

**FORGOTTEN FUTURES**  
**RULES SUMMARY**

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Converted to pdf by  
David Bruns  
2004



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# Chapter 0

## Introduction

This is a *brief* synopsis of the FORGOTTEN FUTURES rules for the use of players. It is fully compatible with the first five FORGOTTEN FUTURES collections. Referees are *strongly* advised to check out the full rules.

### 0.1 What's It About?

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FORGOTTEN FUTURES is a game based on Victorian and Edwardian scientific romances, the predecessors of science fiction. Adventures are usually set in the future, as imagined by the writers of the past. For example, the first FORGOTTEN FUTURES collection was set in 2000 AD and 2065 AD, as imagined before the First World War. Your referee should give you details of the game setting, and you should also check section 2 for some suggestions on role playing in this genre.

### 0.2 Game Requirements

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You'll need two six-sided dice (preferably two per player), copies of the character record form and a few tables, and some pens and paper. A calculator is occasionally useful. Lead or plastic figures can be used to represent characters, but they are not essential.

### 0.3 Game Terms

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**1D6** Roll one dice (one die if you feel pedantic).

**2D6** Roll two dice and add the numbers.

**BODY** A characteristic, often abbreviated as B.

**MIND** A characteristic, often abbreviated as M.

**SOUL** A characteristic, often abbreviated as S.

**Effect** Numerical rating used to calculate the damage caused by weapons and other forms of attack.

**Average of...** Add two numbers (eg characteristics) and divide by two. Round *up* if the result is a fraction. Usually abbreviated as Av, eg AvB&S.

**Half of...** Divide a number (usually a characteristic) by two and round up. Usually shown as /2, eg B/2

**Half average...** Some skills are based on half the average of two characteristics. Add the characteristics, then divide by 4, then round up. Eg AvB&S/2.

**+1** Add 1 to a dice roll or other number.

**+2** Add 2 to a dice roll or other number.

**-1** Subtract 1 from a dice roll or other number.

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**-2** Subtract 2 from a dice roll or other number.

**2+, 3+, etc.** 2 or more, 3 or more, etc.

**Round** A flexible period of time during which all PCs and NPCs can perform actions. In combat a round is a few seconds, in other situations it might be a few minutes or hours.

**Optional Rule** This means exactly what it sounds like; something that can be tacked onto the game if you want to use it, but isn't essential for play. The referee will explain if any of these rules are in use.

# Chapter 1

## Characters And Rules

Each player will need at least one character, whose details should be recorded on one of the record forms.

Players should record their names and the name (including any title or rank), sex, and age of the character. They may wish to give their characters aristocratic or military names and rank, academic honours, and the like; the referee must decide if this will cause problems.

Sex (Male or Female, and (optionally) sexual orientation) and age may be important in some game settings. For "profession", write in something appropriate to the game setting. The referee should explain the pros and cons of your choices.

The next sections of the form are completed using character points.

### 1.1 Character Points

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Your referee will give you some points (usually 21) which may be used as follows:

#### 1: Purchase characteristics at the following costs

<b>Value</b>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7*
<b>Cost</b>	Free	2	3	5	7	10	14*

\* At the discretion of the referee *only*.

Average human characteristics are 3 or 4. 5 is above average, 6 is very good (for example, BODY [6] is an Olympic athlete), 7 is extraordinarily unusual and is available only at the referee's discretion.

**BODY (B)** covers physical strength, toughness, speed, and dexterity.

**MIND (M)** covers all intellectual capabilities, reasoning, and observation.

**SOUL (S)** covers emotions, charisma, and psychic ability.

See section 1.2, below, for full details of the effect of characteristics.

#### 2: Purchase skills

This game uses very general skills; for example, Scientist covers everything from Archaeology to Zoology, Pilot covers everything from Autogyros to Zeppelins. Players may spend up to three points per skill during character generation.

Skills are based on one or more characteristics, to which at least one point must be added. For instance, Actor is based on the average of MIND and SOUL, plus at least one point. A character with MIND [3] and SOUL [3] would get Actor [4] for one point, Actor [5] for 2 points, or Actor [6] for 3 points.

**Note:** Brawling and Stealth are available at the values shown without spending points on them. Naturally they can be improved if points are spent.

## CHARACTERS AND RULES

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Skill	Value	Notes
Actor	AvM&S	Any form of stage performance.
Artist	AvM&S	Any artistic endeavour.
Athlete	B	Swimming, running, etc.
Babbage Engine	M	Use also for computers, golems, etc.
Brawling	B *	Boxing, wrestling, & improvised weapons.
Business	M	Any financial or organisational work.
Detective	AvM&S	Good at noticing small details.
Doctor	M/2	Knowledge and licence to practice.
Driving	AvB&M	Any ground vehicle.
First Aid	M	Emergency treatment to stop bleeding.
Linguist	M †	Covers reading, writing, speaking, etc.
Marksman	M	Use of directly aimed projectile weapons.
Martial Arts	AvB&S/2	Any martial art. Allows multiple attacks.
Mechanic	M	Any form of engineering etc.
Medium	S/2	A genuine medium, not a fake.
Melee Weapon	AvB&M	All close range non-projectile weapons.
Military Arms	M	Use of field guns, explosives, etc.
Morse Code	M	Knowledge of Morse and telegraphy.
Pilot	AvB&M/2	Use for aircraft, submersibles, etc.
Psychology	AvM&S	Use to spot lies, calm people, etc.
Riding	AvB&S	Riding all animals, and training them.
Scholar	M ‡	Detailed knowledge of specialised topics.
Scientist	M	Use of any science.
Stealth	B/2 *	Hiding, camouflage, sneaking, etc.
Thief	AvB&M/2	Pick pockets, locksmith, forgery, etc.

\* Free at base value

† Characters with the Linguist skill initially know Linguist/2 languages (round up). For example, Linguist [5] begins with 3 languages known.

‡ Scholars have knowledge of Scholar/2 related fields (round up); eg., Scholar (Archaeologist, Antiques, Ancient Egypt) [5]

See section 1.3, below, for full details of the purchasing system and use of skills, and 1.3.7 for a detailed explanation of each skill.

