



# ***THE FIGHTING GAME RPG***

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# CREBITS

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For more information about Fight!, please visit <http://divinemadnesspress.wordpress.com>.  
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## **DEDICATION**

*Fight! is dedicated to Mark Buczek, the game's first and most fervent supporter.*

*I pray that he continues to guide the game from his new post.*

*I know you're still playing with us, Mark.*

*Peace.*

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**INTRODUCTION**



## **INTRODUCTION**

Welcome to the worlds of Fight! The Fighting Game RPG! In this game, players have the opportunity to create characters of epic proportions with fighting skills rivaled by few others in history. Their adventures will cross time, space, and sub-genre, as such fighters might be found in stories of modern supernatural conspiracies, globe-spanning terrorist plots, urban crime drama, historical fantasy, near-future techno-thriller espionage, and even fantastic space operas.

Rather than present a specific style of story to tell, the rules for Fight! allow players to emulate the conventions and story tropes of the video game genre known as fighting games. While the play style of these video games almost exclusively focuses on a series of one-on-one combats utilizing colorful characters, each with their own distinctive fighting styles and special moves, the stories that provide the backdrop for these combats constitutes a genre of its own. Fight! emulates this genre in both its tone and its rules. So in order to make the most of this game, it helps to understand what the fighting game genre is.

### **What is the Fighting Game Genre?**

The fighting game genre is a set of thematic elements that cross over into several other more common forms of adventure role-playing. It is perhaps easier to understand it as a filter for interpreting a particular genre, with specific characteristics that make it distinctive. For example, there have been fighting video games that have occurred in fantasy versions of historical Japan, in the modern world, across several planets in the far future, and even in wars waged throughout multiple dimensions. Yet, the fighting game genre is neither solely fantasy, nor modern, nor science fiction. It is not even accurate to equate it with the "martial arts genre," for while it shares certain common story elements with traditional understandings of that genre, it maintains a hyper-stylized context of its own. Here are some of the

distinctive elements that constitute the fighting game genre:

**One in a Million**  
**The Human Body is the Most Powerful Weapon in the Universe**  
**Superpowered**  
**The Supernatural and Super Science**  
**Drama and Melodrama**  
**Fighting is Life**  
**Glory and Ego Matter**  
**Combat is Unavoidable**

**One in a Million:** The main characters in the fighting game genre are not just excellent martial artists. They are the very best martial artists in the world, perhaps even the greatest fighters in the universe. Thus, the rules make a distinction between the player characters (and the most important non-player characters) and every other character in the campaign. These distinctive characters are called Fighters in the game. Even the Fighters that serve a more comedic role in the story, or who have less serious motivations for being involved in the events of the campaign, are (perhaps inexplicably or incongruously) among the most powerful martial artists in the world.

Whether or not the rest of the world knows how powerful the Fighters in the game are varies from campaign to campaign. In some games, the Fighters are veritable celebrities, while in others the level of their personal power remains unknown.

**The Human Body is the Most Powerful Weapon in the Universe:** While there is no question that

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swords, guns, tanks, and bombs are powerful and dangerous weapons in the fighting game genre, they all pale in comparison to the potential destructive force of the human body trained to peak performance (such as is the case with all the Fighters in the campaign).

Martial arts in general are reckoned as more flexible and dangerous in the genre than they are in the real world. Many plot lines in fighting games rely heavily on somehow capturing the essence of a martial artist's power. This may be through magic, high technology, psychic re-programming, or some other means, but the end result is the same: the fighting spirit of a martial artist can be channeled into a weapon of mass destruction or become the basis for the programming of an army of elite super soldiers or unstoppable cyborgs.

**Superpowered:** Aside from the presence of martial arts and some common story elements drawn from the martial arts genre, the fighting game genre shares more in common with the world of comic book superheroes. Fighters are larger than life, often with bold names, distinctive, colorful, and/or outlandish costumes, driven personalities, and especially powers beyond those of lesser mortals.

Characters in this genre are capable of defying physics, enduring blows that would shatter steel, leaping multiple stories into the air, and wielding impossible abilities developed through extraordinary training and powered by the deepest reserves of personal ki energy. Characters in the fighting game genre are much more than just martial artists. Rather, martial arts are the means by which they gain access to superhuman prowess.

**The Supernatural and Super Science:** While the

levels of this element vary from game to game, the fighting game genre presumes that the supernatural is real: magic, superpowers, demons, ghosts, monsters, and psychic abilities all exist in the default presumptions of the genre. While the world at large may or may not know about these realities, the principal characters in the campaign do, and largely take them for granted.

Likewise, with the possible exception of historical games, technological advancements well beyond real world levels are commonplace in the world of Fighters. They encounter robots, nanotechnology, advanced personal weapons, and powered battle armor. This super science may even be the source of some characters' fighting abilities. Even in some historical games, elements of the "steampunk" genre, such as primitive mecha and advanced gunpowder weapons, may be present.

**Drama and Melodrama:** The best role-playing games thrive on the right balance of action, adventure, and drama. Even the most combat-oriented action game can gain a level of nuance and immersion with some simple dramatic additions to the narrative based on the characters involved. It gives the players more reasons to appreciate the story and the setting. This is true of the fighting game genre as well; however, it does not thrive on mere drama, but rather full-blown melodrama.

The principal characters maintain an outlook on their universe that is extremely focused and the personal stakes are always high. This fact makes the characters easy to role-play, but if one is being true to the genre, they may lack some of the subtlety or complexity of "real" people. Almost every important event in the character's life is treated with do-or-die seriousness, demanding an unrelenting response. This focus can be hard to relate to, but maintaining it makes the game true to the genre.

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Not all characters in fighting games are so deadly serious or focused. Lesser characters are often permitted more varied personality traits, and often serve as lighter hearts around the brooding main characters.

**Fighting is Life:** Fighting skills are never a secondary consideration in describing a character. On the contrary, they are the way in which the Fighter understands his place in the universe. Thus, characters in the genre are extraordinarily willing to enter into combat. Any offense, especially regarding one's fighting ability, can be an excuse to start violence.

Aside from answering an insult, combat is also a way to show respect, re-connect with a friend after a long absence, demonstrate one's philosophy of life, or prove a point. Development of one's combat abilities is key to one's whole self-identity. The answer to the question, "Why do you fight?" is also the answer to the question, "Who are you?"

**Glory and Ego Matter:** Honor plays an important role in the fighting game genre, just as it does in many stories in the martial arts genre. However, the pursuit of glory is often even more important than honor. Glory unofficially establishes a hierarchy among the best fighters in the world, a hierarchy that matters to all of them, even if only on a subconscious level.

