the Referee rolls a d20. An android has a Dexterity Skill Modifier of zero. Even so, it rolls a 17 and hits. This is a minor success.*

*CHAMELEON attempts to Dodge. This will cost him no time as the android is not a major opponent (see below). However, his Dodge fails.*

*Because the android rolled a 17 this is a minor success. It rolls its damage using d3's. A fist does d3-5 Kill damage, so the android does no Kill damage. It does 2d3 Stun. CHAMELEON takes 3 points of Stun damage.*

*When he hits the android, CHAMELEON rolls a 10.*

*To this he adds 7 – his Dexterity Skill Modifier – and a further 2 because the android is unskilled in combat. This gives a total of 19. A complete success. DARK CHAMELEON will use d10 to determine damage.*

*Androids take no Stun Damage. CHAMELEON's fist does d10-5 Kill damage but he gets to add another 23 to this.*

*He rolls a 7 and does a total of 25 Kill points of damage, punching the android's head clean off.*



## Critical Hits

An unmodified roll of 20 in combat is a critical hit. It is always best for you to choose the effects of the Critical hit to be appropriate to the situation if possible. Examples of this are:

- -5 to any dodges, parries or other responses made to the attack.
- -1 to any protection/dividers applied to the attack
- Targets in precarious positions have to make Agility rolls to avoid falling off roofs etc.

If, however, there is no obvious effect to apply, you can roll a d6 and consult the following table:

### Critical Hit Table

1	Target falls over and must spend a panel getting up.
2	Perfect attack. All die rolls for damage roll maximum.
3	Target's knockback score is halved.
4	Target is hit in the foot/leg
5	Cosmetic damage to target, Bruising if the damage is mainly Stun, Scarring if it is Kill
6	Target Stunned and makes their next action at -5 on the skill roll.

## Critical misses

An unmodified roll of 1 in combat is a critical miss. It is always best for you, the Referee, to choose the effects of the Critical miss to be appropriate to the situation if possible. Examples of this are:

- Attackers in precarious positions have to make Agility rolls to avoid falling off roofs etc.
- Hit bystanders or comrades
- Cause property damage

If, however, there is no obvious effect to apply, the Referee can roll a d6 on the following table:

### Critical Miss Table

1	Attacker falls over and must spend a panel getting up.
2	Hurt hand or similar. Take 1d10 Stun damage.
3	Cause property damage.
4	Put bystanders/comrades at risk. Roll to attack nearest friendly target.
5	Pull a muscle. Movement halved for attacker's next 1d6 panels
6	Off balance. Next attack or skill roll made at -5.





## Dodge

If an attack strikes, the target may attempt to Dodge. This must be announced and resolved in between the attack striking and the damage being rolled.

The player cannot wait to see if the damage rolled is high or low before deciding to react.

If the target is dodging an attack from a “normal” human – for example a Thug – the dodge takes no time.

If they are dodging an attack from a significant opponent, like a Supervillain, this takes future panels. The target loses a panel for the dodge – whether the dodge is successful or not.

If the target has already used 5 future panels, they may not dodge any attacks – even those from normal opponents.

To dodge the target rolls a d20, adds their Agility Skill modifier and tries to get equal to or higher than 18.

If the dodge roll succeeds, the damage is avoided completely. If total of 15, 16 or 17 is achieved, the Kill and Stun damage are both halved (rounding halves down).

### Example

*BULLDOG is fighting TRICOLOUR. The french villain hits our Hero with an Energy Blast and achieves a full success.*

*This means he uses d10's to roll damage. Because he is put three dice into his attack, it should do 2d10 Kill damage and 4d10 Stun damage.*

*BULLDOG attempts to dodge. He rolls a d20 and gets a 10. To this he adds his Agility Skill Modifier – 5. He also adds an extra +1 because he chose enhanced dodge as his Martial Arts gimmick. This gives a total of 16 – a minor success.*

*The Referee rolled 2d10 for Kill and got a total of 9.*

*As BULLDOG's dodge was a minor success, he halves this total and rounds it down, taking 4 points of Kill damage.*

*4d10 are rolled for Stun. These comes up 6, 5, 3 and 8 for a total of 22*

*This is halved. BULLDOG takes 11 points of Stun damage.*

## Parrying

If an attack strikes, the target may attempt to Parry. They use one of their usual attack forms to knock the incoming attack aside.

This must be announced and resolved in between the attack striking and the damage being rolled.

The player cannot wait to see if the damage rolled is high or low before deciding to react.

If the target is parrying an attack from a “normal” human – for example a Thug – the parry takes no time.

If they are parrying an attack from a significant opponent, like an Alien Overlord, this take a future panel whether the parry is successful or not.

If the target has already used 5 future panels, they may not parry any attacks – even those from normal opponents.

*The parrying has a number of exemptions and special rules. These are all detailed below. However, the basic rule is relatively straightforward. Many Referees prefer to just use this basic rule and their own discretion.*

To parry the target rolls a d20, adds their Dexterity Skill modifier and tries to get equal to or higher than 15. They are trying to hit the attack.

If the parry roll succeeds the target rolls the usual damage for their attack, adding the Stun and Kill damage together.

If the total is 15, 16, or 17 this total is calculated using d6's instead of d10's.

The total is deducted from the Incoming damage, being taken off Kill damage first.

If the damage done by the Parry exceeds the attack done by the attack any excess damage from the parry is ignored. It does not affect the attacker in any way.

### For example

*A thug hits BULLDOG with as cosh, getting a total score of 19. This means that he will roll d6's for damage.*

*BULLDOG chooses to parry the attack. He's just going to block it with his forearm but he IS a martial artist after all. He rolls an 8.*



## Combat

*Adding 6 for his Dexterity and 1 for his Martial Arts, this comes to 15 which is a minor success.*

*He'll be rolling d6's as well.*

*The thug rolls 1d6 Kill and gets 5. Then 2d6 Stun. He gets 9.*

*BULLDOG rolls d6 Kill plus 2d6 Stun plus an extra d6 because of his Martial Arts. He rolls all four dice and gets a total of 16 points.*

*This turns aside all of the 14 points done by the Thug. The extra 2 points are ignored.*

*BULLDOG takes no damage.*

### Parrying Caveats, Exemptions and Special Cases

*If I were you I'd try skipping this section when you play the basic game. As I mentioned above, the basic Parrying rule is fine for almost all situations.*

*Sooner or later though, you're going to have a player who queries a particular parrying situation and, hopefully, this section will enable you to answer any questions they raise.*

#### 1) You can use a melee attack mode to parry another melee attack mode.

Some people argue that you cannot parry a knife attack, for example, with a fist attack. Parrying such an attack represents knocking the attack aside rather than interposing your hand. So a hand-to-hand attack form can be used to parry an edged weapon.

#### 2) You cannot use a missile attack to parry a hand-to-hand attack.

If they're close enough to hit you, it's too close to use your gun.

#### 3) You can use a missile attack to parry another missile attack.

The normal parry rules should apply. However, in certain situations you, the Referee, might rule that the incoming missile has been deflected enough by the parry to miss – even if the strength of the parry is weaker than the strength of the attack. (Useful for when you're in a generous mood).

#### 4) You can use a hand-to-hand attack form to parry a slow-moving or human-powered missile weapon attack.

It is possible to knock aside arrows, spears etc. with your bare hands.



#### 5) You normally cannot use a hand-to-hand attack to parry fast moving or mechanically propelled projectiles.

No knocking aside bullets with a fist.

#### 6) If a Parry does sufficient Kill damage to totally destroy an incoming missile, it will be destroyed and will do no damage.

Even if the object is not destroyed it may still be possible to make a big enough hole in it so that the target takes no damage when the object lands on them.

#### 7) An object can be used to Parry instead of an attack mode.

All the character has to do is to lift the object and make a successful Parry roll. This can be done as a combined action.

The object's Kill score is taken off the incoming attack rather than the character's natural damage. If a minor success is rolled, only half the object's Kill is taken from the attack.



## Damage

When an attack hits, the attacker rolls damage.

All attacks do Kill and Stun damage. One of these is 1 die of damage, the other is 2 dice of damage – depending upon the type of attack.

Attacks which are intended to kill – swords, guns etc.- do 2 dice Kill damage and 1 die Stun damage.

Non-lethal attacks – fists for example – do 2 dice Stun damage and 1 die Kill damage.

Ordinary human beings use d6 to determine the damage from major successful attacks and d3 for minor successes.

Significant or important characters use d10 for damage from successful attacks and d6 for damage from minor successes.

These dice will receive modifiers based upon Strength and any weapons and/or abilities or superpowers being used.

*As mentioned before, if you prefer to roll damage using d6 and halve it instead of using d3's it will make little difference to the game.*

## Strength modifier to damage

If the character has a high Strength and gains a positive modifier to damage, some or all of it can be added to the Kill damage or the Stun damage or split between them in any proportion. How this is being done has to be announced prior to the attack roll being made.

*DARK CHAMELEON is hitting a thug. He has a +23 damage bonus. Before rolling his d20 to hit, Adrian announces that he will do only +10 damage to Stun and +5 to Kill.*

*He is worried that if he uses his full Strength modifier he might severely injure or even kill the Thug. (The +5 bonus to Kill ensures that he WILL draw blood, though.)*

If the character has a low Strength and gains a negative modifier to damage, all of it is subtracted from the damage being done, coming off the Kill damage first.

When the Kill damage is reduced to Zero, any remaining modifier comes off Stun damage.

*Gary Grant has a -2 damage "bonus". He is attacked by a mugger whilst out with his girl-friend and is unable to use his special suit. Still he fights back manfully and manages to land a punch with a full success.*

*He rolls a d10 for Kill damage but only manages to get a 3. With the -5 for Kill damage on all Fists, this does no Kill damage. He rolls 2d10 for Stun damage and gets 9. However, as his damage modifier could not be taken off Kill, it has to come off the Stun on this attack.*

*The mugger takes 7 points of Stun damage.*

## Fists

The most common attack in this kind of game is the good old fist.

All fists suffer a -5 damage modifier to the Kill damage rolled.

## Example weapons

As Referee you should adapt the basic damage rules to reflect the kind of weapons you want in your game. However, there are a few examples on the next page.

Weapons which require training to use are difficult to use if you are unfamiliar with them. This gives most people a -10 on attack rolls using those weapons.

Example Weapons				
Weapon	Kill Dam.	Stun Dam.	Range	Notes
Small Pistol	2d	1d	10 sq.	Needs training to use.
Large Pistol/Revolver	2d+3	1d+3	10 sq.	Needs training to use.
"The most powerful hand-gun in the world"	2d+5	1d+5	10 sq.	Needs training to use.
Rifle	2d+5	1d+5	50 sq.	Needs training to use.
Burst of sub-machine gun fire	2d+3	1d+3	5 sq.	+1 mod. on rolls to hit. Needs training.
Cosh/club/truncheon	1d	2d		
Cattle-prod	1d-10	2d		
Arrow/Cross-bow bolt	2d	1d	20 sq.	Needs training to use.
Knife	2d	1d	3 sq.	
Sword	2d+5	1d		Needs training to use.



## Combat

### Knock-back

If the total of the Kill and Stun damage done by an attack exceeds the sum of Endurance and Strength of the target then they are knocked flying.

For each 5 points - or fraction thereof – by which the damage exceeds their characteristic total, they are pushed back one square.

They need to roll a d20 and add their Agility Skill Modifier with a -1 modifier for every square they have been knocked back. They need to score 15 or higher. If they succeed, they land on their feet. If they fail, they fall over and have to devote a panel to standing up at some time.

Knockback is usually calculated using the Strength and Endurance scores originally rolled for the character.

If the character is aware of the attack and can brace against it (taking no time) they may use their enhanced or superpowered Strength total instead.

Exceptionally large characters (the Growth Superpower, for example) may use their enhanced Endurance score to calculate their Knockback score.

*DARK CHAMELEON has a knockback score of 52 if he is braced.*

*He is charged by MASTADON and takes 60 points damage(!).*

*This is 8 points above his knockback total so he is pushed back two squares.*

*He has to make an Agility roll with a -2 modifier in order to remain on his feet.*



### Effects of damage

Whenever Kill or Stun is reduced to less than 10% or less of its total, the character is stunned.

Their movement is halved and all actions are performed with a -5 modifier on the die roll.

*For example, SCATTERSHOT has 32 Kill points and 29 Stun points. She is hit by a tranquiliser dart which reduces her Stun to 2 before she can pull it out. She now feels a bit whoosey.*

*Her movement is halved from 5 squares to 3 squares. If she attempts to hit someone, it will be with a -5 on her skill roll.*

A character's Stun total may never be more than twice their Kill total.

*For example, FREEBOOTER is near a faulty nuclear reactor. Unknown to him, the radiation is killing him. He takes Kill damage but might not notice this.*

*When his Kill damage falls to 16, his Stun suddenly falls to 32, giving him a hint that something is wrong.*

### Recovering Stun Damage

A character's Stun total can never be more than twice their Kill total.

The character recovers one die of Stun at the end of each round of rest – a round in which they have undertaken no actions. This will be a d10 if the character is completely relaxed and in a non-stress situation.

If they are trying to recover in a non-optimal situation – in combat for example – they will need to make an Endurance Skill roll. A score of 18 or more is needed to recover a d10 of Stun each round, otherwise only a d6 is rolled.

*"In combat" means that the fight is going on all around them. If they are directly involved in combat - if someone is trying to hit them, for example – they cannot roll to recover.*

When the character's total Stun is less than 1, the character is unconscious. They roll a d20 at the end of each subsequent round. To this they add their Endurance Skill Modifier score.

If the total is less than 15, they will remain unconscious.





Once they roll equal to or more than 15, they can begin to recover. This will be at a rate of 1d6 Stun per round unless the Endurance Skill roll was 18 or more in which case they will recover 1d10 Stun per round.

The player can chose to keep making Endurance rolls to try score an 18 to "convert" d6 recovery into d10 recovery.

These rolls are not made at -5 even though the character may still be below 10% Stun.

*For example, a villain – SCARVILE - follows up the tranquiliser attack on SCATTERSHOT with a blow to head. She falls to -7 Stun. At the end of the next round, Jayne – SCATTERSHOT's player – rolls a d20 and gets an 8. To this she adds SCATTERSHOT's Endurance modifier, which is +5. The total is 13. SCATTERSHOT remains unconscious.*

*Next round the roll is 12.  $12 + 5 = 17$ . SCATTERSHOT starts to recover. Jayne rolls a d6 and gets 3. SCATTERSHOT is now on -4 Stun points.*

*Next round, Jayne rolls a d20 again. She rolls a 3.*

*. This is a failure but, because SCATTERSHOT is already recovering, she rolls another d6. She gets a 5. SCATTERSHOT rises to 1 Stun and begins to regain consciousness.*

*In the next round, SCATTERSHOT could act as normal (well, with -5 to her actions) but Jayne elects to have her feign unconsciousness and make one more recovery roll. She rolls a d20 and gets a 15.  $15 + 5 = 20$ . This is a good success so this time – and in any subsequent recovery rounds - Jayne rolls a d10 for SCATTERSHOT's recovery. Unfortunately, she only rolls a 3. SCATTERSHOT rises to 4 Stun and is no longer stunned.*

If the character's Stun total is reduced to a negative level which exceeds their Endurance total, they take no further Stun damage.

Any further Stun damage is taken off their Kill total until such a time as their Stun total starts to recover.

*For example, SCATTERSHOT has an Endurance of 9. if, when she was on -7 Stun, SCARVILE had kicked her in the ribs and done 10 Stun points damage, SCATTERSHOT would have gone down to -9 Stun. The other 8 points would have come off her Kill total.*



## Combat

### Recovering Kill Damage

Characters normally recover one die of Kill damage for each hour of rest – no major actions.

They will need to make an Endurance Skill roll. A score of 18 or more is needed to recover a d10 of Kill each hour, otherwise only a d6 is rolled.

If a character with a First Aid skill attends to the wounded character and makes a successful skill roll, the character may recover 1d6 or 1d10 – as appropriate - Kill or Coma immediately without an endurance roll. They can only receive this benefit once per combat and only for damage received during this combat.

When the character's total Kill is less than 1, they are hospitalised. They will remain unconscious and unable to act until they receive continuous high-quality medical attention. They may then roll a d20 at the end of each day. Once the total of the roll plus their Endurance Skill Modifier is equal to or more than 15, they succeed they may then roll d20 at the end of each subsequent day to recover a die of Kill damage per day until their Kill score exceeds their Endurance, at which point they can recover normally (see above). This recovery die will be a d6 if a total of 15-17 is rolled or a d10 if the total score is 18 or more.

*For example, SCARVILE keeps kicking SCATTERSHOT until her Kill score falls to -8, at which point one of SCATTERSHOT's comrades pulls him off. She is immediately given First Aid (see above) which only restores 2 Kill points. She is taken to hospital.*

*At the end of the day, Jayne – SCATTERSHOT's player – rolls a d20 and gets 12.  $12 + 5$  (SCATTERSHOT's Endurance modifier) = 17. SCATTERSHOT recovers 1d6 damage. A 3 is rolled so SCATTERSHOT goes up to -3 Kill points. She is still in a Coma.*

*The following day's roll is a 5, so SCATTERSHOT does not recover. In fact she fails to recover for the next three days.*

*On the fifth day, the recovery roll is a 17.  $17 + 5 = 22$ . This is above 18 so SCATTERSHOT recovers a d10 of Kill. She recovers 7 points and goes up to 4 Kill points. She is now conscious but must still make an Endurance roll at the end of each day until her Kill points exceed 9 – her Endurance score.*

*It might seem that she is in hospital for a long time, but she was very nearly battered to death.*

If the character's Kill total is reduced to a negative level more than their Endurance total, they take no further Kill damage because they are DEAD!

### Out for the count

If an opponent is reduced to less than 1 Stun, a character may deliver a knockout blow which stops them from recovering for the rest of this combat.

This cannot be done if the attacker is subject to any major stress or distractions.

It can be done in a combat situation, for example, but not if the attacker is currently under direct attack.





## Using objects in Combat

How an object behaves in combat is defined by its size. This is shown on the table below.

Whenever a character tries to lift or throw an object, they must have a minimum Strength required.

*To lift a washing machine, a character must have a minimum Strength of 15.*

When they try to lift or throw the object, they must make a Strength skill roll or similar (e.g. Weightlifting) and apply the modifier from the table.

If the total is 15 or more they have lifted the object.

If the total is 18 or more, they are able to throw the object.

The object can be thrown one square plus an additional square for every two points by which the character's Strength score exceeds the minimum Strength needed to lift/throw the object.

When thrown to strike, objects do 1d Kill and 2d Stun damage as usual. (Unless they have sharp edges.) They do not suffer the -5 damage modifier on Kill which fists do.

The maximum Damage bonus which can be applied when throwing an object is given on the table.

Throwing an object as an attack takes a single die roll and only takes one panel to do.

However, the roll must represent both a successful throw (adding their character's Strength modifier) and a successful strike (adding their Dexterity modifier).

The table also shows the HTK required to destroy an object and the maximum damage modifier which can be applied to an attack using this object before it disintegrates.

*For example, CAPTAIN BIRMINGHAM is an ex-body builder. He has a Strength of 22. He could try to lift or throw a speedboat but not a car.*

*He tries to throw a motorbike at an oncoming Demon. He has enough Strength to make the attempt. He rolls a d20 and gets an 8. To this he adds his Strength Modifier (+11) and the modifier from the table (-3).*

$$8 + 11 - 3 = 16.$$

*CAPTAIN BIRMINGHAM can lift the bike but not throw it.*

*If the Demon gets to him before he has another action, the CAPTAIN can try to hit it with the bike or use the bike to Parry its attacks.*

*If he gets another a panel of action before it reaches him, he can try another roll to throw the bike. He needs a 10 or more. He can throw the bike up to 4 squares. (His Strength exceeds the 15 needed by 7 points, which gives him 3 squares plus the initial 1.)*

**Object Table**

Size	Examples	Min Strength	Skill Roll Modifier	Kill/ /Max. Dam. Modifier
-3	Book, Mobile Phone	0	+ 8	2
-2	Telephone, Brick	2	+ 5	5
-1	TV set, Table	5	+ 3	10
0	Cooker, Moped, (Person)	10	0	15
1	Motorbike, Washing Machine	15	-3	20
2	Speedboat, Caravan	20	-5	25
3	Small Car, Satellite	25	-8	30
4	Average Car, Light Aircraft	30	-10	35
5	Large Car, Van	35	-13	40
6	Lorry, Helicopter (Elephant)	40	-15	45
7	Fighter Plane, Bulldozer	45	-18	50
8	Passenger Jet, Railway Carriage	50	-20	55
9	Tank, Diesel Locomotive	55	-23	60
10	Bomber, Hovercraft, Ferry (Whale)	60	-25	65
11	Jumbo Jet, Small Ship	65	-28	70
12+	Double Weight per size	+5 per size	-2.5 per size	+5 per size



### Actions after movement

If the character has not made their full movement then they can choose to attempt an easy action at the end of the move. An easy action is one which would not normally require a skill roll.

Actions which would normally require skill rolls, especially attacks rolls in combat, cannot be combined with movement.

Because the character has moved, the action will require a skill roll with a -1 modifier for each square the character has moved.

*For example, SCATTERSHOT moves forward a square and picks up the detonator dropped by the terrorist. This will require a Dexterity roll with a -1 modifier to succeed.*

*If she fails the roll, she can pick up the detonator - without needing to make a roll - in her next panel.*

### Combined Actions

Sometimes characters will make an action that combines two effects.

Where there is a combined action that takes a single panel, players make a single die roll and use that one result in each of the two calculations necessary to achieve the differing effects.

*For example, SKYBORN, an acrobatic martial artist, is leaping to kick a giant robot's sensors, which are set on its head. Her player would make one roll.*

*Adding her Agility modifier would determine if she reaches the head.*

*Adding her Dexterity modifier to the same roll would determine if the attack hit.*

### Falling/Moving Objects

Falling or moving objects (e.g. cars) do the usual 2dice/1die damage. As most objects are blunt, the 2 dice damage will usually be to Stun.

The damage modifier is equal to the Kill value of the object divided 10 for each square it has moved/fallen before making contact with its target up the maximum damage plus for that object.

This is split between Kill and Stun.

*If you want to know how fast vehicles move then, as rough guide, halve their speed in mile per hour to get the number of squares they move in a single panel. This won't be exact but it "feels" right.*

This is instead of damage from being thrown. If the object is being thrown, use the rules given previously.

*For example, a Thug drives directly at BULLDOG. The Thug rolls a successful attack total of 16. The car will use d3's to calculate damage.*

*BULLDOG attempts to dodge aside and fails. The car moved 8 squares before hitting him. A car has a Kill score of 35.  $3.5 \div 10$  is 3.5.  $3.5 \times 8 = 28$ .*

*BULLDOG takes  $2d3 + 14$  Stun and  $1d3 + 14$  Kill damage.*





## Charging

If the character has moved in excess of 5 squares prior to making an attack, that attack can be a charge.

There is no -5 "fist" modifier to Kill damage on a charge attack.

The character also gains a +1 damage modifier for each square they have moved prior to the attack taking place.

If the target is not knocked back by the charge, the character takes an amount of damage equal to half the damage done to their opponent.

*For example, FREEBOOTER charges an android and delivers a "clothesline" attack.*

*FREEBOOTER has a movement of 5 squares and has made 2 panels of movement, 10 squares, before delivering the attack. This gives him a damage bonus of +10. He also does not suffer the usual -5 penalty to his fist attack. His total roll for the attack is 19. This allows him to do d10 damage. He chooses to add the +10 on to Kill damage.*

*He does 1d10+10 Kill damage which is enough to decapitate the android. (He does bother rolling the Stun damage.)*

*As the attack destroyed the target, FREEBOOTER does not suffer any damage himself.*

## Ordinary humans/thugs

As noted above, ordinary humans use d6 to determine damage. If they have a minor success in attacking, the damage they do is based on halving the die rolls – normally called d3 damage.

In addition, though they have the same number of panels as the Characters, it takes them two uninterrupted panels to perform major action such as firing a gun. If they have a single panel they may only move, throw a fist or defer the panel to the next round to create enough time for an attack – assuming they are not interrupted.

They also have very low characteristics. We don't usually bother specifying them. They typically have moves of 3 squares per panel and skill modifiers which range from 0 to +5. Thugs with a Dexterity modifier of 0 are far more common than those with modifiers of +5.

The good news for Thugs, however, is that they are trained to use the pistols and other weapons they use and don't suffer the -10 penalty for using them.

They have no Kill or Stun scores. They are automatically stunned by any attack which does more Stun than Kill and rendered immediately unconscious if it has a damage bonus of any kind.

They are automatically injured by any attack which does more Kill than Stun and immediately hospitalised if it has any kind of bonus.



# Adventures

Now you should be ready to design and run your first game.

Squadron UK games have 3 main components:

- Combat
- Storylines
- Development

## Combat

Because this is such an important – and common – part of the game, it is explained in its own chapter (above).

Refereeing combat is quite involved but, if you follow the rules I've given, hopefully you'll find it relatively straightforward.

To prepare for Squadron UK combats you need:

- 1) Dice.
- 2) A playing surface.
- 3) Figures for the characters.
- 4) Vehicles and other props.

## Dice

Though much of what you need is available for cheap or inexpensive download from a variety of Internet sources, you are actually going to have to either order some dice or leave your house to go to your local games stores and buy some.

STORN



You will need several 6-sided dice (these can be raided from other games).

You will also need several ten-sided dice (to roll Critical hits and Misses and to generate percentage rolls for character generation) and at least one twenty-sided die for combat.

Of course, if you already play role-playing games you've probably already got these (and more).

## Playing Surface

At the top end of your choices there are 3D city-scape terrain sets you can purchase from specialist games stores or download for printing on your computer.

At the other end, you can get a large sheet of paper or card, draw a 1" pencil grid and go over it a basic streetplan in black ink. Basic but cheap and easy to make.

In the middle, there are options like:

- Boards or mats - marked with grids - on which terrain can be drawn and erased using special pens. Mats like this are available from specialist suppliers.
- Boards made from Artist's mounting Board or Hardboard, marked with the ubiquitous 1" pencil grid and then covered with clear sticky-backed plastic. You can use Overhead Projector Pens or Dry-Wipe Whiteboard pens to draw out terrain as you need it.
- Bespoke Maps created using specialist software or pre-designed maps downloaded from specialist web-sites. These are often mounted on "Foam Core" bases.
- Maps from published scenarios which can be printed or photocopied - possibly being enlarged and mounted - to use as a ready-made detailed playing surface

The choice depends upon your budget and personal preference.

## Figures

You need to know where all the characters are during a fight. This means you need a token of some kind. You CAN use counters but it's so much more fun to use figures. There are a wide range of metal and plastic figures available commercially.

You should try to obtain some of these for the players' Hero characters and - possibly - for the most important bad guys.

However, it can get expensive to use figures for every character, every thug and every civilian. It can be quite difficult to obtain suitable figures for "ordinary" people. Therefore, most gamers use cardboard figures to represent the majority of the minor characters in the game.

These can be bought from games shops, downloaded from e-shops or, even, created at home. With commercially available software it is now possible to create illustrations of game characters. These can then be reduced, printed on card and used to make cardboard figures of a suitable scale.



## Vehicles

It is possible to use toy cars and plastic models to represent the various vehicles/aircraft etc. in the game and this might prove necessary if you've invested in the expensive 3D terrain. However, not only do the cars have a tendency to roll around all over the place but collecting all the various helicopters you'll need can get expensive and there aren't many models around of high-tech hover platforms mounted with alien death-ray projectors.

Sooner or later it's likely you'll have to draw out some vehicle, weapon or other prop for yourself, so you might as well start by drawing out a couple of cars. You'll be surprised how easy it is to get effective results - and they're only there to be tossed around by the super-strong types anyway.

In addition there are now web-sites where you can download some extremely impressive images of vehicles perfect for use in your games - especially if printed off on a decent printer and mounted on the same foam core or card as the terrain maps.





### Planning Combat

Here's the good news. Once you've got your terrain, figures etc. planning a Squadron UK battle can be an absolute piece of cake. Think of a crime, pick some bad guys (or roll a couple if you haven't got any designed), put the figures on the table and have at it.

To be honest, most gaming groups do not play Squadron UK as their main game (they're off with the elves and dragons). However, Squadron UK makes an ideal change from those games. Apart from the fact that everyone starts at "high-level" - the fact that it is possible to just throw together an fight at the last minute when someone fails to turn up to a gaming session makes it an excellent game to keep to hand for emergencies.

The problem with this approach is that it won't normally fill a full gaming session. Squadron UK is best played as a campaign (see the Advanced Game later for advice on this). Even if you aren't running a full in-depth campaign, however, it's still best to link more than one battle together in a storyline.

If you haven't got time to plan a storyline, there are still two options:

- An experienced Referee can use this sort of one-off battle to "wing" an introduction to a new and, as yet, undesigned multi-part adventure. It is immense fun to make up the contents of the thugs' swag bags at the moment the Hero opens them and watch the players try and work out why the villains are stealing such obscure items. Sooner or later one of them is going to come up with some outrageous theory or other which gives you the next chapter in the adventure.
- One of the main strengths of Squadron UK as a game, if the Referee is short of ideas for a new scenario the game itself will give you some. Simply roll a couple of characters and the rationale of their powers - and the rationale behind the reason(s) they are working together -will tell you what sort of evil plots they are likely to set up.

This is the method we'll use to design the example adventure given in the next chapter.

### Storylines

Though one-off "thrown together" combats have an important role in playing Squadron UK, most Referees prefer to take some time to plan out more complex adventures.

The usual way to do this is to plan a series of events or plot elements - many of them battles between the good guys and bad guys - which make up a storyline for the players to follow.

These elements are often referred to as PLOT PANELS to differentiate them from the shorter, and more rigid, COMBAT PANELS using to control Superhero battles.

They can be arranged on some sort of flow-chart with the Heroes' actions determining the manner in which they proceed through the adventure.

#### *For example*

*SQUADRON: MANCHESTER encounter HEAVY METAL stealing a strange device from a research lab.*

*If they defeat him, they can question him. If he escapes, they will find clues which they can follow.*

*In either event they are ambushed by HEAVY METAL's team-mates. Whether they win or lose, they discover details of how the stolen technology is to be used and the name of the Mega-villain behind the plot. They must escape, track down the villain and foil his scheme.*

Ideas for Squadron UK adventures can come from anywhere. The plots of Hollywood blockbusters or TV thrillers can be used, and often become nearly unrecognisable once the names and places have been changed. News items can give ideas.

*How would the Heroes cope with a National Strike - especially if they discover an evil mastermind is behind it?*

Another source of ideas is to choose one small element of the game and focus on it. It's possible to create an adventure around one of the Heroes or, even, a specific Superpower one of them possesses but doesn't use very often. Maybe there is a particular Superpower you want to try out or there is a Derived Characteristic which doesn't seem to be changing much. (A Scenario giving the players options to change their Relationships or Scruples scores can be very interesting.)





There are also loads of pre-designed adventures around. Apart from those available for Squadron UK itself, there are adventures available written for other similar role-playing games which can be easily customised. All you have to do is re-design the protagonists under this game system.

This isn't the end though. Because of the nature of the source material upon which the game is based, it is not unusual to find Superpowered Crimefighters in a variety of settings. So all you have to do is have a Heroes meet a group of aliens and then they can head off across the Universe to take part in that Science Fiction scenario you downloaded from the Internet.

Alternatively, all you need is some Time-travelling Megavillain and the Heroes can be back in the dark ages adventuring with the Elves and Dragons. Obviously, you shouldn't over-use this idea, but it makes an interesting change of pace from time to time.

Once you've got your idea you need to:

- specify the details of all the characters the players will encounter. Usually you'll only need to write down the specific game details of Superpowered characters. Most ordinary – or unpowered – people just need a text description.
- prepare some maps of the areas where encounters are likely to occur.
- sketch out the main Plot Panels and how they are likely to relate to each other.

## Running Adventures

Because Squadron UK revolves around battles between Superpowered Crimefighters and evil criminals many of the rules in this book relate to this sort of activity.

There are fewer rules devoted towards handling activity in Plot Panels.

It is possible to run many of the Plot Panels without any game rules at all, simply through verbal interaction between the Referee and the Players. The players say what they are doing and the Referee states what happens as a result. This will usually be from notes they have made before the game or through their on-the-spot decisions about the likely outcomes of the players' actions.

*Leon (player): We drive to the address we found written on the envelope.*

*Simon (Referee): It's dark. The lampposts are alight and there is a light drizzle. The house you're looking for is in the middle of a row of terraces.*

*Leon: We park and go up to the door. We ring the door bell.*

*Simon: There's no response.*

*Daniel: Moonbeam teleports to the back door.*

*Leon: Polymer pushes his finger into the lock and shapechanges it into the shape of a key.*

*(This is an ability he has developed through the expenditure of Montage Panels.)*

*Simon: Polymer opens the door. The lights are on but there's no-one at home. Moonbeam sees the back door start to open.....*

*Daniel: I project the image of a rabid rottweiler waiting to pounce on the person that comes out.*





## Adventures

Sometimes, however, you'll need to use the rules on Character Skills to determine the outcome of events.