### 3: Saved for use in play

Points can be used to improve skills at a later date, or optionally to improve the odds in emergencies. If points are saved for this purpose, double them and record them as bonus points.

### Optional Rule: Buying Advantages

Players may be charged points to buy unusual backgrounds and equipment, such as incredible wealth or a personal airship. Your referee will explain if this rule applies.

#### 1.1.1 Equipment And Notes, Weapons, etc.

These sections should be completed when characteristics, skills, and history have been decided. Say what you'd like to own, and describe any special status or background details; the referee will decide if they are reasonable.

The weapons section is used to record weapons that the character routinely carries. The columns list the weapon's name, whether it is capable of multiple attacks, the Effect number which determines how much damage it can cause, and the results of any damage caused. For now it isn't necessary to worry about the use of this system; it's explained in the section on combat below. Weapons are listed in section 1.5.4.

The section marked "Wounds" is left blank for use during play. Note that this is the wound chart for humans and animals of roughly human size and toughness; some animals use different charts.



## 1.2 Characteristics

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Characteristics are three numbers which are used to determine the general physical, mental, and spiritual nature of characters.

**BODY** represents general physique, well-being, stamina, and speed. If players expect their characters to spend a lot of time in combat, or performing manual labour, BODY should be high. Inanimate objects also have BODY. BODY is *not* necessarily indicative of size or weight; it's possible for something to be physically small or light and still have high BODY, or big and heavy and still have low BODY.

**MIND** covers all mental skills and traits including intelligence, reasoning ability, common sense, and the like. Anyone in a skilled job needs high MIND. MIND is also important in the use of most weapons.

**SOUL** covers artistic abilities, empathy, luck, and spiritual well-being. If SOUL is low the character should be played as aloof, insensitive, and unlikeable (as in the phrase "This man has no Soul"); if high, the character does well in these areas. It is also used for other forms of human interaction, such as fast-talking, acting ("A very soulful performance"), and other arts (including martial arts). If your SOUL is low better not try to con anyone, and forget about learning baritsu or karate.

Characteristics cannot normally be improved.

### 1.2.1 Using Characteristics

Characteristics are used mostly as the foundation of skills, but it's occasionally necessary to use them directly. For example, someone trying to perform a feat of strength needs to use BODY. This is done by using the character's BODY (attacking) against the BODY of the target object (defending) using the "attack versus defence" table:

#### Attack versus Defence

This table is used for any attempts to achieve something by using a characteristic or skill. Roll 2D6; if the result is less than or equal to the number indicated on the table, the attempt succeeds.

A dash (-) indicates that there is *no* chance of success, otherwise 2 is *always* a success 12 is *always* a failure.

Attacking characteristic or skill	Defending characteristic, skill, or difficulty number												
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
<b>1</b>	7	6	5	4	3	2	2	2	-	-	-	-	-
<b>2</b>	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	2	2	-	-	-	-
<b>3</b>	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	2	2	-	-	-
<b>4</b>	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	2	2	-	-
<b>5</b>	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	2	2	-
<b>6</b>	11	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	2	2
<b>7</b>	11	11	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	2
<b>8</b>	11	11	11	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2
<b>9</b>	11	11	11	11	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3
<b>10</b>	11	11	11	11	11	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4

Depending on circumstances, characteristics may be used against other characteristics, against skills, or against an arbitrary "difficulty number". Skills give an edge in most of these situations, as explained in later sections.

**BODY** Raw BODY is mostly used for feats of strength, endurance, and dexterity which are not covered by other skills. For example, to dodge a thrown bottle you might have to use your BODY against the skill of the thrower.

**MIND** Raw MIND is generally used to notice things (such as partially hidden objects), to have bright ideas, and to solve puzzles (if they aren't solvable by the player).

**SOUL** Raw SOUL is used mainly for luck and intuition ("I've got a bad feeling about this..."), also as a measure of personality and charm.

### Big Numbers

If attacking and defending values are both too high to fit the table, the referee will divide both by a number which will just put them back onto the scale. For really large numbers (Godzilla versus New York, an H-Bomb versus the Rock of Gibraltar) division by 50 or 100 may be needed, but in most cases dividing by a smaller number (such as 2, 3, 4, 5, or 10) should do the job. Round numbers up if the result is a fraction. In any campaign with ships, spacecraft, land ironclads, or dirigibles this system may become important in combat.

### 1.2.2 Improving The Odds

At the discretion of the referee *only* players may spend bonus points to temporarily modify an attacking or defending value as appropriate. Players must declare that they are doing this, and mark off the point(s) used, before the dice are rolled.

This rule does *not* mean that you can spend points to perform the physically impossible. No matter how many points are spent, a BODY [1] weakling will not lift an elephant single-handed.

## 1.3 Skills

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Anything that you want to do will probably relate to a skill. Driving a car is use of the Driving skill. Splitting the atom is use of the Scientist skill. Skills in this game are *very* broadly defined; for example, Acting covers light comedy, tragedy, juggling, singing, and human cannonball acts!

Skills are initially calculated from one or more characteristics, with the number of points spent added to the result. For instance, Marksman (the use of all forms of hand-held firearm and other hand-held projectile weapons) is based on MIND. Acting is based on an average of MIND and SOUL. Skills may be raised to a maximum value of 10.

Characters automatically have two skills at their basic values without spending points: Brawling and Stealth. Naturally points can be spent to improve them.

### 1.3.1 Using Skills

If you have a skill the referee will generally assume that you can use it automatically under all normal circumstances. You may need to roll dice if you are working under unusual or difficult conditions, under stress, or in immediate danger. They are always used in combat. Usually a skill is used against one of the following:

1. An opponent's characteristics, eg MIND, BODY, SOUL
2. An opponent's skills, eg Business, Martial Arts, Acting
3. An arbitrary difficulty number set by the referee (usually when dealing with inanimate objects, puzzles, combination locks, and the like).

Bonus points can usually be spent to improve skill rolls, exactly as they are used to improve characteristic rolls.