Some characters are arrogant and outgoing about their pursuit of glory. Other characters maintain a more humble demeanor, but the strength of their ego is still critical for their own self-understanding. A Fighter may have momentary crises of self-doubt, but on a fundamental level, the knowledge that he is one of the greatest combatants in the world keeps him going. This pursuit of glory is also the reason behind the common practice of taunting and trash talking in combat.

This element of the fighting game genre is also important on the "metagame" level (see Gaming and Metagaming below for more on this). The hardcore players of fighting video games are an unusually competitive lot, and the glory associated with winning is an important motivator. Furthermore, while winning is good, winning with style and flair is even better. A player is accorded more glory for demonstrating flexibility with a character's move set and using long and interesting combos than winning by repeating the same special move over and over. It is easy to assume that this would also translate to the Fighters who populate the fighting game genre and the rules of the game support this.

**Combat is Unavoidable:** In many role-playing genres, combat exists as one option for resolving conflict. In some games, actually avoiding combat is far more preferable for long-term success or survivability. In the fighting game genre, combat is unavoidable. There is no way that a character will resolve his personal storyline, realize his destiny or doom, or reach his full potential without frequent combat.

This has an effect on the way that the Director sets up the campaign and prepares stories, as well as on the way that players conceptualize their characters. It also colors the role-playing of the characters, especially during combat. As noted above, fighting is intimately related to a character's self-identity. While some genres see character development occurring through introspection and meaningful dialogue with other characters, in the fighting game genre, character development occurs during violence.

These are some of the most important traits that define the fighting game genre. Players should

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embrace these traits when creating and playing their characters, and Directors should strive to make sure the tone of the game is drenched in them.

### **Reading This Book**

In order to get started with the game, players can proceed to Chapters 1-4 for all the details on creating their own unique Fighters. Chapter 1 provides an overview of all the components that make up a character. Chapter 2 describes all of the Skills in the game and how they are utilized in play. Chapter 3 describes the unique Qualities, Weaknesses, and Quirks that define the character's appearance, background, and personality. Chapter 4 describes how to create a Fighter's Special Moves and Super Moves, the unique attack forms that define the character's abilities in combat.

Chapter 5 describes all the rules for combat, which are understandably more detailed than the rest of the rules in a game called Fight! Two sub-systems are also described in this chapter: the first is used when the Fighters are fighting lesser opponents, the faceless minions of their enemies, while the second simplifies some of the core tactical elements of the normal combat system in exchange for a more narrative style of combat for when the nature of the scene warrants a change in tone.

Chapter 6 provides guidance and inspiration for the Director by describing several traditional archetypes for characters, ideas for fight scene locations, and campaign models, as well as advice on beginning, maintaining, and ending a Fight! campaign.

So focus your ki and feel your fighting spirit as you enter into worlds of over-the-top action in the fighting game genre!

### **Gaming and Metagaming**

Every role-playing game strives for some sort of balance between playability and realism. Oftentimes, the realism (or lack thereof) of a game's rules is a deliberate choice meant to emulate the genre in which the game is set. Fight! is in no way an accurate representation of real-world martial arts combat. In fact, it's not even an accurate representation of martial arts as seen in wuxia movies. Rather, Fight! takes its perspective solely from fighting video games. This means that not only is the treatment of martial arts so heavily stylized as to bear little resemblance to the real world, but even the mechanics of the game are influenced by the conventions of these video games.

In addition to prioritizing specific special moves for each character and the use of strings of attacks in combination (to cite just two examples), there is even an "invisible filter" layered over the rules that occasionally allows one to presume the presence of a hypothetical "player" playing the video game in which the character is a part. This metagame is not intended to encourage the breaking of the so-called "fourth wall" in order to have the characters "speak" to their "players" as if the latter were divine beings (though there's nothing wrong with that if that's what you want to do). Rather, it is a way to understand how some of the rules work and why certain design choices were made in the game. In deciding between how something would work in "the real world" as opposed to how it would work in a fighting video game, the rules almost always favor the latter.

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### **The Basics of Role-Playing**

This Introduction presumes familiarity with the basic concepts of a role-playing game. However, for the wholly uninitiated, the following description should suffice. In *Fight!*, each of the players creates a character representative of the typical kinds of characters found in a fighting video game. Each player will act out this character's speech and determine the character's actions in the scenes and setting of the game. Another player called the Director defines this setting and the events that occur there. The Director is also the player who is responsible for designing the universe in which the players' characters will adventure and fight. He plays the roles of all of the characters that are not the player characters. The game itself is played out by acting out the roles of the characters through a series of scenes set up by the Director. When there are multiple possibilities to an event's outcome, such as who wins in a fight scene, the rules and dice are used to resolve the scene.



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**CHARACTER GENERATION**





## CHARACTER GENERATION

### 1. Character Generation

This chapter contains basic details on all the elements that make up a character for Fight! Follow these steps to establish the framework of a Fighter character, and then consult Chapters 2, 3, and 4 for more details regarding Skills, Qualities, and Special Moves.

#### Concept and Background

An exceptional character always begins with an exceptional concept. This can be simple when starting the process: deciding your character is a monk who has just left his monastery, a maverick cop interested in the supernatural, or a world champion tournament fighter is sufficient to start. This is not to say that a concept cannot be detailed to begin with; after all, the more detailed the idea from the outset, the easier it is to make the character.

If you need inspiration for your concept, all you have to do is look to the source material. Look at characters from your favorite fighting game and borrow an idea. It is obvious to any fan that most fighting video games do this same thing with great regularity. This does not suggest that new ideas are not available; however, some character types (e.g., the wandering master, the headstrong champion) just fit the genre exceptionally well. In fact, almost any character archetype from action-adventure fiction can be turned into a concept for a Fight! character with the simple addition of incredible martial arts skills and an attitude willing to engage in over-the-top action.

Character concept in Fight! can easily be broken down into four categories: Appearance, Martial Arts Style, Training Background, and especially, Reason

for Fighting. In each of these categories, think boldly about your concept. It is often far better to imagine extremes for fighting game characters than “safe” concepts. A fighter who wants to be the best in the world will adamantly refuse to live a safe and normal life. The way a fighter dresses may be totally inappropriate for the “normal” world, yet he wears it on a regular basis anyway. A warrior who seeks revenge will put everything else second to this quest, including loved ones and security. Characters in Fight! are not normal, everyday people!

**Appearance:** The outlandish character designs and costumes of fighting game characters are generally not at all “normal” and often share more in common with superhero comics. Both character appearances and outfits are usually extremely stylized, or else strongly iconic (e.g., a traditional fighting outfit of a particular style). The fighting game genre is obviously an extremely visual medium, so give serious thought to what the character looks like. An additional aspect of a character’s appearance is his opening stances or actions before he begins a fight, as well as his win quotes and/or win poses at the end of a fight. In the source material, these remain consistent throughout the character’s career and become part of his visual identity.