If a character is trying to force a door, use their Strength skill modifier. Whenever the character tries to use their Charisma to influence a situation ("Throw down your weapon and surrender!"), Esteem skills would be used. If they're searching, looking around or using any kind of Perception ("I look for tyre marks") use Sleuthing.

If there is no other suitable attribute or Luck is needed ("I cut the blue wire") then use Fate.

### **For example**

*Daniel specifies that Moonbeam is searching a flat. Moonbeam has a Sleuthing score of 10 so his Skill Modifier is +5.*

*He has no special skills at searching so his total modifier remains +5.*

*The Referee knows that the suspect has hidden her diary in a secret compartment.*

*It is Very Difficult for Moonbeam to find it.*

*+5 -15 = -10.*

*With a -10 modifier, Daniel cannot get total of 15 or more and would have to roll a critical success to even find a clue as to the diary's whereabouts.*

*However, if Daniel specifies that Moonbeam is pulling up the carpets, emptying every drawer and searching down the back of the settee, then it will not be difficult to find the diary. It won't be easy, however.*

*He will just roll d20 and add his raw +5 modifier.*

*He will find the diary on a roll of 13 or more. He will find the compartment on a roll of 10 or more.*

## The d6 table

Even though you've got your storyline mapped out, and the results of players die-rolls dictate how successful – or otherwise – the heroes are, events will still occur which have no clear resolution.

It's important that your players don't get the impression that you, as the Referee, aren't arbitrarily deciding the outcome of events.

My recommendation is that you roll a die to decide what happens.

This is a completely optional rule. It is an extension of the principle - used in character generation - that the game is more fun if you let fate have a hand in determining events.

I find the easiest way to do this is to generate a d6 table. Simply put, whenever a player states a course of action which has a number of possible outcomes you write five or six outcomes down on a piece of paper and roll a six-sided die to decide which one occurs.. (The sixth possibility is usually "something else" which would require a further roll on a new table with more extreme results.)

The simplest example of this is during a typical slugfest in a city street. When the Hero is "pushed back" through the window of a nearby shop you get the players to call out 5 possible shops and roll a d6 to see which shop has been wrecked.

Here are two further examples from my own games:

1) The Heroes had just foiled a villains' plot aboard a space station. As they abandoned the badly damaged satellite, it's fate was determined by a d6 roll. Did it keep orbiting the Earth, explode, drift into space, burn up in the atmosphere? As it turned out, its orbit decayed but it did NOT burn up.

Where did it land? Two thirds of the Earth is covered by Ocean. A d6 roll of 2, however, indicated it had come down on land.

5 continents were listed (and "other" to cover islands etc).

The station crashed down on Australia.

Whew! Most of Australia is desert (a roll of 1-4, 5 being cities, 6 being "other" - Ayres Rock etc).

Unfortunately a roll of 5 meant it landed on a city. A list of 6 Australian cities and a roll determined that the Space Station had crashed on Sydney Australia. Whoops!

If I as Referee had simply determined that the satellite had exploded or burnt up in the atmosphere, then there would be no consequences for the Heroes failing to secure its fate before abandoning it. On the other hand, if I had arbitrarily ruled that the Space Station had levelled part of Sydney I could've been accused of "punishing" the players.

Instead we got an interesting storyline to be followed up later - when the Australian Government sought extradition of the Heroes and sent agents to bring them in.



2) There is an alien Supergroup known as the Star Guard. Their leaders decided that there weren't enough Star Guards to patrol space so they decided to create more. Taking "templates" from the existing Guard's they grafted them onto an android body, known as the Star God.

When the Star God went mad and chased an alien spy to Earth, the Heroes became involved.

They tracked the Star God back to its base where - at great cost - they managed to temporarily defeat it.

At this point, as Referee, I had assumed the Heroes would use the Alien Technology to strip the Star God of its powers by removing the "templates". Instead, one of them had the bright idea to overlay one template - that of a fiery energy attacker - onto the Star God over and over and over again to "burn him out".

What happens? I created a d6 table. By negotiation with the players I put down a number of possibilities. The plan could succeed or fail. The equipment could survive, burn out or explode.

One possibility we put down was that the additional power made the Star God mega-powerful. Guess which option came up?

Yup.

The Star God became mega-powerful. He defeated the Heroes.

(In this first, unexpected, battle I didn't actually have any statistics for the Villain, I just let him use unlimited fiery energy attacks and shrug off almost all attacks.)

Then he went on to conquer the Earth.

(By this time I'd written out a character sheet for him, compatible with the abilities he'd shown in his first battle. He was an EXTREMELY powerful mega-villain.)

It took a lot of planning and hard work on the part of the Heroes to finally defeat him. (This involved hitting him with a comet and dropping him into a black hole.) Again, a plot-line I had not conceived virtually writing itself for me and my players to enjoy.

## Development

In between Combats and Storylines, the Heroes will have some down-time.

Some of this will be spent maintaining their secret identities. They will work in their day-time jobs and socialise with their friends and family.

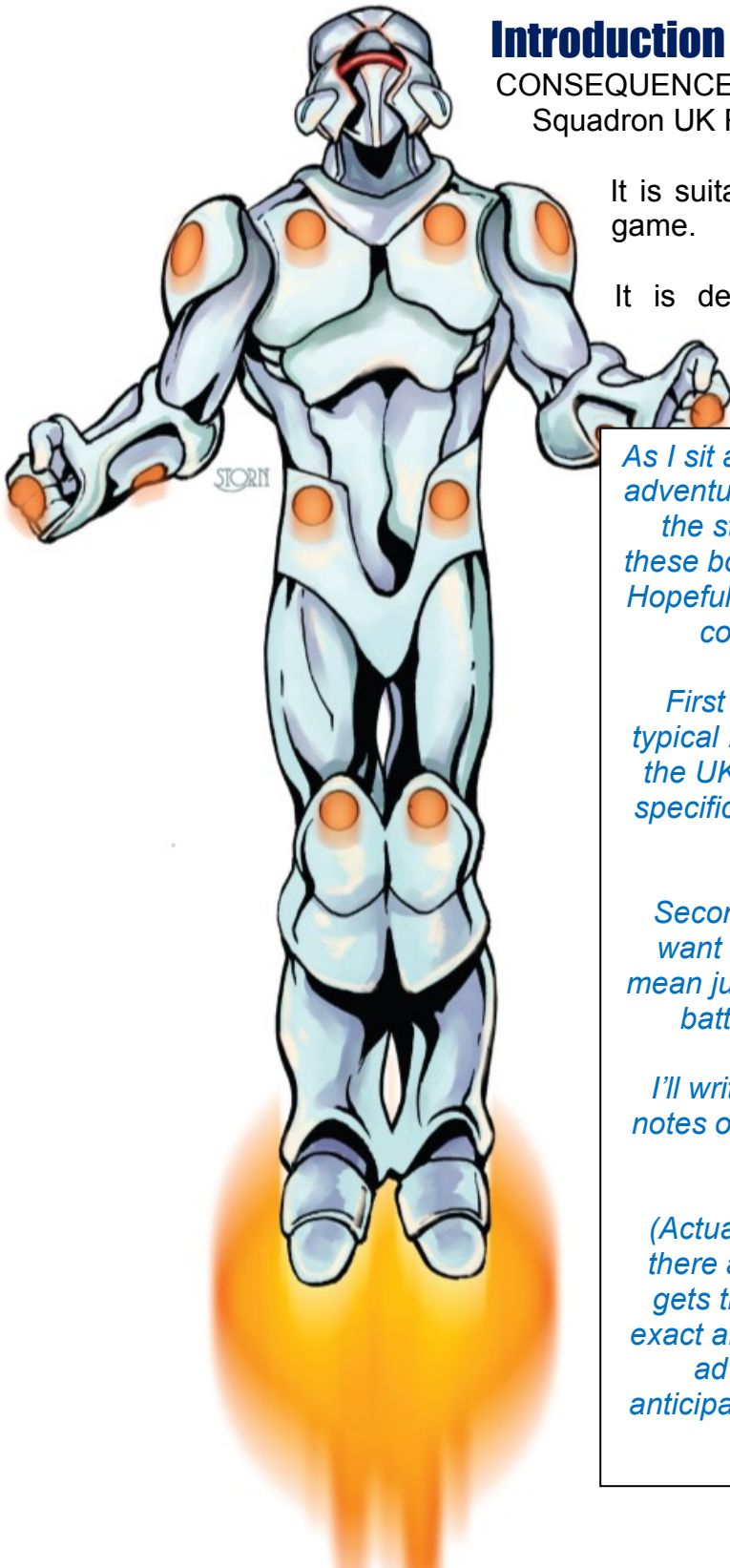
Some of their time, however, will be spent practicing their abilities, training or on some other activity related to their Superhero Identity and intended to improve themselves in some way.

This is handled through the use of MONTAGE PANELS which are explained in a couple of chapter's time.





# Consequences



## Introduction

CONSEQUENCES is an introductory Adventure for the Squadron UK Role-playing game.

It is suitable for Referees who are new to the game.

It is designed for a group of 3-5 Heroes created using the Basic Rules – that is having 8 power rolls each.

*As I sit and write this, I don't actually know what the adventure is going to be about, yet. As I go through the stages of writing the adventure, I'll include these boxes which explain what I'm doing and why. Hopefully you'll be able to use some of my ideas to come up with an adventure of your own.*

*First of all, I'm going to set the adventure in a typical 20<sup>th</sup> century first world city – Birmingham in the UK in my case. However, I won't refer to any specific locations so it can be easily transferred to another location – real or fictional.*

*Secondly, because it's for new Referees, I only want the most basic of storylines. That doesn't mean just a simple slug-fest, however. I'll have two battles linked by the most rudimentary plot.*

*I'll write the adventure for 4 Heroes and include notes on how it can be toughened up for 5 players or simplified for a smaller group.*

*(Actually, these notes are always useful, even if there are exactly 4 players in the group. No-one gets the balance perfect. Depending upon their exact abilities and actions the players may find the adventure easier or more difficult than I'd anticipated. It's always good to have some idea on how to adapt things during play.)*





*For 4 heroes, I need 4 challenges.*

*The first battle will feature 2 Supervillains. That's 2 challenges. They'll have some thugs with them. That's the third challenge. I'll decide what the fourth challenge is later.*

*To keep things simple for the new Referee, I want the second battle to feature one big challenge of some kind.*

*I don't have any wonderful ideas at the moment, so I intend to roll the 2 Supervillains first – using exactly the same rules, and character generation sheet, as the Heroes. I expect the storyline to evolve out of their backgrounds.*

Adrian has convinced the rich dilettante, St John Evers, to fund his work.

Amongst the devices Dr Adrian has created using the Evers' riches are suit of powered armour for St John Evers. For himself, however, he has kept his greatest creation. He has a suit made of micro-fine, super-strong metal, multi-use tiles. Combined with advanced holographic technology, this suit allows him to apparently grow in size and change shape apparently "transforming" into all manner of items.

Evers thinks that Adrian is working for him. He is wrong.

*"I'm too smart to fall for that trick!"*

## Cast List

First Adventure features two Supervillains:

### Heavyw8

St John Evers is heir to the Evers family fortune. He doesn't deserve this honour. He is a mean, venal and thoroughly spoiled young man whose dissolute energies are spent on wild extreme sports and tawdry tabloid-worthy affairs.



He has used part of his family's fortune to fund the work of Dr Aaron Adrian (see below). In return, Dr Adrian has made a suit of powered armour for St John which he intends to use to be a "Superhero". Both his motives and methods are extremely suspect.

*"Time to feel the heavy hand of justice!"*

### Antern8

Aaron Adrian is a renegade cybernetic scientist. He has been black-listed by both commercial organisations and the military for his wildly erratic and unprofessional approach.



*Both these characters were generated using the Basic Game Character Generation Sheet. (If you check their character sheets and the numbers don't seem to add up – I rolled Strength three times when creating Altern8!)*

*I'll admit I was a bit disappointed to roll two high-strength "brawler" types. Normally I prefer a bit more variety. However, it'll make the adventure easier to run for new Referees so I'm happy to leave them as they are in this case.*

*I chose to roll for Backgrounds. You may choose to omit this for villains or simply choose to allocate them a "criminal" background.*

*The backgrounds matched in that obviously the rich character was acting as the patron of the impoverished scientist – a comicbook staple. However, they raised the issue of why a rich person would need to commit a crime. The idea of a wild, rich, bored young heir came to me. I originally thought he could be committing crime for fun but then another thought came to me.....*

### Dominic Grey

A middle-aged "business-man" who has been in the news recently. The police allege that he is a local crime boss, active in the city for many years. They just haven't been able to "nail" him. Recently, he was implicated in the kidnapping and – apparent – murder of the young son of one of his rivals. Three witnesses identified Grey as being present at the murder and having given the relevant order. Grey was arrested and charged.





## Consequences

The trial collapsed when all three of the witnesses we tragically killed in a series of unfortunate accidents.

The entire country knows that Grey is guilty. St John Evers has decided that he deserves to be punished.

*"I'm just an honest, hard-working business man. So you call me 'Sir' "*

### Goons

Working on behalf of St John Evers, Aaron Adrian has hired a number of "minders" to ensure that no-one interferes with HEAVYW8 whilst he is at work.

Their job is supposed to be to protect members of the public, passing police officers etc. from coming to accidental harm but they may become a bit heavy-handed.

Using his funds Evers has outfitted them all with green jumpsuits marked with his trademark "8" logo. They carry truncheons/coshes but have not been issued with guns.

*"Nothing to see here - so just back off!"*

### Thugs

Dominic Grey has his own "minders". These are dressed as ordinary citizens but do carry guns – which they are willing to use in extreme circumstances. i.e. Whenever they think that can get away with it.

*"Yus, boss!"*

### Dereck "Angel" Hartnell

One of Grey's most trusted minders and a career criminal – Dereck Hartnell wasn't present when the child murder took place. In his mind his boss has crossed a line. You don't murder kids.

He doesn't know what to do about it. Obviously he doesn't want to go to prison and, anyway, look what happened to the guys who *did* rat on the boss.

If Dereck is rescued, his will be extremely grateful to the Heroes.

*"Why are you called 'Angel?'"*

*"Don't ask....."*

### The Long Arm of the Law

Depending upon how long they hang around, the Heroes will encounter anything from a lone Police Constable up to a whole squad of CID officers.

Though attitudes may vary, overall they officially disapprove of "vigilantes" but tend to be privately supportive of "good guys" like the Heroes. As a consequence they are particularly hard on "bad apples" like HEAVYW8.

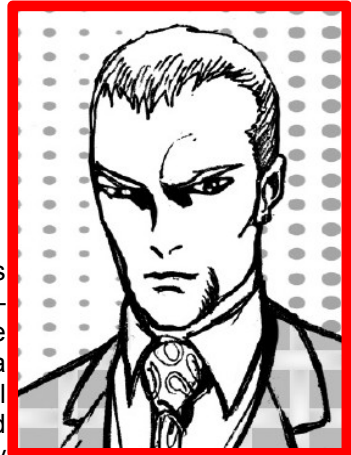
They loathe Dominic Grey but are aware of the need to treat him with kid gloves. They are excessively and sarcastically polite in their dealings with him.

*"Now do you think that's appropriate, sir?"*

### Clive Diamond

Clive is a venal and opportunist reporter for the local BBC television news. Though he is off duty today, when he encounters events he will:

- Press his personal smart-phone into the hands of a passerby and tell them to record as much as they can.
- Use his work smart-phone to summon a camera crew.
- Ask around for witnesses and anyone who has camera-phone footage.
- Try to interview the Heroes.



The Heroes would do well to handle him with extreme caution.

*"Whatever happens, I'm reporting what I saw. You just might want to take in interest in HOW I report it..."*

*So now we've got the protagonists for the first battle, we need a location and a set-up.*

*Oh, and don't forget we need a fourth challenge for our Heroes.*



## Chapter 1: The Hand of Justice

As this is the Heroes' first adventure it is possible to introduce them all as "just passing".

Have them roll dice. In order from highest roll to lowest, the players can choose from the following list:

- Whilst out on the street they have spotted the famous crime boss, Dominic Grey, being driven around in a limousine. They have decided to follow him. They witness his car being stopped by an armoured figure which has smashed a window, pulled Grey out, and hurled the car through a nearby shop-front. Green-suited figures have fanned out to circle the area. They may act in the first round but may need to change into costume.
- whilst out shopping in a local clothes store, they were disturbed by a car smashing through the shop window, scattering the customers. They may act in the first round but will need to change into costume. (A clothes store has changing rooms, right?)
- Whilst out in the town, they hear a loud crash and commotion from an adjacent street. They will appear and act in the second round but will need to change into costume.
- Keen to try out their new Super Identity, they are patrolling the streets/skies/rooftops. They will appear, in costume, and act in the second round.
- The player may invent an introduction of their own (subject to your approval).

The situation is shown on the map overleaf:

1. HEAVYW8 is holding the protesting figure of Dominic Grey aloft in the air. They are surrounded by a circle of green-suited figures
2. A large car has been thrown through the front of a clothes store. Trapped in the car are a number of large men wearing expensive tailored suits.
3. Four innocent looking cars are parked in a side road. One is a souped-up people carrier - the goons' getaway vehicle. Second is a much faster sports car for the villains themselves. The third is a wreck brought along as ammunition for

ALTERN8. The last is ALTERN8 himself, in disguise.

There are also a number of civilians/passersby present.

St John Evers will make the following speech:

*"Dominic Grey you have been tried in the people's court and found guilty of the murder of an innocent child. Now prepare to face the consequences of your actions!"*

At this point you should roll for initiative and start the combat.

## Tactics

HEAVYW8 is happy to tear Grey limb from limb in full view of the public. If the Heroes interfere he is more likely to throw him high into the air so that he will be killed by the fall. He will then proceed to render the Heroes unconscious. If he seems to be outclassed, he will try to incapacitate the heroes by – for example – smashing the floor at their feet and rush to his sports car to escape.

ALERN8 is happy to watch HEAVYW8 dispense "justice".

However, as soon as the Heroes appear he will transform into a large humanoid form and lob the second-hand car he's got at them. This will only do +35 damage instead of his full +39 due to the size of the car.

He will then move into battle lobbing the car and then seeking to pummel the Heroes into submission.

If he seems to be losing, he will shrink to normal size and dash around a corner, into a crowd of civilians or into a shop and use his hologram imager to transform into an ordinary person.

THE GOONS will try to use their truncheons to keep the Heroes away from their boss.

THE THUGS will draw their guns and shoot at any Heroes moving towards them, assuming that they are with the bad guys. When re-assured that this is not the case, they'll co-operate with their rescue.

If they get out in good time, they'll start shooting at HEAVYW8 and ALTERN8.

If he has the opportunity, "Angel" Hartnell may "accidentally" shoot his boss in the crossfire.





## Consequences

THE HEROES tactics will be coloured by their attitude towards Dominic Grey. They are completely aware of his story. It's been all over the papers after all.

## Events

CLIVE DIAMOND will emerge from a shop in Round 1, give someone his phone, makes a phone call and then go around checking who else is







filming the battle. At the end of the battle he will approach reach Hero is turn for an interview. His camera crew will arrive shortly afterwards.

CONSTABLE SMITH will arrive during round 2 and start to usher civilians to safety whilst calling for back-up. More Police will arrive 5 rounds later when they will start to arrest the Goons, Thugs, Villains and question the Heroes.

THE WRECKED CAR will explode at the end of round 5. The smell of petrol will warn anyone of this likelihood. This will do 10d kill and stun to anyone in the car, 5 to anyone in an adjacent square and 3d to anyone within two squares.

It will also cause the front of the shop to collapse. This will do a further 5d stun and 3d Kill to anyone caught and trap them underneath (unless they made an appropriate Dodge roll) under weight equivalent to a lorry.

Unless the debris is lifted from them they will suffer 1d Stun every panel they are trapped.

Trying to move the car or pull the trapped passengers out will precipitate the collapse immediately. (As soon as the Heroes try, bits of dust will fall warning them of this consequence.)

In order to rescue the Thugs, the Heroes will need to adopt appropriate tactics. Possibilities are:

- Pulling the car out in one swift tug. (This will require a *lot* of superstrength.)
- Someone holding the roof up whilst the thugs escape or are pulled out.
- Blasting away the shop front immediately above the car and then getting the thugs out in the split second before the rest of the roof comes down.

The players will probably come up with plans of their own.

As the Heroes are not a team, they cannot change the order in which they act. If they need to co-ordinate actions, they must each spend a panel immediately prior to the co-ordinated action planning with their colleagues.

*This is, of course, the fourth challenge I'm offering the Heroes.*

*I'd hope a couple of the Heroes will be holding the fort with ALTERN8 and HEAVYW8 whilst the rest work together to rescue the trapped thugs.*

*You can never predict what the players will actually do, however.*

## Adjusting the battle

If there are only three Heroes present, the car will not explode. The shop front will collapse crushing the car after 5 rounds but will not collapse before that time for any reason.

If there are five Heroes present then ALTERN8 will have equipped the Goons with gas bombs and tranquiliser pistols which each do 1d stun each panel to anyone suffering their effects.

You may also wish to reduce the amount of time until the Thugs' car explodes.

## Aftermath

The Police will wish to take statements from the Heroes. Clive Diamond will expect interviews.

Some passersby will ask for autographs and one wide-eyed child will ask where he can buy the Heroes' action figures from.

Any injured Heroes will receive medical care from the Ambulance Service. The Fire Brigade will arrive to secure the building and any further wrecked cars.

The Heroes may have a small opportunity to question the villains and/or Dominic Grey before the main bulk of the Police arrive. Dominic Grey will be extremely effusive in his gratitude and will publically write them a cheque for a huge sum of money. The money is probably from criminal sources and, in any event, the cheque cannot be cashed being written in the Hero's name. Grey is aware of this. He will then press a lesser amount of cash into the Hero's hand – ensuring that this is witnessed or, even, filmed for television.

"Angel" Hartnell is very grateful to the Heroes and will co-operate with them fully - provided this is not witnessed by Dominic Grey.

If St John Evers is caught and unmasked, he will try to turn events into a media circus – claiming that he had taken action on behalf of the people. He tries to portray himself as the Hero, the Heroes as extremely misguided or - even – criminal and claims his family will ensure he is released.

Aaron Adrian, however, has another card to play. If he is caught he will *not* allow his work to fall into the hands of others.



## Consequences



He warns that if he is not released immediately, then a small nuclear device will be detonated destroying his workshop, his inventions and a significant part of the city. Unless he visits the workshop to put in an appropriate code every few hours, the explosion is inevitable.

The Heroes (and the authorities) can now:

- Release Adrian.
- Release Adrian and try to follow him covertly.
- Call his bluff. (He isn't bluffing.)
- Keep Adrian in custody and try to sweat the location and codes out of him (this will fail).
- Speak to St John Evers. He is appalled by this turn of events – both morally and from a PR standpoint – and will happily reveal the location of Adrian's workshop. He knows nothing about a bomb or any codes, however.

Hopefully the Heroes and Authorities can now move to stop the bomb.

*I told you the plot was going to be rudimentary. This is the first adventure. We don't need anything too taxing for the Heroes brains at this point.*

## Derived characteristics

Before the Heroes rush off, however, now is the time to calculate their derived characteristics for the first time.

### Esteem

**Legality:** Zero if they committed a crime like killing Dominic Grey. 1 if they allowed a crime to be committed or attacked or avoided the Police. 2 if they co-operated with the Police. 3 if they work hand in hand with the Police to question the villains and foil Aaron Adrian's plot.

**Memorability:** This should be rated from the Hero's appearance as detailed in the rules. However, a character who should get a low memorability may ask for a +1 on this if the performed and particularly memorable actions.

**Heroism:** Zero for allowing Dominic Grey and/or the Thugs to die or for killing or maliciously injuring opponents. 1 if their actions were callous or thoughtless. 2 for saving civilians. 3 for saving criminals. 4 for putting the safety of others – especially criminals – before their own.

**Relationships:** Rate this from the table given in the rules.

**Success:** This is a level 2 crime.

### Sleuthing

These sub-characteristics can all be calculated from the Sleuthing table in the rules except for:

**Contacts:** This can get up 3 with good handling of "Angel" Hartnell and/or the Police.

**Accessibility:** This will probably be 1. However, if the arrange contact details with the Police it goes up to 2.

They can choose to give each other contact details. They can also use Clive Diamond to gain a 3 or 4. You shouldn't prompt the Heroes in this area, however.

### Fate

**Scruples:** Don't accept any arguments here. Anyone who killed or assisted in the demise of Dominic Grey gets zero. If they stood by and let it happen, they get a 1. To get a 3 they need to have cogently argued the case for his survival and the legal system. For a 4 they needed to put his life before their own.

All other characteristics can be calculated from the Fate Table given in the rules above.

*A mean and devious Referee might like to have one Hero's home and family at risk from the bomb so that they suffer a temporarily low Home Life score.*

*This depends upon your personal preferences.*

*Personally it's something I'd do partway through a campaign rather than in a first adventure.*



## Chapter 2: Bomb Guards

The Heroes (and Police) rush towards the location of St John Evers and Dr Aaron Adrian's secret workshop in the hope of stopping an imminent Nuclear Explosion.

*At this point we need another battle but I don't want to give a new Referee too many different things to keep track of.*

*It would be easy enough to roll 3 or 4 more villains at this point and say they've hired to guard the workshop – or are ransacking it for their own ends when the Heroes arrive.*

*Instead we'll take our cue from the fact that Aaron Adrian is a brilliant cyberneticist and simply go with robots.*

*Either one big robot or several small ones. I'll go with the several small ones option.*

*Oh, and to keep things simple, we'll use the same map as the first battle.*

If the Heroes have an appropriate Brilliant Scientist with them, then the authorities will defer to their superior knowledge and co-opt them to help defuse the bomb.

If the Heroes do not have a Scientist of their own, the Police will call upon the services of **Professor Martin Marland** from the local University.

Professor Marland is a genius but is also an ordinary person – a rather weak one at that. He will need careful guarding and shepherding. Any successful attack against him will render him unconscious.

Someone might have the brilliant notion of bringing Dr Aaron Adrian along to suffer the consequences of his actions. In the face of logic, his ego refuses to allow him to acquiesce and he will continue to refuse to help.

Anyone who suggests bringing him cannot have a Scruples score of higher than 1. Anyone who co-operates with this plan without verbally protesting cannot have a Scruples score of more than 2.

The authorities will arrive in force and surround the rather non-descript building in a residential area. (This marked with an X on the map.)

Whilst the local residents are evacuated, heavily armoured bomb disposal personnel will approach the building to secure it before sending for Professor Marland – or the appropriate Hero.



However, as they approach, a number of small jet-like shapes fly out of the front doors of the building and – using beams of energy – attack the approaching figures.

At this point the Heroes will probably interfere, if only to pull the fallen technicians to safety. If they don't do so on their own account, the senior Police officer present will officially ask for their support.

## Events

In the first instance, the Heroes should make sure that the bomb-disposal personnel are alright and make sure they are carried to safety. (They are unconscious – their armoured suits having protected them from the bulk of the blasts.)

The Heroes will then have to engage the flying drones themselves. The challenges here are that – as robots – they take no Stun damage. They're also flying and attack at long range. "Brick" type superheroes will be reduced to throwing things at them.

Actually, the best thing to throw at them is a drone which has been de-activated and fallen to the ground. Because they are made of the same metal, they get no protection from a broken drone which is thrown at them.

Ideally, the Heroes should merely seek to distract the drones and try to get the Brilliant Scientist into the building.

Once they have done this, they need to block the main doors to stop any of the drones from re-entering the building to harry the characters within.

If the Heroes choose to wait until all the drones are destroyed before trying to get anyone into the building they will have less time to de-activate the bomb inside.





## Consequences

From the moment the Heroes engage the drones, there are 20 panels remaining until the bomb explodes. Every time the villains (drones) act, remove this many panels from that total.

When characters enter the building, it will take a successful Search roll to find the control panel for the bomb. At this point they will see how many panels are remaining.







Deactivating the bomb without entering the correct command code is virtually Impossible (-15 to skill rolls). (Of course, a Brilliant Scientist gets +15 to skill rolls – Professor Marland included).

A natural roll of 1 will accelerate the countdown, halving the number of remaining panels.

*This is better than having a critical failure set the bomb off. We can't have a 5% chance of the Heroes being wiped out now, can we?*

The players may come up with a number of other suggestions (hacking the computer to find Adrian's codes, for example).

As Referee you should determine an appropriate chance of these succeeding.

*There is an old rule that the first wild plan fails but the second wild plan should be allowed to succeed. Employ this if all else fails but make the players roll dice just so they don't know you're doing it.*

As time runs out, the chance of success can be improved.

If the scientist has appropriate technical help, the chance of defusing the bomb will fall to extremely difficult (-10) or (if you're generous) difficult (-5). Similarly, the effective use of Superpowers will increase the chance of success.

During the last few panels, non-essential characters should flee. If they hide in the authorities' lead-lined vehicles outside they might survive the blast.

If time runs out, the Heroes will hopefully have a last-ditch attempt to stop the explosion, probably through just destroying the bomb.

Have them make a Fate roll.

If this fails then you can still offer them a d6 table made up of consequences the players suggest. At least half of them must involve the bomb going off, however.

If the bomb does go off it will do 20 dice Kill and Stun to everyone within half a mile with the damage halving for each half mile thereafter up to 2 miles out from the blast.

People in lead-lined vans outside will take 10 dice Kill and Stun.

Hopefully it won't come to that.

By the way, it is possible to use the controls in the building to de-activate the drones outside, but the Heroes will probably be too busy to do that.

## Adjusting the battle

In this battle, simply increase or decrease the number of Drones to match the Heroes.

If they're finding things too easy just throw in a few more drones.

Ideally all the drones should come out of the building when it is approached. If you need to you can have a couple left inside.

*Or have a new one appear every 5 rounds as they are manufactured.*

*Or have a double kill point "Master Drone" appear out of the computer console next to the nuclear device.*

*Or have destroyed drones regenerate. Or explode.*



## Aftermath

The Police will thank the Heroes. Unfortunately, because there wasn't enough time to warn or evacuate the city, they'd rather this event was kept out of the news. So the Heroes won't be getting the medals they deserve. However, they'll have the authorities' gratitude and – provided they don't things – should be allowed to operate freely in the city from now on.

Dr Adrian's research and gadgets will be impounded. The Heroes won't be able to get their hands on them for their own purposes.



## Consequences

### Derived characteristics

These should be given again. They should show a slight improvement from those given after Chapter 1.

I'm hoping you'll be able to rate them yourself by this stage without needing a point by point breakdown.

### Loose Ends

The following consequences could ensue from the events in this Scenario. It is up to you which ones occur and how you choose to pursue them.

- 1) St John Evers escapes justice and seeks revenge.
- 2) St John Evers escapes justice and seeks to join the Heroes' team, promising to fund it.
- 3) St John Evers disappears.
- 4) St John Evers dies in mysterious circumstances.

5) Sir Arnold Evers – St John's father – offers to fund the Heroes' team in gratitude for them saving his son from the consequences of his actions.

6) A dangerous gadget is stolen from Dr Adrian's workshop.

7) One or more Heroes begins to suffer the effects of radiation poisoning.

8) The Heroes are given the "protection" of Dominic Grey. Their enemies start to die in mysterious circumstances.

9) The Government approach the Heroes to set up an official, but covert, team.

10) Clive Diamond releases secret footage revealing how close the city came to nuclear annihilation.

*Or you could just roll a bunch of new villains. Roll the same number of villains as there are Heroes. Then roll one based on 15 powers as their boss and see where your imagination takes you.....*





## Protagonists

### Drones

Here are the game statistics of the participants in this adventure.

Name: <b>Heavyw8</b>				Alias: <b>St John Evers</b>			
St	En	Dx	Ag	Ps	Es	Sl	Fa
(14) 28	(15) 23	15	12	9	n/a	n/a	n/a
(+7) +14	(+8) +12	+8	+6	+4	-	-	-
Common Skills		Lvl	Trained Skills		Lvl	Move	
Etiquette		+13	High Society		+5	6	
Gambling		+9	Hist. (Roman)		+2	Kn.Bk.	
Literacy		+9	Lang. (Latin)		+2	(29) 42/61	
Riding		+11	Axe-Smith		+5	Dm.Md.	
Scrounging		+13	Axe-Skill		+8	(+2) +16	
Kill: (52) 80				Stun: (52) 80			
Attack		Kill	Stn	Mod		Notes	
Axe		2d	1d	+16		Strike at +2, +2d damage	
Fist		1d-5	2d	+16			
Superpowers, Background, Abilities							
Weapon 2 (Axe, Indestructible, Parrying at +5 +1d)							
Endurance (+5 to Knockback)							
Protection 2 (-6 to all Agility Rolls. Divides stun damage by 3 and Kill damage by 4. Immune to bullets/knives, Quick Change)							
Strength 2 (-5 to Opponents Knockback, +5 to own).							
Rich - Inherited							
Background Story							
Minor son of a rich family. Squanders his family's wealth on mad schemes, extreme sports etc.							
Has hired a scientist to build him a suit of armour and cybernetic axe so that he can become a "Superhero".							