### 1.3.2 Temporary Skills

Characters may occasionally want to use skills they don't possess. This is allowable, if it will keep characters alive or the game moving and there is some way to justify it. The character uses the skill at its lowest possible rating, but must roll for all actions including routine easy jobs, and the difficulty of all actions is doubled.

Bonus points may not be used to help in this situation.

### 1.3.3 Projects

The skill rolls above are used to resolve short-term problems. Sometimes characters become involved in long projects, such as the creation of a work of art or development of a new invention, which should not be determined by a single roll of the dice. Usually the referee will call for a series of rolls with any failure prolonging the project, any success hastening it. Depending on the nature of the project, the rolls

may become harder or easier as you progress. Usually the referee will warn you if you are attempting the impossible.

### **1.3.4 Improving Skills**

Bonus points can be spent to attempt to improve skill ratings (to a maximum of 10, representing near-perfection). These improvements are assumed to have been acquired by experience or by training. Each improvement costs as much as the new value of the skill.

To try to improve a skill use the relevant characteristic(s) to attack the current skill rating.

If the result is a success, the skill has been improved.

If the attempt is a failure, but the dice roll is not a 12, the character loses the points but does *not* improve the skill; more training is needed. After some more experience (another adventure) you can try again. This can be repeated until the skill has been improved. A skill's rating may not be improved more than one point per adventure.

If the result is a 12 you have "peaked" with this skill; you lose the points, do not improve the skill, and *cannot* improve it at a later date.

Characters with the Linguist skill may add extra languages by practice during the campaign, or by spending 1 bonus point per extra language for training between adventures. Only add one language per adventure. Improving the Linguist skill itself costs the new value of the skill, eg. 5 bonus points to raise Linguist [4] to Linguist [5], as above.

### **1.3.5 Adding Skills**

New skills can be purchased, using the roll described above, but costs are increased. The referee will decide if a new skill is appropriate for the character. The new skill is acquired at its lowest possible value.

An attempt to add a new skill costs *double* its rating; eg, an attempt to add a skill with rating 5 costs 10 bonus points. This represents the considerable investment in time and money needed to learn a completely new skill. Sometimes the referee may make things harder or easier.

To try to acquire a new skill use the relevant characteristic(s) against the first rating the skill will have. If the result is a success, the skill has been acquired. If the attempt is a failure, you spend the points but do *not* acquire the skill; more training is needed. After some more experience (another adventure) you can try again. This can be repeated until the skill has been acquired, or until a 12 is rolled, indicating that the character is incapable of learning that skill.

### **1.3.6 Free Skills**

Referees may make some additional skills available to all characters without the normal points cost, on the assumption that they are so common that anyone can use them. For example, in a campaign set in real 1990s America it would be reasonable to assume that every adult can drive. Your referee will tell you if this is relevant.

### **1.3.7 Skill List**

Skills are listed in the following format: Name, basic value (to which the points spent should be added), and explanation. The following abbreviations are used:

B = BODY, M = MIND, S = SOUL, Av = Average, / = Divided by

For example:

AvM&S = average of MIND and SOUL

M/2 = MIND divided by 2 (round *up*)

AvB&S/2 = average of BODY and SOUL divided by 2 (round *up*)

Skills marked with an asterisk are automatically acquired at their basic values.

**Actor – Basic Value: AvM&S** Any form of stage performance. If more than one point is spent you are good enough to earn money from one specialised type of performance, such as Operatic Tenor.

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**Artist – Basic Value: AvM&S** Any artistic endeavour, also useful for forgery. For more than one point add a specialisation, such as Sculptor.

**Athlete – Basic Value: B** Swimming, running, etc. The advantage of training over brute strength. For more points mention a speciality such as Skiing

**Babbage Engine – Basic Value: M** Use for control of any type of mechanical, pneumatic, hydraulic, or electric computer (including player pianos and card- or roll- controlled looms and organs), also for commanding androids, golems, zombies, etc.

**Brawling – Basic Value: B \*** Any form of unarmed combat, apart from martial arts. See the combat rules below.

**Business – Basic Value: M** Any form of financial or organisational work, man-management, politics, etc.

**Detective – Basic Value: AvM&S** Trained in the art of observation; good at spotting small details. Can be used as an improvement over normal observation rolls, and sometimes in place of an Idea roll, or the Psychology skill.

**Doctor – Basic Value: M/2** A detailed knowledge of medicines, minor surgery, etc., and a licence to practice. If more than one point is spent, the character has knowledge of a speciality (such as surgery) and the appropriate qualifications. This skill may *not* be acquired in the course of play, unless several years pass between adventures.

**Driving – Basic Value: AvB&M** Any ground vehicle (car, land ironclad, railway engine, tractor, etc.). This skill does not apply to exotic vehicles (such as aircraft, spacecraft, submersibles) whose operators require a high degree of training.

**First Aid – Basic Value: M** Emergency treatment of wounds. See the rules on injuries.

**Linguist – Basic Value: M** The ability to learn, read, speak, and write languages. Initially characters know Linguist/2 languages; more languages can be acquired very easily. Characters automatically know their own native language, and need never roll to use it, without buying this skill.

**Marksman – Basic Value: M** Use of directly aimed projectile weapons (eg gun, crossbow, throwing knives, spears, etc.) but not field guns or other specialised militaria.

**Martial Arts – Basic Value: AvB&S/2** Use for any Oriental martial art, also for Savate, quarterstaff combat, etc. Allows multiple hand-to-hand and melee weapon attacks in a single combat round, and can increase the Effect number of some attacks. Your referee will tell you if this skill is available and explain any special restrictions that may reply.

**Mechanic – Basic Value: M** All forms of mechanical and electrical work, engineering, building, plumbing, etc.; this covers work on existing machinery and the like, and the use of machine tools and other production equipment, but not innovative equipment design which is covered by the Scientist skill.

**Medium – Basic Value: S/2** A genuine medium, not a fake. Fake mediums use the Acting skill instead. This skill may not work in all campaigns; if it does, it can be used for contact with the spirit world, seances, and premonitions of impending doom: "I have a bad feeling about this..."