**Martial Arts Style:** While characters in Fight! are not required to have any connection to real-world martial arts styles, it is important to visualize what the character’s fighting style actually looks like. What common elements or thematic flourishes describe the appearance of the character’s martial arts? Does the character exclusively use punches or kicks? Does a glow of blue energy accompany the character’s most powerful attacks? Is the character especially fast, move around a lot, or spend a lot of time jumping? Does the character have an unusual

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move around a lot, or spend a lot of time jumping? Does the character have an unusual stance when he fights?

**Training Background:** What events led to the character learning martial arts? More importantly, where, how, and why did he develop his skill to become one of the very best in the world (even if he does not know or believe that to be the case)? Was he trained by a reclusive master to fulfill a great destiny? Was he a soldier who proved to be a natural in unarmed combat? Did he learn to fight to right a great wrong to his family and his drive brought him to excellence? Does he practice a particular style designed to defeat a great evil?

**Reason for Fighting:** This is the most important element of concept to keep the character involved in the events of the campaign. Whether the character fights to be the best, or to seek vengeance, or to save someone he loves, his reason for fighting in general says much about his philosophy of life in the fighting game genre. For many characters, fighting is a metaphor for life itself. Therefore, knowing why someone chooses to fight as a way to find meaning in one's life says much about the character. This one category basically defines a character's core personality and in some ways guides the previous three categories.

As you continue to develop the concept, further questions about the character's background arise. Where is he from? What is his personality? His interests? Here are some additional questions to consider for your character. Answering these questions is not essential, but it can add a lot to a character. Much of this information can be found for many characters in fighting video games, so there are ample sources for inspiration.

Is his fighting style a traditional art or a completely unique school?

How tall is he? How much does he weigh?

What does he look like? What is his hair color? Remember that some characters in the source material, especially women, occasionally have unusual colors for their hair.

When he is not fighting, how does he dress?

How old is he? What is his birthday? Are either of these facts especially significant in some way?

What country is he from? Perhaps he is not of this Earth, or perhaps he is now more or less than human due to biological mutations or cybernetic enhancements.

Does he have a job? Is it a traditional job or is it exotic? Does his job get in the way of his fighting or are the two complementary? If they are not, how does he get around these complications?

What is his blood type? Japanese tradition relates a person's blood type to their basic personality, much like an astrological sun sign. See Blood Types below.

When the character is not fighting, training, or working, what does he like to do? What are some of his unusual likes and dislikes? Another strange convention of the genre is the unusual and/or silly hobbies the heroes enjoy, such as text messaging, doing laundry, or growing exotic flowers.

What is his favorite food? Favorite sport?

What is most valuable in his life? Is it a person, a thing, or an idea? Conversely, what does he hate the most?

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### Blood Types

**Type A:** People with blood type A are calm, self-assured, a bit quiet around others, and often committed to personal excellence. This is a good blood type for the dedicated warrior who fights to perfect his body and his art.

**Type B:** People with blood type B are friendly, individualistic, and often enthusiastic. This blood type corresponds to friendly, fun-loving, outgoing, and/or silly types of characters. While the hero of the most serious fighting game stories will not be blood type B, his bumbling buddy or desperate girlfriend might be.

**Type O:** People with blood type O are social people, open-minded, committed, and self-confident. It is an excellent "default" blood type for many characters.

**Type AB:** People with blood type AB share characteristics from other blood types, creating an iconoclastic personality with competing personality traits. Such a character may be inconsistent, unpredictable, or deceptive in their behavior. This is a good blood type for many villainous characters.

While answering these questions will provide a wealth of information about the character, the Director may ask for more information. These additional facts are more directly intended to provide story hooks, as well as to help situate the character in the specific world setting that the Director has designed. Many players will freely offer detailed accounts of their characters' backgrounds, but for those who are less inclined, it helps to have some specific questions or categories for the player to address. The Director is free to come up with his

own categories. A few are suggested here.

Supporting characters provide story hooks for the Director to use. These characters might be friends, fighting allies, enemies, or mysterious strangers. Have the player define one to three of these supporting characters. If the Director feels any of them might be problematic, he and the player should work at modifying them appropriately.

If the player is not willing to write a full background, have him suggest one to three quirky aspects of the character's personality, things about him that might not readily suggest themselves.

Have the player suggest one to three concrete aspects of the character's past. This could perhaps be a family member that needs protecting, a criminal past, or a pact made with a powerful sorcerer.

Finally, it might be useful to have the player decide upon one important obstacle against fighting for the character. This might be the disapproval of the character's family, a deep-seated fear or insecurity about himself, or a curse that will lead to his death. This last trait, if given enough thought, can often provide especially intriguing storylines for the character.

### Designing a Character

All Player Characters (PCs) and most important Non-Player Characters (NPCs) are considered to be Fighters. This means that they are among a select group of the most powerful martial artists in the setting (though the scale of that setting might be a city, the world, or the whole universe). In terms of

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the game rules, Fighters are far more powerful than other people, able to defeat hordes of lesser combatants, perform unbelievable feats of physical and possibly mystical ability, and only find a true challenge in martial combat against another of their kind. These are the movers and shakers of the campaign setting: the noblest of heroes and the darkest of villains.

Each Fighter character is defined by a number of traits:

**Basic Qualities:** These three characteristics are Strength, Speed, and Stamina. They describe the character's basic physical capabilities and, to a lesser extent, certain elements of his fighting style. They are defined at character creation and can never be changed.

**Qualities:** These traits encompass a wide variety of generally advantageous aspects of the character. Many of them describe a character's appearance, but they also include connections to the larger world, important items or contacts, and even powerful supernatural abilities for use outside of combat.

**Weaknesses:** These traits encompass a variety of disadvantages afflicting the character. Many of them describe psychological limitations, while others describe appearance or other liabilities. There are even some Weaknesses that relate to combat ability. No character is required to take Weaknesses, but doing so allows a character to select additional Qualities.

**Quirks:** These traits are elements of a character's personality that often impose minor restrictions on the actions of a character. However, they are not as

significant or as debilitating as Weaknesses. Many characters have one or two Quirks. A larger collection of Quirks (more than two) is actually considered to be a Weakness.

**Skills:** These traits determine a character's talent and training in a number of different areas. Several Skills in the game are not "skills" in the traditional sense of the word, but rather a rating of a character's ability with certain exceptional powers or specialized training.