Name: <b>Altern8</b>				Alias: <b>Dr Aaron Adrian</b>			
St	En	Dx	Ag	Ps	Es	Sl	Fa
(14) 51	(9) 20	12	14	11	-	-	-
(+7) +26	(+5) +10	+6	+7	+6	-	-	-
Common Skills		Lvl	Trained Skills		Lvl	Move	
Climbing		(+12) +31	Computer Programming		+4	10	
Computer Use		+11	Cryptography		+3	Kn.Bk.	
First aid		+11	Driving		+3	(23) 71	
Impress		+5	Speak Russian		+3	Dm.Md.	
Scrounging		+5	Mimickry		+3	(+2) +39	
Kill:		(31) 70		Stun:		(32) 71	
Attack		Kill	Stn	Mod		Notes	
Fist		1d-5	2d	+39			
Superpowers, Background, Abilities							
Strength 3 (Always braced, +10 on lifting/throwing rolls)							
Change Form 2 (Non-humanoid, change while moving)							
Growth 2 (Intermediate form, costume changes with him)							
Brilliant Physicist							
Background Story							
Brilliant but rogue physicist who has built a giant suit which can pack away to ordinary human size. Hologram projectors in the suit can make it appear as objects such as cars, lorries etc. Divides Kill damage by 2.							

- The drones each have a KILL score of 10. They have no STUN score.
- They divide all Kill damage they take by 2.
- They move at 5 squares per panel.
- They each have an ENERGY BLAST. This has a range of 10 squares and strikes with a +5 on the Skill Roll.
- Each attack will against one specific target. It will do 1d to Kill and 2d to Stun (d10/d6).
- Anyone touching the drone will immediately take 2d Stun damage.

There will normally be 2 Drones per Hero.

## Supporting Cast

All the other protagonists are ordinary people.

That is:

- They move 3 squares a panel
- They take two panels to perform a major action
- They are knocked out or injured by any attack which has a damage bonus and stunned by all other attacks.



# Life of a Hero

Cue the music! It's time for a training Montage!

Over the years, Superheroes change. When they're born they might just be able to leap tall buildings. Later on, they learn how to fly!

In the same way the Heroes of Squadron UK will improve as time goes on. There are four ways that a Hero can improve in this game:

## Derived Characteristics

By now you should be familiar with these. They allow the players' actions within the game to affect the lives of their Heroes. Heroes who search for clues are going to better at solving crimes etc.

## In game events

Things will happen in the game which make the Heroes more successful.

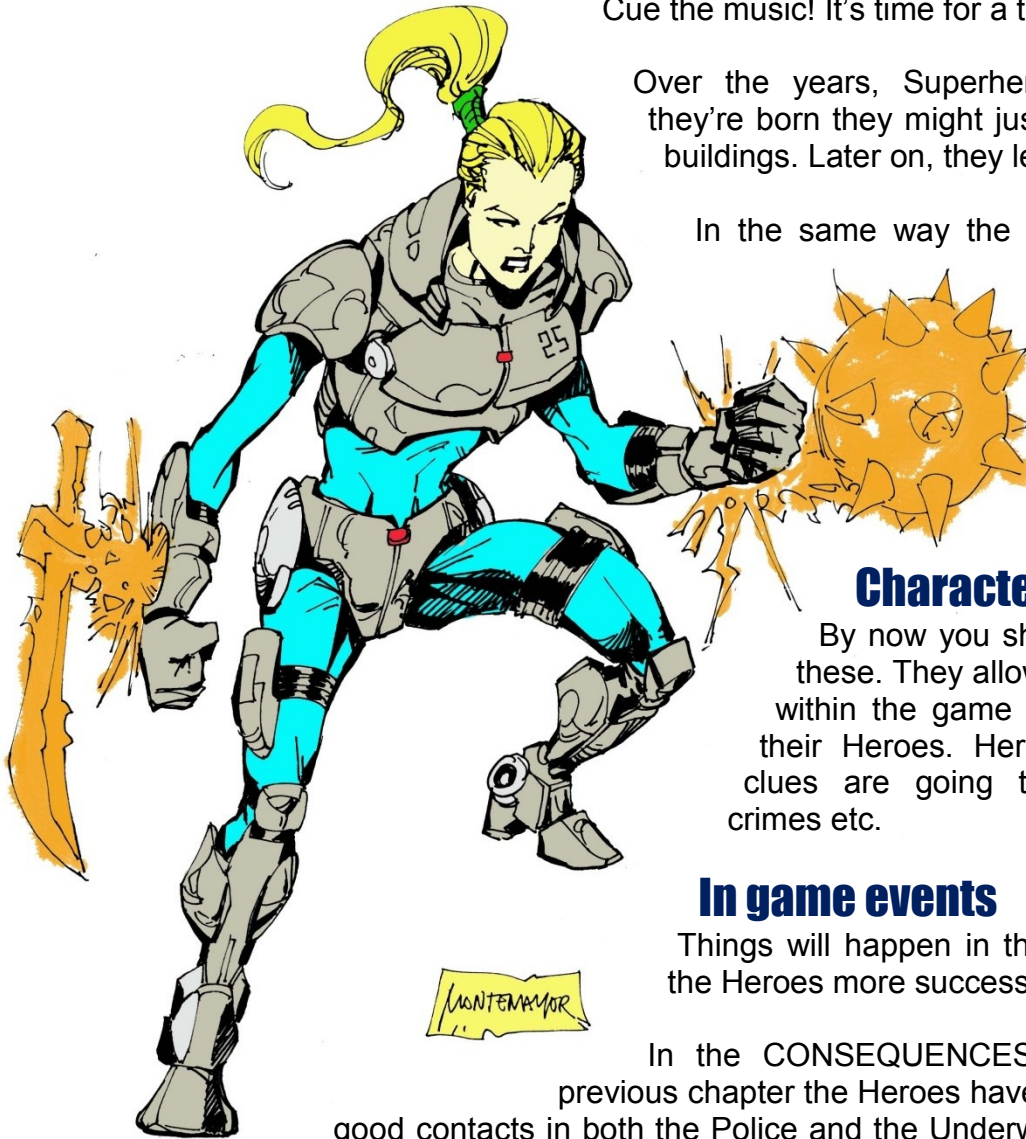
In the CONSEQUENCES scenario from the previous chapter the Heroes have the chance to make good contacts in both the Police and the Underworld. These will help them in their battle against crime.

## Referee largesse

The Referee will occasionally decide to give some or all of the players an in-game reward or development.

For example, exposure to cosmic radiation during a space-based adventure enhances the characters' powers or allows them to develop new ones.

This is obviously a rare event and the Referee would need to have some good reason for doing this. (See the Example Campaign - Squadron: Birmingham for a further example of how this can be used.)







## Training

This is what this chapter is all about. Almost all Superheroes are seen to do some training. But, because such training is not always the most interesting thing to read about or watch, the training is glossed over in a few panels of a comicbook or – on film – in a training Montage.

Training in Squadron UK is done through the use of MONTAGE PANELS.

Each game session you tell your players how many Montage panels their Hero has spare in their comic this issue.

The players then tell you what their Heroes are seen doing in those panels.

Depending upon how they use the panels, sooner or later their abilities will improve.

Montage Panels can be spent on three things:

- Improving Skills
- Improving Characteristics
- Improving Superpowers

*As Referee you should keep as much of these rules as possible to yourself. They are fairly simple but if the players become aware of exactly how they work, some may be tempted to “mini-max” their character’s training to gain an unfair advantage.*

## Awarding Montage Panels

You can either award Montage Panels every session or at an appropriate break-point in the Heroes’ lives.

### Example

*Simon is running the CONSEQUENCES Scenario. Because the players spent part of the game session making their Heroes, they don’t finish the whole adventure. Simon finishes the game session at the end of Chapter 1.*

*He doesn’t award any Montage Panels at this point as the characters wouldn’t have any free time between stopping the villains and disarming the Nuclear bomb in Chapter 2. Instead he choose to put the panels “in the bank” and give them out at the end of Chapter 2. The Heroes can then do some training before starting the next adventure.*

How many Montage Panels you give depends upon how often you play the game and how fast you and your players want the Heroes to improve.

It’s normal to give 2 Montage Panels per game session. So start to award them at this rate. If the characters start to improve too quickly, reduce the rate to 1 Panel per session. If they are taking too long to improve, increase it to 3 panels per session.



## Improving Skills

In order to improve the level of a skill, player has to explain to you exactly how their character is training. If they can’t outline an effective training regime then it will take twice as long to develop the new level of skill. You should tell the player if you think the development method they’ve outlined won’t yield results quickly.

*Because the SEARCHING skill is so useful, for example, lots of players want to improve it. However, it’s not that easy to explain how you’d improve this ability.*

### Common Skills

In order to improve a common skill by one level, the character has to train for a number of Montage Panels equal to the current level of the Skill.

The level of the skill is the relevant skill modifier plus any modifier possessed but ignores the effects of Superpowers.



## Life of a Hero

### Example

*DARK CHAMELEON has a Stealth Skill level of +16. However 6 of this is due to the suit he wears. His ability without the suit is +10. (5 of this is from his Agility of 10 and 5 from the initial +5 he gained from being specialised in it.)*

*His Stealth "raw" skill modifier will go up to +11 when he has spent 10 Montage Panels training. (He will then have a +17 modifier when wearing his suit.)*

Characters can choose to train up any Common Skill even if they are not currently specialised in it. Again this requires an appropriate method of training.

### Example

*DARK CHAMELEON has a Business skill of +5 – based entirely on his Psyche score of 10. He has no special ability in business. If he can find someone to mentor him, he could boost his score to +6 in Business in just 5 Montage Panels.*

### Trained Skills

In order to improve a trained skill by one level, the character has to train for a number of Montage Panels equal to TWICE the current level of the Skill.

The level of the skill is the current modifier possessed, ignoring the effects of Superpowers.

### Example

*DARK CHAMELEON has a Driving Skill Modifier of +3. If he spends some time focussing practising – rather than merely day-to-day driving – he can boost this to +4 in (2 x 3 =) 6 Montage Panels.*

Characters *cannot* develop Trained Skills they do not already possess (see the Advanced Game if you want to do this).

## Improving Characteristics

In order to improve an innate characteristic (Strength, Endurance, Dexterity, Agility or Psyche), a character must have professional support from an expert in the field.

If they can afford this, or acquire it in other ways, they must commit to a dedicated training regime. That is at least one Montage Panel of each group awarded must be dedicated towards maintaining this particular training.

If they pass these two requirements then their characteristic will increase by one when they have trained for a number of Montage Panels equal to TWICE the current level of the characteristic. This generally ignores the effects of Superpowers.

### Example

*DARK CHAMELEON has an Agility score of 10. In action, this is affected by the Acrobatics and Protection afforded by his suit.*

*If he trains under the supervision of an expert gymnast for 20 Montage Panels as part of an unbroken training regime, his basic Agility score will go up to 11. This will put his Skill Modifier up to +6 – affecting all the skills based on that modifier and his dodging ability.*

*To put his agility up to 12 he would have to train for another 24 montage panels and this wouldn't raise his skill modifier. He'd have to train for another 26 panels to do that. So to put his skill modifier up from +6 to +7 would take a total of 50 Montage Panels.*





## Improving Superpowers

This is totally at the behest of you and your players. In general it is not possible to say "I am going to put my CLOAKING ability up from Level 1 to Level 2" and just spend Montage Panels to do it.

A player must specify *exactly* how their character is training to improve their power and this will depend upon the exact superpowers they possess and the background story they've come up with to explain them. What works for one character will not work for another.

### Example

*BLITZKRIEG and SHOCKER both have an electrical Energy Blast. BLITZKRIEG's blast comes from a cannon he carries. SHOCKER generates the blast himself – following a freak accident involving a blast a lightning and some chemicals. If each wishes to increase the size of their Energy Blast dice pool, they will have to use totally different methods and – to be honest it's going to be a lot easier for BLITZKRIEG than SHOCKER.*

It is also a lot more interesting if characters start to develop unique abilities based upon the exact combination of powers they possess.

### Example

*SHOCKER also possesses an electrical force field. If he wanted to develop the ability to give electric shocks to anyone who comes into contact with the field that would be a much more reasonable, and interesting development.*

If a proposed development is for colour/character development only and has no real use in combat, it only takes 5 Montage Panels.

### Example

*DARK CHAMELEON wants to turn invisible by fading from his feet upwards so that his face fades away last.*

If a development only has minor applications which are mainly defensive, it takes 10 Montage panels to develop.

If the development has some minor offensive uses it takes 15 Montage Panels to develop.

If it significantly improves the characters abilities, it takes 20 Montage panels to develop.

### Example

*DARK CHAMELEON wants to become visible just as he punches, catching his opponent off-guard. They will not be able to respond to the attack and will suffer a further -5 to their Pushback Threshold.*

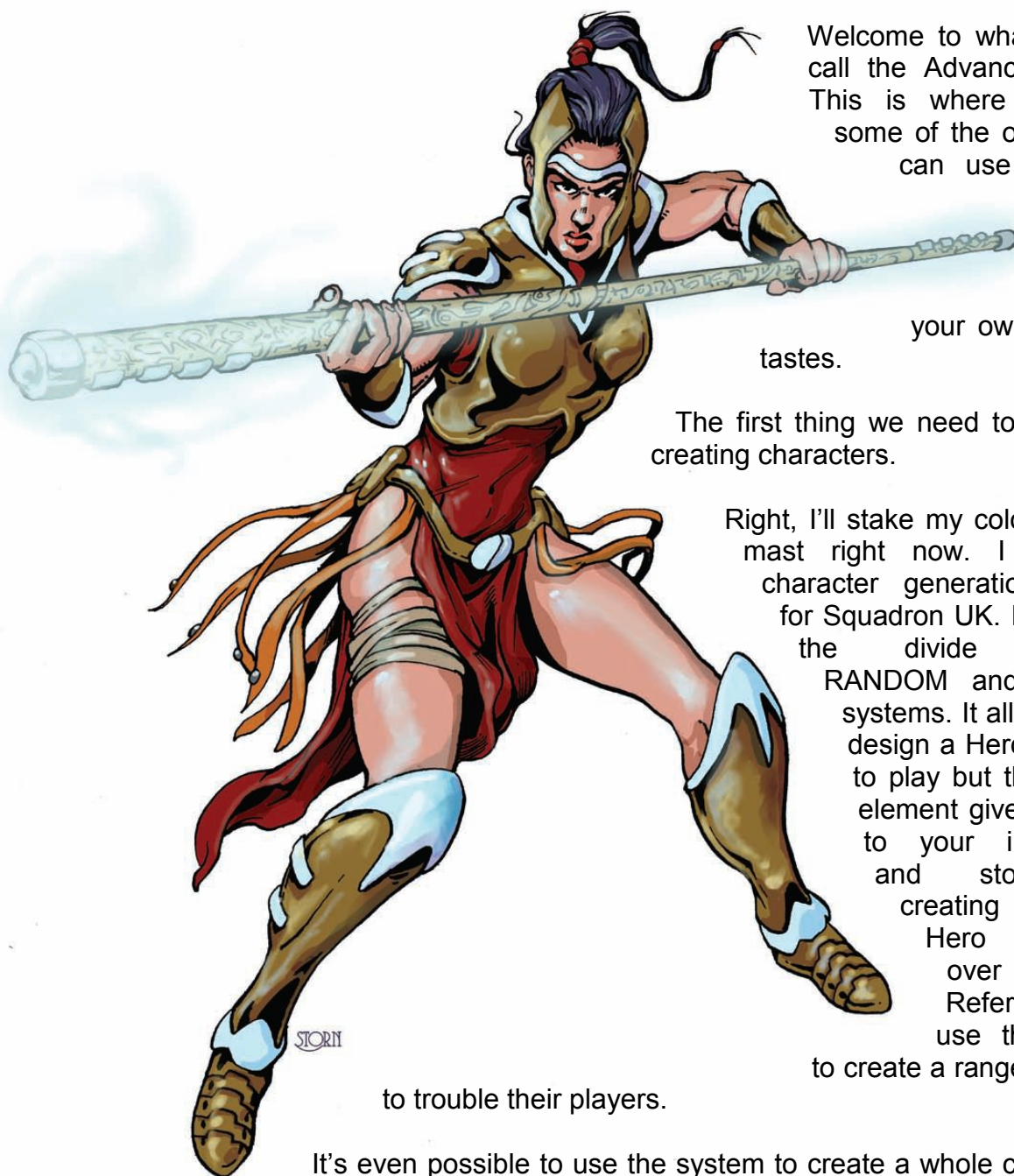
If it would seem to double a character's effectiveness then it takes 25 (or more) Montage Panels to develop.

In all cases, it takes TWICE the amount of Montage Panels to develop the ability if the player is unable to specify a clear and feasible method of training.





# Advanced Character Generation



Welcome to what I like to call the Advanced Game. This is where I explain some of the options you can use to tweak the game rules to suit your own personal tastes.

The first thing we need to look at is creating characters.

Right, I'll stake my colours to the mast right now. I love the character generation system for Squadron UK. It straddles the divide between RANDOM and DESIGN systems. It allows you to design a Hero you want to play but the random element gives a nudge to your imagination and stops you creating the same Hero over and over again. Referees can use the system to create a range of villains

to trouble their players.

It's even possible to use the system to create a whole campaign – just create 20 villains and then work out what sort of plots they'd be involved in and how they interact.

I'm not interested in totally random character generation. This too often gives characters with unfeasible combinations of powers which players don't want to run.

In addition, the player doesn't feel "ownership" of the character having done little except roll the dice to create them.





In the same way I don't like game systems which allow players total control of the design of their characters. I don't want to insult anyone but we don't all have the imagination to come up with a brand new Superhero. Then there's the guys who spend hours poring over the rulebooks trying to squeeze every little advantage out of the system. Not to mention the players who – when their favourite character is killed or sidelined – simply create a clone.

So, for me, the perfect system for making Heroes should have a random element tempered by the player selection and design.

However, I will accept that exactly how much emphasis is placed on each element is a matter of personal taste. In particular, the basic character generation system given in the second chapter is designed to get players into the game as quickly as possible. It tends to “push” players in a certain direction.

So in this chapter, I'll give you as many different methods of adapting the character generation system as I can think of and let you choose the method(s) you prefer.

A character is made up of:

- Superpowers
- A Background
- Characteristics
- Skills

Skills cannot normally be determined until after the characteristics have been determined. As a balancing factor in the game, characters with high characteristics have a low number of skill points and vice versa.

The other three can be sorted out in any order. However, I'll look at them in the order they were tackled in the basic game and start with Superpowers.

This doesn't mean that you have to start character generation with the Superpowers. If you want to make your characters determine their characteristics first, that's fine.

## Single Superpower Table

One of the biggest complaints people level at the basic game is the fact that powers are rolled on a single table.

You may choose an alternative to the single-table system of making Heroes, and some of these are given below.

However, even if you stick to a single Superpower table there are still several ways you can adjust the character generation system.

### When to stop rolling

The basic game recommends players roll four powers before stopping to roll for a Background and/or make powers higher level.

Players can, and should, be allowed to stop rolling powers at any time they wish. If they stop after a couple of rolls, they've got a lot more opportunity to put powers up to higher levels.

### For example

*A player with 8 power rolls rolls ENERGY BLAST and PROTECTION. He stops rolling. Assuming he doesn't have a background, he has 6 power rolls left. He can use this to put both powers up to level 3. Extremely useful.*

Similarly, if a player has rolled four powers and doesn't have an effective attack yet, they may choose to keep rolling in the hope of getting one.

Personally I don't think players should ever be allowed to use all their allocated power rolls. This takes the game back to a totally random system with all the problems that entails.



## Advanced Character Generation

### Change the number of power rolls

The basic game recommends players are given 8 power rolls to create their Heroes.

Of course you can change the number of rolls you give the players, depending upon the sort of game you want to have.

Whatever power rolls you give, you should give the same number to every player.

Most Referees give from 6 to 10 power rolls. This gives games which vary from “street” level up to “Earth’s Mightiest Heroes”. However, you can go higher or lower when you’re familiar with the game.

In theory, it’s even possible to play the game with no Superpowers at all! See the “Origins” campaign suggestion later in the book.

Obviously I recommend that you start playing the game at the 8 power level. However, when the time comes to start a new campaign and generate new Heroes for everyone you should use your experience to adjust the power rolls allocation up or down from 8 to suit your own style of play.



### Selecting Superpowers

If you want, you can give your players free choice of any powers from the table. The trouble is, they’ll all take Flight, Protection, Strength and – possibly – Energy Blast. So this probably isn’t a good idea.

However, an element of choice can be useful. Some possibilities are:

- Allowing the player to choose one or two Superpowers and then roll for at least one more.
- Let the player roll a power and then choose a power. They can choose as many powers as they want as long as they’ve rolled a random power before each one. Obviously they should not be allowed to choose a power they’ve already got. They should increase the level of any powers using the usual methods.
- If a player has used more than half of their power rolls and have failed to roll a necessary category (normally this means an attack or a defence) they can be allowed to choose a power to fill that gap. (Or be allowed to roll on one of the special tables given later in this chapter.)
- After all power rolls are used, every player gets to choose one additional power at half-level to round out their character.

### Customise the table

If you don’t like the range of Heroes the extant table creates, there’s nothing to stop you producing a table of your own. This might be the suit a particular idea you’ve got for a campaign. Just make sure that if it’s going to be the one single master table, like the one in these rules, that it’s got as wide a range of powers on it as possible.

If you want to skew the game towards certain powers, you may wish to give players the option of selecting the power rather than giving it a large percentage on the table. Doing that can skew the table, effectively ruling out many powers, and still leaves the possibility of none of your players rolling the particular power you want.

### Example

*Simon a setting up a campaign set in the Orient. He leave Martial Arts on the table at its usual percentage but gives his players the option of selecting Martial Arts as a power – at the cost of one power roll - before they start rolling for their other powers.*



## Dedicated Superpower Tables

One of the criticisms which is often levelled at the game is that randomly rolling powers can give combinations which are hard to rationalise.

I've been using a single table for years and I must have rolled scores of characters. I've never yet rolled one which I've been unable to rationalise. All it takes is a bit of imagination. Actually it's the ones whose background stories need a bit more thought that end up being the most interesting.

However, I'll accept that, in theory, a single table could theoretically yield an anomalous result. We can reduce this chance by creating different Superpower tables, each dedicated to a specific purpose.

*Because "specialised" tables have fewer powers on them, the chance of rolling each power will be greater.*

*This gives an increased chance of rolling the same power more than once. This gives more high level powers. So you should reduce the number of power rolls you give when using these tables.*

## Archetypes

When academics write about the phenomenon of Superhero comics, they often divide the Heroes into specific types.

For example, many people draw a clear distinction between *Costumed Crimefighters* and actual *Superheroes*. The first of these are "normal" people who wear costumes to fight crime and have abilities such as Martial Arts and Scientific Knowledge. They have no paranormal abilities. To be a Superhero you apparently have to have at least one strange or unusual power.

Some players come to the game wanting to play a particular Archetype. Alternatively, some Referees wish to control games which have a range of Archetypes or which have a limited number.

### Example

*It isn't hard to imagine a world where all the Heroes are costumed Crimefighters except for one single Superhero. Now where did I get that idea from?*

On the following pages are a number of specific tables each designed to produce a particular Archetype.

They still require random rolling, with all the effects that entails. If player chooses to roll a costumed crimefighter, for example, they will have a better chance of rolling Martial Arts than on the standard Superpower table. They aren't *guaranteed* to roll it, however.

Some of the tables include non-standard powers, or put limits on the existing powers. I've kept the details of these in this chapter.

### Accident/Experimentation/Mutation

Cosmic radiation, Gamma rays, an Alien Virus, being blasted across the room by a bolt of lightning into a pile of chemicals – all of these events, and more, can give strange side effects. Some people are just born this way.

His table is a good one to use half-way through a campaign if you want to beef up to Heroes. Just put them in space and have them pass through a strange belt of radiation, or catch them in the fallout of a nuclear blast. They can then have a free roll (or two) on this table.

Acrobatics	1		
Change form	2		
Cloaking	3	-	8
Energy Blast	9	-	18
Endurance	19	-	21
Enhancement	24	-	28
Fast recovery	29	-	30
Flight	31	-	40
Follower	41		42
Force field	43	-	48
Growth	49	-	50
Image generation	51	-	55
Impossible events	56		
Increased move	57	-	60
Information	61	-	64
Marksmanship	65		
Martial Arts	66	-	69
Mind control	70	-	71
Mutation	72		
Regeneration	73		
State change	74		
Strength	75	-	84
Supersense	85	-	88
Survival	89	-	92
Weapon	93	-	95
Choose	96	-	100



## Advanced Character Generation

### Armour

This table is used if the character has a suit of Armour which gives them their abilities.

Before rolling on this table, the character should be given level 1 Protection which uses one of their Power Rolls. They cannot take the gimmick "innate".

Alternatively, you can let any player who rolls Protection - as part of any other character generation process - switch to this table, provided they forsake having Innate protection.

Acrobatics	1		
Change form	2		
Cloaking	3	-	8
Energy Blast	9	-	18
Endurance	19	-	21
Enhancement	22	-	28
Fast recovery	29		
Flight	30	-	39
Follower	40	-	41
Force field	42	-	47
Growth	48	-	49
Image generation	50	-	54
Impossible events	55		
Increased move	56	-	59
Information	60	-	63
Marksmanship	64	-	65
Martial Arts	66	-	69
Mind control	70	-	71
Mutation	72		
Regeneration	73		
State change	74		
Strength	75	-	84
Supersense	85	-	88
Survival	89	-	92
Weapon	93	-	95
Choose	96	-	100



### Blaster

These are the characters who stay out of combat, using their abilities at long range.

This table won't promise to produce someone with and Energy Blast but it has a pretty high chance. You may wish to give the character Energy Blast level 1 before rolling on this table. Alternatively, if they've only got a roll or two left and haven't rolled a viable character or one with an Energy Blast, you may wish to assume they've rolled it at that point.

Acrobatics	1	-	5
Change form	6	-	8
Cloaking	9	-	12
Endurance	13	-	14
Energy Blast	15	-	24
Energy Sense	25	-	28
Enhancement*	29	-	36
Fast recovery	37	-	39
Flight	40	-	49
Follower	50	-	51
Force field	52	-	59
Growth	60		
Image generation	61	-	63
Impossible events	64	-	65
Increased move	66	-	69
Information	70		
Magic	71		
Marksmanship	72	-	76
Martial Arts	77		
Mind control	78		
Mutation	79		
Protection	80	-	81
Psychic	82		
Regeneration	83	-	84
Shrink	85	-	86
State change	87	-	89
Strength	90		
Supersense	91		
Survival	92	-	93
Weapon	94	-	95
Choose	96	-	100

\* If Enhancement is rolled and Energy Blast is not rolled then Energy Blast should be taken as one of the Enhancement powers. The other power(s) should be rolled randomly.





## Brick/Brawler

This is the table for generating the team "Brick". The guys who are the first to get into physical combat. The team's hand-to-hand merchants.

*Amazingly I find the people who choose to roll on this table seem to be a remarkably good psychological match for the characters in the comics. Something to do with the number of brain cells I suppose.*

Acrobatics	1	-	2
Change form	3	-	4
Cloaking	5		
Endurance	6	-	15
Energy Blast	16		
Energy Sense	17		
Enhancement	18	-	23
Fast recovery	24	-	28
Flight	29		
Follower	30		
Force field	31		
Growth	32	-	36
Image generation	37		
Increased move	38		
Magic	39		
Marksmanship	40	-	41
Martial Arts	42	-	51
Mind control	52		
Mutation	53	-	54
Protection	55	-	64
Psychic	65		
Regeneration	66	-	71
Shrink	72		
State change	73	-	75
Strength	76	-	85
Supersense	86		
Survival	87	-	90
Weapon	91	-	95
Choose	96	-	100



## Costumed Crimefighter



This table generates characters who have no innate special powers. They are ordinary people who use skills, training and gadgets to fight crime.

Acrobatics	1	-	11
Change form*	12		
Cloaking*	13		
Endurance*	14	-	16
Energy Blast**	17	-	18
Energy Sense**	19		
Enhancement	20	-	21
Fast recovery	22	-	23
Flight**	24	-	26
Follower	27	-	33
Force field**	34		
Image generation**	35		
Increased move*	36	-	41
Information	42	-	48
Marksmanship	49	-	55
Martial Arts	56	-	66
Mind control*	67	-	68
Protection**	69	-	74
Strength*	75	-	79
Supersense	80	-	82
Survival	83	-	84
Weapon	85	-	95
Choose	96	-	100

\* These powers cannot be taken to a level higher than 1.

\*\* These powers come from Gadgets or Devices.



## Advanced Character Generation

### Device

If the character has invented, inherited, stolen or found a high-tech device – whether of human or alien origin – these are the kinds of abilities it will give them.

If it is possible to leave determining the exact nature of the device until after the rolls are made this is preferable. The nature of the construct can then be chosen to match the powers rolled.

If this is not possible, then the device is likely to be of indeterminate form with abilities such as Armour or a Weapon unfolding from within as needed. In this case the ability to disguise the power within the device should be taken as the first Gimmick of the power concerned.

Acrobatics	1	-	4
Change form	5	-	6
Cloaking	7	-	10
Energy Blast	11	-	18
Endurance	19	-	20
Enhancement	21	-	25
Fast recovery	26	-	27
Flight	28	-	33
Follower	34	-	35
Force field	36	-	40
Growth	41	-	42
Image generation	43	-	44
Impossible events	45		
Increased move	46	-	49
Information	50	-	52
Marksmanship	53		
Martial Arts	54	-	59
Mind control	60	-	61
Mutation	62	-	62
Protection	63	-	66
Psychic	67	-	71
Regeneration	72	-	73
Shrink	74	-	74
State change	75	-	76
Strength	77	-	83
Supersense	84	-	87
Survival	88	-	89
Weapon	90	-	95
Choose	96	-	100

### Magic

This power table can be used to create characters whose powers are rooted in sorcery. Normally a player rolling on this table should have chosen or been allocated the MAGIC background.

One option is to allow players to switch to this table if – during any other character generation process – they acquire the Magical background.

Acrobatics	1	-	2
Change form	3	-	8
Cloaking	9	-	13
Energy Blast	14	-	22
Endurance	23	-	25
Enhancement	26	-	33
Fast recovery	34	-	35
Flight	36	-	39
Follower	40	-	41
Force field	42	-	44
Growth	45	-	46
Image generation	47	-	50
Impossible events	51	-	54
Increased move			55
Information	56	-	62
Marksmanship	63	-	65
Martial Arts	66	-	72
Mind control	73	-	75
Mutation			76
Protection	77	-	79
Regeneration			80
Shrink	81	-	82
State change	83	-	85
Strength	86	-	87
Supersense	88	-	91
Survival			92
Weapon	93	-	95
Choose	96	-	100





## Mystic Artefact

If the character has found or inherited an magical item, it will give them the following abilities.

By preference the exact nature of the item should be determined after the powers are rolled. In that case if the roll Weapon or Protection (armour) then it is obvious what the item is.

However, this isn't essential. If it is necessary to state beforehand what the article is – a ring normally – then any Armour or Weapon can be generated when the ring is activated. The ability to “pack away” the possession into the ring should be taken as the first Gimmick of that power.

Acrobatics	1	-	4
Change form	5	-	7
Cloaking	8	-	11
Energy Blast	12	-	19
Endurance	20	-	21
Enhancement	22	-	26
Fast recovery	27	-	28
Flight	29	-	34
Follower	35	-	36
Force field	37	-	40
Growth	41	-	42
Image generation	43	-	44
Impossible events	45	-	46
Increased move	47	-	50
Information	51	-	52
Magic	53	-	57
Marksmanship			58
Martial Arts	59	-	64
Mind control	65	-	66
Mutation			67
Protection	68	-	71
Psychic			72
Regeneration	73	-	74
Shrink			75
State change	76	-	77
Strength	78	-	84
Supersense	85	-	88
Survival			89
Weapon	90	-	95
Choose	96	-	100

## Paranormal Infection



This is the table to use if the character is bitten by a Vampire, Werewolf or similar creature. It is also used for the full-blood or half-breed offspring of such creatures or characters suffering from a supernatural curse.