**Melee Weapon – Basic Value: AvB&M** Use of any non-projectile weapon, such as a dagger, sword, or axe.

**Military Arms – Basic Value: M** Use of field guns, mortars, explosives, and other specialised military weapons, but not hand guns and other simple portable weapons.

**Morse Code – Basic Value: M** Knowledge of Morse code and basic telegraphic techniques, including maintenance and adjustment of equipment.

**Pilot – Basic Value: AvB&M/2** Use for aircraft, spacecraft, submarines, digging machines, and other vehicles which require a high degree of skill and concentration. Includes the use of parachutes and systems such as radios, sonar, navigation, and meteorology.

**Psychology – Basic Value: AvM&S** Use to spot lies, calm hysteria, notice tension, and so forth. This skill may also be used for hypnosis, if the referee approves.

**Riding – Basic Value: AvB&S** Riding any animal, from a pony to a diplodocus. Also used for training animals including lion taming, dog handling, or running a flea circus.

**Scholar – Basic Value: M** Expert knowledge of specific fields, such as archaeology, history, philosophy. Scholar/2 related areas of knowledge are known; for example, Scholar [5] might include knowledge of Archaeology, Antiques, and Ancient Egypt. The skill cannot be taken twice to give mastery of two unrelated areas of knowledge, but the term "related" can be interpreted as loosely as the referee permits. For example, expert knowledge of Cats (but not veterinary skills) might be added to the list above because the Egyptians worshipped cats.

**Scientist – Basic Value: M** Use of all sciences. Most scientific romances make little or no distinction between scientific fields. Optionally note one particular science (eg Paleontology) as a speciality if more than one point is spent on science.

**Stealth – Basic Value: B/2 \*** Hiding, camouflage, sneaking, etc.

**Thief – Basic Value: AvB&M/2** Pick pockets, locksmith, forgery, etc.

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## 1.4 Wounds

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Each character and NPC has a Wounds record, which indicates the general severity of wounds taken. It is possible (and sometimes easy) to go from "uninjured" to "dead" as the result of a single wound.

For humans and human-sized animals, humanoid aliens, etc. the Wounds record has five boxes, indicating the extent of damage:

*Wounds: B* ○, *F* ○, *I* ○, *I* ○, *C* ○

**"B" means "Bruised"** If you are hurt to this extent you are stiff and a little slow, but otherwise unharmed, and recover in a day or two. It's possible to suffer multiple bruises without any additional effect, apart from spectacular flesh colours and superficial marks. "Bruised" includes all forms of minor cut and scald.

**"F" means "Flesh Wound"** This is a deep cut, concussion, or sprain, a moderately serious burn, and so forth. You are slowed, and may become infected or suffer other long-term medical effects, but there is little risk of death. If a flesh wound isn't treated promptly it may deteriorate and become an Injury (below). Recovery takes at least a week. Additional flesh wounds must be treated separately but have no other effects.

**"I" means "Injury"** This is nasty; a gaping wound, punctured lung, broken bone, skull fracture, serious poisoning, first degree burns, or the like. You need first aid and reasonably prompt medical attention; without it you will probably suffer serious medical effects. You can only move slowly. If you take two injuries (a tick in both boxes) you can barely crawl and cannot fight. Injuries need at least a month to heal, longer if there are medical complications. If all Injury boxes are ticked and you take another injury you are critically injured, as below.

**”C” means ”Critical”** You are unconscious and will die without medical aid. If First Aid or the Doctor skill is used successfully you may revert to severely injured status (all injury boxes ticked), otherwise death occurs in a matter of minutes, hours at best.

Note that some weapons, and some other forms of damage, have two additional results possible.

**”KO” means ”Knockout”** The victim is knocked unconscious for a few minutes, but isn’t necessarily permanently harmed. There is no need to record this since it is a temporary effect. Record bruises instead if appropriate.

**”K” means ”Kill”** For obvious reasons there isn’t any need to have a tick box for this!

The table shows the effects of wounds. Temporarily reduce the value of BODY or BODY-related skills by the value shown, but not below a minimum of 1.

Wound	Body	Recovery Period	Recovery Difficulty	Notes
Bruised	–	1 Day	2	Purple marks etc.
Flesh Wound	-1	1 Week	4	A nasty cut
Injury	-2	1 Month	6	Broken bones etc.
2+ Injuries	-4	1 Month	8*	Cannot fight or run
Critical	N/A	N/A	8	Unconscious, dying
Knocked out	–	6D6 min	4	

\* per injury.

### 1.4.1 Medical Skills, Recovery, and Death

First Aid stabilises wounds and prevent them getting worse. On a successful roll against the recovery difficulty of the wound, there is no possibility of deterioration. For example, this might involve splinting a broken leg, disinfecting and bandaging a wound, or putting cold tea (a common Victorian remedy) onto a burn. Multiple wounds must be treated separately; for instance, someone with a Flesh Wound and an Injury, or with two Injuries, would need each treated separately.

Without first aid the wound may eventually deteriorate; roll the recovery Difficulty against the patient’s BODY, if the result is a success the wound will get worse. Flesh wounds become Injuries and Injuries become Critical if they get worse.

The Doctor skill acts like First Aid, and also speeds healing. If a successful roll is made recovery time is halved. Since the Doctor skill begins at a lower level than First Aid, devoted healers may wish to take both skills.

To recover from wounds without medical help, roll BODY against the recovery difficulty - *after* the minimum recovery period. If the result is a success, the wound is healed. If the result is a failure, the illness drags on for another period before the roll can be made again.

Death is death, and is usually permanent. In some settings there may be some rationale for reanimation or resurrection, but in most games there is no recovery. Your referee will explain if this applies.

Some examples of common forms of injury follow the combat rules below; they are clearer if you understand some details that are introduced in the combat rules.