**Special Moves and Super Moves:** These two sets of traits best distinguish a character's unique fighting style. Each individual special attack is built out of a list of Elements that define how the move is best used in combat.

**Glory:** This trait measures the style, flair, and skill with which the character defeats his opponents. As the character earns more Glory, he advances in Power Level. Glory functions as the equivalent of "experience points" in other role-playing games, though the way it is earned is rather specific to the structure of the game.

**Combat Bonuses:** These traits measure special bonuses in combat that are applied specifically to Accuracy, Control, Defense, and Damage. By choosing specific bonuses, the character further defines his particular fighting style.

**Life Bar:** This trait measures how much damage a character can endure before being knocked out or being so wounded as to be unable to continue fighting. It is called a "bar" in reference to the depleting bars at the top of the screen in traditional fighting video games.

**Fighting Spirit:** This trait measures a character's creativity, flexibility, skill, and split-second decision-

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making ability in combat. It is used for many purposes in combat. Fighting Spirit can make attacks faster and more accurate, defenses more sure, and combos longer. It has many other uses in combat as well.

### Character Generation Checklist

The following steps describe the specific process of making a character in Fight!

1. Choose the character's Basic Qualities.
2. Choose four additional Qualities.
3. If desired, choose Weaknesses and Quirks to possibly earn more Qualities.
4. Spend 5 points on Combat Skills.
5. Spend 15 points on other Skills.
6. Spend 10 points on Special Moves.

### Basic Qualities

Every character has three Basic Qualities: Strength, Speed, and Stamina.

**Strength:** This measures the character's ability to use physical force in combat. A high Strength increases a character's damage in combat.

**Speed:** This measures a character's reaction time in combat, including the ability to act with both speed and competence. It also measures the character's ability to most efficiently use the opportunities he has been given in combat. Speed may modify a character's Initiative, Control, or both.

**Stamina:** This measures the character's ability to absorb damage and keep functioning. A high Stamina reduces the damage a character receives

from opponents.

The three Basic Qualities are rated between  $-1$  and  $2$ , with a  $0$  being average for a Fighter (though not necessarily average for a regular human).

A character may choose to have any two Basic Qualities at  $1$ , while the third remains  $0$ . Alternatively, a character may choose to have one Basic Quality at  $2$ , one at  $-1$ , and the remaining one at  $0$ . This permits nine different character archetypes.

**Example 1:** Wayne is creating a character. As he has in mind a fairly stereotypical "hero" character, he decides to choose Strength  $1$ , Speed  $0$ , and Stamina  $1$ . This character hits hard and resists damage well, but is not especially fast.

**Example 2:** Christine is creating her character. She has a different stereotype in mind: the ultra-fast female fighter who may not hit hard but hits often. She chooses Strength  $-1$ , Speed  $2$ , and Stamina  $0$ .

If a character has a Speed that is not  $0$ , this Basic Quality must be further defined. A character with Speed that is one point higher or lower than average must choose to have the benefit or penalty apply to either Initiative or Control. If Speed is  $2$ , the bonus may apply to both or it may apply to either Initiative or Control twice. These modifiers increase the available character archetypes from nine to 15. This decision must be made when the character is first created and may not be changed later.

**Example 1:** Christine's character has a Speed of  $2$ . Her character concept is a character that always

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strikes first, so she assigns both points of Speed to Initiative. She fills in the character sheet with Speed 2, and then circles the word "Initiative" next to it.

**Example 2:** Jen's character is also a stereotypical fast female fighter with a Speed of 2. However, her character is not only fast, but capable of significant combo attacks as well. She assigns one point of Speed to Initiative and the other to Control. She fills in the character sheet with Speed 2, and then circles both the words "Control" and "Initiative" next to it.

**Example 3:** Jen and Christine's Fighters are soon to meet one of the Director's NPCs named Blood Fist. Blood Fist has Strength 2, Speed -1, and Stamina 0. The Director decided to record the character's negative Speed as an Initiative penalty. Blood Fist may not move fast, but he still knows how to put together a Combo when he has to. The Director records Speed -1, and then circles the word "Initiative" next to it.

The effect of having a positive or negative Basic Quality is determined by the die size used in certain situations in combat. A description of how die sizes work can be found at the beginning of Chapter 6.

Positive Strength adds one or two die sizes to the damage of attacks. Negative Strength subtracts one die size from the damage of attacks.

Positive Speed with a focus on Initiative adds one or two die sizes to the character's Initiative rolls in combat. Negative Speed with a focus on Initiative subtracts one die size from the character's Initiative rolls in combat. Regardless of the character's base die size as determined by Speed, Initiative can still be increased with Fighting Spirit as usual (see Initiative and Control in the Combat chapter).

Positive Speed with a focus on Control adds one or two die sizes to the character's Control rolls in combat. Negative Speed with a focus on Control subtracts one die size from the character's Control in combat. Regardless of the character's base die size as determined by Speed, Control can still be increased with Fighting Spirit as usual (see Initiative and Control in the Combat chapter).

Positive Stamina subtracts one or two die sizes from the damage inflicted by an opponent's attacks. Negative Stamina increases the damage of opponents' attacks by one die size.

### Qualities, Weaknesses, and Quirks

Every character begins the game with four Qualities, selected from the list of Qualities found in Chapter 3. A character also has an opportunity to gain a new Quality at every even-numbered Power Level, subject to the Director's approval. This approval should be based on the events of the campaign. If the character has been carefully cultivating a reputation in the underworld, then the Quality "Connections: Criminal" makes sense. But a character should not be able to develop the "Wealth" Quality overnight, for example, simply because the character advanced in power. Generally speaking, the Director should not make it too difficult for characters to gain new Qualities, as long as some reasonable in-game explanation can be provided.

A character can also gain additional Qualities during character creation by choosing Weaknesses. Each Weakness selected allows the character an additional Quality. When a character gains a new Quality at an even-numbered Power Level, he may instead lose a Weakness, subject to the Director's approval. Just as when gaining a new Quality, there should be a story-based reason why the character



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loses a Weakness. Furthermore, some Weaknesses may be extremely difficult or impossible to lose.

Quirks are a lesser form of Weakness, usually defined by specific personality traits that compel the character to behave in certain ways in certain situations. They limit the character in small ways, but not to the same degree as a Weakness. Their primary purpose is as a guide to role-playing the character. Some example Quirks are Brutal, Impulsive, or Suspicious.

Every character is encouraged to take one or two Quirks to help further define his personality. If a character instead chooses three to five Quirks, the combined Quirks count as a Weakness, making the character eligible to choose another Quality.

If a player role-plays his Quirks to such a degree that he deliberately hinders his character in the course of a story, the Director can choose to award the character a Story Point (see Story Points in Chapter 3, the Qualities chapter).