Acrobatics	1	-	10
Change form	11	-	19
Cloaking			20
Endurance	21	-	24
Enhancement	25	-	28
Fast recovery	29	-	32
Flight	33	-	36
Follower	37	-	40
Growth	41	-	42
Image generation			43
Impossible events			44
Increased move	45	-	51
Information	49	-	52
Magic	53	-	55
Marksmanship			56
Martial Arts	57	-	65
Mind control	66	-	70
Mutation			71
Protection	72	-	75
Regeneration	76	-	79
Shrink			80
State change			81
Strength	82	-	91
Supersense	92	-	95
Survival			96
Choose	97	-	100



## Advanced Character Generation

### Psychic

This power table can be used to create characters whose powers stem from the power of the human mind.

Normally a player rolling on this table should have chosen or been allocated the PSYCHIC background.

One option is to allow players to switch to this table if – during any other character generation process – they acquire a Psionic background.

Acrobatics	1	-	4
Change form	5	-	10
Cloaking	11	-	16
Energy Blast	17	-	26
Endurance	27	-	28
Enhancement	29	-	36
Fast recovery	37	-	38
Flight	39	-	44
Follower	45	-	46
Force field	47	-	48
Image generation	49	-	54
Impossible events	55	-	57
Increased move		58	
Information	59	-	65
Marksmanship	66	-	67
Martial Arts	68	-	70
Mind control	71	-	81
Protection	82	-	83
Regeneration		84	
Strength	85	-	86
Supersense	87	-	90
Survival		91	
Weapon	92	-	94
Choose	95	-	100







## Facets

Another complaint levelled at the system is that – even if you roll on a dedicated table – it's possible to get unbalanced characters. That is ones who roll all defensive superpowers and no major attack or ones who get all attacks and can't move very fast.

Characters like this exist in the comics. The only characters who need to be “well rounded” are those who star in their own titles. Unbalanced characters work well in Superhero teams. And Squadron UK is primarily a team game. (The clue's in the title.)

However, for those people who worry about such things, here are some tables dedicated to specific parts of a Hero's make-up.

There are a number of ways to use them:

- You can give the player a specific number of rolls on each table. For example, up to three rolls on the Attack table, 3 rolls on the Defense table and no more than one roll on the Movement and Weird tables.
- You can keep the tables in reserve and – if towards the end of the character generation process the character seems to be missing something – you can allow the player a roll on the relevant table. For example, if the player has used 6 rolls out of 8 and still doesn't have an attack, you can let them roll on the attack table.
- You can let the players freely choose which tables they want to roll on – as long as they specify the exact table they want to use *before* making the die roll.



## Attack Table

This table is used to make sure a character has some way of delivering enhanced damage to opponents – so they don't have to rely upon their untrained fists.

Energy Blast	1	-	12
Energy Sense	13	-	15
Enhancement	16	-	20
Flight	21	-	25
Follower	26	-	27
Force field	28	-	29
Growth	30	-	36
Image generation	37	-	38
Impossible events	39	-	40
Increased move	41	-	46
Marksmanship	47	-	52
Martial Arts	53	-	64
Mind control	65	-	66
Strength	67	-	78
Weapon	79	-	90
Choose	91	-	100

## Defence Table

This table ensures that a character has some special way of absorbing, avoiding or recovering damage.

Acrobatics	1	-	12
Change form	13	-	19
Cloaking	20	-	26
Endurance	27	-	33
Enhancement	34	-	37
Fast recovery	38	-	41
Flight	42	-	45
Follower	46	-	47
Force field	48	-	59
Growth	60	-	63
Increased move	64	-	67
Protection	68	-	79
Regeneration	80	-	83
Shrink	84	-	87
State change	88	-	91
Survival	92	-	95
Choose	96	-	100



## Advanced Character Generation

### Movement Table

A table to help make sure the character doesn't get left too far behind as the combat moves on.

Acrobatics	1	-	20
Enhancement	21	-	26
Flight	27	-	46
Follower	47	-	48
Growth	49	-	58
Impossible events	59	-	60
Increased move	61	-	80
Mutation	81	-	82
Shrink	83	-	87
State change	88	-	95
Choose	96	-	100

### Weird Table

This table contains a selection of the more unusual powers.

The Weird Table is normally used if a player has rolled a "bog-standard" character but wishes to play someone a bit more unique or interesting.

Rolling a power on this table should add a bit of colour.

Change form	1	-	5
Cloaking	6	-	10
Energy Blast	11	-	12
Energy Sense	13	-	16
Enhancement	17	-	19
Fast recovery	20	-	23
Flight	24	-	25
Follower	26	-	29
Force field	30	-	33
Growth	34	-	38
Image generation	39	-	43
Impossible events	44	-	47
Increased move	48	-	49
Information	50	-	54
Magic	55	-	58
Mind control	59	-	62
Mutation	63	-	67
Protection	68	-	69
Psychic	70	-	73
Regeneration	74	-	77
Shrink	78	-	82
State change	83	-	87
Strength	88	-	89
Supersense	90	-	91
Survival	92	-	95
Choose	96	-	100





## New Powers

There are three Superpowers listed on these tables which are not on the single Superpower Generation Table given in the Basic Game:

### Mutation

The character has an extra limb. Possibly a tentacle of some kind.

This limb can be used to perform an additional panel of action in a round. However, that action cannot be a combat action or a movement action.

#### Example

*The Lynx has a tail. He sees a mugger taking a young woman's hangbag. In two panels he can close with the mugger and thump him. He can then use his tail to pick up the dropped bag and proffer it towards its owner.*

At higher levels the character can either have:

- an additional limb (and additional non-combat/movement option).

or

- an existing limb can extend a number of squares up the character's (original, unenhanced) Strength Modifier.

### Gimmicks:

- The limb(s) can retract entirely out of sight when they are not in use.
- +1 to parry rolls.
- If the limb is extended (level 2 or higher) it can lock on to a secure hold in one round. In the next round it can retract – pulling the character along (or up), effectively giving a free movement option.

### Magic

This is simply the Magic character background. All of the character's powers are mystical in origin. Normal defences do not work against them.

This counts as a level 1 power. It does not have any higher levels or gimmicks and may not be taken at half level.

### Psychic

This is the same as the Psychic character background.

All of the character's powers are mental in origin. Normal defences do not work against them.

This counts as a level 1 power. It does not have any higher levels or gimmicks and may not be taken at half level.

## Choosing Powers

How much do you trust your players? How imaginative are they?

If you have total trust in them AND they are extremely imaginative, you may wish to allow them to simply choose the powers for their Superheroes. Then they'll definitely get characters they want to play. Right?

I'm not going to try and dissuade you if you want to try this option – though I think it's fairly obvious that it isn't to my particular taste.

However, you may wish to consider the following options:

- If players choose powers then reduce the number of power selections/rolls you give them. A character created from 7 power selections is usually at least as powerful as a character created using 8 power rolls.
- Do not allow the players to choose the same power more than once. They should be required to increase levels of powers in the usual way.
- Insist the players roll at least one power to give some variation in characters.
- Make players roll most of their powers but choose one.

Of course, you could always go through the powers, level and gimmick options and give each one a points value.

Players could then be given a number of points – either a set figure or based upon their characteristics scores – which could be purchase powers (and possibly skills).

If it's alright with you, I think I'll leave that for someone else to develop....



### Backgrounds

In the Basic Game, players roll for their Backgrounds during the character generation process.

Variations upon this include:

- Rolling for a Background at the beginning before rolling any Superpowers.
- Rolling for a Background with their last roll.
- The player chooses when to roll.
- The player chooses whether or not they want to roll for a background.
- The player is allowed to choose a Background (if they want) before rolling for Superpowers.
- The player is allowed to choose a Background at the end – to allow them to pick one compatible with their powers.
- Players state before rolling powers if they want a Background but pick the exact one after rolling for powers.
- Every player must pick a background.
- The Referee has a set of pre-determined Backgrounds which are distributed amongst the characters – preferably on a logical “best fit” basis. (However, it could be random or on a first come first served basis).



If players are allowed to freely choose Backgrounds then you need to build in some system to stop everyone choosing Magic or Psychic. Possibly, they should only be allowed to choose them if they can justify it and no other Background isn't appropriate. Either that or it comes with some kind of side-effect or curse.

### Characteristics

Alongside Superpowers, a character is also defined by their characteristics. Most importantly, these determine Skill Modifiers but they also influence many other important game ratings.

A very clear system for creating and handling these is given in the Basic Game, but you can customise this system in myriad ways to suit your own tastes.

#### Psyche and Derived Characteristics

In the basic game, Psyche is generated from the four “physical” characteristics. This is because experience showed that players treated it differently from them.

Every one of the four physical characteristics is used by every character in every game. It is possible to go for an entire game without using Psyche at all. So – if any element of control or characteristic swapping were included in the character generation system – players would swap their lowest score into Psyche. This left them vulnerable to Psychic attacks. This, in turn, left the Referee with a choice of either throwing psychic bad-guys against the Heroes - and being accused of slewing the game against the players – or avoiding the use of Psychics completely – which cut out a whole segment of game play.

Two things have been done to address this situation. Firstly, Psyche has also been made more useful by linking it to things like the range of Superpowers.

Also, the system used to generate Psyche in the basic game takes control of its generation out of the hands of the players and simulates the comics well.

It does, however, tend to create characters with “average” Psyche. If this doesn't suit your personal tastes then there's nothing to stop you allowing the players to roll for Psyche in the same way as they roll for their other characteristics.

You might want to consider introducing the following rules, however:

- Players should be required to keep their Psyche roll and not swap it with any other roll. This is just to stop “ordinary” characters swapping their lowest roll into Psyche – and “psychic” characters putting their highest score there.





- Ranges and effects of Superpowers currently based upon Psyche should be standardised. The range of Energy Blasts should be set to 10 squares, for example.

In the same way, you could ask your players to roll for their Derived Characteristics, if you wish. That is, players use dice to discover their characters' Esteem, Sleuthing and Fate scores, rather than earning them. This is normally done by Referees who prefer to play the game as a Superhero combat game as opposed to running extended storyline adventures or a campaign.

If your players do roll for these three characteristics then it is best to ask them to justify them when they give the characters background. Again, you may wish to either ban players from swapping these characteristics or limit swaps. Otherwise everyone ends up putting their lowest score into Fate.

### Generating Characteristics

In the basic game characteristics were generated using the best 3 of 4d6 rolled.

This is because characteristics based on 3d6 is the "classic" way of creating RPG characters and – in my opinion – has never been bettered. It gives a wide variation in characters but most rolls are around the average.

Rolling 4d6 and choosing the best 3 just skews the results towards the higher end makes it more likely that people will get three 6's than three 1's – which is more appropriate for a Superhero game.

However, there are other ways of generating these characteristics:

- Rolling 3d6 will give slightly weaker characters with higher skills and Psyche. Possibly more suitable for a "streets" level game.
- 5d6 choose the best 3, 6d6 choose the best 3 etc. or 2d6 plus 6 points. These will give higher characteristics and more "heroic" characters. You might wish to allow a player to use one of these systems on a "one off" basis if their character dies and they are creating a new one half-way through an existing campaign. All the other characters will have been upgraded through the use of Montage panels, so giving the new character the benefit of slightly higher characteristics will compensate for this.

- Allowing the players to make a large number of rolls (8, for example) and choosing the best – or most appropriate – four from them. (If four "odd" rolls are chosen this will give an enhanced Psyche score whilst still giving good Skill Modifiers and Trained Skill points.) This system will also generate heroic characters – as above.
- Rolling 2d10 will give a range from 2-20. This will give a much wider range of scores amongst the characters.
- Rolling 1d20 will give a wild range of scores between the characters. Too wide for most people.
- Instead of rolling for characteristics, you could give your players a set number of points to freely distribute between their characteristics. 45-50 points is a typical range.
- Players can be given a set range of 4 numbers to freely distribute amongst their physical characteristics – say 10, 12, 14 and 16.

### Swapping Characteristics

The basic game requires the physical characteristics to be generated "in order" and then allows two of them to be swapped. This is a reasonable compromise between:

- Requiring the rolls to be made in order and then kept in the order they are rolled. This system is random and removes an element of control from the players. It runs the risk of characters being generated who lack a good score in a characteristic they particularly need. A "Brick" with a low Endurance score or a "Blaster" with a low Dexterity for example.
- Allowing free re-arrangement of the rolls. Any of the four scores can be allocated to any of the four physical characteristics. This system tempts some players into trying to "mini-max" their characteristic spread.

The "roll 4 swap 2" system gives the same balance between random rolling and design as the system for generating Superpowers. If you want to keep this mix but give players more control over the design, then you can employ a system where the players can freely re-arrange 3 of their 4 rolls but must keep at least one characteristic in the position where it was rolled.



## Advanced Character Generation

### Skills

The final part of character generation is the allocation of skills.

Skills are mainly used in the storylines between Superhero combats.

Depending upon how much emphasis you want to place on these storylines you might want to increase or decrease the number of skills players have to allocate to their characters.

There are two types of skill.

#### Common Skills

In the basic game players are allowed to freely select 5 common skills for their characters. They use these skills with an additional +5 skill modifier.

This system has the benefit of simplicity. However, some skills (Searching, for example) tend to be chosen rather more than others. +5 is also quite a high modifier.

If you want to adjust the allocation of common skills, you can make one or more of these modifications:

- Allow the players to choose more or less than 5 common skills.
- Adjust the modifier so it is more or less than +5.
- Give a modifier which *replaces* the characters Characteristic Skill Modifier instead of adding to it. For example, a character with the computer use skill could add a total of +10 regardless of their Psyche score.
- Place numbers next to the skill table and ask the players to randomly roll for common skills. This can be with equal weighting or you can choose to use percentage allocations to give some skills (First Aid for example) a higher chance than others.
- You can split the example table given into two separate tables Skills – those which might be considered more “useful” in a Superhero adventure and those which are there mainly for characterisation or “colour”. Players can then be allowed to choose (or roll) a set number from the first table and select their remaining skills from the other table.

#### Example

For his “Tears of Tomorrow” campaign Pete splits the Example Common Skills Table into two separate tables. He allows the characters to have 5 specialised common skills, as usual, and lets them have a +5 modifier in each case. However, the players are required to roll if they want to try to acquire one of the more useful common skills.

They use a d20 to roll three times on this table:

Useful Common Skills (Tears of Tomorrow Campaign)		
D20 roll	Skill	Characteristic
1	Climbing	Strength/Agility
2	Computer Use	Psyche
3	Demolition/Piano Smashing	Strength
4	Door bursting	Strength
5	First Aid	Psyche
6	Impress	Esteem
7	Jumping	Strength/Agility
8	Negotiation	Esteem
9	Searching	Sleuthing
10	Spotting/Notice	Sleuthing
11	Stealth	Agility
12	Weightlifting	Strength
13-18	Choose	
19-20	Choose from the table below	

They choose other common skills from this table:

Characterisation Common Skills Tears of Tomorrow Campaign	
Skill	Characteristic
Business	Psyche/Esteem
Etiquette	Esteem
Gambling	Psyche/Esteem
Juggling	Dexterity
Language- native	Psyche
Literacy	Psyche
Make-up	Dexterity
Pot-holing	Agility
Riding	Agility
Scrounging	Esteem
Swimming	Strength/Agility
Teamster	Esteem/ Psyche





### Trained Skills

In the Basic Game, the total of the character's skill modifiers is subtracted from 55. The resultant Skill Points are distributed between 5 trained skills.

This can be varied in the following ways:

- Raise or lower the 55 point initial "pool" of skill points.
- Give every player a set number of Skill points (25 for example) to allocate regardless of their character's Skill Modifiers.
- Allow them to divide their skill points between more or fewer than 5 skills. This can either be a set number chosen by you, as Referee, for the campaign as a whole or a number chosen by the player from a range you give them.

*For example, you can split your skill points between 3-8 trained skills.*

- Require the players to randomly roll one or more of their trained skills.

*Remember, whichever system you choose for the selection allocation of skills, you should require your players to explain why their character has those skills as part of their Background Story.*

*You should also feel free to design adventures which require the use of particular skills – especially those which seem to be being shunned by all the players.*

### Bespoke Generation Systems

There are other variations you can bring to the method of creating characters. Ideally, the system you come up with should be suited to the kind of campaign you want to run.

Some more suggestions and advice is given in the chapter on campaigns. (See below).



# Adjusting the Game System



When your players have got their Heroes, you'll want to play the game.

In exactly the same way that you can adapt the character generation system to suit your own tastes, there are other elements of the game which you may want to fiddle with.

## The four levers

The Core System of the game is based around making Skill Rolls – rolling a d20 and modifying the score based upon Skill Modifiers.

There are four values within this system that you might want to vary.

### The characteristic divider

In the Basic Game, character's skill modifiers are determined by taking their characteristic score and halving it.

This gives a range of values from +2 to +9.





You may feel that this is too wide a spread. A seven point difference between the highest and lowest skill modifier characters can possess is a proportionally high – 35% -part of a d20 skill roll.

There are compensations built into the game – the bell curve of a 3d6 roll, the ability to swap characteristics, skill points etc. However, if you feel that the players initial rolls for their Heroes' characteristics are too important, you may wish to adjust the divider.

Dividing the characters' scores by 3, for example, will reduce the range to +1 to +6. This gives only 25% of a d20 roll difference between characters.

You can divide by larger numbers or even – if you want a totally wild and random game – you can choose not to divide the characteristics at all and simply add the character's raw characteristic rolls to the die roll.

If you adjust the Characteristic Divider, this will reduce (or increase) the average character Skill Modifier. You will almost certainly want to adjust the level of success to compensate.

### The Level of Success

This is set at 15/18 in the basic game. Given the relatively high Skill Modifiers flying about (especially those from Superpowers) this gives characters a very good chance of success.

The average Skill Modifier for a characteristic is +5. The average roll on a d20 is 10.5. Even without additions, Heroes will score a minor success on slightly more than half of their rolls.

I've set the level of success at 15/18 to give a lot of successes. Heroes succeed more often than they fail in comics but we need to keep some chance of failing a skill roll in order to keep the tension in the game.

It also contributes to high-paced combat. I want the battle in the game to be long enough to be interesting but short enough so that they don't fill the whole of a gaming session.

If you want things to go even faster, you can lower the level of success. If you want a slower game, possibly with more emphasis on the Superhero slugfests – to can raise the number that people need to roll to succeed. A nice "round" number is 20.

Remember that there are compensating factors built into the game so raising or lowering the level

of success won't change the speed of the game as much as you might think. If it is harder to hit a target, it is harder to Parry or Dodge an attack when it does hit and vice versa. In a game where people are hitting almost all the time, there will be lot more Dodges and Parries because they will also succeed more often.

### The Range of Success

Skill rolls have 5 possible outcomes:

- Critical Failure
- Failure
- Minor Success
- Success
- Critical Success

In the Basic Game this is represented by a total of 15 being a Minor Success with 18 being a full success.

Some Referees find this varying level of success a distraction and prefer to have a single total for "succeed" or "fail".

Alternatively, you can reduce the range of success with – for example- a total of 16 indicating a minor success and 17 or more indicating a full success.





## Adjusting the Game System



### The Skill Die

In the Basic Game, a d20 is rolled to determine whether a skill roll succeeds or not.

This gives a very wide range of outcomes with a roll of 1 having exactly the same chance of success as a roll of 20.

This represents the highly volatile nature of the comics. Actions in Superhero comics are notoriously unpredictable – they have to be to maintain the dramatic tension.

However, Referees and players who want a more predictable game may wish to use different dice for making Skill Rolls. For example:

- 2d10 gives more or less the same spread, but most rolls will tend to be around 11 and Critical Hits and Misses will be much more unlikely. (Critical Misses will occur on a roll of 2).
- 3d6 has the same effects as 2d10 but magnified. Critical Hits (18) and Misses (3) will be extremely rare.

- Using a single d10 roll will give a narrower range of outcomes, making the game more predictable but this will be compensated for by the fact that Critical Hits (10) and Misses will be far more common.

Obviously there are other dice combinations which can be tried.

*You may have noticed by now that – if you want - it's easy to produce a version of the game that only uses d10's.*

- 2d10 for characteristics
- 2d10 for Skill Rolls
- Only one level of success (d10's used for damage)

*Feel free to experiment.....*

## Initiative

The Initiative rules in Squadron UK are absolutely wild.

Different rounds are of different lengths. If there are a lot of multiple panel rounds then it's unfair to the Energy Blasters whose dice pools are going to have to stretch a lot further.

It's possible to have a situation where you win Initiative by 5 panels and then lose the next round by 5 panels. The bad guys get 10 continuous panels of action against you before you can anything other than Dodge, Parry or respond in other ways.

I make no apology for this. In fact I'm rather proud of the system. It reflects the unpredictable nature of the comics where two characters can meet in two different comics with two totally different outcomes to their conflict. It reflects the situation on a TV cop show – at the end of Act 1 or 2 - where the crooks can get in their car and be halfway down the street before the good guy even gets out of the bank.

If you want things even wilder and woollier, try rolling Initiative using d10's. However, if you want things more predictable, you use one of the systems I give later.

There is one thing we need to clarify first, however, and that is what happens with identical initiative rolls for the Heroes and Villains. Remember the current rule is that everyone has two panels and acts in strict Agility order.



If you need a simpler system, you can:

- ignore the rolls and roll again
- assume that the Heroes win
- assume that the side with the highest Agility (single score or average for the team) wins

Having decided that, we can now look at some alternative systems for Initiative:

- Each character has two panels per round with the side rolling highest going first.
- Each character has two panels per round. The side rolling highest goes first with one panel. The losers then get their two panels. The winners then get their second panel.

- Use the existing initiative system but roll d4's or d3's (or d10 halved).

### Damage

The Basic Game is set at a fairly brutal level. Stun and Kill points are rolled using d6's but damage is determined using d10's.

This is deliberate. As I've said before, I *want* combat to be fast and furious.

If you want the combats to last longer to allow both sides more options to display tactics – you may wish to reset the damage level of the game to use d6's all the time.



# Advice



Unsurprisingly, over the years I've learnt a few things about running this game. In this chapter, I'm going to share a few of my thoughts with you.

The first piece of advice is this, *let the game take the strain*. This comes in two parts.

Firstly – through judgement rather than luck – the game system (especially the combat system) is highly structured. When you are Refereeing, for example, a Superhero combat – if you follow the rules as they are written, both you and your players should have a great time.

Secondly – and this is through luck as much as judgement – because the game system acts as an adjunct to your players and is designed to help them create original and interesting Superheroes, by extension it acts as an adjunct to your imagination. It helps *you* create original and interesting stories. (I'll give some examples of this below.)

My second big piece of advice is *use your players*.

I played other RPG's. In the best ones, players have a major influence on the development of events within the game world. In Squadron UK, the best Referees allow the players to have a major influence on the development of the world itself – often without the players realising it's happened.

It happens because the players have to come up with background stories to explain their Heroes' superpowers. In my experience most of these stories are creative and well thought out and give the Referee loads of (free) hooks and ideas to build stories on. Use them.





My third piece of advice – play the game as a fixed term campaign. Too many role-players come to Superhero RPGs and suddenly turn into table-top wargamers – happy to play out a Superpowered battle or two and call it role-playing. At the very least you need to string the battles together with a basic storyline. (See the example *Consequences* scenario above.)

However, even comics with a single issue storyline have on-going sub-plot development in the background these days. One-off self-contained episodes of TV series are becoming a thing of the past.

The best comics have stories which form part of an ongoing plotline with single-issue and multi-issue stories all advancing the main plot. So you want to play Squadron UK as a Campaign.

Put at its most simple this means that - instead of each adventure being a one-off self-contained event - each adventure leads into another one featuring the same characters. This gives players a chance to improve their characters and refine their personalities.

However, the campaign needs to be fixed term. The greatest comicbook ever written was conceived as a single storyline lasting a mere 12 issues. It built to an inextinguishable climax and has never been bettered.

The Squadron UK rules do not carry in them an in-built targets for the players to aim for. You need to build those targets into your game as designer and Referee. And the most important target is the climax of the campaign. The players have to have something to aim towards and need to feel they've achieved something.

## The Two Campaign Structure

In fact, I think you need two campaigns.

Unless you are an extremely experienced role-player who has been able to develop a thorough grasp of these rules already, I recommend you start with a *Basic Game campaign*. You use this to learn the rules and find out what your players enjoy.

Then, when the climax of that campaign has been reached, you should consider designing a *Bespoke Campaign* – applying some of the principles outlined in the Advanced game.

Despite its name, you and your players will find the *Basic Game campaign* thoroughly engrossing and enjoyable.

However, when it comes to an end and you switch over to your *Bespoke Campaign*, you'll discover a new depth to the game. This second campaign should still be of a fixed term and build to a specific climax. However, it will last longer and should be extremely satisfying to play.

## Basic Game Campaign

The first thing you should do as Referee is to familiarise yourself with the character generation system by creating several characters of your own. At least 3 but preferably as many as 6. These will be your first Villains.

If you do this properly, and come up with an appropriate Background Story for each of the characters, you should be able to see what kind of crimes and plots they are likely to be responsible for.

Set the Campaign in your home city in the present day. I bet you'll be able to find a good location for your Villains' first crime.

Now choose an appropriate climax for the campaign. Hopefully this will arise naturally out of the backgrounds of one or more of your villains. If not, just pick one. Here are a few examples:

- Saving the city
- Repulsing the Alien Invasion
- Wiping out the vampires
- Preventing the summoning of the Demon
- Closing the hell-gate
- Revealing and stopping the android invasion
- Stopping the nuclear war
- Preventing wide-scale mutation
- Becoming the official Superteam
- Stopping the epidemic

Jot down enough notes to run your first game. Preferably this will have two or more scenes linked by a simple plot-line. (Again see *Consequences* – above.)



## Advice

(If all else fails you can run *Consequences* as the first adventure in your *Basic Game campaign*. It's just a lot more enjoyable to design your own.)

Then you invite your players over and get them to create their Heroes (using the Basic Game Generation sheet). Apart from the game setting, try not to put too much limit on your players' imaginations. If one wants to have a character suffering from a Supernatural curse whilst another wants to be an alien from another world, let them.

Run your first game.

In between the first game session and the second, review three things:

- The outcomes of the game. The players may have come up with some theories about the story behind the adventure which you can build upon. Or they may have picked up some "leads" they intend to follow up on.
- The heroes' Background Stories. If you're not impressed with your players' imaginations I'll be very surprised. You should pluck out at least one hook from each character's background – and as many hooks as you can overall – and think up some adventures you can build on those hooks.
- Your intended climax for the campaign. You might want to amend or, even, change it at this point. If one of the Heroes is an alien from another world fleeing a galactic catastrophe then that catastrophe can be on its way to Earth. Before it arrives, your Heroes are going to need some way to get into Space so a series of adventures involving the Government Space Agency might be appropriate.
- Try to find some way to get the characters to work together as a team of some kind for their future adventures.

You shouldn't find it hard to come up with some idea for future adventures for your players.

There do not have to be any overt links between the adventures - other than the fact that they feature the same Heroes - but once you start running the game you will find links developing. Villains who escape capture will return in the future. Heroes will forge links with the Police or Underworld and regularly call on their contacts for information.



This is how you should start running the campaign. Let the Heroes fight a few simple battles against bad guys in their own home town. Then put them through more complex multi-issue adventures. Along the way introduce elements from their backgrounds, have non-player characters return from time to time to help or hinder the Heroes, give them a base or Headquarters, have the press support or hound them etc. etc. and, before you know it, you will have a living breathing world on your hands.

All the while, however, have your eye on the climax. Try to put an element which contributes towards the building storyline into each adventure.

Eventually, throw in the final climactic battle. Don't leave it too long before you run it. Don't be worried about killing off one or more of the Heroes – but try not to kill all of them.

Don't be tempted to carry the campaign on past its climax. If you do this right, the climactic encounter will be a thrilling battle which the players will enjoy and they will come back begging for more. After this anything would be an anti-climax. Stick to your guns.

Now is the time to switch to your *Bespoke Campaign*.



## Bespoke Campaign

You've hopefully had a great time running your first campaign. However, there are bound to be things which you didn't enjoy as much as you could. Perhaps one player or character tended to dominate the game or maybe the characters were too tough or too weak for your Refereeing style or maybe you weren't happy with the speed at which the developed their powers.

You can now fix that in your own campaign.

### Setting

I recommended you set you first campaign in your own city in the present day. Your second campaign can be set anywhere and in any time period.

It can be set half-way across the galaxy, in another dimension or in a lost subterranean civilisation. It could be the 22nd century (with the Heroes from your first campaign as legends out of history) or back in Victorian times with the steam-powered battle armour or WW2 with Supersoldiers vs. Nazi technology or your version of an existing television of comicbook setting or on a Space Station or Under the Sea or in an alternative world where the Nazi's won WWII or where the world has been conquered by aliens or where magic is commonplace or.....

Get the idea? The main thing to do is to make sure that you have plenty of ideas for adventures in this setting before you start.

### Character creation

This is where you can really have some fun. In your first campaign you used the Basic Game rules to make the Heroes and let their backgrounds contribute towards the creation of the world.

This time you will invent the world first and the Heroes will be created to fit into it.

Allowing players to come up with their own rationales for their characters without any limits makes it easier for them to design their characters and allows a greater input from their imaginations into the campaign.

However, it does tend to end up with mystical medieval magicians teaming up with alien mega-soldiers alongside shaolin monks. This is often called "the kitchen sink" universe.

Many Referees prefer to come up with a history for their campaign world which defines when, where and why Superpowered characters came from.

In some worlds all paranormal Superpowers are based on magic, in others they are the result of an alien virus, in others still they were caused by the release of nuclear radiation following WWII. This sort of world has a much more coherent feel.

This does put limits on the players' ability to design characters but making them work within limits sometimes results in more imagination being used rather than less.

A variant of this world is to have a common origin for Superpowers but not to reveal it to the players up front. They can slowly unravel the origins of their world as they play the game.

The table given in the Basic Rules is designed to generate a "kitchen sink" universe with Mutants, Scientists, Athletes, Aliens and Magicians all in the mix.

If you want to have a specific setting or your Heroes' powers all stem from a common event may wish to use one or more of the dedicated tables given in the chapter on Advanced Character Generation.





## Advice

### Example

*A Referee decides he wants his campaign to start on a Space Station during a cosmic storm. He allocates appropriate backgrounds to the characters and specifies particular skills which they must all possess.*

*He then requires all the players to roll powers using the Accident/Experimentation/Mutation table.*

It is also possible to limit the number of additional grades which can be obtained for each power. It is not uncommon to limit Strength, Protection etc. to Grade 2 maximum.

You can be as creative here as you want. You can start the campaign with Heroes with no powers and they can get them halfway through, they can start with 4 power rolls and get a further 5 later on. They can start with 10 power rolls only to be stripped of half of their powers later.

See *Squadron: Birmingham* later in this book for an example of a *Bespoke Campaign* with a *Bespoke* character generation system.



### Design the Heroes as a team

It is easiest to play Squadron UK if the Heroes operate as a team. If they are a group of freelance mavericks it is sometimes hard to find ways to work them all into every adventure.

This is why most Referees encourage the players to team up and set up a common headquarters or communications system even if they start out as individuals.

However, it is possible to decide before the characters are created that they belong to a team.

This opens a number of options.

- They could all have a common origin (they were all involved in the same scientific accident, for instance).
- They can all be generated at the same time and the players can take "team balance" into account when creating their characters.
- The Referee can issue specific backgrounds. "You must have at least one Brilliant Scientist and someone who is Rich."
- Players can be allowed to "trade" powers during the generation process to produce a more balanced team.
- The team could be generated as "one big character" with - for example - 16 characteristic rolls, 3 Backgrounds and 21 power rolls to be divided between 4 characters as they are rolled.
- Different team members could be generated on different power tables to produce the various "types" of character required - the "team brick" table for example.

If the more extreme options listed above are taken then it is usual to reduce the number of individual power rolls each character gets to produce the "stronger as a team than they are as individuals" effect.

You can also take the opportunity to put an appropriate support mechanism into place for the team. They can start with a base, aircraft and Government or Private funding, for example.





## Setting a target

Even though I hope this campaign will last longer than our first one, it is still best to have a target in mind. Build in an underlying plot or storyline which the characters have to unravel and solve with the intention of halting the campaign - or taking a break from it - when the climax has been reached and resolved.

At the most basic level this is an evil plot by a fiendish mega-villain who is eventually tracked down, defeated and rendered harmless.