## 1.5 Combat

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All the events in a combat round occur simultaneously. If ten people are firing guns, all of them fire *before* the results are assessed. You can shoot a gun out of someone’s hand, but he will have a chance to shoot you before he loses it. Attacks are usually a use of skill against a defence; if the attack penetrates the defence, the damage is determined by use of the attack’s Effect against the BODY of the target. All of these concepts are explained in more detail below.

### 1.5.1 Combat Rounds

A combat round is a period of approximately five seconds in which combat occurs. In this time punches might be exchanged, shots fired, and so forth.

The following things can be done in a combat round

**Movement**

A normal human can walk about ten feet, or run twenty. On a difficulty 6 BODY or Athlete roll, or on expenditure of a bonus point, this can be pushed to thirty feet.

**Or an action**

such as ducking for cover or opening a door.

Referees may *optionally* allow two actions, or an action and a movement, in a round; for instance, opening a door and diving through.

**Then, an attack**

or several attacks with some weapons and skills.

**Then wounds take effect.**

If you don't want to move or perform any action apart from the attack itself there is a bonus on the attack, but you do *not* fire first.

Anyone taken completely by surprise *cannot* fight, move, or dodge in the first round of combat, but *can* perform a simple action. For example, intruders would have a round to attack someone who was standing a few feet from an alarm button; he would not have time to get to it first. They could not stop him pressing the button if he already had his hand on it. By definition, someone with a weapon in his hand pointed at an attacker is *not* taken by surprise!

**1.5.2 Resolving Attacks**

Attacks are resolved in the following stages:

1. All players should state who they intend to attack; the referee should explain who NPCs are attacking. This should be done before any attacks are made.
2. Each character and NPC attacks the chosen target. Roll the attacking skill or characteristic against a defending skill, or against a difficulty number of 6 if there is no better defence available. There are various modifiers for distance etc.
3. If the roll to hit succeeds, the Effect of the attack is used to attack the BODY of the victim. Damage is calculated according to the success of this roll.

**Rolling To Attack**

The following bonuses and penalties are available, and should be added to or subtracted from the attacking skill if appropriate (to a maximum of 10 or a minimum of 1):

<b>Situation</b>	<b>Modifier</b>
Attacker hasn't moved	+1
Target is immobile/inanimate	+1
Target is twice man sized or more	+1
Target is very close	+1 (projectiles only)
Using a fully automatic weapon	+1 (machine guns)
Firing both barrels of a shotgun	+1
Target is <i>too</i> close	-1 ( <i>not</i> brawling)
Target is running/moving fast	-1
Target is half man sized or less	-1
Target is distant	-1 (Projectiles only)
Target partially hidden or camouflaged	-1
Attacking two or more targets	-2
Attacker is ducking or dodging	-1
Target is ducking or dodging	-2
Attacking for limited damage	-1 (See below)
Attacking for minimal damage	-2 (See below)

Some attacks can be used via two or more skills; for example, a longbow might be used via the Marksman or Martial Arts skill, a club via the Brawling or Melee Weapons skill. Use whichever skill is best. If all else fails weapons may be used via characteristic rolls; these are usually poorer than skills.

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Defences may also be based on skills or characteristics; for example, someone might try to avoid an arrow by ducking (BODY versus the attacking skill), by hiding (Stealth skill), or by use of the Martial Arts skill to catch it! If no better skill is available, the basic defending value is 6.

If the result of any attack is a success, some damage occurs. Roll for damage as described below. Damage Roll to cause damage, using the Effect of the attack (see below) against the victim's BODY.

All attacks have an Effect number. For hand-to-hand weapons, martial arts, and other unarmed combat skills it is either the skill level or the user's BODY plus a bonus; for example, a club gains most of its power from the user's strength, and has an Effect equal to the user's BODY +1. A fencing foil, like all swords and daggers, has an Effect equal to Melee Weapon skill. For firearms the Effect number is usually intrinsic to the weapon, and thus independent of the user's skill or BODY.

Damage is determined by using the Effect number to attack the target's BODY. The result of this roll will sometimes be a failure; this is interpreted as minimal damage for the weapon, from column A of the weapons table. While this is always preferable (for the victim!), many weapons have a flesh wound or worse as their minimal damage.

If the result is a success, but more than half of the result needed for a success, check column B of the weapon table.

If the result is a success, and the dice roll is less than or equal to half the result needed for a success (round down), check column C of the weapon table. If in doubt, use this table to calculate which damage column is used:

Roll Needed	Column A if result	Column B if result	Column C if result
2	3-12	2	-
3	4-12	2-3	-
4	5-12	3-4	2
5	6-12	3-5	2
6	7-12	4-6	2-3
7	8-12	4-7	2-3
8	9-12	5-8	2-4
9	10-12	5-9	2-4
10	11-12	6-10	2-5
11	12	6-11	2-5

Machine guns use a special rule. If they are used on more than one target, the Effect is reduced by 2. The attacker must roll separately to hit each target, and to damage the victim if the attack is successful. It's easy to abuse machine guns; players often say that they are trying to shoot at victims in two or three different areas, which should not be allowed. Shooting at several targets in one direction (such as a group of men running along a corridor) is acceptable, but the targets in front will conceal those behind, or at least reduce the Effect. They are powerful weapons, but not all-powerful.

### Pulling Punches & Aiming To Wound

Sometimes players may want to do less than the maximum amount of damage with an attack. Say what you are trying to do *before* rolling to hit, and adjust the attacking skill as follows:

1. Attacking for limited damage; damage effects are limited to column A and B only, column C damage is taken as column B. Skill -1.
2. Attacking for minimal damage; damage effect is limited to column A only, column B and C damage are taken as column A. Skill -2.

In other words, there is an increased chance of missing if you are pulling your punches or aiming to wound, because the attack is trickier.

It isn't possible to limit damage with shotguns, machine guns, or area effect weapons such as explosives or flame throwers, or with *any* attack on multiple targets.

### Optional Rule: Hit Locations

To aim at a specific part of the BODY, modify the attacking skill and the damage Effect as follows:



<b>Location</b>	<b>Skill modification</b>	<b>Effect</b>	<b>Random hit</b>
Head	-2	+2	2
Arms	-1	-1	3 Right, 4 left
Torso	No modification	0	5-9
Legs	-1	-1	10-12

This rule makes it harder to hit if you are aiming at someone's limbs or head, but increases the likelihood of serious damage from a head injury.