Finally, a character does not have to take all four Qualities (or more than four, if Weaknesses have increased his available total above four). Instead, a Quality can be exchanged for three additional points of Non-Combat Skills, two points of Fighting Spirit, or a single point in a Combat Skill. However, all characters must choose at least one Quality at character creation.

The descriptions of all Qualities, Weaknesses, and Traits can be found in Chapter 3.

### Noticing What the Players Want Through Their Characters' Qualities

The majority of the Qualities and Weaknesses in the game have nothing to do with combat or fighting ability. Instead, these elements of the character are intended to develop the character beyond his identity as a Fighter. Many of them deal with social interactions: either additional resources in the form of equipment or information available to the character or improved abilities to impress or persuade other people the character encounters. As they gain new Qualities by advancing in Power Level, a character can expand his network of contacts and allies.

However, the rules do not require a character to have any more than a single Quality. This can allow a character to instead trade all of his extra Qualities for significantly greater Combat Skills and/or Fighting Spirit, choices that directly improve a character's ability in a fight.

The Director should note the choices his players make when they make and advance their characters. Are they spending all of their Qualities on Connections, Influence, and Followers? This indicates that the characters' interactions with NPCs are important to the group and a story full of non-stop fight scenes will probably not be as interesting to them. On the other hand, if the players' characters all have only a single Quality, and many of those are combat-related, the players are indicating that combat is most fun to them, and the Director should plan stories accordingly.

Many groups, though, probably have players who fit into both of these categories, suggesting that the Director needs to find a balance in writing stories that are character-driven and ones that are action-packed. In any case, the Qualities the player chooses for his character can be a useful guideline for the Director.

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### Skills

Skills are divided into two categories: Combat Skills and Non-Combat Skills. Non-Combat Skills are further divided into Mechanical Skills and Narrative Skills. This latter distinction delineates when the skills are used in the game, though it does not change how the skills are acquired or the basic rules governing how the skills are used. Each character begins with a pool of points to be spent on Combat Skills and Non-Combat Skills.

**Combat Skills:** These skills have a direct, mechanical relationship to the combat system. There are five of them, but the most important ones are Defense, Evasion, and Tactics (sometimes abbreviated DET). These three skills are used to avoid being hit in combat. The remaining two Combat Skills are Ki, usually used only by characters with Special Moves that have the Ranged Element, and Combo, which determines how long of a Combo the character can string together in combat.

**Mechanical Skills:** All the skills in this category of Non-Combat Skills have additional requirements before they can be acquired and/or specific applications in a story context. They are skills with specific game applications. However, they cost the same to acquire as Narrative Skills.

**Narrative Skills:** The remaining Non-Combat Skills encompass everything else a character might be able to do, usually used in a story outside of a combat situation.

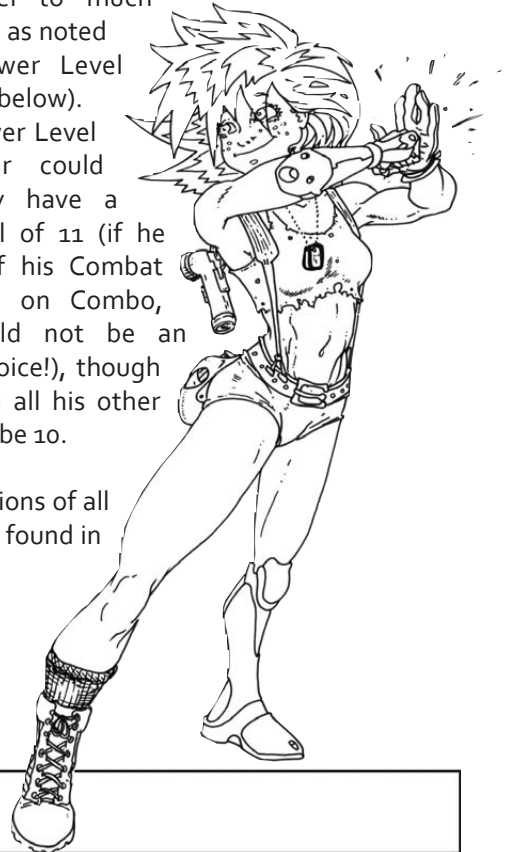
When a character is first built, as well as each time he increases in Power Level, he receives points to spend on both Combat and Non-Combat Skills. Points cannot be switched between categories. For

example, a character cannot spend five Non-Combat Skill points on Combat Skills or vice versa.

A character's competence with a given Skill is measured by levels in that skill. It costs one point to increase a Skill by one level. A character with only one level of a Skill has basic training, while eight levels denotes an advanced level of training. It should be noted that what constitutes "basic" training is largely dependent on the Skill in question. Especially for Combat Skills, even one level generally represents far greater skill than is possible for a normal person.

The highest level a character may have in any single Skill is his present Power Level x 3, up to a maximum level of 10. Two exceptions exist: the Combo Skill has no maximum level at any point and Defense, Evasion, and Tactics are limited by a character's Power Level to much lower levels, as noted on the Power Level Chart (see below). Thus, a Power Level 4 character could theoretically have a Combo Skill of 11 (if he spent all of his Combat Skill Points on Combo, which would not be an effective choice!), though the limit on all his other Skills would be 10.

Full descriptions of all Skills can be found in Chapter 2.





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### Choosing Combat Skills at Power Level 1

A player can distribute the five points available for Combat Skills in whatever way he wishes. However, there are some mechanical considerations to keep in mind that are not immediately apparent without some familiarity with the combat rules.

A Combo Skill of 1 has no effect. The actual level of this Skill determines the maximum number of hits that can be strung together into a single attack, and thus a character needs at least 2 levels of this Skill to be able to use it. In a sense, one must spend two Combat Skill points to acquire the "ability" to do Combos.

Ki Skill is useful even with only a single level. However, its primary use in combat is to determine the damage of Special Moves with the Ranged Element. Therefore, a character without Ranged moves does not need to have the Ki Skill. On the other hand, a Power Level 1 character can only spend up to three points in any one Skill. The damage of a Ranged Special Move is the same for Ki 1-3. This means that the main incentive for choosing a Ki Skill higher than 1 is to speed advancement in the Skill at higher Power Levels.

A level of 1 in any of the defensive Skills is extremely limited. There are very few instances in the combat system in which that level will be able to block or avoid an attack. Therefore, it is worthwhile to consider putting two or even three Combat Skill points in at least one of the three defensive Skills at Power Level 1. While the character will be less flexible in his defenses to start, he will actually have a chance to avoid some attacks. If the player chooses to put at least two Skill points in two different defensive Skills, the best pair is Defense and Evasion, as these two Skills can be used together.