Three things to bear in mind:

- Every adventure does not have to revolve around the over-arching story arc for the campaign. Other stories should be introduced as red-herrings or as side-tracks which throw illumination onto the main storyline. If the Heroes aren't being outwitted by villains with "too much information" how are they going to know that there's a leak in their organisation?
- Don't be tempted to carry the campaign on past its climax. If you do this right, the climactic encounter will be a thrilling battle which the players will enjoy and they will come back begging for more. After this anything would be an anti-climax. Stick to your guns. If you were successful and they really do want to continue then let someone else take over the reins for a bit (see below). Take a break and come back when you've got an idea for a brand new story-arc for the Heroes.
- It IS possible to plan these short-term campaigns into mega-plots, trilogies etc. with the resolution of each story-arc leading onto the beginning of a new one. If the players enjoy the resolution of a campaign you've got somewhere new to take it. If it isn't as successful then it can reach a natural end.

## For example

*Stage 1: The Heroes discover a shadowy presence behind much of the evil in the world.*

*Eventually they discover that the world has been invaded by aliens.*

*They have to uncover the aliens and reveal their existence to the world.*

*Stage 2: The Heroes and their allies combat the Aliens and somehow (by commandeering alien space-craft and attacking their mothership, perhaps?) foil the aliens' plot and drive them from the Earth.*

*Stage 3: The Heroes pursue the Aliens across the universe, liberating system after system. They drive the Aliens back to their home planet and set up an interstellar alliance.*

*Stage 4: Maybe the Heroes return to find Earth a changed place or they've unwittingly dragged Earth into an Interstellar war.*

Personally I'd give up this campaign after Stage 2 but it's up to you how far you want to push it.





### Ideas for adventures

There are plenty of sources of ideas for adventures for your game:

- You must have had some ideas for the kind of adventures you wanted to run when you set up the campaign.
- If you roll some Villains for the campaign then their backgrounds will give you some further ideas for adventures.
- As always, trawl the Heroes' Background Stories for any Hook or idea they've left for you.
- Lift ideas from the News, TV, Books and Films.

If this isn't enough, then you can try the following formula:

#### The TV Series formula

American TV series have a large number of episodes to fill. In order to do this the editors use a formula.

There is always an introductory episode - usually "feature length" - which "sets the scene", introduces the main bad guys and gives each character a chance to establish themselves.

During this episode the characters might meet for the first time and team up, establishing a base of operations for their future adventures.

The series often has a recurring "story-arc" and a number of the episodes are devoted to moving this story forward.

Each main character has at least one episode (usually two) devoted to them where they take the centre stage. (You can base adventures upon events in the character's origin story or set up situations which require the use of one of their unique Superpowers to resolve).

There are a few episodes where individual writers come up with new and original plots - you will get to use all your amazing new scenarios.

Guest stars and particularly popular or successful races, organisations or settings will re-appear and have episodes devoted to them. (If a Hero has a contact - say "Patsy O'Toole" - who they enjoy interacting with - maybe he has a distinctive catchphrase or dry turn of wit - you can design a storyline all around him.)

It goes without saying that certain successful villains will escape from custody to re-appear with a brand new scheme - possibly upgraded through the use of Montage Panels.

Sub-plots will be set-up in one episode to be resolved later on in episodes specifically devoted to them.

There is usually a "clip-show" where the writers recycle scenes from earlier shows due to budgetary or deadline limitations. (This is when you walk into the game session and re-use villains and settings from previous adventures thrown together in a mix because you haven't had time to plan anything new).

The series usually ends in a climactic episode - often feature-length - which resolves the story-arc and any hanging sub-plots and sets the scene for the next series.

This is of course the climax to the campaign that I keep banging on about.

If you plan a campaign along these guidelines you've probably got enough material to keep it going for months, if not years.





## Past the End of the Campaign

Whatever happens, I advise you to take a short break after the climax of the campaign. You can:

- Play another game for a bit.
- Let another player run a couple of Squadron UK games so you can be the Hero for a bit.
- Dust off the details of the *Basic Game campaign* and go back to run a couple of adventures in it for old times sake.
- Campaign packs such as *Squadron: X* are already available for Squadron UK and more will be appearing. There are also appropriate settings available designed for other games and, if you wish, you can pick up one of these. It is generally very easy to convert them to Squadron UK.

However, if your players are begging for more adventures, you might want to consider some of the following ideas for “refreshing” your *Bespoke Campaign* before revisiting it:

### Change the setting

A multi-part adventure set half-way across the galaxy, in the past, in another dimension or in a lost subterranean civilisation can spice things up.

*I once put my players through a time-warp. They were projected a hundred years into the future. Not only did they stop several crimes there, they also discovered the grim fate which had befallen them in the past. They had to find a way to go back in time and find a way to change their destinies.*

### Change the Heroes

Each player could take on a new character within the same game world. These could be freelance in a world where the original Heroes are in a superteam (or vice versa).

One possibility is to have the new Heroes as sidekicks or a back-up team for the original group. If the main group of Heroes are called away on a long-term adventure (half-way across the galaxy, in the past, in another dimension or to a lost subterranean civilisation.....) it is the reserve team who have to act to save the City.

Alternatively the new team could be based in a different town or – even – country and be operating under completely different conditions.

(One interesting variation I have seen of this is to have the players run characters recruited from defeated and rehabilitated villains.)

### Change the era

Suddenly it's the 22nd century and the original Heroes are just legends out of history. Or it's back in Victorian times with the steam-powered battle armour. Or WW2 with Supersoldiers vs. Nazi technology.

The players can be asked to generate new characters or their Heroes may have been transported the new locale for some reason. Maybe a mega-villain wants them out of the way or some God-like entity has a quest he needs them to perform.

An interesting option is to tell the players that they are running characters with the exact same abilities and names as their usual characters but who are the descendants or ancestors of the original team.

### Change the Referee

This is a very powerful but very enjoyable option. Novel-writing and British television sit-coms are the only media in which a single author is expected to maintain any long-running series on their own. Comics, film franchises, TV series etc. all use a variety of authors.

When the players start to get a bit bored and you're running out of ideas, hand the whole thing over to one of them. They can retire their Hero and you can make a new one to join. Trust me, it's fascinating for both of you to see what it's like on the other side of the fence. Sub-plots you'd forgotten suddenly start to take shape and make sense.

You finally understand why they all hated that wonderful villain you'd invented.





# Squadron: Birmingham



If there's one piece of advice I'm always giving to Referees it's this:

*"Set your campaign in your own home town."*

The silver age of comics dawned when adventures started to be set in New York rather than some invented Metropolis. Somehow things feel a lot more real when it's your home town that's threatened by the mega-villain. Instead of some nameless or invented monolith – it's a well known (and well loved) landmark your Heroes have to save from destruction.

Well I'm a "Brummie". For those of you who don't know what that means – it means I'm from Birmingham. That's the original Birmingham set in the middle of England – not the one in Alabama.

People in other countries may not have heard of Birmingham. I can't recall any Hollywood films which have featured the city. This is a bit surprising and disappointing as it's Britain's second city (regardless of what upstarts such as Manchester might say).

Us locals sometimes refer to Birmingham as "Brum" for short and – hence – those of us who live here are called "Brummies".

Following my own advice, I have almost always set my own Superhero role-playing campaigns in Birmingham. It's a fascinating place. It's got more canals than Venice, for example.

So I present here for you an outline for a Superhero Campaign set in Birmingham, UK.

Some of you will, hopefully, play the campaign as it is written here – fleshing out the details as required. Adding your own villains and additional side adventures. I'm not presenting a tourist guide to the city - so you'll have to do a bit of Internet research for places to set your own battles.

Others will take the storyline of the campaign and transplant it to your own home town. (It would really tickle me if someone from Birmingham Alabama ran the story there. Feel free to drop me a line if you do.)





Most people will simply read the campaign and use it as a source of ideas for their own game. It shows you how I go about setting up a campaign.

I have actually run this campaign through from beginning to end. (Though this version may contain some tinkering based upon what I learnt.)

It features:

- A bespoke character generation system. This shows how you can adjust the rules to create the type of game you want. In this case I want the characters to start off as “novice” heroes – slightly underpowered and out of their league. They’ll then grow into proper Superheroes as the campaign progresses.
- A storyline with a fixed duration. It builds inexorably towards a climax.
- One way of setting the Heroes up as a team. In fact, becoming the official Birmingham Super-team will be the main aim of the campaign.
- A number of villains who you can use as inspiration for your own games or who you can lift and transplant wholesale.

Needless to say, if you’re going to be a player in this campaign, you shouldn’t read any more. In fact, you shouldn’t even have read this far.

Put the book down now!

## The story

Birmingham already has its own Superteam. Taking the standard method of naming such teams, they are called **Squadron: Birmingham**. (Almost every city in the country has its own Squadron.)

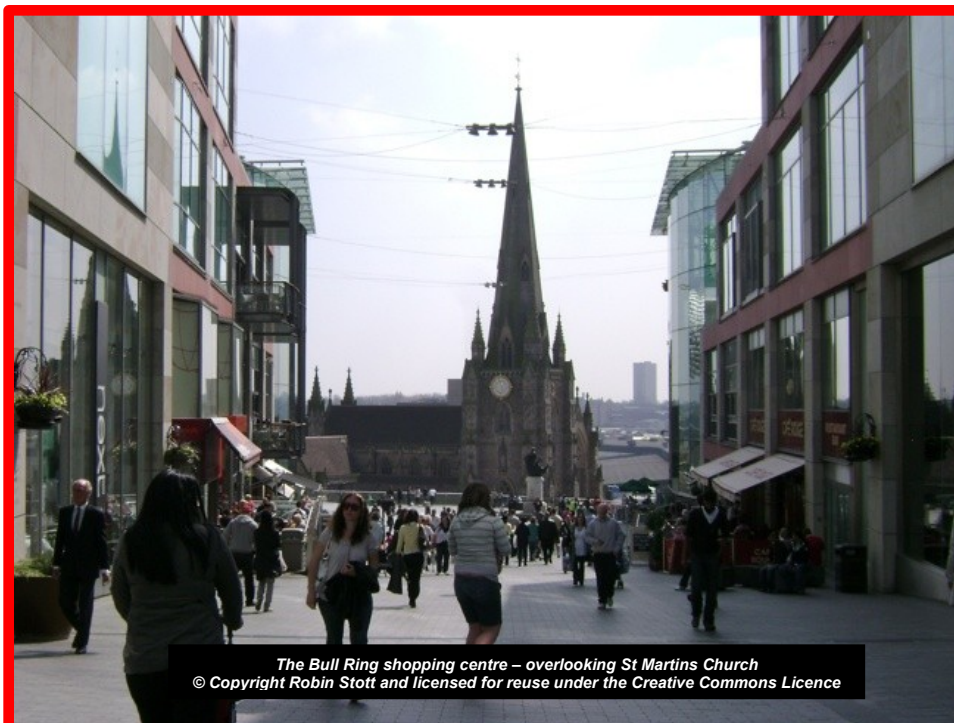
The players will be running young aspiring Heroes who have come to Birmingham to make their names. They will find a Squadron: Birmingham in crisis. They’ve recently lost some key members in dramatic and tragic circumstances. Others are facing crises of confidence or competence.

Naturally the player-heroes will aspire to join the team to fill their depleted ranks. At first they’ll be rejected. They’ll have to prove themselves and earn their places in the Squadron.

Of course, eventually they’ll succeed. Then they’ll face some much tougher challenges and supervillains learning from their more experienced colleagues.

Then comes the twist. I’m not going to reveal it here. I’ll let you discover it as you read. Some of you will work it out and see it coming – but it’s still quite neat.

The players will find their characters thrown into an extreme situation which will require all their power, skill and guile to resolve. Only then will they be able to truly take the mantle of Squadron: Birmingham!



The Bull Ring shopping centre – overlooking St Martins Church  
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## Squadron: Birmingham

### Character Creation

To create Heroes for this campaign, the players should use the following rules.

#### Superpowers

The players have 6 power rolls. They should use the single Superpower Table given in the Basic Rules.

The only exception to this is if they have used five out of their six power rolls and have not rolled a necessary type of power. For example, they have not rolled an offensive Superpower. In this case you may choose to let them roll on the appropriate FACET table in the advanced rules. However, this should not be necessary due to the following rule.

After they have used their 6 rolls they may freely choose one Superpower at half level. (Provided it fits appropriately with the other powers rolled by the character.)

One of the rolls MUST be used to roll for a Background on the standard table given in the Basic Rules. This can be done at any time – as the player's first roll, last roll or at any time in between.

The player may stop rolling at any time to increase the levels of powers already rolled.

*8 powers is generally seen as "standard" for Superheroes. By limiting them to 6, I'm making the Heroes slightly under-powered. Most of the villains and non-player Heroes will be based upon 8 powers and may have been improved through the expenditure of Montage Panels.*

*The free choice of a half-level power somewhat compensates for this. It also draws the players' attention to the existence of these neat little abilities for when they make characters in the future.*

#### Rationales

Squadron: Birmingham is set in a classic "kitchen sink" Superhero world. Aliens rub shoulders with mutants. Super-scientists contend with magicians. Most Heroes from the comic-book world have their analogues here.

*If the players ask about **Squadron: Manchester**, for example, just take an existing Superhero team from the comics and change their names.*

So there should be no limit upon the background stories the players think up for their characters.

#### Example

*Let's make a couple of Heroes for the campaign to show you how it works.*

*Craig chooses to roll for a Background first. He rolls his 2d10 and gets a 6 and a 4 for a total of 10. Nothing special. So he still has 6 power rolls.*

*First roll: 08% Acrobatics  
Second roll: 17% Endurance  
Third roll: 75% Regeneration  
Fourth roll: 20% Energy Blast*

*He stops rolling and puts his Acrobatics and Energy Blast up to Level 2.*

*He chooses the Increased Move power at ½ level – which he takes in the Leaping form.*

*His character is someone who is "over-charged with bio-electric energy".*

*Luke also rolls for his background before he starts rolling for powers. He rolls 10 + 5 for a total of 15. He used to work for the Authorities. He has 5 power rolls left.*

*First roll: 82% Strength  
Second roll: 52% Impossible events  
Third roll: 88% Supersense  
Fourth roll: 95% Weapon*

*As he hasn't rolled a Defensive or Movement power, he asks the Referee (me) if he can roll on a Facet table. I tell him he can't.*

*He chooses to use his last roll to put his Weapon up to Level 2.*

*He chooses Cloaking as his half-level power.*

*His character has an ancient artefact. A shield of some kind. All of his abilities come from that shield.*

*Because he has put all of his eggs in one basket and could – theoretically – lose his weapon, I allow him one bonus gimmick on his Weapon Superpower.*



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## Characteristics

Once they've rolled their Superpowers, the players should roll for characteristics.

They should make two rolls using 3d6 and two rolls using the best 3 of 4 d6. However, they may freely allocate these four rolls between their characteristics.

**Psyche** is calculated by subtracting the Average of the physical characteristics from **22**. This is one less than in the basic game.

Movement, however, is calculated by dividing the total of the physical characteristics by 8 instead of the usual 10. Fractions are always rounded up.

*If we don't do this then the slightly lower characteristics will result in a slower moving game. This slight change will speed up action a little bit, which is in keeping with the mood we want.*

### Example

*Craig rolls:*

*3d6: 1, 2, 1 for a total of 4.  
3d6: 3, 5, 3 for a total of 11.  
4d6: 1, 4, 1, 6 for a total of 11.  
4d6: 5, 2, 5, 6 for a total of 16.*

*He puts the 4 into Endurance. One 11 goes into Strength. He decides his Acrobatics power is enough to compensate for an 11 in Agility and puts his 16 into Dexterity.*

*His Psyche is:*

$$22 - 10 = 12.$$

*His movement is 5 squares. (But don't forget he can Leap 8 squares.)*

*Luke rolls:*

*3d6: 6, 5, 1 for a total of 12  
3d6: 4, 4, 2 for a total of 10  
4d6: 1, 2, 3, 3, for a total of 8  
4d6: 3, 5, 1, 4 for a total of 12*

*He puts his 8 into Strength. He intends to use his Weapon to Parry attacks and won't be dodging much – he hopes! So he puts his 10 into Agility. The 12's go into Dexterity and Endurance.*

*His Psyche is:*

$$22 - 10 = 12.$$

*His movement is 5 squares.*

## Skills

Players may choose to specialise in 5 common skills as usual. However, their Heroes only gain a +4 bonus in them.

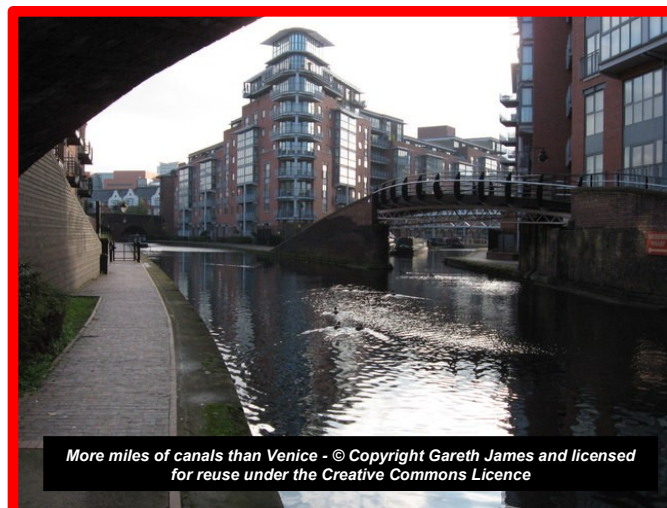
Trained skill points are calculated by taking the total of the character's (rolled) skill modifiers from 50.

Again, these are minor (some might say petty) changes to the rules. This is to stop the characters' slightly lower characteristics giving them higher skills. It keeps the mood that they are beginners/novices.

## Odds and sods

The characters do NOT get to choose a costume. They start the campaign in "normal" clothes. They can choose 2 items of equipment. All other calculations are made as normal.

*See the character sheets overleaf for the decisions*



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## Squadron: Birmingham

Craig and Luke make about their characters.

### Craig's character

Name: Cascade				Alias: Arthur Peters			
St	En	Dx	Ag	Ps	Es	Sl	Fa
11	(4) 21	16	11	12	-	-	-
+6	(+2) + 11	+8	+6	+6			
Common Skills		Lvl	Trained Skills		Lvl	Move	
English Lang.		+11	Environment Lore - Mountains		+4	5/8	
Jumping		+22	Language - French		+4	Kn.Bk.	
Climbing		+22	Driving		+4	15	
First Aid		+11	Pilot		+4	Dm.Md.	
Stealth		+22	Sky Diving		+4	-	
Kill: (15) 75				Stun: (12) 72			
Attack		Kill	Stn	Mod	Notes		
Fist		d-5	2d	-	-		
Bio-blast		d	2d	-	+8 dice over 3 rounds		
Superpowers, Background, Abilities							
Acrobatics 2 (+10 Agility Rolls, +5 dodges, -1 to Opponents' dodges)							
Endurance (+5 to recovery rolls, needs very little sleep)							
Energy Blast 2 (Bio-electric. Can focus on single target. Can do attacks with no Kill damage)							
<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>							
Regeneration (Can go up to -42 Kill before dying)							
Increased move ½ (Leaping)							
Background Story							
<p>Arthur Peters has always been a sickly young man. Though a keen traveller and mountaineer, his illnesses kept him from fulfilling his dreams. So he volunteered for an experimental process. This has healed him but left him over-charged with bio-electric energy. Has to discharge this periodically. It ripples around him whenever he moves fast, causing a cascade effect.</p> <p>He drives around in a battered old Morris Minor Traveller which has his mountaineering equipment in the back.</p>							



### Luke's Character

Name: <b>Karma</b>				Alias: <b>Elliott Fitzgerald</b>			
St	En	Dx	Ag	Ps	Es	Sl	Fa
(8) 25	12	12	10	12	-	-	-
(+4) +14	+6	+6	+5	+6			
Common Skills		Lvl	Trained Skills		Lvl	Move	
Etiquette		+4	Diplomacy		+6	5	
Impress		+4	High Society		+6	Kn.Bk.	
English Lang.		+6	Lang.– Farsi		+6	(20) 37	
Literacy		+6	Research		+6	Dm.Md.	
Swimming		+9	Sea Diving		+5	(-1)+13	
Kill: 41			Stun: 43				
Attack		Kill	Stn	Mod	Notes		
Fist		d-5	2d	(-1) +13			
Shield		d	2d	+13 +2d	Can be used as a Missile. 5 sq. Basic Range.		
Superpowers, Background, Abilities							
Government Background (Foreign Office)							
Impossible Events (Luck, Can be done whilst moving)							
Strength (Always braced whilst holding shield)							
Supersense (Heat vision – can operate in darkness)							
Weapon 2 (Shield, Melee and missile, Returns following throw, +5 +1d on Parries)*							
Background Story							
<p>Elliott Fitzgerald worked for the Foreign Office as a attaché to various ambassadors across the Middle East. During a terrorist hostage crisis, both he and the Ambassador were rescued by a mysterious hooded figure wielding a small shield of ancient design. Their Hero was fatally wounded in the attack but – before his body crumbled to dust – he forced his shield into Elliott's hands. Now – almost against his will – Elliott finds himself drawn to perform selfless acts. The magical shield enables him to bring good or ill fortune to those around him. He is currently on sabbatical from his job and is researching into the origins of the magical item he has inherited.</p> <p>He has an expensive wardrobe of clothes and always carries a pager which he can use to summon help from the Secret Services should he fall into foreign hands.</p>							

\* Despite the "extra" gimmick I gave him, Luke ran out of gimmicks for his weapon. He was unable to take the one which made it indestructible. (It's his own fault, he could have given up on using the shield as a missile.)

So I make a mental note that – at some point in the campaign – I am going to destroy Karma's shield. Of course I'm not going to strip him of all his powers. They'll be transferred/absorbed into Elliott Fitzgerald's body. There'll be a cost, of course – maybe a radical change in his appearance?

Of course the outline backgrounds given above aren't the full story. I'd encourage both Craig and Luke to give me a more detailed background at the earliest opportunity. However, even given the skimpy details above, I've already spotted some plot hooks I can work into the campaign.....





## Coming to Birmingham

This is the first adventure in the Campaign.

None of the players' characters should be native to Birmingham.

*If you have a Brummie in your group and you're not familiar with the city yourself, you should relocate it to a different city.*

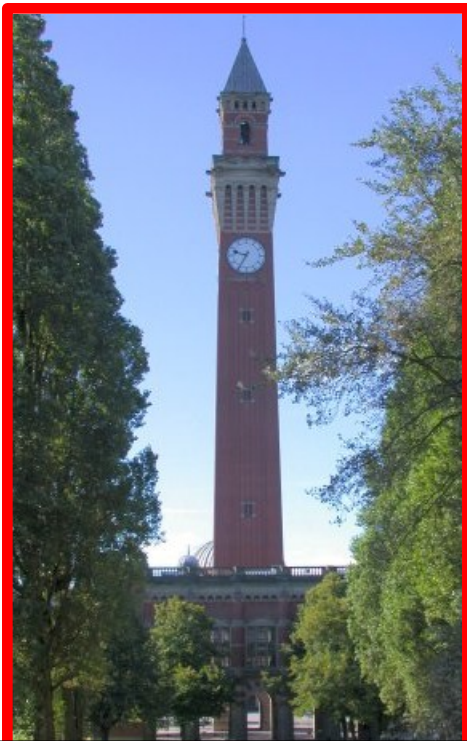
Each player should specify a reason why they are coming to visit the city. If at all possible, and their backgrounds align, some of the player characters may be allowed to know each other before this first adventure happens.

### Example

*There is no reason why Cascade or Karma should ever have met before the campaign starts, so each will have his own reason for coming here.*

*Co-incidentally, however, they're both heading to the same place – **Birmingham University**. (Not the "City of Birmingham University". Birmingham University is an old-school "red-brick" University with an international reputation. The other one..... isn't)*

*Cascade wishes to consult a famous Scientist about his condition. Karma wishes to use the University's acclaimed Library of the Occult to research into the origins of his shield.*



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Whatever the character's reasons for coming to the City, they will all arrive on the same day and – almost inevitably – they'll be passing through the same place – Spaghetti Junction.

### Spaghetti Junction

Officially called the Gravelly Hill interchange – Spaghetti Junction is the highest expression of the creative art of 1960's Road Planning. Three major roads meet a couple of motorways in a tangled mess of roadways rising high on concrete pillars.

Beneath these roadways lie the meeting place of three canals and a couple of major railway lines. If you want to get into Birmingham, Spaghetti Junction (the name says it all) is hard to avoid.

Ideally the characters will all be travelling to the city by car. If anyone is travelling by train then their journey will have been interrupted by the train coming to a juddering halt underneath the junction in response to the events unfolding up above. However, they'd then need to find some way to get up to the action. If they don't fly, things could get awkward.

A similar situation would occur in the unlikely situation that any of the characters are travelling to Birmingham by barge. However, in this case the barge will not come to a halt. The battle will have started and be over before the slow-moving vehicle has travelled half-way through the structure. A character could hop off the boat and be back on it with no problem.

### Example

*Cascade is travelling in his Morris Minor Traveller. Karma will have pulled some strings and is being chauffeured in a Government Limousine. (He didn't roll the power "Follower" and so does not have a Chauffeur of his own.)*



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## Squadron: Birmingham



### Fire and Ice

This first simple battle revolves around a robbery by two Supervillains. (Or more, possibly, but more of that later.)

I've provided you with the details of the two bad guys you met in the Introduction to this book – **Frostorm** and **Firefly**.

Feel free to use these two characters if you want to. However, I'm hoping you'll have a couple of villains you've designed yourself to slot in instead of them. These characters are going to have a story-arc straddling the campaign and it would be better for you to use characters you're totally familiar with.

Whenever I refer to Frostorm and Firefly, I'm hoping that they're acting as placeholders for two or more characters of your own design.

The two villains are generated using 8 powers on the Blaster archetypes table. They also have some individual improvements from the expenditure of Montage panels. As such, they are individually more powerful than any of the Heroes.

Frostorm and Firefly have been hired by a mysterious crime-lord to stop a lorry transporting experimental devices and rob it.

They have been given a squad of goons and some souped up vans in which to make their escape.

The situation may be further complicated by the possible presence of a third villain. This is Dr. Darren G. Stockade. Stockade is a tragic figure who, through his own experimentation, is totally and permanently invisible. Stockade is also interested in the experimental devices being transported though – in his case – it is one particular small item he is after.

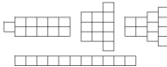
In addition, Frostorm may have realised that – as both he and Firefly are “blasters” – they might need some more physical back-up. He might have purchased this from a villain known as “The Beastmaster”. This takes the form of a giant gorilla which the villains may choose to unleash if – for any reason – the robbery isn't going to plan.

As if this wasn't enough, Frostorm's initial attack upon the lorry carrying the goods was to spray ice under its wheels. This has caused it to swerve across both sides of the expressway. Cars have crashed and over-turned. Some have burst into flames and others are tangled wrecks containing limp forms. A coach of holiday-makers has smashed through the retaining wall and is hanging over the edge, threatening to tip onto the roadway beneath.



The Heroes have to stop the villains, capture their goons, secure the experimental devices, rescue the trapped travellers (especially all those holiday-makers) and get the traffic moving again before rush-hour brings the entire city to a stand-still.

If you wish, there are some further complications or dramatic scenes you can throw in along the way. However, we'll cover these – and explain the epilogue to the battle - after we've introduced the villains of the piece:

Name: <b>Firefly</b>				Alias: <b>Roger Stephens</b>			
St	En	Dx	Ag	Ps	Es	Sl	Fa
8	10	16	11	12	8	8	13
+4	+5	+8	+6	+6	+4	+4	+7
Common Skills		Lvl	Trained Skills		Lvl	Move	
First Aid		+11	Biology		+5	5/10	
Impress		+10	Metallurgy		+5	Kn.Bk.	
Gambling		+11	Sea Diving		+5	24	
Spot		+9	Sky Diving		+5	Dm.Md.	
Scrounge		+9	Low Society		+6	-1	
Kill:	35			Stun:	36		
Attack		Kill	Stn	Mod		Notes	
Fist		d-5	2d	-1			
Energy Blast		d	2d	-		+8 dice per 2 round	
Superpowers, Background, Abilities							
Flight 2 (Able to perform actions whilst speeding up in a charge, can strike a blow in passing) Force Field 2 (Random 24 points, Can raise/lower force field whilst moving, can use Energy Blast through the field.) Energy Blast 4 (Flame. Single target, reduces dividers by 2, larger area of effect)							
							
Background Story							
Roger Stephens' is simply a mutant. No-one knows how his powers work – least of all Roger himself. He doesn't care and he certainly doesn't wish to be subjected to any kind of medical or scientific examination. He doesn't go out of his way to harm people but doesn't care if they get hurt.							
<b><i>"Is it just me or is it hot in here?"</i></b>							



Name: <b>Frostorm</b>				Alias: <b>Johann Schweitz</b>			
St	En	Dx	Ag	Ps	Es	Sl	Fa
12	12	12	12	11	10	12	6
+6	+6	+6	+6	+6	+5	+6	+3
Common Skills		Lvl	Trained Skills		Lvl	Move	
Computer Use		+11	Computer Programming		+6	5/10	
First Aid		+11	Language - English		+4	Kn.Bk.	
Impress		+10	Skating		+6	24	
Search		+11	Driving		+2	Dm.Md.	
Spot		+11	Lockpick		+2	-	
Kill:	45			Stun:	41		
Attack		Kill	Stn	Mod		Notes	
Energy Blast		d	2d	-		+8 dice per round	
Gun butt		d	2d	-		-	
Superpowers, Background, Abilities							
Brilliant Scientist (Cryogenics) Protection 2 (Armour divides Kill damage by 4 and Stun Damage by 3, -5 to all Agility rolls, Immune to Guns and Knives) Increased Move (Skating) (On ice generated by boots – can perform actions whilst building up speed for a charge.*) Energy Blast 4 (Ice) (Single Target, Extra Range – 13 sq., Manifestations. Can also encase targets in Ice. Needs a Strength roll equal to the total points gained by the attack to break free.)							
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Background Story							
Johann Schweitz is an Austrian – ex-olympic speed skater and genius in the field of cryogenic science. Banned from polite scientific society when he unfortunately tested his theories on a number of unwitting and unwilling candidates – who it later transpired he was unable to successfully thaw from their deep-frozen state. He now operates of the fringes of society, using his great skills to undertake robberies to fund his continuing research.							
*His skating leaves a trail of ice. “Not unlike a Frosty Mollusc” one – now missing – reporter once said.							
<b>“No von interferes viz mein vork!”</b>							





## Squadron: Birmingham

Name: <b>Stockade</b>				Alias: <b>Dr. Darren G. Stockade</b>			
St	En	Dx	Ag	Ps	Es	SI	Fa
14	16	17	13	16	6	17	6
+7	+8	+9	+7	+8	+3	+9	+3
Common Skills		Lvl	Trained Skills		Lvl	Move	
Computer Use		+16	Computer Programming		+8	6	
First Aid		+16	Driving		+8	Kn.Bk.	
Scrounging		+11	Hacking		+8	30	
Searching		+17	Lockpick		+8	Dm.Md.	
Stealth		+15	Pilot		+8	+2	
Kill:	55			Stun:	58		
Attack	Kill	Stn	Mod	Notes			
Fist	d-5	2d	+2				
Energy Blast	d	2d	-	+6 dice per round			
Superpowers, Background, Abilities							
Brilliant Scientists (Physics) Cloaking 2* (costume changes with them, permanent) Energy blast 3 (Electric, single target, increased range – 18 squares, can reverse base damage.) Energy sense - electricity							
Background Story							
One of the most misunderstood and most tragic of Supervillains.							
Darren G. Stockade was working on the cutting edge of high-energy physics when he was caught in a quantum feedback field. This has rendered him permanently invisible. Not only that, but anything with which he comes into contact is also slowly and eventually rendered invisible as well. If he stands in place for any period of time, slowly expanding craters of invisible material grow out from his feet. If he is captured and placed in prison, he will lie in his bed until the entire place becomes see through.							
He has developed high levels of skills but most of these he performs as a difficult task due to his invisible state.							
The only things which renders him visible is a short burst of quantum energy such as that which leaks from his electro-arc pistol whenever he discharges it. Every time he fires it, he becomes visible for a fraction of a second.							
Stockade has to keep moving.							
If he stops to rest his presence will be revealed by the growth of the area of invisibility around him. And that could lead to his arrest and incarceration. Not just for crimes he's committed – and he's been forced to commit a few – but because of the illicit uses both Government and Criminal groups have for a man of his abilities.							
Stockade exists on the fringes of the visible world – searching everywhere, trying everything - desperately seeking a cure for his terrible condition.							

He has broken into the most secure of scientific establishments – raiding the work of his peers for some clue to regaining opacity. He has eavesdropped on secret Government meetings and the plots of Villains. He is willing to do anything to be as visible as the rest of us.

Stockade is both desperate and bad-tempered. He gets particularly irked when upstart “Heroes” start making facile suggestions or question his morality. He’s tried everything. They’d feel the same, they’d do the same, in his position.