Someone who is rolling to hit a target without trying to hit a specific area should roll 2D6 for a random hit location as indicated above, and modify the Effect accordingly.

It is not possible to attack a specific hit location with machine guns or area effect weapons such as grenades, or while performing any form of multiple attack. Damage from these weapons should attack random hit locations.

### 1.5.3 Armour

Armour reduces the Effect of weapons. The level of protection depends on the type of armour. Naturally only the area covered by the armour is protected; for example, motorbike leathers cover the torso, arms, and legs, but don't protect the head. Adding a full-face crash helmet extends this protection to the head. Similarly, body armour doesn't protect limbs or the head.

<b>Clothing/Item</b>	<b>Protection</b>
Bulletproof vest	-4 Effect on projectile and blade attacks
Kevlar body armour	-6 Effect on projectile and blade attacks
Bullet Proof glass	-4 Effect on all projectile attacks
Medieval Plate Mail	-4 Effect on all melee weapon attacks
Motorbike leathers	-2 Effect on all impact weapons (eg clubs)
WW1 Steel Helmet	-3 Effect on all attacks to head
Crash Helmet	-2 Effect on all impact damage to head

### 1.5.4 Weapons

Use the tables that follow to determine the capabilities and effects of combat skills and weapons. Where damage results are shown (eg C/K), roll the effect against BODY again; if this roll fails the first result is used, otherwise the second result is used.

**Abbreviations** B = Bruise, F = Flesh wound, I = Injury, C = Critical, KO = Knockout, K = Kill, M.Arts = Martial Arts, I+KO = Injured *and* knocked out.

Some of the weapons shown have very high effect numbers, which go well off the "attack versus defence" table. This usually indicates an attack which will do maximum damage unless a 12 is rolled, or the effect number is somehow reduced; for example by distance (explosives), by the damage being spread to cover several targets (mini gun), or by armour.

#### Melee Weapons

Effect is based on BODY or skill.

<b>Weapon</b>	<b>Multiple Targets</b>	<b>Effect</b>	<b>Damage</b>			<b>Notes</b>
			<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	
Fist	No*	BODY †	B	B	KO	
Kick	No*	BODY †	B	B	F	
Wrestling	No	BODY †	B	KO	KO/I	
Animal bite	No	BODY+2	F	I	C	
Animal claw	No	BODY+1	F	I	C	
Animal horns	No	BODY+2	F	I	C/K	

\* Using the Martial Arts skill it is possible to perform one fist and one kick attack in a single round against one target, or against two targets that are close together. Against two targets the attacks are at -2 Effect.

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† Users of the Martial Arts skill can use BODY or Martial Arts for Effect in these attacks, whichever is better.

Weapon	Multiple Targets	Effect	Damage			Notes
			A	B	C	
Club	Max 2*	BODY+1	B	F	KO/K	Eg cricket bat
Spear	No	Melee	F	I	C/K	Any type
Axe	No	BODY+2	F	I	C/K	
Sword	Max 2*	Melee+1	F	I	C/K	
Dagger	No	Melee+1	F	I	I/K	Eg flick knife
Whip	No	Melee/2	B	B	F	
Chair	No	Brawl	B	F	I/KO	
Broken bottle	No	Brawl+1	F	F	I	
Nunchuks	Max 2*	M. Arts	B	F	KO/K	Martial Artist only
Staff	Max 3*	Melee+2	F	I	KO/C	

\* Targets must be within 5ft. Multiple attacks are at -2 Effect. Multiple attacks are available with the Martial Artist skill *only*.

**Range** For all melee weapons, targets are *too close* if they block effective use of the weapon; within a couple of feet for swords and axes, within 6 ft for whips (a lousy weapon, despite Indiana Jones), and so forth.

### Projectile Weapons

Effect is usually based on skill (for thrown weapons), on BODY (for longbows and thrown axes), or on the weapon rather than the user for firearms etc.

Weapon	Multiple Targets	Effect	Damage			Notes
			A	B	C	
Spear	No	Melee	F	I	C/K	Thrown
Axe	No	BODY+1	F	I	C/K	Thrown
Dagger	No	Melee	F	I	I	Thrown
Shuriken	Max 3	M.Arts	B	F	F	Thrown
Boomerang	No	Marksman	B	F	KO/I	Thrown
Cricket ball	No	Marksman	B	F	KO/I	Thrown
Longbow	No*	BODY+1	F	I	C/K	A hunting bow
Crossbow	No	7	F	I	C/K	A military bow

\* Maximum 2 targets if attacking with Martial Arts skill.

Weapon	Multiple Targets	Effect	Damage			Notes
			A	B	C	
Small handgun	Max 2*	4	F	F	I/C	eg .22 revolver
Big handgun	Max 2*	6	F	I	C/K	eg .38 revolver
Huge handgun	Max 2*	8	I	I	C/K	eg .45 revolver
Small rifle	No	5	F	F	I/C	eg .22 rifle
Big rifle	No	7	F	I	C/K	eg Winchester
Huge rifle	No	9	I	C	K	eg Elephant gun
Small shotgun	Max 2*	4	F	I	I	1 barrel
Small shotgun	No	8 †/4	I	I	C	Both barrels
Large shotgun	Max 2*	7	F	I	C/K	1 barrel
Large shotgun	No	14 †/ 7	I	C	K	Both barrels
Machine pistol	Yes †	7	F	I	C/K	eg Schmeisser
Submachine gun	Yes †	9	F	I	C/K	eg Tommy Gun
Machine gun	Yes †	11	F	I	C/K	eg Gatling Gun
Harpoon	No	15	I	C	C/K	Non-explosive
Harpoon	No	25	C	C	K	Explosive

\* Reduce Effect by 2 if fired at additional targets.