These first important decisions already begin to define the fighting style of the character. A character with Ranged attacks has fewer points to spend on defenses and so must manage positioning more carefully. A character with two or three points in Combo is setting himself up for an aggressive style of play that will rely on high Initiative and Control. A character who chooses neither of these options will probably have moderately sound defenses in exchange for offensive flexibility

### Special Moves

Special Moves are one of the most important characteristics of a Fighter. These are the unique attacks that make up a character's fighting style, whether that includes powerful uppercuts, spinning roundhouse kicks, or projecting balls of destructive energy. Each move is made up of specific characteristics that define its application during

combat. The details of these characteristics are explained in Chapter 4.

A Fighter character begins with 10 Move Points to spend on Special Moves. Each Special Move costs a number of Move Points to purchase equal to its level (explained in more detail in Chapter 4), with the

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exception of Level 2 (L2) moves, which cost 3 Move Points rather than 2 points. Most Special Moves are L3, L4, or L5

A character must spend all 10 points on Special Moves. However, with each Special Move generally costing 3, 4, or 5 points, there is a possibility that only 1 or 2 points will be left over. In this case, these remaining points can be spent on Non-Combat Skills instead. They cannot be saved.

**Example 1:** Wayne's Fighter is a traditional combatant with three Special Moves. Two of these Special Moves are Level 3 (L3), while his final move is Level 4 (L4). This costs 10 points (3+3+4).

**Example 2:** Jen's Fighter has simpler moves. All three of her starting Special Moves are L3. This only totals 9 points, so the remaining point can be spent on a Non-Combat Skill.

Power Level	Total Glory	Super Moves	Combat Bonuses	DET	Full Defense	Life Bar	Fighting Spirit
1	0-25	0	0	3	+1	30	10
2	26-50	0	1	3	+2	40	20
3	51-100	1	2	3	+2	50	30
4	101-175	2	3/2	3	+3	60	40
5	176-250	3	4/2	4	+3	70	55
6	251-350	4	5/2	4	+4	80	70
7	351-500	5	6/3	4	+4	90	85
8	501+	6	7/3	5	+5	100	100

### Power Level

A Fighter character's overall power, especially in combat, is determined by his Power Level. Power Level functions in many ways like the concept of "level" in other role-playing games. All characters begin at Power Level 1. As they gain Glory through the events of the campaign, they advance in Power

Level. No character can achieve a Power Level above 8 –this usually marks the countdown to the end of a campaign plotline. For an additional challenge and to extend the story's finale, there is also an optional rule that serves as an exception for a campaign's final "Boss" Fighters, who may be Power Level 9, or even Power Level 10.

All characters begin with 0 Glory. As soon as a character gains enough Glory for the next Power

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Level as listed on the chart above, they immediately advance in Power Level. However, the Director can restrict a character from advancing in Power Level until the end of a session or the end of an adventure. A character normally will not advance in Power Level during the middle of a combat, as spending all the choices to advance the character would disrupt the narrative of the combat. However, the Director is free to allow this if he wishes, if he thinks the character's sudden power boost will make for a better story. Perhaps he might allow an immediate increase in Fighting Spirit or Life Bar, or allow him access to a new Special Move that the player had prepared in advance.

When a character advances in Power Level, he gains another 3 points to be spent on Combat Skills, another

### Completing a Character's Move List

Over the course of the eight Power Levels, a character will acquire enough Move Points to purchase between 18-24 Special and Super Moves. This raises certain questions. Does the character need that many moves? Does the campaign style suggest the character should have that many moves?

If the campaign is meant to emulate the increasingly complicated world of modern 2-D fighting games, the answer is probably yes. Many characters in contemporary fighting games may rely on 5-6 primary special attacks, but have a wide array of Special Moves for unusual situations or which are highly dependent on following other moves, sometimes in long chains. Thus, creative players can use all the available Move Points to create rich repertoires of moves to use in many different situations.

On the other hand, if the style of the campaign is emulating the majority of 3-D fighting games, the answer is likely no. Despite impressively long move lists, sometimes in the neighborhood of 100 "special moves," the majority of these are actually better represented with the rules for Attack Strings (see Chapter 4). Basically, just because the attacks look different and are named differently when the player presses one punch, two punches, or three punches in a row, the game mechanics of *Fight!* describe this as an Attack String of Basic Attacks, not as different Special Moves. Thus, in a campaign like this, characters will still likely have a number of Special Moves, but they will also use Move Points to increase their Attack String Skill.

Likewise, if the campaign is intended to maintain the simplicity of old-school 2-D fighting games, the characters' move lists might be closed very early (even as early as Power Level 1 or 2). This allows the character to translate all of his remaining Move Points into Skills for a campaign style that allows characters to do more than just fight, or into greater levels of Combo and Fighting Spirit.

This latter option also fits well with the implied "metagame" of *Fight!* With a short move list, it doesn't take as long to learn how to perform all of them. Instead, skill in combat is measured by the ability to use those Special Moves well, which is represented in the game with both Combos and the ability to manipulate fights with Fighting Spirit.

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10 points to spend on Non-Combat Skills, and another 10 points to spend on Special Moves.

With the 10 points available for Special Moves, the character must acquire at least one new Special Move or Super Move (if permitted by his Power Level and the campaign guidelines). If the character cannot or does not wish to spend exactly 10 points on new Special Moves, the remainder not spent on Special Moves can be either added to Non-Combat Skills or to Fighting Spirit on a 1-for-1 basis, to the Combo Skill at a cost of 3 points per point of Combo, or they can be saved for next level.

A player can decide that his character's Special Move list is "complete." At this point, he is no longer obligated to spend Move Points on new Special Moves and can instead spend those points on Non-Combat Skills, Fighting Spirit, or the Combo Skill, as noted above. However, the character can never again acquire more Special Moves or Super Moves. If the campaign includes Super Moves, a character cannot "close" his Move List until after Power Level 3 when the character acquires his first Super Move.

Finally, at each even Power Level, at the Director's discretion, a character can gain a new Quality or lose a Weakness. These cannot be Basic Qualities, which never change.

### Explanation of the Power Level Chart

**Power Level:** All characters start at Power Level 1. As they earn Glory, they progress through Power Level 8. An increase in Power Level demonstrates a greater level of power, as well as a greater understanding of one's capabilities and potential.

On a metagame level, Power Level can also be understood as a player's proficiency with the particular character in the "video game" represented by the campaign. At each Power Level, the player learns how to use new moves in more situations, as well as how to perform longer Combos and defend more effectively.