If Stockade is present in a scenario it will be for his own purposes and he will be unaligned with any other faction present. He will not seek to permanently harm anyone but will do anything and everything he needs to do to achieve his ends. If any character present possesses super-senses and can detect Stockade’s presence, they will be mercilessly targeted for his own defence. He is not above kidnapping anyone who may hold a clue to returning him to normal.

He is a cunning opponent who will use his ability to focus his Energy blast on Kill damage to use the environment to his advantage. If he has a single die left for an attack, he will use it to ignite a petrol tank. He will bring the roof down. He will blast the floor out from under an innocent bystander if he has to.

***“Don’t presume to lecture me! You’ve half my IQ and a life that doesn’t involve constant suffering.”***

Every one of these three characters will grow and develop as the campaign progresses, so these character sheets are only for this first battle.

In addition to the baddies, there’ll also be some Goons. These are all wearing denim coveralls and are armed with guns and coshes. There are normally 5 of these for each Hero present but feel free to adjust the numbers as you see fit.

- They are knocked out or injured by any attack which has a damage bonus and stunned by all other attacks
- They move 3 squares a panel
- They take two panels to perform a major action
- They attack with a +2 on their Skill Rolls

None of them who “the boss” is, having been hired by shadowy intermediaries in local pubs.





### The Gorilla

This is presented to you as example of how to design a big threat without putting in a lot of effort.

The Gorilla has:

- 75 Kill and Stun
- A move of 5
- A Knockback score of 30
- A Damage Modifier of +25
- The same number of panels as the Heroes.

Any skill rolls it makes (including Dexterity rolls in combat) are made at +5.

This information should be enough to run the brute. If you need to, you can assume it has any appropriate powers (Supersense, for example.) But don't add powers just for the sake of it.

If you need to make the game more interesting, tell the players that the gorilla is growing bigger. Each round add:

- 10 Kill and Stun
- 1 square to its move
- 5 to its Knockback and Damage Modifier

### Balancing the Scenario

If you have two or three Heroes then Frostorm and Firefly should be sufficient on their own. If you have three quite tough Heroes, then throw in Stockade as well.

For four or more Heroes you can add either Stockade or the Gorilla or both.

The great thing about both of them is that you can keep them secret and just throw them in if things turn against the villains too quickly. You want the Heroes to win, but if they manage to take out either villain within a couple of rounds then you will need to "release the beast" from the van it is being stored in.

Only use the option to have the gorilla grow in size if you think your Heroes are proving to be excessively effective. It is a rare group that would need to have Frostorm, Firefly, Stockade and a growing gorilla all in play at the same time!

You can always adjust the scenario further by applying one of more of the options given in the next section.



### Other events

That's all I'm going to give you. There's no map. All you need is a dual carriageway road – with 3 lanes in each carriageway.

Another road is crossing underneath it.

On the road is a crashed lorry – full of high-tech scientific equipment. There are half a dozen soup-up vans, a score of thugs in overalls and two obvious Supervillains.

Ruined cars are scattered right and left and a large coach is hanging over the edge.

That's all you need. Describe the situation and leave it to the players to decide if they want to save innocents, foil the robbery or simply beat up the bad guys.

As they don't have costumes and aren't ready for action, the Heroes will need to improvise some kind of mask or way of concealing their identity. You should support any ideas the players come up with. Hoodies are particularly useful!



## Squadron: Birmingham

### Example

*Cascade's identity is hidden by the blur if he keeps moving. However, he can pull a woollen climbing mask out of the bag in the rear of his car. Karma will simply pick up a set of mirrored sunglasses which have luckily been thrown out of one of the crashed vehicles (using his Impossible Events power).*

To further spice things up, you can add one or more of the following:

- Characters who are pushed back might fall off the carriageway and onto a fast moving lorry (or train) beneath – being pulled away from the battle.
- If Frostorm's escape is otherwise blocked, he can create an ice-slide to the lower levels and may use a lorry or train to escape. (A battle between Frostorm and one of the Heroes on top of an express train would make an exciting climax to the battle.)
- Frostorm will make good use of his ability to trap characters. He won't waste this on obvious "bricks" but will try to trap anyone who seems physically weak – even if this just means freezing their feet to the road so that they are unable to dodge.
- Characters pushed or thrown off the road could end up in the canal.
- Some of the crashed cars could explode.
- A non-player "hero" could appear who is the same power level as the player characters. The trouble is he is inept or unreasonably brutal or both.
- Stockade will be sneaking around striking by surprise whenever it best suits his interest – especially to take out anyone who can detect him. You should use him to balance the Scenario appropriately if the Heroes are finding it too easy against the other two villains – possibly by ignoring all the trapped crash victims to concentrate upon the fight.
- In addition to their Energy Attacks, both Frostorm and Firefly enjoy building up momentum to deliver physical attacks with a damage bonus.

Their ideal attack in a round when they have lots of panels is to charge in, unleashing all their energy for the round in a single shot and then following this up with a charge-assisted punch.

- If any of the Heroes is particularly tough, you can allow Frostorm and Firefly to use a co-ordinated tactic. Whenever one of them hits a target immediately after it has been hit by their cohort, they gain a bonus die on both the Kill and Stun damage done by that attack. (The intention was that they would have developed this ability by the time they re-appeared later in the campaign. However, use it now if you have to.)

Whatever happens after 5 rounds, **Techknight** - one of the members of Squadron: Birmingham will arrive to sort things out. (See later for his details.) If the Villains haven't started to flee already, they will all try to escape at this stage.



Before things are wrapped up, however, Techknight will make one critical failure in a skill roll which will leave him at the mercy of the remaining Villains and giving the player-heroes a chance to rescue him.

### For example

*One way to bring the battle to an end is to have Techknight lure the giant gorilla to the edge of the road.*

*He will then blast the floor away from beneath the two of them. The gorilla will fall to the ground far below and be knocked unconscious – shrinking back to its normal size.*

*Techknight intends to fly away but his boot jets will malfunction and he will start to fall as well. The players will need to catch him in some way.*

*You shouldn't draw any particular attention to this but it is key plot point which you must include.*

*I'll explain more later....*



## Aftermath

Now is the time to give Derived Characteristics. I'm not going to go over this in detail again here. If in any doubt go back to the relevant chapter or take a look at the Basic Game example scenario: Consequences.

It's likely that Frostorm will have been captured. Firefly may have escaped. Stockade will almost certainly have gotten away.

Almost all of the scientific gear will have been secured but it is likely that one key component will have simply disappeared. As the villains don't have it, suspicion may fall – temporarily – upon the Heroes.

Regardless of who has been captured, none of the goons know who is behind the robbery. Frostorm and Firefly will not wish to talk. However, if some sort of psychic abilities are used (or similar) then the Heroes will find out that they have been contacted through a dedicated web-site. They know about a pre-arranged rendezvous where they were to drop off the stolen goods. (This will in an unused warehouse in Longbridge, near where the British Leyland/Rover car factory used to stand.)

Techknight will allow the characters their heads in interrogating the bad guys. However, if anyone does anything stupid like actually throwing someone over the side of the road, he will interfere. For example, he will fly down and catch the victim before arresting the responsible character.

If the Heroes conduct themselves in a suitable manner he will introduce himself to them and give them a signed photo of himself. (He doesn't have one of his full team, at the moment.) He will allow them to take photographs posing with him if they want.

If the Heroes find out about the villains' rendezvous he will say "We'll take it from here".

Squadron: Birmingham will take responsibility for following up on the lead. If the Heroes insist on following it up themselves this will lead to a falling out with the official team.

In any event, no-one will turn up to the rendezvous. "The boss" knows what's happened. He has other spies at the junction and events have been reported in the media.

Techknight will supervise the clean-up and liaise with any police that arrive. Then he will do one more thing for the Heroes.



That is to tell them they need to get themselves proper costumes. (Their street clothes will have been damaged somewhat during the battle.)

He'll give them the business card of a Tailors shop set on the Stratford Road (one of the main arterial roads leading into Birmingham.)

"Just show him the card and tell him I sent you," he says before flying off.

At this point you should really put some pressure on your players to keep their characters together, even if this just means agreeing to meet at the tailor's shop the following day. It makes your job a lot easier if they start to hang around together.

The Heroes should now finish their journey into town and find themselves some accommodation.

## Example

*Cascade will probably check into a cheap hotel or – even – bunk down at the YMCA. Karma will check into a courtesy apartment provided by Birmingham City Council.*

## Tinker, tailor.....

When the characters meet the following day at the Tailor's shop recommended by Techknight, they will meet Callum Cartland.

When Squadron: Birmingham cleaned the city up, his sideline of outfitting the local

Super-powered baddies with all their costumes came to light. Callum agreed to work for the good guys. His shop became a place where many villains were finally caught.

Due to his shady background, the team cannot openly pay Callum but they route funds to him unofficially. He will happily provide each character with a bespoke Heavy or Light costume – no charge.





### Down and Dirty

The characters have now arrived in Birmingham, have met at least one member of the city's Elite Superheroes and are beginning to make other contacts.

This is where you move into the second phase of the campaign.

In this phase, the characters should become involved in a number of low level adventures featuring characters on the bottom rung of society. Scum who may possess some unusual abilities but who are generally below the notice of Squadron: Birmingham. Occasionally their paths will cross those of the "big guys" – generally not to the benefit of the player characters.

A typical adventure can grow out of their meeting with their new tailor friend – Callum Cartland:

### Dirty Dogs

During his conversations with the heroes, Callum will let slip that he is coming under pressure from a new gang in town to pay protection money. He doesn't wish to bother Squadron: Birmingham with such a petty situation, but maybe the player-characters can help out?

At first the characters will just have to scare off a handful of street-toughs. After this, a gang of 20 or so will arrive to torch Callum's shop. When the Heroes deal with them they will face the gang's elite "warriors".

Though these might look like typical low-rent criminals, you should design them as full characters with a couple of minor superpowers each. Martial Arts is a good one.

One character - "The Beast" - should be designed as if he were a full Supervillain – despite his apparently "normal" appearance.

You can even give him some "true" Superpowers which are apparently beast-like in original – Weapon (claws) for example.

Whilst the characters will probably be able to dispatch this elite squad of thugs, it will probably prove much tougher than they'd anticipated.

They'll discover syringes of some kind of serum on The Beast's body. It'll turn out that he works for a shadowy character known as "The Beastmaster".



Apart from extending control over this part of town, the gang has also been kidnapping all sorts of pets for the Beastmaster's experiments.

When the characters track this evil genius to his lair, they will find that – not only is he possessed of an incredible range of animal-like powers – he has a number of followers, both human and beast, who have all been enhanced by his scientific skills. Oh, and he also has the biggest, meanest, nastiest dog they've ever seen. By big we mean dinosaur sized.....

When they close down Beastmaster's operation it will turn out that it had been infiltrated by a deep-cover operative for the British International Security Council and United Intelligence Network. (BISCUIT for short.) It turns out that Beastmaster was just one member of a suspected cabal of supervillains and now – because of the character's interference – they won't be able to find out who has been funding his work.

### Closer to home

You should also try to build at least one low-level adventure out of each of the player-character's backgrounds.

### Examples

*When Cascade makes himself known to the scientist at Birmingham University, this allows other people to track him down. It turns out that he was not the only one given Superpowers by the experimental healing process.*





*Unfortunately, every other subject has developed a degenerative disease. They have banded together to hunt Cascade. They think his vivisection will reveal a cure to their condition.*

*Karma, on the other hand, will find a library in crisis. Many of its key books and artefacts have been stolen. Karma and his comrades manage to discover who is doing this.*

*It turns out to be a local coven keen on raising a demon from the Nether World. Not only do some members of the Coven possess magical abilities, but the Heroes will only track them down as they are half-way through the summoning.....*

In this part of the campaign, the characters should always feel that they are almost out of their league. When they do succeed it should be by the skin of their teeth and – even then – their good deeds shouldn't go unpunished.

All the way through this phase, they should be seeing stories on television showing Squadron: Birmingham defeating powerful villains. Hopefully, you'll have an idea for a REALLY tough villain. Design him, and report that Squadron: Birmingham only just defeated him by the skin of their teeth. Later on, in the next phase of the campaign, you can pit him against the player-characters. Hopefully you'll get to see them panic.

If the Heroes mess up – or even if they don't – members of Squadron: Birmingham will turn up to set things right and “advise” (condescend to) them.

### Example

*If the Heroes fail to stop the Demon being summoned in Karma's scenario, or Beastmaster's giant dog gets loose, the “proper” Heroes can turn up to set things right.*

*Techknight is always happy to takes a couple of minutes to point out the tactics the characters should have used.*

### Training

During this part of the campaign, the characters should be slowly improving their derived characteristics and beginning to train, using Montage panels. This should be slow and unrewarding.

Give the characters ONE Montage panel each per adventure, no more.



They could train with a local football team - © Copyright Stephen McKay and licensed for reuse under the Creative Commons Licence

## Playing with the big boys (1)

During the next part of the campaign, the Heroes should begin to interact more closely with the local official Superhero team and – even – apply to join their ranks.

So that you can portray them properly, it's time to introduce them.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I present:

## Squadron: Birmingham!

As a major British city, Birmingham has had Superheroes operating on its streets since the industrial revolution – some claim even earlier.

As a centre for technological innovation, Birmingham has always been on the cutting edge of invention and one of the first Heroes was **Ironclad** – wearing steam-powered armour (invented by James Watt) and active from the late 18<sup>th</sup> century. This is the first recorded instance of a Superhero wearing powered armour anywhere in the world. (He was slow but strong.)

However, traditionally Birmingham's Heroes were few and tended to operate as individuals. With the massive redevelopment of Birmingham which started in the early 21<sup>st</sup> century, new waves of organised crime moved into the city. The solo heroes were overwhelmed and a new force was needed.

Squadron: Birmingham was born.

Over the years the team has had a rotating membership. Its numbers have fluctuated between 4 and 10 – not counting the occasional visits by Heroes from other cities or countries.



## Squadron: Birmingham

For the last couple of years, the team has operated with 5 members:

- Spearhead
- Miasma
- Warrior
- Technight
- Enigma

A few months ago, Spearhead was killed whilst saving the city from an invasion of Dinosaurs from the deep past.

Reduced to four members- its lowest roster ever – the team has faced further challenges as each of its members seems to be currently suffering from their own personal crises.

This has led to one of them – Enigma – quitting as this part of the campaign begins.

And then there were three.



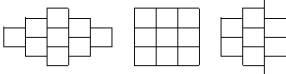
## Technight

Name: <b>Technight</b>				Alias: <b>Prof. Stan Craig</b>			
St (6) 37 (+3) +19	En 12  +6	Dx 11  +6	Ag 9  +5	Ps 13  +7	Es 15  +8	SI 13  +7	Fa 7  +4
Common Skills		Lvl	Trained Skills		Lvl	Move	
Computer Use		+15	Driving		+7	4/8/12	
First Aid		+12	Pilot		+7	Kn.Bk.	
Searching		+14	Programming		+7	49	
Spotting		+12	Criminology		+7	Dm.Md.	
Weightlifting		+25	Pharmacology		+7	+25	
Kill:	50			Stun:	50		
Attack		Kill	Stn	Mod	Notes		
Fist		d-5	2d	+25			
Plasma Blast		d	2d	-	Plus 10 dice over 4 rounds		
Superpowers, Background, Abilities							
Brilliant Scientist (Physics and Engineering)							
Protection 2 (Kill/4, Stun/3, -6 to Agility rolls – Quick change, immune to bullets/knives)							
Flight 2 (Accelerate at double usual rate, can act whilst accelerating)							
Strength 2 (Always braced, -5 to opponents' Knockback)							
Enhancement (Survival – space)							
Increased Move (Can strike blow in passing)							
Energy Blast 2 (Plasma, Single target, can bounce attacks)							
Background Story							
Brilliant Scientist – powered armour – 'nuff said.							
Technight currently suffers at least one critical failure to skill rolls in every adventure. Undue attention shouldn't be drawn to this but it must occur at a crucial juncture in every adventure.							
To be explained later.							

## Miasma





Name: <b>Miasma</b>				Alias: <b>Hope Starr</b>			
St	En	Dx	Ag	Ps	Es	Sl	Fa
8	9	8	9	15	14	16	8
+4	+5	+4	+5	+8	+7	+8	+4
Common Skills		Lvl	Trained Skills		Lvl	Move	
Searching		+15	Psychology		+8	4	
Spotting		+15	Criminology		+7	Kn.Bk.	
Negotiation		+12	Driving		+1	17	
Stealth		+9	Pilot		+1	Dm.Md.	
Business		+12	Entrepreneur		+7	-1	
Kill:	34			Stun:	33		
Attack		Kill	Stn	Mod	Notes		
Fist		d-5	2d	-1			
Psychic Blast		d	2d	-	6 dice per round		
<b>Superpowers, Background, Abilities</b>							
Psychic Background – attacks use Psyche and ignore most defences							
Change Form (Costume changes with her)							
Energy Sense (Psychic – can make it visible to others)							
Flight (No visible means of flight)							
Force Field 2 (Psychic – Random 22 points Solid – Invisible, can use psychic attacks through it)							
Image Generation (can be maintained while talking)							
Impossible Events (Physical transmutation – Permanent on a 20)							
Information (Mind-reading, -1 to opponent's Psyche dodges)							
Mind Control 2 (Can affect 8 targets at once, using voice and visual focus – Image generation)							
Energy Blast 3 (Psychic, 6 dice per round – single target, attack invisible, can ignore either Kill or Stun)							
<div></div>							
<b>Astral form:</b>							
Follower 2 (stats as above – Mental link, can act independently)							
Cloaking 2 (invisible whilst moving, “costume” changes with her, can become visible)							
State change (gaseous, costume changes with her)							
<b>Background Story</b>							
Miasma is an incredibly powerful, naturally gifted, psychic.							
She was apparently born with these abilities but they have developed as she has grown older.							
She has raised them to their current level through a strict, yoga-based, training regime.							
She has recently managed to create a separate physical entity which she calls her “Astral Form”. She uses this avatar for scouting.							
She cannot use any of her other abilities through her Astral Form.							
Miasma's skills and abilities have meant that the de facto leadership of Squadron: Birmingham has fallen upon her shoulders.							
More of this later.....							

## Warrior



Name: <b>Warrior</b>				Alias: <b>Elliott Stone</b>			
St	En	Dx	Ag	Ps	Es	Sl	Fa
(4) 42	(7) 25	15	12	14	12	8	12
(+2) +21	(+4) +13	+8	+6	+7	+6	+4	+6
Common Skills		Lvl	Trained Skills		Lvl	Move	
Weight-lifting		+36	Driving		+4	4	
Climbing		+26	Sky Diving		+7	Kn.Bk.	
Destruction		+26	Language (Russain)		+7	(29) 67	
Gambling		+12	Sea Diving		+7	Dm.Md.	
Swimming		+26	History (Cold War)		+7	(-5) +30	
Kill:	100 /5			Stun:	100 /4		
Attack	Kill	Stn	Mod	Notes			
Fist	d-5	2d	+30				
Superpowers, Background, Abilities							
Strength 3 (Slight build, +10 weightlifting)							
Protection 3 (Innate, unnoticeable, Immune to bullets/knives)							
Endurance (+5 Recovery)							
Fast Recovery (Can push recovery)							
Regeneration (Ages slowly)							
Survival (Air, Pressure) (Innate)							
Background Story							
Created by Government Agents to be a perfect spy during the Cold War.							
Wears a heavy costume. The team "brick" – 'nuff said.							



### Internal Conflicts

At this particular moment in time, each member of the Squadron is facing a personal crisis of some kind.

#### Enigma

Basically, Enigma is an Elf. He has magical occult powers, pointed ears, great senses and is mustard with a bow.

He is always jolly and treats life as one big party. As his pre-recorded, televised resignation speech makes clear – he can no longer stand working with the poe-faced bunch of depressives that his team-mates have become. OK so there have been setbacks but you face life's trials with a smile and a song in your heart. Warrior doesn't even come out for drinks any more.

Enigma hasn't been seen since he quit. Rumour has it that he has returned to the "Faerie Realm". He'll probably return in a century or two.

#### Miasma

A couple of months ago, Miasma came into direct mental conflict with the villain known as PSICLONE. Though no one but her will ever know just how brutal the psychic battle was, she was forced to shred her opponent's mind. His mindless husk now resides in a secret sanatorium.

This is an experience she never wants to repeat. Consequently, she has been holding back from using the full force of her psychic powers in combat. This may have contributed to the team's recent lack of success and – even – the death of Spearhead. If only she'd tried to destroy those Raptors minds instead of controlling them....

#### Warrior

The people's Hero has always been a beacon of justice – ever since he turned his back on the evils of covert Government operations in the 1950's.

However, like Miasma he was recently forced into a brutal to-the-death one-on-one battle with his oldest foe - THE ETERNAL COSSACK. During the battle, Warrior was forced to beat the Cossack to death with his bare hands.

Since then the erstwhile outgoing public Hero has become taciturn and uncommunicative. He remains almost as popular as ever with the general public who – it seems – share his pain to a far larger extent than they do Miasma's.

#### Technight

Stan Craig has always been a genius – being able to fabricate the wildest of inventions in short order out of the flotsam and jetsam of modern living.

Recently, however, it seems that his gift has abandoned him. Not only has the flow of new ideas dried up, even his previous successes seem to be developing unaccountable faults. Whenever he tried to trace the faults they always seem to be due to minor errors made by Stan himself during maintenance and upgrading. This is – of course – intolerable.

Perhaps he needs a holiday. However, his city and his team-mates need him more than ever right now.

### Rejection

Following the departure of Enigma, Squadron: Birmingham will take the radical step of publicly appealing for new members.

*You may wish to run this as a "reality" TV show. That's not to my tastes.*

The characters may choose to apply to be members of the Squadron.

Interviews will take place at the Squadron's public offices. These are at the top of the ROTUNDA.

This is a landmark building in Birmingham City centre. It is distinctive for being perfectly cylindrical and towers a full 25 storeys (!) above the city below.

During the interviews, Technight will point out all the times the characters have stopped minor crimes and helped the citizens of Birmingham in small ways. He will also point out their relative lack of power and the times they have inadvertently interfered with the course of a Police investigation or cut across the Squadron's activities.

The characters will be rejected.

Of course you can always choose to have one character accepted on the proviso that he cuts all ties with his current group. Make sure you pick a character who will refuse this offer.

Matters will be made worse by the fact that the Squadron DO take on one new member, a flash young guy called Dynamo. He has quite impressive lightning powers but nothing like the characters' track record.





## Dynamo

I'm not going to give you any character details on Dynamo. He's just a 2D cardboard cut-out filling a slot in the campaign. If he appears in any Scenarios featuring the characters, just make up his abilities as you go along. He isn't important.

His job is to annoy the characters and to die at an appropriate moment. He doesn't deserve a character sheet of his own.

## Playing with the Big Boys (2)

The characters will have to pick themselves up following their rejection and get themselves back in the game.

Fortunately, their old nemeses Frostorm and Firefly will choose this moment to escape from the prison and take up their old life of crime – probably bolstered by crooks they've met whilst doing porridge. They'll either go straight back to hiring themselves out to the highest bidder or they'll seek revenge upon the player-characters for putting them away in the first place.

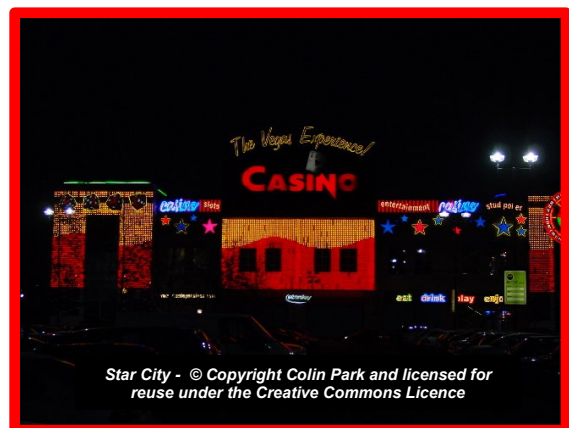
None of the adventures the Heroes take part in during this phase of the campaign will be in the City Centre.

So this one will be an apparent robbery of the Casino at STAR CITY – an entertainment complex in Erdington in the North part of the city. Whether it's actually a robbery or just a lure to trap the Heroes in an ambush is up to you.

It's important that the players build up an on-going relationship with these two baddies – or whoever it is you've designed to fill their place in your version of the campaign.

As well as bringing along one or more bad guys they met in prison, the two villains will also have been upgraded through the expenditure of Montage Panels:

- They can act in any order – regardless of their abilities – because they have trained together.
- They will have developed a co-ordinated attack. Whenever one of them hits a target which has just been hit by their cohort, they will do a bonus die of damage to both Kill and Stun to represent the sudden heating/cooling. By preference, in any round where they get more than one consecutive panel, they will alternate their attacks to gain these bonus dice on every attack.
- Firefly has developed his Force Field. It can be either Hard or Soft at his choice. As long as it is Hard, it will absorb all damage until 24 Kill is done to it in a single panel. It will then be disrupted – and cannot be used in either its Hard or Soft form – for 24 hours. It takes a panel to switch between types.
- Frostorm has developed the ability to swathe a target's head in ice, blinding them. (-10 in skill rolls.)



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## Squadron: Birmingham

The Heroes should foil this plot, though there's always the possibility that they'll need the help of Squadron: Birmingham to finally wrap things up. Especially if they are defeated and get put in a deathtrap by the vengeful villains.

This should be typical of the adventures the Heroes have in this part of the campaign. People they have met before will return to hassle them.

### Examples

*Magicians and Demons from Karma's background. Supercharged individuals produced by the same process as Cascade. Beastmaster's minions etc.*

An important and useful returning character is Stockade. It's unlikely that Heroes will be able to stop his robberies but he doesn't actually harm anyone – not seriously at least – and the Heroes may come to understand and – even – sympathise with his plight.

None of their adventures will take place in the City Centre and very few of them will be reported in the Birmingham Mail, let alone on television or in the National press.

All the time the characters will see Squadron: Birmingham's exploits on their TV's. They WILL be fighting in the city centre – in the Bull Ring Shopping Centre or in Victoria Square. They'll be fighting really impressive villains such as TIME LORD and his dinosaur horde.

The character's should feel a little bit miffed – especially as they see Dynamo's Esteem growing at a much faster rate than their own.

### In the fold

Then, suddenly, the characters will get a call from the Birmingham Metropolitan Police or Birmingham Council. The council has received blackmail threats – possibly from TIME LORD threatening to invade with a Roman Legion or aliens proposing the conquer the city – and Squadron: Birmingham are nowhere to be found.

The characters should defeat the threat – gaining an appropriate and overdue boost to their derived characteristics.

Then they should turn their thoughts to tracing the missing Superhero team.

Breaking into their base at the Rotunda will be extremely difficult.

The defences were created by Technight and he is a certified genius.

You should run a session with the players' characters versus the Rotunda. If they succeed in breaking, they will discover that – whilst the Squadron's public offices occupy the top floor of the building – their real base is spread across a series of sub-terranean levels below it.

If the Heroes fail to crack the Rotunda, they can always have a chat to people they know are in the Squadron's confidence.

Eventually they'll find out that Squadron: Birmingham had discovered that THE CYBERLORD had returned and was operating out of the chocolate factory in Bournville. They have gone to shut his operation down.

### Bournville

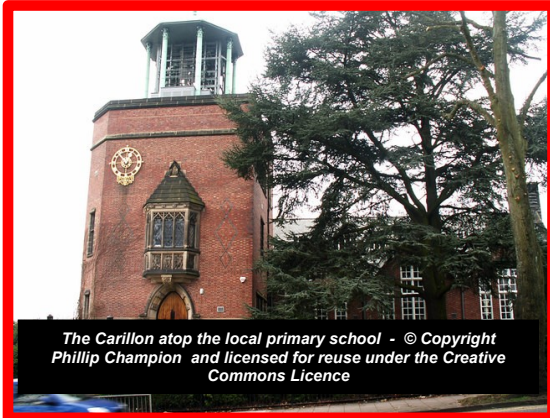
Heaven upon earth. When George Cadbury and his brother built a chocolate factory in the south of Birmingham in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century – George bought acres of land around the factory and built a garden village for his workers in order to 'alleviate the evils of modern more cramped living conditions'.

The village, like the factory itself, is built around the Bourne Brook and was christened "Bournville". Dotted with small parks and with development strictly controlled by the Bournville Village Trust, it is a beautiful and relaxed place to live. As the Cadbury family were strict quakers, there are no public houses within the confines of Bournville.

The factory itself is the nearest thing on earth to Willy Wonka's fictional establishment. As well as the facilities to produce the finest world-famous chocolate products, it boasts sporting and entertainment facilities provided by George Cadbury for the benefit of his workers.



Bournville Village Green - © Copyright Phillip Champion and licensed for reuse under the Creative Commons Licence



In recent years, visitors have been welcomed into the factory through a custom built venue designed to entertain them whilst showing them the history of chocolate, the Cadbury family and the Bournville estate.

As you stroll along the banks of the Bourne Brook, drifting from park to park - possibly stopping to watch the model yachts on the yachting pool – you smell the rich aroma of chocolate from the nearby factory and hear the strains of the Carillon (a rare musical instrument which uses a bell tower to play actual, beautiful tunes) echoing through the air, you realise you are in paradise.

What foul scheme could the villainous Cyberlord be plotting in this haven of havens?

Basically he's using nanites – tiny robots – to take over the local populace. The previously friendly Bournville village has become a place of taciturn residents and suspicious stares who might turn on the Heroes in a mob at a moment's notice.

*You've seen enough horror films to know what I'm on about. Think **Stepford Wives** or **Village of the Damned**.*

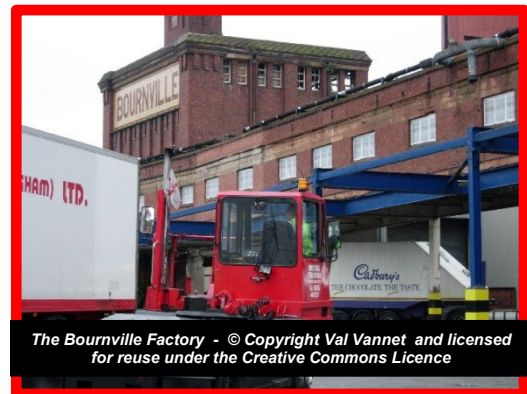
If they manage to get into the factory itself, they'll find it filled with Cyberlord's robots. Boy, does this guy like his robots!

His plan is to fill the chocolate products coming out of the factory with nanites. This should bring enough of the country's population under his direct control to allow him and his robot army to take over – especially given how many members of the current Government are known to have a sweet tooth.

When Squadron: Birmingham moved in to stop him, the problem was that Cyberlord knew their exact abilities and had already constructed robots custom-designed to defeat them.

(He's currently using Dynamo to recharge many of his robots allowing them to have more active at any given time than usual.)

The characters are an unknown quantity and, therefore, should have a chance of defeating Cyberlord. At the very least they should be able to release the captive Squadron: Birmingham. Together, the two teams should triumph – especially as the Squadron will be able to direct the player characters to take on those robots specifically designed to negate the Squadron's powers.



## A Second Chance

If they want it, Squadron: Birmingham are willing to offer the characters a second chance at qualifying for the team.

Having just been rescued the Squadron are willing to eat a little bit of humble pie here, as long as the characters don't push things too much.

The players' characters will still have to pass an interview though. They'll be invited to the Squadron's secret base beneath the Rotunda to audition.

There's a chance of some humour here if Techknight discovers the damage done by the characters when they tried to break in during the previous chapter.

The characters will audition by taking on Techknight, Dynamo and a handful of security drones in a mock battle in the Squadron's training facility.

At first the odds will seem stacked against the Heroes as Techknight and Dynamo seem to be able to shrug off any damage done by the characters.





## Squadron: Birmingham

Sooner or later, however, they'll realise that these are not the real Squadron members they are fighting – but robot avatars. Once they realise this, they will be able to cut loose with Kill damage and defeat them.

This may take two or three tries. If the Heroes lose the first battle, let them lick their wounds and try again. Sooner or later they'll be able to kick the Squadron's butt.

*This is a key scene. As soon as it is over, make notes of exactly what the Heroes did and what they said. This will prove extremely important later.*

When things are settled, the characters will be officially welcomed to the team on a probationary basis. Techknight will be assigned as their training officer.

### Real Heroes

They've made it! The characters are now fully-fledged members of Squadron: Birmingham. Not only will their derived characteristics get a boost but – with the access to the Squadron's facilities – the characters will get twice as many Montage panels and improve a lot faster.

The next few adventures should be about Techknight taking them out to deal with real threats to the city. If there are any loose ends from the character's backgrounds around, Techknight will assist in tying them up.