† Hand guns can be used to fire at two targets, or twice at one target. If firing at two separate targets each attack is at -2 to hit. If firing two shots at one target there is no modifier. Each attack is resolved separately. Shotguns can fire twice at one target (no modifier to hit, small effect), fire at two different targets (modifier -2 to hit, small effect), or fire both barrels at once (+1 modifier to hit, big effect at *short range only*). In all but the last case the two shots are resolved separately.

‡ At *short range only*

**Ammunition** As a rule of thumb six shots for all rifles and handguns, and three bursts or twenty single shots for machine guns, should be satisfactory in most campaigns. Your referee will tell you if more detail is required.

**Range** Normal range for all hand-thrown weapons, handguns, machine pistols, and submachine guns is 10-20 ft; normal range for bows, rifles, machine guns, and mini guns is 50-100 ft. Anything closer is at short range, anything further away at long range. Targets are too close if they are closer than the end of the weapon.

**Area Effect Weapons**

All explosives damage everything at full effect inside the radius shown, at effect -1D6 to double that radius, at effect -2D6 to three times the radius, and so forth. The effect of these weapons is not reduced if there are multiple targets.

Weapon	Multiple Targets	Effect	Damage			Notes
			A	B	C	
Stun grenade	6ft	8	B	KO	I+KO	
Hand grenade	10ft	10	F	I	C/K	
Dynamite	10ft	10	F	I	C/K	+2 effect/stick
Mortar shell	10ft	12	I	C	K	
Howitzer shell	10ft	15	I	C	K	
Anti-tank mine	10ft	20	I	C	K	
Car bomb	20ft	15	I	C	K	
Truck bomb	20ft	20	I	C	K	
Flame thrower	10ft	10	I	I	C/K	No damage outside 20ft

**Exotic Weapons**

Things that might conceivably come into play in a campaign, in no specific order:

Weapon	Multiple Targets	Effect	Damage			Notes
			A	B	C	
Radium gun	No	8	F	I	C/K	Burroughs' Mars
Stun gun	Area 3ft	8	B	KO	KO	Most SF
Disintegrator	Yes*	15	I	C	K	Most SF
Heat Ray	Area 75ft	30	C	K	K	War Of The Worlds
Black smoke	Area 500yd	10	C	K	K	War of the Worlds
Hydrogen bomb	Area 1 ml	40	C	K	K	Not recommended!
Mini gun	Yes*	15	I	C	K	See Terminator 2

\* Reduce Effect by 2 if fired at additional targets.

**1.5.5 Non-Combat Injuries**

Combat is the main cause of wounds, but characters occasionally run into other problems that can cause damage. For instance:

**Falling** The damage hits automatically; the Effect number is 1 plus 1 per storey fallen, to a maximum of 20. For example, someone tripping and falling to the ground risks damage with Effect 2; someone falling 20,000ft takes damage with Effect 20. Note that falls of less than 10ft are a common cause of accidental death in the home.

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**Car Crash** Effect 1 plus 1 per 10 MPH. Halve the Effect if wearing a seat belt or protected by an air bag.

**Run Over** Effect 2 plus 2 per 10 MPH, to a maximum of 10.

**Poison** Effects vary with type of poison as below. Some gases have an increasing effect with time as shown.

**Electrocution** The effect varies with voltage as below.

**Drowning, suffocation, etc** Characters can hold their breath without harm for BODY x 20 seconds; after that take damage with Effect 1, +1 per 20 seconds submerged. If the character survives, any damage (other than death) is cleared in a few hours, not the days required for other forms of damage. Exposure to vacuum is faster and much more deadly. Brief exposure may result in skin lesions, more than a few seconds in space will result in ruptures and decompression injuries or serious damage to the lungs etc. Damage heals normally, not at the accelerated rate for drowning and suffocation.

**Fire** Effect varies with severity of fire, starting at 1 (a match) and working up to 7 (a petrol bomb or flamethrower) and onwards. The effect increases for each round of exposure after the first.

Source	Effect Targets	Damage			Notes
		A	B	C	
Falls	1+1/storey	B	I	C/K	
Car crash (passenger/driver)	1+1/10MPH	F	I	C/K	
Run over	2+2/10MPH	F	I	C/K	
"Micky Finn"	8	KO	KO	C/K	
A small amount of strychnine	6	I	C	K	
A lot of cyanide	10	C	K	K	
A tiny amount of arsenic	3*	-	I	C/K	
A lot of arsenic	6*	I	C	K	
Cobra venom	8 †	I	C	K	
Chloroform or ether	6+1/round	KO	KO	C/K	
Martian Gas	5+1/round	F	C	K	(Astronef)
Chlorine (WW1 poison gas)	7+1/minute	I	C	K	
Electric Cattle fence	4	-	B	F	
110 V (US mains)	6	F	I	C/K	
220/240 V (European mains)	8	F	I	C/K	
Electric fence (5000 Volts)	15	C	K	K	
Electric chair (execution)	.....	Automatic kill			.....
Drowning / suffocation	1+1/30 sec	I	I	C/K ‡	
Exposure to Vacuum	6+1/5 sec	F	I	C/K	
Match	1+1/round	F	F	F	
Candle flame	2+1/round	F	F	F	
Bonfire	4+2/round	F	I	I	
Petrol bomb	7+3/round	I	C	C/K	
Blast furnace	10+10/round	C	K	K	
Volcano	20+10/round	C	K	K	

\* It is possible to build up an immunity to some forms of arsenic with repeated small doses, reducing the Effect of large doses. It is also possible to kill yourself trying this stunt.

† The cobra must attack successfully first!

‡ See rules text above.

# Appendix A

## Role Playing Notes

So far these rules have said a lot about rolling dice, but little about the real meat of a role playing game; the opportunity to take on a completely different personality. Since most scientific romances were written by Victorians and Edwardians, characters have a tendency to fall into stereotyped behaviour which isn't necessarily changed if they are set in the future. Here are a few of the principal elements of this behaviour:

### **I Know My Place...**

People in inferior positions accept that they are underlings. They are happy to be employed; the idea of bettering their position, over and above promotion within their workplace, is somehow abhorrent. This attitude is especially prevalent amongst servants and others in intimate contact with their social "superiors". For examples see the roles played by Eric Sykes in "Monte Carlo Or Bust", Peter Falk in "The Great Race", and Gordon Jackson in "Upstairs, Downstairs".