**Total Glory:** This is the total Glory earned by the character through all his endeavors. The Glory Total is what determines the character's Power Level. The ways characters can acquire Glory are described below.

**Super Moves:** It is presumed that campaigns will allow Super Moves by default. However, no character can acquire his first Super Move before reaching Power Level 3. When a character reaches Power Level 3, he must use some of his Move Points to acquire a Super Move. Unlike normal Special Moves, the total number of Super Moves a character can have is determined by his Power Level.

**Combat Bonuses:** There are four different Combat Bonuses: Accuracy, Control, Damage, and Defense. Each of these adds to the appropriate check or value in combat. When a character achieves Power Level 2, he chooses one of the four categories in which to take a +1 bonus. At Power Level 3, he may choose a different bonus at +1, or he can choose the same bonus to become +2. The split number on the Power Level chart beginning at Power Level 4 shows the total number of bonuses on the left, and the highest total available to any single bonus on the right. Thus, at Power Level 4, a character will have 3 total Combat Bonuses, though no single category will be greater than +2.

**DET:** DET stands for the three defensive Combat Skills: Defense, Evasion, and Tactics. Unlike normal Skills, these three Skills individually cannot be of a higher level than listed on the Power Level chart.

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For example, a Power Level 5 character can normally have up to 10 levels in any Skill, except for Defense, Evasion, and Tactics, which cannot be higher than 4 according to the Power Level chart (and of course, Combo never has an upper limit for any character).

**Full Defense:** When a character uses the Full Defense option in combat, his Defense Total is increased by the amount listed here. A higher Power Level character can make better use of this tactic.

**Life Bar:** This is the amount of damage the character can take in combat before being defeated. "Defeated" usually means knocked out, but in the context of the story, it may mean the character needs to take a break before going another round, or that he is simply unable to fight anymore, or possibly that he has been killed.

**Fighting Spirit:** This represents the reserves of energy - physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual - that the character can bring to the battlefield. It can

### Creating a Group with a Hero and His Supporting Characters

The default presumption for a group of players is that each of their characters is a Fighter traveling and fighting alongside the other PCs for reasons appropriate to their back-stories and motivations. Each of the fighters is roughly equivalent in skill and ability as the rest. However, it is possible that a group of players might want one of their characters to clearly be the "hero," while the remaining characters offer support roles (despite still being Fighters themselves).

In this situation, the points allocated to Combat and Non-Combat Skills change. The hero character begins with 10 points in Combat Skills, but only 5 points in Non-Combat Skills. Each Power Level (including Power Level 8), the hero gains 5 points in both Combat and Non-Combat Skills. On the other hand, the non-hero characters start the game with only 2 points of Combat Skills, but with 25 points of Non-Combat Skills. Each Power Level, these characters receive 1 more point for Combat Skills, but 15 more points for Non-Combat Skills.

This allows the non-hero characters to develop high skill levels in many different areas to support the hero. It is important to note that, with such a campaign style, the Dramatic Combat sub-system should not be used. Due to the prevalence of Non-Combat Skill use in that system, combined with the increased use of Basic Moves, not only will the hero character not shine in such a situation, but his "support" characters will perhaps prove to be better fighters than he is! One possible exception to this would be occasional fight scenes against incorporeal monsters and spirits, where a supporting magical character has a chance to shine. Likewise, to create balance with this campaign model, investigation, infiltration, and interaction scenes should be as common as combat scenes, in order to give all the characters their moment in the spotlight. The Director should also consider small Glory awards for the supporting characters when their skill use saves the day or allows the story to continue for the main hero.

be used in many different ways in combat. The careful management of Fighting Spirit is one of the most important tactical decisions in the whole combat system. The number in this column represents the base Fighting Spirit for a Fighter of a particular Power Level. If the Fighter has spent Move Points to increase his Fighting Spirit, those additional points are added to his new base Fighting

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additional points are added to his new base Fighting Spirit when the character advances in Power Level.

Special Move in this combat), even though it hit, earns no Glory.

### Earning Glory

Combat is the primary means by which characters earn most of their Glory. The first time a character hits with a Special Move in a fight, he earns Glory equal to the level of the move. This only applies to the first use of a Special Move in a fight; subsequent uses of the same move in the same fight do not earn Glory. If the attack misses, no Glory is earned, but if the same move is used again in the same combat and hits, it then earns Glory. Basic Moves do not earn Glory. A Combo earns Glory equal to the number of moves in the Combo (including Basic Moves), as well as Glory for any Special Moves in the Combo that have been used successfully for the first time in the combat.



**Example 1:** Koichiro hits an opponent with his L3 Ranged attack, a projection of blue ki force. This is the first time the attack has been used in the fight, so it earns 3 Glory. On the following round, he uses the same blue bolt again and hits again. However, this attack (and all subsequent uses of this particular

**Example 2:** Koichiro's opponent, the ninja Tsuto, attacks back and hits with a 4-hit Combo, beginning with a flying axe kick, an L4 move. This is the first time the kick has been used in the fight; therefore the Combo is worth 8 Glory: 4 for the L4 move, and 4 for the successful 4-hit Combo. Two rounds later, he hits with the exact same Combo. This time, the attack is only worth 4 Glory (for the 4-hit Combo).

If a character is fighting in a tournament fight or some other situation in which the best of a series of rounds determines the winner (such as the best 2 out of 3), record each character's Glory total for each round of the conflict. Each character earns Glory only for their personal best round. The remaining Glory from other rounds is ignored.

**Example:** Koichiro battles the fearsome Blood Fist in a best 2-out-of-3 tournament. In the first round, Koichiro handily defeats Blood Fist, earning 17 Glory. Blood Fist earns 10. In the second round, Blood Fist rallies and defeats Koichiro, earning 12 Glory to



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Koichiro's 11. In the final round, however, Koichiro bests the villain, earning 15 Glory to Blood Fist's 13. Thus, Koichiro would earn 17 Glory (his total from round 1) and Blood Fist would earn 13 (from round 3). Note that Blood Fist still used his highest total, even though he lost the specific round in question.

If the combatants are of unequal Power Levels, the higher-level character receives a fraction of the normal Glory earned equal to the ratio of the characters' Power Levels. The lower level character does not earn extra Glory for fighting a higher-level opponent. For simplicity, this rule should only be invoked in one-on-one confrontations.

Glory earned in fights against Thugs is tallied normally for the whole combat, and then divided by 3 (rounding up). The Dramatic Combat sub-system has many options that have special Glory bonuses attached to them when used successfully. Action Sequences sometimes earn a small amount of Glory, according to a specific formula (see Chapter 2).

While Special Moves and Combos are the primary ways in which characters earn Glory, there are other ways to gain (and lose) Glory as well. The chart on the next page indicates these situations.