### Example

*That Coven that's been causing Karma so much hassle can be closed down once and for all. Techknight will analyse the frequencies generated by Coven when they open their gates to hell. He will then produce a counter frequency which will close the supernatural doorway – forever.*

Techknight will even start discussing the possibility of most of the characters becoming full members of the Squadron. (It's much funnier if one of the characters isn't seen to be making the grade.)

You should create the feeling that the campaign is effectively over. The Heroes have achieved their goal and everyone should be starting to get a bit bored with how samey everything is.

Start to discuss starting a new campaign or ask the players if any of them fancy taking the reins for a bit.

Try to put them off their guard.







## The Twist

Try to come up with one last stunning scenario for the characters to play in. If there are any plot-lines still un-resolved, especially from their backgrounds, run an adventure to tidy them up.

Then, towards the end of the evening's play, when everyone is packing their bags away, say that Techknight has called them all to his office – on the lowest level of Squadron: Birmingham's base – for a debrief. Everyone suspects he is going to give them their badges of membership and throw them a surprise party. Try to put the players off their guard.

When they arrive at his office they find Techknight and Dynamo dead. Slaughtered. Their dismembered bodies scattered about the room.

Miasma's voice will echo through the PA:

"Fools! You've played your parts well. Now there's only one thing left for you to do – DIE!"

The characters hear the sound of distant explosions and falling masonry. Pre-set charges have been detonated and the Rotunda is being demolished directly above their heads.

## Versus the Rotunda

Hopefully the players will be a little bit jaded, a little bit tired and caught totally off guard. Run this next bit at great speed and don't let them slow you down.

Roll initiative as normal. Every panel the "villains" get, the collapsing masonry will do 1d10 kill and 1d10 stun to every character. This can be dodged or parried but will cost future panels.

Whatever the players try, there is no way out up or sideways. The only way out is down.

For every 10 Kill they manage to do to the floor of the base, they will be able to negate one die of damage that round as they dig down to avoid the falling concrete.

When they've done 50 Kill, the characters will break through into a secret sub-basement. Anyone making a Spot roll will see a large bag in the corner.

They may choose to bring it with them as they keep digging down. The collapsing Rotunda is still falling on them.

Keep the attack coming mercilessly until one (or – at your option – two) characters fall to minus Kill points and are hospitalised. At this point the characters break through into a subterranean canyon and plummet into the darkness below.

This is where the evening's play ends.

*And, hopefully, one of the older players will say "You can't stop there Mr Derek!"*



## The Real Story

*OK, Sherlock, what's the deal here? All the clues are there.....*

The real Villain of the piece is, of course, PSICLONE. During his mental battle with Miasma, he managed to switch bodies with her. The "real" Miasma is in a coma locked inside Psiclone's aging body whilst the villain enjoys her youth and health (and gender).

Having replaced the psychic Heroine, he has set out to bring down Squadron: Birmingham from within.



## Squadron: Birmingham

Spearhead was easy. Using his/her Psychic abilities to slow the Hero's responses whilst causing the dinosaur horde to concentrate their attacks upon her proved child's play.

Then Psiclone distracted and delayed the team to give the Eternal Cossack time to defeat and batter to death the real Warrior. It didn't take much to convince the Baltic Bad-guy to swap costumes with his foe and take his place within the team.

Enigma and Techknight proved to be more stubborn. Despite Psiclone messing with his mind, to cause catastrophic equipment failure, Techknight stubbornly refused to have a fatal accident. His tech was just too good. And the Elf was just too unpredictable to manipulate.

Matters came to a head when Enigma became suspicious and had to be disposed of directly. He put up a good fight against the combined might of the Cossack and Psiclone, scoring arrow strikes against both of them before falling himself. But fall he did.

This meant Psiclone had to fake a "resignation" video. Then he/she had to come up with some way of disposing of Techknight without throwing suspicion upon him/herself. Enter the characters.

Originally he/she wanted to frame Dynamo but the young Hero proved too ineffectual for that to be believable.

I wanted you to experience the twist at the same time the players do. However, hopefully you're reading ahead and have reached this point before playing that part of the campaign.

If so, you may choose to drop a couple of clues about the true state of affairs:

- Techknight's equipment failures
- The disappearance of Enigma
- Official records of the Warrior's abilities report him to have Martial Arts skills and he is strong but not THAT strong
- The off-hand attitude of Miasma and Warrior

Don't give away too much, however. If in doubt, give the players no clues at all – other than Techknight's once per game critical failure.

The ideal situation is if you can get just one player suspicious but ridicule those suspicions in front of the other players so that they are accused of paranoia. It's great when they say "I told you so..." as the Rotunda implodes.

### Into the Dark

So our battered Heroes are trapped deep beneath the earth. Some of them are severely injured and all have taken serious damage.

The way they came in is blocked by rubble far above them. They are trapped and alone with only their wits and abilities to allow them to survive and escape.

Fortunately, there seems to be plenty of air down here. They won't need water or food for a couple of days so the real need at the moment is light. Hopefully, one of the characters will be able to provide this – if only from a discharge of their energy blast.

When they manage to illuminate their surroundings they will notice three things. Firstly, they are in a cavern. Secondly, a pallid figure will hurry from the cavern into an adjacent tunnel. Thirdly, that bag they bought with them contains Enigma's body.





From all around comes the sound of movement.

We're in classic horror film territory here. The Heroes have to creep through tunnels facing attack by sub-human creatures which live in the dark.

These creatures are fairly weak:

Damage: 1d Kill and 2d Stun

Skills: They strike at +5 to hit and can see in the dark.

Movement: 5 squares.

Knockback: 20 but this is irrelevant due to the cramped nature of these tunnels.

They are rendered unconscious or dead by any attack with a bonus of any kind.

They may be dodged for free as long as the character has panels available.

However, they are numberless. They may attack en masse at any time the characters are in darkness. In addition, once out of the cavern and into the tunnels, the characters move at half speed due to the cramped conditions.

As they move through the tunnels the characters will encounter the following issues and challenges:

- Forks in the tunnel
- Chasms which need to be crossed
- Low tunnels which require them to bend over giving -5 to all skill rolls, including in combat
- The smell of gas
- An explosion of gas (up to 5d10 Kill and Stun at your option)
- A narrow tunnel which can only be negotiated one at a time on their bellies
- A cave-in which could do damage and/or separate the team
- A cave blocked by water which may or may not open up ahead if they can hold their breaths for long enough
- Anything else you can think of – depending upon the horror films you've seen

Given their depleted Stun and Kill and their injured comrades, this should prove a real challenge for the Heroes.

The skill here is to put in enough perils to endanger the Heroes without killing them all outright.





## Squadron: Birmingham

Anyone defeated by the humanoids will be taken away. They will not be killed, however. The humanoids are not cannibals – they live off the natural fungi which grow down here. They want the characters to swell their numbers.

Captured characters will be taken to a large cavern. In the centre of the cavern is a huge glowing crystal. Anyone exposed to the energies coming off the crystal for an extended period of time will degenerate into a humanoid themselves. Any captured character will be strapped to the crystal until they de-evolve.

The leader of the humanoids is a huge hulking entity. If anyone can defeat him in single combat, they will become the leader of the humanoids.

Nominally he has 50 Kill and Stun and divides all damage done by 2.

He has a +25 damage modifier and strikes at +7.

However, if none of the players are currently able to defeat him one-on-one you should feel free to reduce his abilities appropriately.

A good trick to play is to pit a slightly underpowered character against the humanoid's leader. Then, as they are losing, they will be knocked back into the crystal. It will crumble behind them and shards will scour their body. Give them an immediate one level boost to one of their powers. (Strength is the obvious one.) They can use their boosted powers to defeat their opponent.

The boost can happen to any power regardless of the level currently possessed. It could boost a level 3 power to level 4, for example.

If the Heroes win, the humanoids will release them and lead them out of the cavern, through the tunnels and back to the surface world.

### Mutations

Anyone who was strapped to the crystal will feel sick during the journey out of the tunnels and will collapse, retching and helpless, when they reach the surface.

Anyone who was in the cavern will begin to feel sick later.

Anyone who did not enter the cavern will not feel sick at all – though their player might.....

All characters who were exposed to the strange radiation will undergo a mutation. Unless they have already received this benefit during the combat above, they may:

- Roll for a new Superpower
- Upgrade an existing Level 1 Superpower to Level 2.
- Upgrade their ½ level power to level 1 and then choose an new ½ level power

All upgrades must be logical and approved by the Referee.

### Recovery

By now the characters will have been battered by the collapsing Rotunda. Some may not have recovered from that yet. Almost everyone else will have suffered from the privations of their sojourn beneath the Earth. In addition, everyone will be sick from the mutations currently racking their bodies.

They will emerge from below ground onto the wooded slopes of the Lickey Hills. (These lie to the South West of Birmingham.)

The sickly characters will be found by Alma McMartin, a local artist, as she scours the woods to replenish her store of natural pigments. One by one she'll escort the characters back to her cottage and begin to nurse them back to health.







Alma is beautiful, talented and a low-level psychic. She will immediately recognise the characters but her psychic ability will inform her of their innate natures. She will help them, regardless of what she has heard on the radio.

The characters will recover in a lovely cottage filled with wild flowers and watercolours. They will eat rabbit stew and mushroom soup flavoured with wild herbs. Alma might fall in love with one of them.

### Blacklists

As soon as they are strong enough, Alma will allow them to listen to the radio. She will also pull out her battered old laptop and plug it into her telephone port. They'll then discover exactly why they can't go to a hospital to recover.

The story being put out on the media is that the characters infiltrated Squadron: Birmingham and slaughtered Techknight and Dynamo.

Film is shown of the characters brutally attacking the two heroes.

*I told you to write down what happened during their "audition". Anything they did or said then will now come back to haunt them.*

*If any of the characters tore off the head off Techknight's robot avatar, for example, this will be clearly shown – though a bit of blood may have been photo-shopped in to cover the wires.*

The villainous characters were only stopped when Warrior bravely managed to bring the Rotunda down on top of them. Warrior barely survived himself and is currently recovering in the Superhero wing of Selly Oak hospital.

This left Miasma alone to defend Birmingham from the ravages of Supercrime. Fortunately, new Heroes have stepped forward to fill the breach:

ICE WARRIOR – an armoured warrior who uses his ice cannon to defeat villainy.

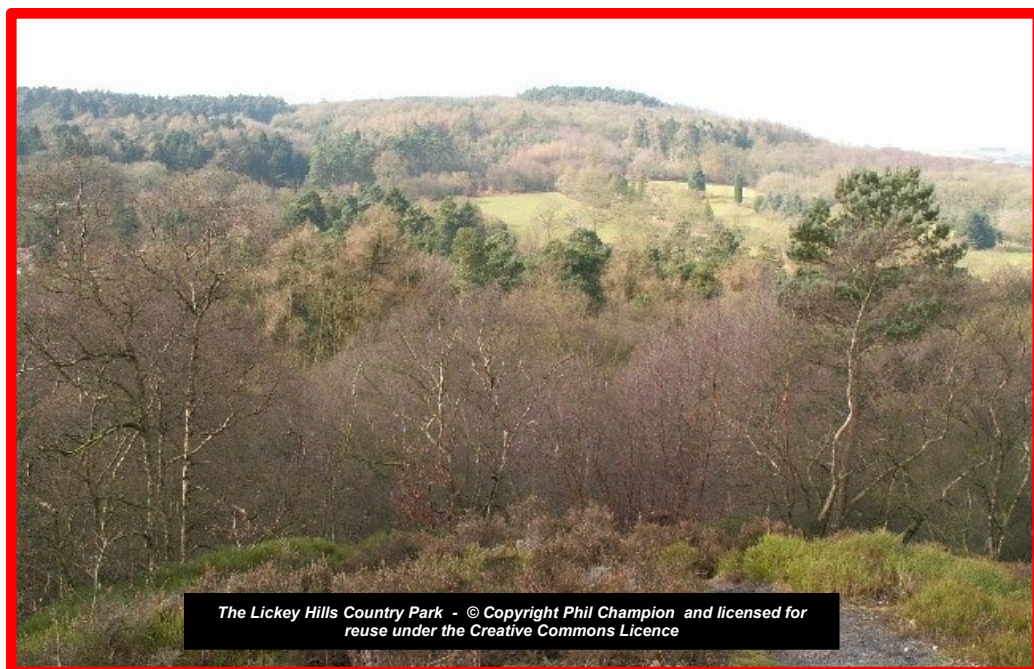
THE FLAME OF JUSTICE – a flying hero, wreathed in fire, who uses fireballs to combat crime.

It won't take much to realise that these are the Heroes' old foes Frostorm and Firefly in the most flimsy of disguises.

You should also throw in any other villains the Heroes have met during the campaign – Beastmaster and his minions, possibly. Try to get the roster of the new Squadron: Birmingham up to 8 or so.

So everyone thinks the Heroes are villains. They are presumed dead but – if they were to re-appear – they'd be arrested. They're outnumbered by a team consisting of some of their oldest enemies.

Things are about to get interesting.....





### End-game

First of all, give your characters the lowest Derived Characteristics they've ever had. It doesn't matter how Heroic they are, everyone thinks they're evil. Their Esteem scores should go through the floor.

Then listen to the Heroes plan. Hopefully they won't propose going to the authorities, the media or super-teams from neighbouring cities with "the truth". No-one will believe them. Even if they've got Enigma's body still (why haven't they given it a decent burial?) who's to say they didn't kill him as well?

This would also throw away the one advantage they have – the fact that everyone thinks they're dead.

You players will, hopefully, be able to come up with ideas other than simply charging into town to confront the baddies. Personally, I can think of:

- Getting a tape recorder! When they do finally face Miasma/Psiclone they've got to get him/her to gloat and explain the plot and either record it or transmit it live via the internet.
- Guerilla warfare – picking off the faux Squadron: Birmingham a couple at a time.
- Recruiting allies (1) – villains. Not everyone they've faced will have joined the Squadron. Maybe they'll realise that they have mutual enemies. Stockade –in particular – will track them down.

The strange energy they are now giving off could hold the key to bringing him back to visibility. He will trade his services in return for knowledge of the source of that radiation.

- Recruiting allies (2) – contacts. Hopefully by now they've got some people in the Police and Underworld who trust and believe in them.
- Recruiting allies (3) – the underworld humanoids.
- Recruiting allies (4) – Engima's people – if they can be found.
- Recruiting allies (5) – if any of the Heroes are Brilliant Engineers, remember, they know where the remnants of Cyberlord's robot army is stored...
- If the heroes can locate Psiclone's body maybe they can resurrect the real Miasma. At the very least she'll be able to engage him in psychic combat during the climactic battle.

The war has only just begun. Bringing down the evil Squadron: Birmingham won't happen overnight.

*If Enigma's people are located, for example, they may wish the Heroes to undertake a quest to prove their worthiness.*

However, hopefully your players are cunning enough to weaken the bad-guys sufficiently for them to have chance when the final battle is joined. And to gain the evidence to clear their names and prove themselves worthy of taking the mantle of Squadron: Birmingham for themselves.





## Picture Credits

I'm extremely grateful to all those strangers who put their pictures of Birmingham up on the 'net and allow people like me to use them.

However, as well as crediting them the "Creative Commons Licence" says I have to give you the Internet links to the pictures URL's. So here they are:

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stephenhanafin ON Flickr

and a screen-shot of Spaghetti Junction from Google Earth:

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## Appendix 1: Superpowers

This appendix contains a listing of all the Superpowers listed on the tables given in the Chapter on “Birth of a Hero”.

They are listed in alphabetical order.

Many powers listed here actually cover a variety of powers from comics and films depending upon the exact background story. I've given alternative names for the powers to give you and your players further ideas or – if needed – a nudge to your imaginations.

*For example, the power “Follower” can represent a Butler or a pet Bird. At higher levels, it can represent a Sidekick or – if multiple followers are taken – a Superpower such as “Replication”.*

### Levels

All powers have higher levels (see Character Creation). Many higher levels have a choice of options. Each option counts as a higher level in its own right. Only one option can be taken for each higher level. The player must pick one option when then character is created and this cannot be changed later.

*For example, the Hero “Firewall” has Enhancement at level 2. His player decides that Firewall has a wider range of powers he can choose from for his enhancement. “Crescent” also has Enhancement level 2. His player decides that Crescent will keep the two Enhancement powers he gained at level 1. However, he can grant those abilities to other people with a touch.*

All powers have half levels (see Character Creation). These allow the character to take two half-level powers instead of one first level power, when the Hero first gains their powers. Once done, these may not be taken to higher levels as part of the Character Creation process. They remain at half-level.

The only way a player could enhance these abilities would be through the expenditure of Montage Panels later in the campaign.

They may not choose any gimmicks for their half-level powers.

### Gimmicks

In addition to enhancements and/or options which are given at higher levels, superpowers also come with gimmicks. The player may select one gimmick at each level of the power.

These are minor customisations of the superpowers which allow the player to further tailor their Hero's unique abilities.

*For example, FIREWALL has a Flame Energy Blast at level 2. He chooses gimmicks which increase the area he can affect and which reduce the effect of armour against his attack.*

*CRESCENDO has a Sonic Energy Blast. He chooses gimmicks which let him target an attack on a single target and to only do Stun damage.*

Where appropriate, players may select the same gimmick more than once if the Hero has more than one level in the power.

*For example, “Maverick” has Agility level 2. He may choose to have +5 on climbing rolls and an extra +1 on dodge rolls.*

*Alternatively, he could choose to have either +10 on climbing rolls or +2 on all Dodge rolls.*

If a character has a half-level power, they do not choose any gimmicks for that power.

### Rationalisation

The player should come up with an explanation for how their powers work, possibly based upon the events they have been caught up with within the campaign.

The exact levels taken in each power, the options taken and gimmick taken at each level should all be consistent with this explanation.

As Referee, you must agree with the player's explanation before he can finalise the details of his Hero.

See Chapter 2 for an example of an appropriate explanation (DARK CHAMELEON.)

### Using Superpowers

All Superpowers take a panel to use unless otherwise specified.

Some Superpowers may be used at any time without time penalty.

*For example - “Strength”.*

Others require concentration. The character cannot move or perform other actions whilst using the power.



## Appendix 1: Superpowers

*For example – “Cloaking” Level 1 (Invisibility.)*

Other powers may be time-limited. This means that they can only be used for a number of panels equal to the character's Psyche SCORE. After this time the power will automatically fail and will require a panel to re-activate.

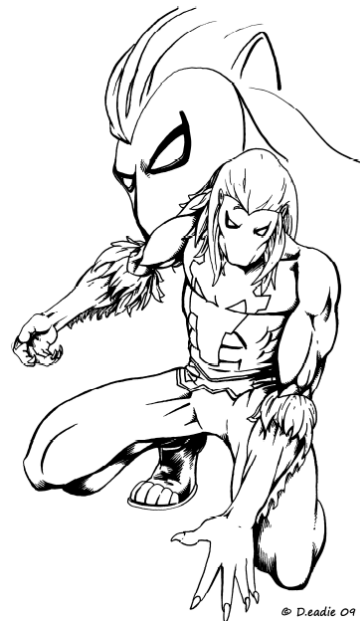
If the character wishes to re-activate the power earlier than this point, they must use a panel to de-activate it first. The power cannot be used continually.

*For example – If THE HUNTER has “Cloaking” Level 1 (Chameleon) and a Psyche score of 12, he can remain cloaked for 12 consecutive panels before becoming visible.*

*If he chooses, he can use a panel to become visible after - say - 7 panels and another to re-cloak for 12 further panels.*

Other powers may be used at a range. Unless otherwise specified, the range is equal to the character's Psyche MODIFIER.

*For example – If THE TRACKER has “Cloaking” Level 2, a Psyche of 11 and has chosen Chameleon with added range - he can “cloak” a man-sized object within 6 squares.*



### Acrobatics

(Gymnastics, Agility)

The character is extremely nimble and agile and is far more likely to be able to perform acrobatic feats – such as dodging attacks – than other people.

For each level of this power possessed, the character gets +2 per level to their Dodge rolls and +5 per level to any Skill rolls based on Agility.

#### Gimmicks:

- Use one particular skill based on Agility (for example, climbing) with a further +5 bonus.
- A +5 bonus on the Agility roll when making it as part of a Combined Action. (For example, vaulting a car to kick at an opponent.)
- A further +1 dodge bonus.
- -1 modifier on opponents' dodge
- -1 modifier on opponents' parry

*For example, MAVERICK has Agility level 2. He may choose to have +5 on climbing rolls and an extra +1 on dodge rolls.*

*Alternatively, he could choose to have +10 on climbing rolls or +2 on all Dodge rolls.*

**½ level:** The Hero gets +1 on Dodge rolls and +2 on Agility Skill rolls.

## Change form

(Disguise, Shapechange, Doppelganger, Stretch, Deform)

The character has control over their physical form and can make it change its appearance and (at higher levels) shape.

**Level 1:** The character can change themselves into any humanoid form. Basically, they can disguise themselves as other people, appropriate animals (simians, ursine) or humanoid aliens.

*For example, they could disguise themselves as a Supervillain or an Ape.*

**Higher levels:** Choose from the following options:

- change into a non-humanoid shape (of the same size)
- change size (plus or minus one size category per level, see the Object Table in the Combat Section).
- can stretch or deform shape though staying basically humanoid in form. Maximum Stretch is equal to Psyche Skill Modifier in squares.
- The ability to change colour (-4 to sleuthing rolls made to spot the character if they are trying to merge into the background.)

In addition to these specific higher level upgrades, the character gets on additional gimmick per level

- +1 to stun divider if it is used as a response to combat (dodge or parry).
- Has a costume which changes shape with the character
- Has a costume which changes colour with the character
- Mimickry - skill (at basic level, no modifiers).

*For example, PLASTO has Change Shape Level 3. He can imitate humanoid figures of any size from -1 to +1 in size and can Stretch up to 6 squares. His gimmicks are a costume that deforms with him and +2 to his Stun modifier when he Dodges or Parries.*

**½ level:** It takes time and equipment to disguise themselves.

## Cloaking

(Invisibility, Chameleon Ability)

The character has the ability to make themselves difficult to see.

**Level 1** – The character can choose from either:

- Chameleon ability (-5 sleuthing rolls to perceive them) without concentration and with full movement.

Or

- Totally invisibility (-10 Sleuthing rolls) but with concentration - cannot move.

**Higher levels:** Choose from the following options:

- Can be invisible without concentration
- Can pass effect onto other objects/targets - requires touch at first level taken.
- Can pass effect onto other objects/targets - at range equal to Psyche Modifier (higher levels)
- In each case the effect is time-limited (by Psyche Score) at the first level taken.

**Gimmicks:**

- Can appear/disappear as part of a combined action whilst moving
- If an effect requires concentration – is able to talk whilst maintaining it.
- Has a costume which changes with them
- +2 squares increase in range of transmitted effects.

*For example – THE TRACKER has “Cloaking” Level 2, a Psyche of 11 and has chosen Chameleon with added range. His gimmicks are a costume which changes with him and increased range. He can “cloak” a man-sized object within 8 squares.*

**½ level** – Chameleon ability but with full concentration - cannot move.



### Endurance

(Vigour, health, stamina, constitution)

The character is uncommonly fit and healthy.

**Level 1:** Their Endurance score goes up to 20+d6 – with a commensurate increase in their Kill and Stun totals

**Higher levels:** Endurance increases by another 5+d6 per level.

*You should insist that this power is clearly rationalised - especially at higher levels. Merely saying that a character is "Super Fit" would not explain all the extra Kill and Stun points.*

This power has no effect on the character's Knockback score which is usually based upon their original Endurance roll.

Gimmicks:

- +5 to knockback score
- +5 to recovery rolls
- Immune to one specified disease
- Needs 50% less sleep than normal people

**½ level:** The character has an Endurance of 20



### Energy Blast

(Zap, Energy Attack, Flame-thrower, Disruption etc. etc.)

The character has the ability to discharge energy in a way that is harmful to targets. Or similar powers with the same effect. (Hail of metal, for example.)

The exact type of energy or attack must be specified when the character is created. The individual details of the attack (see below) must be selected to be compatible with this form of energy.

*I can give you a list of possible energy types if you want (Heat, Cold, Light, Sound, Electrical, Plasma, Cosmic, Radiation, Nuclear etc. etc.) but it's much better to make your players choose the type they want.*

**Level 1:** The attack does the usual 1d and 2d damage (which can be either mainly on Kill or Stun at a player's choice). The character gains bonus dice to add to this attack.

These bonus dice are gained at 2 dice per round. However, the maximum number of dice which can be added to any given attack is limited by the number of rounds it takes the character to recover their energy.

For each round it takes the character to recover their dice, they have 2 dice in their dice pool which can be allocated in any way they want.

Characters may not have a recovery period of more than 5 rounds.

Their dice pool may never exceed the maximum. Unused dice do not "carry over".

At least one extra die must be allocated to every attack. A character who has used all their bonus dice cannot use their Energy to attack until they have recovered them.

There can never be more than two dice difference between the total rolled for Kill damage and the total rolled for Stun damage. (Hence the smallest attack will be with one added die will be. eg. 1d Kill and 3d Stun.)

The energy affects all targets within a specific area. This area must be detailed by the player when the character is first created and may not be varied. The area covers 9 squares.

Typical arrangements are listed overleaf.

## Appendix 1: Superpowers

- a 3 by 3 arrangement to simulate a burst pattern or cloud
- 9 squares in a straight line away from the character to represent a ray or beam
- A triangle fanning away from the character
- 9 squares in a straight line transverse to the character to represent a "wall" of energy

The range of the blast is equal to the character's Psyche SCORE. The last square of the area must be within this range squares of the character otherwise the attack is at extreme range and suffers negative penalties in the strike roll as detailed in combat.

*The area of effect should be chosen with this in mind. Characters with a Psyche score of less than 9 may not choose the "beam" area effect.*

The last square of the area can never be more than double Psyche in squares away from the character even at extreme range. (Unless the additional range gimmick is taken.)

**Higher levels:** Apply the appropriate option.

Either:

- If the character has a recovery period of more than one round, reduce the recovery period by one round.

Or:

- If the character has a recovery period of one round, add 2 to their pool of bonus dice.

In addition to the above boost, the character also gets one extra area of 9 squares.

In addition to the above, the attack has one special effect.



Typical special effects are:

- The ability to focus the attack on a single target if desired
- Extended range (+2 squares)
- The ability to reduce target's protection by 1 level to both Kill and Stun. For example – armour which normally divides damage by 3 will only divide the damage from this attack by 2.
- The attack can be created from different sources e.g. Hands and Eyes.
- Larger area of effect (+2 squares)
- Bouncing the attack off surfaces
- Bending the attack around corners
- The ability to ignore either the Kill or Stun damage (to simulate Radiation or Stunner attacks). Dice are still expended as normal, but their effects are ignored.
- Manifestations (eg. Ice walls, sky-writing)

*For example, FIREWALL has a Flame Energy Blast at level 2. He chose 2 dice recovered over 1 round at level 1 so - at level 2 - he has 4 dice which he recovers every round.*

*He can create a Fireball (3 square by 3 square effect) and a Fire Wall (9 squares in a line transversely in front of him).*

*He chooses gimmicks which increase the area he can affect (his Fire Wall is now 11 squares long) and which reduce the effect of armour against his attack. (-1 on both Kill and Stun dividers).*

*"Crescendo" has a Sonic Energy Blast. He chose 10 dice recovered over 5 rounds at level 1 so - at level 2 - he has 10 dice which he recovers every 4 rounds. He choose two triangular areas of effect which simulate a cone of sound in front of him.*

*He chooses gimmicks: target an attack on a single target and to only do Stun damage.*

*If he does a 5 dice attack against a Supervillain team, he would do 3 dice to Kill and 5 dice to Stun. He can choose to ignore the 3 Kill dice if he wishes but it still costs him 5 dice to make the attack.*

**½ level:** The character gets an Energy Attack as above but against a single target – no area of effect – within 10 squares. They get no special effect. They get bonus dice as above but the base attack is 1d on either Kill or Stun.



### Energy Sense

(Energy manipulation, cantrips, telepathy)

The character can detect and – to a limited degree – manipulate one specified type of energy. Types of energy include the usual heat, cold, electricity etc. but can also include mental energies, life-force, occult forces if appropriate to the character.

**Level 1:** With concentration and within a range equal to their Psyche SCORE - in squares - the character can detect their chosen form of energy.

If they want to detect specific information – the flow of wiring in a house, read surface thoughts etc. it will require a skill roll based on Psyche.

If they have a focus of some kind near a target (eg. Cigarette lighter, knowledge of a target's phobia) they can attempt to cause damage. This will require a skill roll and will do 2 dice damage to which no response can be made on the part of the target. This damage will be split between Kill and Stun based upon the rationalisation of the power.

*If the character can detect mental energies as is aware of a target's claustrophobia, they can do 2 dice stun. A flame attack from a bursting cigarette lighter would do 1 die Kill and 1 die stun. If radiation detection was used within a nuclear reactor, the attack could do 2 dice kill.*

Higher levels: Choose from

:

- Detect/affect more forms of energy (one per level)
- Cause damage without focus
- Longer range (+Psyche Score per level)
- More damage (+2 dice but one must be on Kill and one on Stun)

#### Gimmicks

- The ability to reduce target's protection by 1 level on both Kill and Stun. For example – armour which normally divides damage by 3 will only divide the damage from this attack by 2.
- The ability to ignore either the Kill or Stun damage (to simulate Radiation or Stunner attacks). Dice are still expended as normal, but their effects are ignored.
- Can make the energy visible to others (with concentration)

**1/2 level:** Detection only. Requires touch.



### Enhancement

(Absorption, Chameleon Ability, Weather Control, Elemental Control, Magic)

The character can temporarily demonstrate abilities which they do not normally possess.

**Level 1:** The character can temporarily use two Superpowers with span limited by their Psyche score in panels. These powers must be specified when the character is first created and must have a reasonable rationale. They are both a level 1.

*You have the right to expect the player to randomly roll one or more of them. Otherwise everyone will choose Flight and Strength!*

It takes a panel to activate/de-activate a power. This panel is not included in the usage limit. If the Psyche score limit is reached the power will automatically de-activate, taking no time.

Once a psyche limit has been reached, the character cannot re-use that power for a period of panels equal to their psyche score or for the length of time it was used.

*Example: BUGMAN can grow butterfly wings or chitinous natural armour. He has a Psyche of 9. He is pursuing JET - a villain. It takes him panel to grow his wings. He then pursues JET for 5 panels and catches him. He retracts his wings (one panel) and grows his armour (1 panel). He can now use his armour for 9 panels but cannot re-grow his wings for another 4. (It was 5 but the panel in which he grew his armour counts as "resting" his wings.)*

**Option:** If the powers come from a specific, non-ubiquitous, source the character may demonstrate 3 or more such powers.



*Example: STEEL gains Strength and Protection from touching specific ferrous materials. The Referee also allows him to exhibit Endurance.*

*STORMCLOUD has Energy attack and Cloaking which only work on a cloudy day. These represent Lightning and Fog. The Referee allows the cloaking to be Level 2 hiding both self and others within range.*

**Higher levels:** Choose from the following options:

- The character can exhibit a wider range of powers (2 per level)
- The powers can be exhibited at a higher level
- The powers can last longer (double duration per level)
- The powers can be transferred to others – by touch at the first level taken – at range (equal to Psyche in squares) at higher levels.

**Gimmicks:**

- The two powers can be exhibited simultaneously.
- A power can de-activated and the second activated within a single panel
- Select a gimmick from one of the Superpowers possessed. Only one gimmick per level even though two powers are being exhibited.
- Select an appropriate gimmick from any Superpower.
- As per the individual Superpowers.

*BUGMAN chooses a costume which changes with him.*

**½ level:** The character can temporarily exhibit one additional power.

## Fast recovery

(Second wind, resistance to pain, iron will)

The character has the ability to ignore a large degree of pain and recovers Stun damage at a faster than normal rate.

**Level 1:** The character does not need to make an Endurance roll to recover Stun damage. They recover 2 dice Stun damage every round. If they are stunned, they only suffer -2 on their skill rolls.

If they are knocked out, this ability ceases to work and normal rules apply until they wake up.

Higher levels: Choose from the following options:

- +1 die recovery per round
- The character can pass the recovery on to others. This is via touch to a single target at the first level taken. It can be to multiple targets and/or at range (equal to Psyche Modifier in squares) at higher levels.

**Gimmicks:**

- Can attempt to “push” recovery with an Endurance roll. +1 die recovery if the roll succeed. -1 die if the roll fails. (No difference for a minor success).
- Recover +1 Stun per round even if performing actions
- -2 stun damage per attack from a specified non-ubiquitous attack form. (Fire, for example, but not fists.)

**½ level:** +1d6/d3 recovery per round. Endurance roll needed.



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## Appendix 1: Superpowers

### Flight

(Gliding, Wings, Jet pack, Levitation)

The character can ignore the effects of gravity and move freely without needing to be in contact with the ground.