### **Get Up And Go...**

In contradiction to the above, the Protestant Work Ethic is also very popular. This says that if you work hard, study, and save money you'll eventually reach the top. This is primarily an American ideal, but also very popular with the British middle classes and anyone else who wants to better himself. Unfortunately middle-class Britons know that however successful they may be, they will never be gentlemen...

### **You're A Toff, Guv...**

Aristocrats are the cream of society; stern but caring, almost always wealthy and learned, always polite (especially to women and other inferiors), they are genuinely superior men, and even savages know them as such. Even if an aristocrat goes bad he remains a gentleman; if his crimes are discovered he will commit suicide rather than dishonour his family by standing trial.

### **A Woman's Place Is In The Home...**

Women unfortunately tend to be treated as inferiors, second class citizens who must be protected from physical and moral danger. An adventurous woman is *very* unusual, a cause for sensation and scandal. A woman exerting real authority is almost unheard of, despite the example of Queen Victoria, and suffragettes and other campaigners for women's rights are treated with great suspicion.

### **I Say, He's A Bally Foreigner...**

Chauvinism, in its original meaning, is rampant. People don't necessarily hate foreigners, but they do treat them as mental and moral inferiors. To quote a satirical treatment of this attitude, from H.M.S. Pinafore:

*For he might have been a Roosian, A French, or Turk, or Proosian,  
Or perhaps Italian,  
But in spite of all temptations,  
To belong to other nations,  
He remains an Englishman!  
Hurrah!  
For the true born Englishman!*

This disrespect for foreigners was true of most nations, especially Britain, while harsh treatment and exploitation of "savages" was typical wherever "civilised" nations were expanding into "primitive" lands; in India and Africa, the Middle East, North and South America, Australia, and the Pacific.

### **Under A Gooseberry Bush, My Dear...**

Some things just aren't done. Chief amongst these is any detailed discussion of sex. Courtship is almost invariably chaperoned, any more intimate contact takes place as in this example:

*... he brushed off the confetti, and swept her into his arms.*

\* \* \* \* \*

*The next morning there were kippers for breakfast...*

The row of stars is the nearest these stories come to a lurid sex scene. All indelicacies, whatever their nature, should occur well off-stage.

### **Arr, We Talks Loike This....**

Speech is usually fairly formal, and is of course always polite. Accents are stereotyped; in Britain members of the working classes always have lovable Cockney accents, or impenetrable country dialects, while the upper classes all have Oxford accents. Scotsmen say "Och aye", "The noo", and "Hoots mon", Welshmen "Look you" and "Boyo", Irish "Begorra" and "Saints preserve us". America has its own stereotypes; Harvard accents for the upper classes, Brooklyn for the dregs. Only criminals and drunkards swear.

Finally, here are three examples of good and bad roleplaying in the context of these rules. Can you tell them apart?

*"I say, old chap, can you direct me to the station?"*

*"Yo dude, where do I catch the iron horse?"*

*"Excuse me, my Lord, a gentleman from the police is at the door."*

*"Hey boss, it's the pigs."*

*"I'm afraid we're in a bit of a hurry. May we get by, please?"*

*"Out of the way, you \*\*\*ing scumbags, we're on a mission from God!"*

Your referee may have more to say on these and other topics.

# Appendix B

## Sources

Ten especially useful books, five films, and four comics.

### Books

- Sir Arthur Conan Doyle: The Lost World
- George MacDonald Fraser: Flashman (& sequels)
- William Gibson & Bruce Sterling: The Difference Engine
- Colin Greenland: Harm's Way
- Harry Harrison: A Transatlantic Tunnel, Hurrah!
- Christopher Priest: The Space Machine
- Olaf Stapledon: Odd John
- H.G. Wells: The Time Machine, The War Of The Worlds, The First Men In The Moon

### Films

- The First Men In The Moon
- The Lost World
- Metropolis
- The Time Machine

### Comics

- Brian Augustyn: Gotham By Gaslight, Batman: Master of the Future
- Grant Morrison: Sebastian O
- Bryan Talbot: The Adventures Of Luthor Arkwright

# FORGOTTEN FUTURES

## CHARACTERSHEET

NAME:

PLAYER:

AGE:

GENDER:

OCCUPATION:

DESCRIPTION:

BODY

MIND

SOUL

[     ]

[     ]

[     ]

ACTOR	AvM&S ...	MECHANIC	M ...
ARTIST	AvM&S ...	MEDIUM	S/2 ...
ATHLETE	B ...	MELEE WEAPON	AvB&M ...
BABBAGE ENGINE	M ...	MILITARY ARMS	M ...
BRAWLING	B ...	MORSE CODE	M ...
BUSINESS	M ...	PILOT	AvB&M/2 ...
DETECTIVE	AvM&S ...	PSYCHOLOGY	AvM&S ...
DOCTOR	M/2 ...	RIDING	AvB&S ...
DRIVING	AvB&M ...	SCHOLAR	M ...
FIRST AID	M ...	SCIENTIST	M ...
LINGUIST	M ...	STEALTH	B/2 ...
MARKSMAN	M ...	THIEF	AvB&M/2 ...
MARTIAL ARTS	AvB&S/2 ...	.....	.....

WOUNDS: B  F  I  I  C

BONUS POINTS: .....

WEAPON                      MULT?    EFFECT    A    B    C    NOTES

ATTACKING SKILL	DEFENDING CHARACTERISTIC, SKILL OR DIFFICULTY															
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
1	7	6	5	4	3	2	2	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	2	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
3	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	2	2	-	-	-	-	-	-
4	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	2	2	-	-	-	-	-
5	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	2	2	-	-	-	-
6	11	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	2	2	-	-	-
7	11	11	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	2	2	-	-
8	11	11	11	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	2	2	-
9	11	11	11	11	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	2	2
10	11	11	11	11	11	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	2