**Level 1:** The character flies at their normal ground-based movement rate.

**Higher levels:** At one additional movement rate per panel for each level in a combat situation.

*Example, FUSAR has a movement rate of 5 squares per panel on the ground. He has Flight level 3, so he can fly at 15 squares per panel.*

If the character is able to accelerate in a straight line for period of time, they can move at the CUBE of the movement increase. They can add an additional movement rate for each panel they fly in a straight line.

At level 3 the character moves at 3 times their normal move in combat but can accelerate to up to 27 times their normal move in a straight line.

*FUSAR can fly at up to 135 squares per panel! That is 15 squares in the first panel, 20 squares in the second, 25 in the third and so on.....*

If the character is able to attack at the end of a move, they gain the usual charge bonuses.

#### Gimmicks:

- No visible means of flight
- Able to perform other action whilst building up speed in a charge
- Can come to a dead stop at the end of a charge
- Can strike a blow in passing at the end of a charge without incurring any damage themselves
- Can accelerate at double the usual rate
- Can recover whilst falling.

**½ level:** Choose one of:

- The character can ignore gravity and float at their normal move with full concentration. They may take no other actions whilst floating.

Or

- They may move and act freely as long as they are in contact with a surface (wallcrawling).

### Follower

(Pet, Sidekick, Animal Control, Replication)

The character is accompanied by a companion of some kind. This follower can be human, humanoid, animal, swarm, clone, replicant or anything similar.

However they appear, they all have the characteristics given below.

**Level 1:** The character has one unpowered associate. They are generated using 3d6 rolls for their characteristics. They have the same number of panels, as the character and have attacks equivalent to fist attacks.

They may have skills but may not have any skills which the Hero themselves does not possess.

They calculate trained skill points by subtracting the total of their Skill Modifiers from 40. They may not have any more skill points than their “master”.

**Second level:** Either:

- The character has a second associate as above

Or

- A single follower is generated using the best 3 of 4d6. In this second case one more of their Superpowers can transferred to or replicated in the associate.

**Higher levels:** One additional “3d6” follower for each level or “4d6” follower for each 2 levels.



## Appendix 1: Superpowers

*If a Hero has a "4d6" follower then one or more Superpowers will be transferred from the Hero to that follower. Normally this makes rationalising different powers easier.*

*Rarely, however, Superpowers may be possessed by both the Hero and their Follower(s). This should only happen with a weaker power or in special circumstances.*

*A good example of this is an energy attack which can be launched from any of the followers but which comes from a central pool of dice.*

### Gimmicks:

- The follower may have one skill not possessed by the Hero
- There is a telepathic link between the follower and the Hero
- The player may play the follower as a separate character if the Hero falls unconscious – otherwise they are controlled by the Referee.

**½ level:** The follower has characteristics based on 2d6. They have half the number of panels each round as the character (rounded up) and have no specialist skills.



## Force field

Energy field, Force shield, Power wall

The character is surrounded by a field of energy of some kind which subtracts damage from all attacks. The player should choose an appropriate type of force field.

*Again, I don't need to give you a list of possible energy types, do I? The force field doesn't even need to be energy, as such.*

*RETCH is surrounded by layers of bio-electric goo.*

*GAUSSMAN surrounds himself with a wall of whirling small metal objects.*

**Level 1:** This can either be fixed, random or variable, at the players choice.

Choose from:

**Fixed:** The field has 15 points

**Random:** The field has 3d6+5 points, rolled once when the character is first created.

**Variable:** The field varies in strength. The field has 4d6 points rolled for each and every attack.

These points come off the Kill damage done first and then from the Stun damage.

Once the type of field has been selected, it cannot be changed later. It remains the same type at higher levels.

**Higher levels:** Choose from the following options:

- Increased protection per level (+5 if fixed, d6+2 if random, d6 if variable)
- Field is solid – it absorbs ALL Stun damage. It remains in place until it takes Kill damage equal to its total at which point it is totally disrupted and will take hours (36-Psyche score) to regenerate
- Can be used at range to protect other targets or (if solid) to perform other actions such as restraining, lifting etc. Range is equal to the Hero's Psyche Modifier in squares.

### Gimmicks:

- The Hero can use one specified attack through the Force Field.

(This doesn't mean opponents can use that type of attack against the Hero, however).

- The Hero can raise or lower the force field whilst moving
- The force field is invisible

**½ level:** Protective field of 5 points – fixed, d6+2 points – random or d6+1 variable.



### Growth

(Giant, Larger, Taller)

**Level 1:** The character grows to a large size, roughly 50% bigger in all dimensions.

They gain +1d10 Strength and Endurance, when they are larger. The extra Endurance gives them extra d6 rolls for the Kill and Stun damage they can take. However, these only apply when the character is enlarged.

They also gain 50% on their ground-based movement.

**Higher levels:** 50% increase in size per level. +1d10 Strength and Endurance and add 50% of Original movement rate per level.

**Option:** If the character is permanently large, they gain one extra level for free.

*That is, they can be 10-12 feet tall and gain 2d10 Strength and Endurance at first level but are stuck at that size. This will cause them serious problems in their day-to-day life.*

The enhanced characteristics gained through this power are used to calculate whether the hero is knocked back in combat. (If they are attacked by surprise, they only use the enhanced Endurance plus their original Strength roll.)

#### Gimmicks:

- A costume which grows and shrinks with the character
- The character can grow/shrink whilst moving
- Growing/shrinking into combat counts as a Charge with a +5 damage modifier per level of Growth.
- Can choose to grow to any intermediate level e.g. A level 1 character can choose to grow to level 1 or stop at ½ level.

**½ level:** The character grow 25% and gets +1d6 Strength and Endurance and +25% move.



### Image generation

Illusions, hallucinations, hologram projection

The character has the ability to produce illusions of some kind. They appear within a number of squares equal to the character's Psyche score.

**Level 1:** The character has the following options. They can generate an illusion of:

- Up to a size 1 object which can be perceived by a single sense, without concentration
- Up to a size 2 object which can be perceived by a single sense with concentration
- Up to a size 1 object which can be perceived by 2 senses, with concentration

They can use any of these options during play.

#### Higher levels. Choose from:

- for each level add an additional size or sense which can be generated both, with and without concentration
- The illusions can cause damage. This will require a skill roll based on Psyche. Only Stun damage will be done and will be appropriate to the size of object created. It can be dodged or parried as usual. (A successful parry will reveal the illusion for what it is).
- The illusions can be used to inhibit vision.

#### Gimmicks:

- The illusions can Dodge attacks
- Illusions can be maintained whilst moving
- The Hero can talk whilst maintaining an illusion

**½ level:** The Hero can make an illusion of up to a size 1 object which can be perceived by a single sense, with concentration.

## Impossible events

Luck, Probability Manipulation, Transmutation

The character can cause things to happen. Unlikely things become likely, impossible changes can occur.

The cause of these effects must be clearly defined when the player is first created.

*A character who affects the STATE of items will not be able to affect the PROBABILITY of events, for example.*

Effects will be instant and/or will last for a number of panels equal to the hero's Psyche Modifier.

Level 1: Roll d20 plus half of Psyche to try and exceed 15. -5 on roll for each:

- Change of state OR level of impossibility
- Change of size
- Size rating affected
- Whatever is determined by the Referee.

**Change of state:** The range of states are:

- Nothing/Vacuum
- Plasma
- Gas/Vapour
- Liquid
- Viscous
- Soft Solid
- Hard Solid
- Superhard solid

**Level of impossibility:** The range is:

- Likely
- Possible
- Unlikely
- Extremely Unlikely
- Impossible

**Change of size:** rate this from the objects table in the combat section.

**Size rating affected:** Again rate this from the objects table in the combat section.

**Higher levels:** +5 on Psyche rolls per level.

**Gimmicks:**

- Effect can be made whilst moving
- Hero can talk whilst creating effect
- Critical successes are permanent
- The effect lasts for an additional number of panels equal to the Hero's Psyche modifier
- The Hero can cancel any effect in place at any time

*This is an extremely open-ended and difficult power to play and Referee. Ideally you should try to find some time to discuss the player's character concept with them prior to play and to agree some possible uses of the power before the game is played. If you're trying to work everything out during play it can become tricky and slow the game down.*

*For example, HARRIDAN has a Psyche Modifier of 5. She has a magical power which allows her to change objects into other objects. She has level 2 of the power with the gimmicks of permanent criticals and the ability to cancel effects.*

*She wants to turn the ground underneath the villains to mud.*

*Change of state - Hard to viscous - 2 levels (-10)  
Level of impossibility - not applicable  
No change of size - (0)  
Size affected - (0)  
Level 2 (+5)*

*She needs to make a Psyche Skill roll at - 5 overall to get the effect to work.*

*If she scores 15 or more the muddy ground will impede the villain's move.*

*If she scores 18 or more the villain will sink into the mud.*

*Harridan can then cancel the effect in her next panel, trapping the fiend.*

**½ level:** As above but with -5 on Psyche roll.

## Appendix 1: Superpowers

### Increased move

Speed, Superspeed, Leaping, Teleporting

The character has an enhanced move of some kind. This can be achieved in one of three ways:

- Running
- Leaping – if the character possesses other appropriate powers
- Teleporting – at the cost of 1d10 stun damage per normal movement rate teleported.

The exact form must be decided when the character is created and cannot be changed.

**Level 1:** Double the character's normal movement rate using their chosen mode of movement.

If the character is running able to accelerate in a straight line for period of time, they can move at the CUBE of the movement increase. Their speed increases by one movement rate for each panel spent accelerating.

*e.g. at level 1 the character moves at 2 times their normal move in combat but can accelerate to up to 8 times their normal move in a straight line. That is three times their move in the second panel, four times in the third etc.*

If the character is able to attack at the end of a charge move or leap, they gain the usual charge bonuses.

**Higher levels:** Choose from the following options:

- Enhance their move by an amount equal to their original movement score
- Add 1 to the number of squares that can be teleported for each d10 of Stun
- Allow a movement panel to be split either side of action panels

**Gimmicks:**

- Able to perform other action whilst building up speed in a charge
- Can come to a dead stop at the end of a charge
- Can strike a blow in passing at the end of a charge without incurring any damage themselves

- +1 dodge modifier
- Can teleport another person (at double cost to teleporter and normal cost to passenger).

½ level: +50% movement – running or leaping only.



### Information

Scrying, precognition, computer brain

The character can instantly summon up important information.

**Level 1** – At level 1 the character has instant access to common information (e.g. Phone number) or any information that they have been privy to at any time in the past (photographic memory).

**Level 2** – The character has instant access to any information which could theoretically be deduced from common information.

**Level 3** – The character has instant access to rare information.

Gimmicks:

- The information can be recalled whilst moving
- +1 to dodges
- +1 to parries
- -1 to opponents' dodges
- -1 to opponents' parries

(The latter 4 gimmicks are from the ability to analyse and predict an opponents' actions).

½ level – The character needs a device and/or a short period of time to summon up common information.

### Marksmanship

Accuracy, marksman, sniper

For a specified attack form (picked when they are created) the character can do additional damage by aiming for targets' vulnerable points.

**Level 1:** For each uninterrupted 2 panels the character spends aiming, they gain a +1 modifier to the Dexterity roll and +1d10 damage when the attack is finally made. During the panels spent aiming, neither the attacker or target can move.

The Frame spent making the attack counts as one of the two spent aiming.

Higher levels: Choose from:

- An additional +1 to Dexterity roll and plus 1d10 damage modifier per level per 2 panels
- Some movement on the part of the target or attacker is allowed. As long as one of them remains static and the other has made less than a full move, the shot can still be taken.

#### Gimmicks

- The attacker can choose to add bonuses across single panels (level 2 and above only)
- -1 to opponents' dodges
- -1 to opponents' parries
- Can bounce attacks off appropriate surfaces

**½ level:** +1d6 damage modifier per 2 panels spent aiming.



### Martial Arts

Karate, Judo, Pugilism, Kung Fu, Brawling, Hand-to-hand combat

The character is trained in some form of hand to hand combat.

**Level 1:** The character does not suffer a -5 Kill modifier but actually gets a +1 die damage modifier with their natural attacks.

They make all Dexterity rolls to hit in hand-to-hand combat with a +2 modifier.

**Higher levels:** +1 die damage, +2 to Dexterity rolls at each level.

Gimmicks:

- Enhanced dodge (+1)
- Enhance Parry (+1)
- Judo throw - if the character makes a successful Parry or Dodge versus a hand-to-hand attack and takes no damage they may immediately make a one panel attack against their attacker. If this succeeds the attacker takes damage as usual and must make a successful Agility roll or be thrown to the floor.
- +5 Agility rolls made as part of a combined attack with Martial Arts.
- Minor enhancement (+1 to Dexterity roll) to specific, non-ubiquitous, attack (eg. Kick)
- The ability to do a base attack of 2d Kill and 1d Coma
- Once per scenario the character can deliver a "haymaker" which does double damage. This *must* be accompanied by a catchphrase!

**½ level:** +1 die damage to physical attacks. No modifier to Dexterity rolls. Fist attacks are still made at -5 to Kill.



### Mind control

Hypnotism, Control, Brainwashing

The character can take temporary control of the actions of another being. They must be able to make physical or eye-contact to do so.

This is played out as a typical combat situation except that all rolls use Psyche rather than Dexterity/Agility. The attacker rolls using Psyche to control the target, the target – if they wish – rolls using Psyche to resist the attack. As always Criticals apply and rolls must succeed by more than 3 to be a total success.

Control runs for a number of panels equal to the character's Psyche score before it needs renewing.

**Level 1** – The character may hypnotise a single willing target in stressed situation or a single unwilling target in unstressed situation.

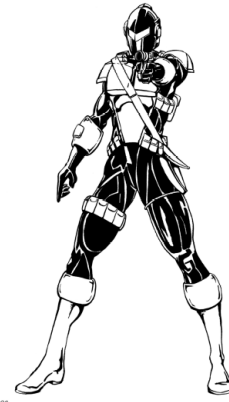
#### Higher levels:

- The character can affect multiple targets (one per Psyche modifier)
- They can try to affect unwilling targets in stress situations.
- Double the number of panels the effect covers
- The attack can take place whilst either party is in motion

#### Gimmicks

- -1 to targets' resistance rolls
- Attack can be done using voice and visual focus
- Telepathic link created with those controlled

**½ level** – The character can try to affect a single willing target in unstressed situation.



### Protection

Armour, Tough skin, Scaly hide, Invulnerability

The character is protected from damage by their costume or naturally tough skin.

**Level 1** – The protection comes from a suit of Armour.

All damage done to the character is divided by 2. The character suffers a -3 modifier to all agility rolls.

**Level 2** – Armour with +1 to divider (divide all damage by 3). -6 to all agility rolls

**Level 3** – Armour which divides all damage by 4. -9 to Agility rolls.

Higher levels: Increase the damage dividing effect by +1 per level. At a -3 modifier to Agility rolls per level.

#### Gimmicks

- Protection is innate (tough skin) – but still noticeable (scales, rocks etc.)
- Protection is imperceptible – but not innate.
- Quick change – donning/doffing armour takes only one panel
- Automatic change – other actions – including movement – may be undertaken whilst doffing/donning armour
- +1 to Agility rolls made in the armour
- Totally immune to Kill damage from Bullets or Knives.

**½ level:** Some kind of summoned or temporary protection. Damage is divided by 2 but needs full concentration – no other actions may be taken. Only lasts for a number of Panels equal to the character's Psyche.

### Regeneration

Fast healing, Restoration

The character recovers/heals from physical damage at a remarkable rate.

**Level 1:** The character recovers Kill damage as fast as they recover Stun damage.

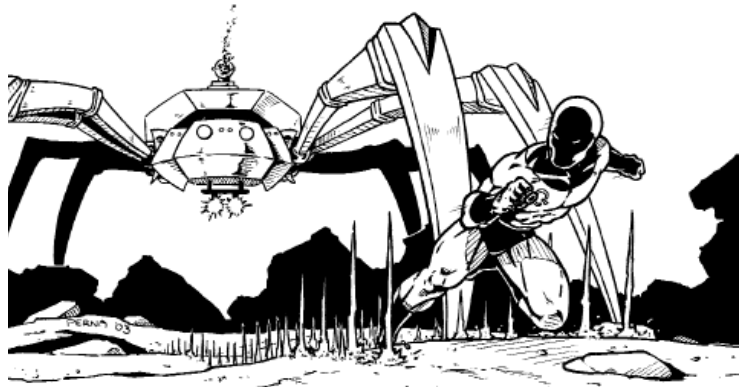
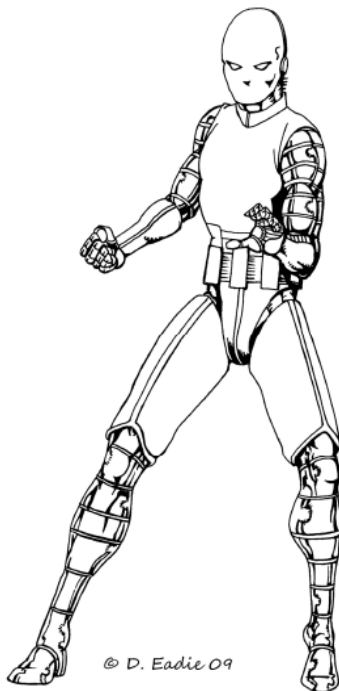
**Higher levels:** Choose from these options:

- +1 die recovery per level.
- can pass the recovery on to others (healing) – by touch at first but at range at higher levels

Gimmicks:

- Character ages at much reduced rate
- Character can recover from double minus Endurance score
- Character appears young
- If the character can pass healing on to others, they can also pass on minor cosmetic improvements.

**½ level:** If they make an appropriate Endurance roll, the character can recover 1d6/1d3 Kill per round.



### Shrink

Reduction, Minimisation, Shivel

The character can become smaller in size.

**Level 1:** The character can shrink to Half normal size. This will allow them to fit in small areas etc. but they move at half their normal rate.

They get a Dodge modifier of +3 but their knockback score is halved.

**Level 2:**

The character can shrink to the size of an insect. They can move a maximum of square per panel unless they have other powers which help out.

People striking them have a -5 modifier on their strike roll and they gain a +5 Dodge modifier.

They have knockback score of zero and sent flying by any successful attack.

**Level 3:** The character is microscopic in size. Ordinary combat rules cease to apply.

**Level 4:** The character shrinks to the Atomic level. We're now Quantum. All normal rules cease to apply.

**Gimmicks:**

- Costume which shrinks/grows with them
- The ability to shrink/grow whilst moving
- Gains a charge bonus of +5 damage per level if growing into an attack.

**½ level:** The character is permanently smaller – as per level 1.

### State change

Gaseous form, spirit form, intangibility, solidity

The character can change their physical state to become super-solid or spirit-like and gaseous.

**Level 1:** Either:

- The character can become ghostlike – but visible - without concentration

Or

- The character can become super-solid - and impervious to damage - with concentration.

In either case the effect last for a number of panels equal to the character's Psyche Score – maximum. For every panel they spend in the changed state, they must spend one panel recovering when out of it before they can change state again.

**Higher levels:** Choose from the following options:

- Super-solid without concentration
- Ghostly and invisible
- For each additional level, they can have one effect which works upon the physical world when they are in the changed state. However, that effect can also be used from the normal world upon them.

**Gimmicks:**

- Costume which changes state with the Hero
- Changing state whilst moving
- Recovery time reduced by one panel

**½ level:** They can turn ghost-like but this requires full concentration



### Strength

'nuff said

The character is uncommonly, inhumanly, strong

**Level 1:** The characters Strength is now 20 plus the roll of 1d6. This will give them a significant damage modifier.

**Higher levels:** Add 1d6+5 Strength per each additional level.

**Gimmicks:**

- +5 to character's knockback
- Can use Strength to brace vs knockback even when taken by surprise
- +5 on lifting/throwing rolls (weightlifting)
- -5 to opponent's knockback
- Slight build - does not appear strong.

**NB:** The enhanced Strength does not affect the character's movement rate which is always calculated from their original Strength roll. It does affect the character's knock-back score as long as the character is aware of an attack so they can brace against it. If they are attacked by surprise, knock-back is calculated using their original Strength score.

**½ level:** The character has a Strength of 20.

### Supersense

Hypervision, Supersmell, Eagle-eyes, Superhearing

One or more of the character's senses is heightened to an exceptional degree.

**Level 1:** A single sense is heightened. The character gains a +5 modifier on all Sleuthing rolls and skill rolls based on sleuthing.

**Higher levels:** For each level, the character gains +5 on sleuthing rolls. This may be done by choosing to add an additional sense to their selection or by heightening their existing Supersense to a higher level.

#### Gimmicks:

- May operate in darkness without a negative modifier
- Can detect things which would be otherwise impossible.
- -1 to opponent's Dodges
- -1 to opponent's Parries
- +5 to one specific skill roll related to this sense.

**½ level:** Animal senses. +3 to Sleuthing and related rolls.

### Survival

Environment suit, Adaptation, Water-breathing

The character can survive in situations unsuited to normal human beings.

**Level 1:** The player should specify two things which the character can survive without (eg. air) or which they are resistant to (pressure, decompression, radiation, disease, poison etc.)

**Higher levels:** The character can survive without or resist two additional items per level.

#### Gimmicks:

- The power is innate and does not need equipment or a costume to use.
- The power is unnoticeable and not obvious from looking at the character.

- Can survive without one additional specified item for a limited period of time. The duration will be related to Psyche and dependent upon the item. e.g. a character could survive without food for a number of weeks equal to their Psyche score.
- Can resist one additional specified thing. They will still suffer from that item but will either take half damage or take twice as long to show effects.

**½ level:** The character can resist/live without one specified factor.

### Weapon

Claws, Hammer, Weaponskill

The character wields a weapon. Either through great skill or training - or through the weapons' own powers and abilities - the character uses this weapon with great effectiveness.

**Level 1:** The character gets a +2 Modifier to Dexterity rolls when they use this weapon in combat. They also gain +1d10 damage modifier.

**Higher levels:** The character gets an additional +2 Dexterity modifier, +1d10 damage.

#### Gimmicks:

- The weapon can be used in an additional mode i.e. Missile and Melee
- The weapon can be used as a Shield. It adds +5 to parry rolls or an additional d10 damage modifier to parries only. (That is, 2d10 at first level.)
- The weapon is innate or built-in. The Character cannot be disarmed.
- Quick-draw - the weapon can be drawn and used in single panel.
- If it is a missile it returns to the firer in the following panel. (During which time the character can be performing another action.)
- The weapon is functionally indestructible.

**½ level:** The character possesses a weapon with a +1 modifier to Dexterity rolls and a +1d6 modifier to damage.



### Authorities

The character is employed by an important public body – normally the Government or Police Force. They have influence and access to important information. For as long as they are employed, they have a Contacts score of 4.

### Brilliant Biologist

The character is a world-class genius in the field of Biological research. They are a household name in academic circles and may even be the beneficiary of – or be working towards – a nobel prize.

In normal play they circumvent all skill rolls with regard to biological research or information. Under stressed or difficult circumstances if a skill roll is required, it is made at +15 on the skill roll. They make all scientifically-based skill rolls at +8 even outside their own discipline.

### Brilliant Chemist

The character is a world-class genius in the field of Chemical research. They are a household name in academic circles and may even be the beneficiary of – or be working towards – a nobel prize.

In normal play they circumvent all skill rolls with regard to chemical research or information. Under stressed or difficult circumstances if a skill roll is required, it is made at +15 on the skill roll. They make all scientifically-based skill rolls at +8 even outside their own discipline.

### Brilliant Physicist/Engineer (Cybernetics)

The character is a world-class genius either in the field of Physics research or in the field of engineering. They are a household name in academic circles and may even have invented some of the devices people take for granted in their ordinary lives.

In normal play they circumvent all skill rolls with regard to cybernetic research or information. Under stressed or difficult circumstances if a skill roll is required, it is made at +15 on the skill roll. They make all scientifically-based skill rolls at +8 even outside their own discipline.

### Criminal

The character has links with at least one powerful criminal organisation – whether as a family member or active or reformed major criminal.

They have influence and access to important information. For as long as they maintain these links, they have a Contacts score of 4.

### Immortal – legendary

The character is a mythical character who has lived forever. They can be killed by normal means, but so far have managed to avoid this fate.

They get a bonus power of Survival at ½ level. If the player has already rolled Survival at level 1 then either one of their other powers must be taken at ½ level to compensate or allow the player to choose an appropriate power at half level.

In addition, if they have been a noticeable figure in history and choose to reveal themselves, they can have an automatic Memorability score of 3 or 4 at the player's choice.

### Immortal – mechanical

Through the interference of technology, the character will not age and die by normal means, though they can still die a violent death.

Should the player decide that their character is a mechanoid, the character still takes the equivalent of Stun damage due to its advanced and sensitive nature.

They get a bonus power of Survival at ½ level. If the player has already rolled Survival at level 1 then either one of their other powers must be taken at ½ level to compensate or allow the player to choose an appropriate power at half level.

### Magical

All of the character's abilities come from a Magical basis. Attacks will be based upon Psyche rather than Dexterity and normal defences will not work against them.

They will bypass protections such as Armour or Parrying. (Dodge may still work).

### Psionic

The character is a psychic. All of their abilities are generated by their mind.. Attacks will be based upon Psyche rather than Dexterity and normal defences will not work against them. They will bypass protections such as Armour or Parrying. Dodging may still work but this will be based upon Psyche rather than Agility.

### Rich – Business

The character is incredibly rich and successful in the world of business. In campaign play, assume they can afford to purchase anything they want or need.

This may have minor beneficial effects upon their derived characteristics.

### Rich – inherited

The character has inherited a vast fortune. In campaign play, assume they can afford to purchase anything they want or need.

This may have minor beneficial effects upon their derived characteristics.

### Training

The character has received training in one or more aspects of their development.

If this background is rolled the player may add 2 points to any characteristic or add 1 point to each of two different characteristics.

Where this addition would benefit the character (calculating skill modifiers, movement etc.) the bonus points are counted.

Where they would hinder the character (the calculation of trained skill points, for example) the points are ignored.



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# Character Sheet

Hero Name:

Secret ID:

Player:

Strength

Endurance

Dexterity

Agility

Psyche

Esteem

Sleuthing

Fate

Common Skills	Level	Trained Skills	Level

Legality	
Memorability	
Heroism	
Relationships	
Success	

Powers	
Detection	
Contacts	
Exposure	
Accessibility	

Scruples	
Victories	
Public Reaction	
Extrovert	
Home-life	

Move

Knockback

Damage  
Modifier

Kill

Stun

Background, Superpowers, Abilities

Origin Story

Attack	Kill	Stun	Mod.	Notes

Costume and Equipment

# Basic Game: Character Generation Sheet

## Superpowers/Backgrounds

1) You have 8 Superpower rolls, as you use them up cross them off here:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

2) Roll percentage dice 4 times. Look the rolls up on the Superpower table and write down the Superpowers you roll here:

Remember to cross 4 rolls off your total.


## Superpower Table

Acrobatics	01 - 09
Change form	10 - 13
Cloaking	14 - 16
Endurance	17 - 19
Energy Blast	20 - 28
Energy Sense	29 - 30
Enhancement	31
Fast recovery	32
Flight	33 - 41
Follower	42 - 45
Force field	46 - 49
Growth	50
Image generation	51
Impossible events	52
Increased move	53
Information	54
Marksmanship	55
Martial Arts	56 - 64
Mind Control	65
Protection	66 - 74
Regeneration	75
Shrink	76
State change	77
Strength	78 - 86
Supersense	87 - 90
Survival	91
Weapon	92 - 95
Choose	96 - 00

3) Roll 2d10 and add them. Look on the Background Table. If you get a background, put it here and cross off a power roll:

--

## Background Table

2	Roll twice
3	Magical
4	Choose
5	Immortal – legendary
6	Brilliant Chemist
7	Criminal
8	Rich – inherited
9	Training
10	Nothing special - no cost
11	Nothing special - no cost
12	Nothing special - no cost
13	Brilliant Physicist/Engineer
14	Rich – Business
15	Authorities
16	Brilliant Biologist
17	Immortal – mechanical
18	Choose
19	Psionic
20	Roll twice

4) Your remaining 3 or 4 rolls can be used to roll more powers or to buy higher levels in powers already rolled. It costs one roll to turn level 1 into level 2, two rolls to turn level 2 into level 3 etc.

*(Typical example: If you roll 4 powers and a background you'll have three rolls left. These can be used to put three powers up to level 2 or one up to level 3.)*

If you need an extra roll, two powers can be taken at ½ level.

Now is a good time to read the descriptions of the powers you rolled in the rule book. All powers must be compatible. Use all your remaining rolls now.

If you roll any more powers, write them here:


# Character Generation Sheet

## Characteristics

1) Roll 4d6 four times. Add up the highest three numbers each time to get a total from 3-18. Write them here:

Strength	Endurance	Dexterity	Agility

2) You can swap TWO of these to suit your Superpowers.

3) Work out the total of the four rolls and write it here:

4) Work out the average of the four rolls and write it here:

5) Subtract the average from 23, round the result up to a whole number and write it here:

This is your PSYCHE.

6) Write your Superpowers and characteristics on your character sheet.

Halve each characteristic and write the result in the triangle next to the main score.

## Hit points

Roll 1d6 for each Endurance point you have. This is your total KILL score.

Roll the d6's again. This is your total STUN score.

## Move

Divide the total of the four physical characteristics (see above) by 10. This is your Move.

## Knockback

Add your Strength to your Endurance. This is your Knockback Score.

## Skills

1) Choose 5 common skills and list them on the character sheet along with their associated characteristic modifier + 5.

2) Choose 5 trained skills and write them on the character sheet.

3) Add up all 5 of your Skill modifiers (half the characteristics, the numbers in the lower triangles):

4) Subtract the total from 55:

5) Divide these points between your trained skills.

No trained skill can have a total its associated characteristic skill modifier. (No more than your highest skill modifier if it is based upon Esteem, Sleuthing or Fate.)

## Example Common Skills

Skill	Characteristic
Business	Psyche/Esteem
Climbing	Strength/Agility
Computer Use	Psyche
Demolition/Piano Smashing	Strength
Door bursting	Strength
Etiquette	Esteem
First Aid	Psyche
Gambling	Psyche/Esteem
Impress	Esteem
Juggling	Dexterity
Jumping	Strength/Agility
Language- native	Psyche
Literacy	Psyche
Make-up	Dexterity
Negotiation	Esteem
Pot-holing	Agility
Riding	Agility
Scrounging	Esteem
Singing	Esteem
Searching	Sleuthing
Spotting/Notice	Sleuthing
Stealth	Agility
Swimming	Strength/Agility
Teamster	Esteem/ Psyche
Weightlifting	Strength

## Example Trained Skills

Skill	Characteristic
Anatomy	Psyche
Biochemistry	Psyche
Biology	Psyche
Blacksmith	Strength/Dexterity
Computer Programming	Psyche
Criminology	Psyche
Cryptography	Psyche
Design	Psyche
Diplomacy	Esteem
Disguise	Psyche/Dexterity
Driving	Psyche/Dexterity
Electronics	Psyche
Engineering	Psyche
Entrepreneur	Psyche
Environment Lore – specific	Psyche
Hacking	Psyche
High Society	Esteem
History – specific era	Psyche
Inorganic Chemistry	Psyche
Language – foreign	Psyche
Locksmith/pick	Psyche/Dexterity
Metallurgy	Psyche
Mimicry	Psyche/Esteem
Mythology	Psyche
Occult Knowledge	Psyche
Organic Chemistry	Psyche
Particle Physics	Psyche
Pharmacology	Psyche
Pilot	Psyche/Dexterity
Research	Psyche
Sea diving	Psyche/Agility
Sky diving	Psyche/Agility
Surgery	Psyche/Dexterity
Weapon Smith/Repair- specific	Psyche/Dexterity
Weapon Skill – specific	Strength/Dexterity

## Costume/Equipment

Choose a light costume (helps dodging) or a heavy costume (stops some kill damage.) Choose three items of equipment.

Choose a name and an alias and fill in your character sheet.

### **What is Squadron UK?**

Squadron UK is THE British Superhero Role-Playing Game. A classic, old-school system honed to perfection by a player, referee and writer with decades of Superhero Gaming experience.

### **What's so special about it?**

- \* Addictive character generation - the perfect blend of random rolling and design.
- \* Fast and furious combat - that makes you feel like you're IN the comic.
- \* Innovative campaign rules - this is a full role-playing game, not just a combat game.

### **What's in this book?**

- \* The complete Basic game system, with simplified character creation and an example adventure to get you up and running within minutes.
- \* Advanced rules to allow experienced players to customise the game to their tastes.
- \* A complete example campaign, "Squadron: Birmingham" - months of adventure.