In general, all characters will earn more Glory than they ever lose. However, if a character should happen to lose enough Glory to reduce his Power Level, he does not lose any of the benefits gained from the higher Power Level (including new Special Moves, Skills, Bonuses, Life Bar, and Fighting Spirit), but until the character regains sufficient Glory to regain his former Power Level, he is considered to be the lower Power Level for all effects based specifically on Power Level, especially the use of Fighting Spirit in combat.

### Glory and Rate of Character Advancement

The rate at which Glory is earned also determines the speed of character advancement and therefore, the speed of the campaign as a whole. Furthermore, earning Glory is highly dependent on tactical choices and a healthy dose of luck in combat. It is not impossible that two player characters who are involved in the exact same combats may have drastically different Glory totals.

This requires special attention on the part of the Director. While it might make sense in the context of the story for one character to be of a higher Power Level than another character, this is not always conducive to good player dynamics. If it seems like disparate Glory totals or even Power Levels will be a problem in the group, then the Director should make provisions for characters lagging behind in Glory to have



opportunities for solo combats to help make up the difference.

In the campaign overall, the frequency of combat will determine the rate of advancement. In a story based solely around a single tournament with many

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### Additional Glory Awards Chart

Defeating another Fighter (ie., reduce to 0 life Bar)	1
End of each session of play	1
Character significantly advances the story	1
Good role-playing	0-2 (Director's discretion)
Character acted consistently according to genre conventions	1
Good planning, ideas, or resourcefulness	1
Not striking a Stunned opponent	1
Defeating a Stunned Opponent	1
Defeating an opponent with a Super Move	1
Issuing a challenge to another Fighter	1
Accepting a challenge	1
Defeating a Fighter with 70% or more time left *	1
Defeating a Fighter with 80% or more time left*	2
Defeating a Fighter with 90% or more time left*	3
Defeating more than one Fighter single-handedly	1 per extra opponent
Defeating a Fighter without losing any Life Bar	3
Open display of cowardice	-1-20 (Director's discretion)
Character defeated in combat	-5
Character Stunned	-1

\* (see the Combat chapter for an explanation of time left in a fight)



## CHARACTER GENERATION

opponents, it's possible for a character to advance a full Power Level every single story. However, a better balance between combat and adventuring (investigation, interaction, interpersonal relationships, training journeys, etc.) will likely yield a slower rate of advancement. If a group played weekly sessions, with each character having some opportunity for Glory in combat every session or every other session, while still working towards the climax of some greater plot, it should take less than one year to progress from Power Level 1 to Power Level 8.

If the Director feels advancement is too fast or too slow, it is a simple matter to adjust the frequency of combat. Decreasing combats is often much easier from a story perspective, but in a game such as *Fight!*, where the characters are highly focused on, well, fighting, combat cannot be ignored for long. Both Dramatic Combat scenes and especially Thug Thrashing scenes offer opportunities for full fight scenes without significant Glory earned. Adding combats requires some sort of context within the larger narrative, but in the fighting game genre, it should be ridiculously easy to come up with a premise for a throwdown.

### Simplifying and Accelerating the Rate of Advancement

In some short campaigns, the plot arc may encompass a very short period of time, perhaps a matter of days or even a single long tournament. In these cases, the normal rate of advancement may not work. After all, advancing from Power Level 1 through Power Level 8 should take at least 20 combats and probably quite a few more.

If the campaign would work better with a more rapid advancement, the Director can simply ignore the normal means of acquiring Glory and allow every character to advance one Power Level at the end of each story or story segment. This also allows a group to have a "full campaign," but in a much shorter period of actual play time.

For example, suppose the Director wants to run a campaign in which the main story is about a group of heroes learning to reach their full potential and finding the answers to their quests through the events of a single tournament occurring in a single city. Such a set-up would not work as well with the normal means of advancement, which is intended for longer, more complicated plots. So instead, the Director decides to allow each character to advance in Power Level after each bracket of the tournament. By the time the finals of the tournament occur, the Fighters will be Power Level 8.

The rules for Power Level are also an abstraction at the service of the campaign and its main story. Power Level is not necessarily meant to represent the full potential and power of a character, but rather that character's advancement in power and potential over the course of a particular storyline. For more on this, see Chapter 6 regarding pacing and ending a campaign.

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**SKILLS**



## 2. Skills

This chapter explains how Skills are used in Fight! While some of the Skills in the game correspond to “skills” properly so-called, many of them actually describe specialized training, psychological states, or even actual martial arts techniques. This chapter describes how to use Skills in play, followed by descriptions of all the Skills. The chapter concludes with special rules for a particular kind of skill use called an Action Sequence.

With these rules, Fighters can sneak into the fortresses of evil masterminds, dodge the gunfire of mere soldiers, persuade their police superiors to look the other way as they continue an investigation “their way,” level buildings with secret techniques, draw spiritual power from the depths of the earth, and look amazing while doing it.

### Basics of the Skill System

The rules for skill use in Fight! are intended to be simple and straightforward to facilitate ease of use in play. The basic mechanic is the roll of a d10 with modifiers, trying to equal or exceed a Difficulty Level assigned by the Director. If the roll is successful, the character accomplishes what he intended to do. If not, the character fails, perhaps with negative consequences, depending on what he was trying to accomplish. This is all that is absolutely necessary for skill use in the game. The remainder of this section contains a series of permutations to this rule.

**Skill Check = 1d10 + relevant Skill vs. assigned Difficulty Level (DL)**

### Assigning Difficulty Levels

The chart below provides the suggested Difficulty Levels for various levels of skill checks. Note that the determination of difficulty is based on the action of a skilled person, not an untrained person.

Difficulty of Task for a Skilled Person	Difficulty Level
Trivial	4
Average	8
Challenging	12
Very Difficult	16
Generally Impossible	20

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## SKILLS

For ease of play, the Director may rule that a character with a few levels in a Skill can ignore rolling to resolve Trivial tasks. After all, any character with 3 or more levels in a Skill will not fail any normal attempt to accomplish a Trivial task; this presumption can also be extended to characters with only one or two levels in most cases.

The Director is not obligated to use the Difficulty Levels outlined in the chart above. He can simply choose to assign a DL using the chart as a guideline. Furthermore, the Director might choose to set the Difficulty Level at a certain level to represent the objective difficulty of the task, and then give the character a bonus or penalty on the die roll to represent some special circumstance. Whether modifying the DL or modifying the roll, the end result is the same: the task becomes easier or harder. Use whatever method works best for the players' engagement with the story.

A character's Basic Qualities may also affect the DL of a skill check. Whether or not a Quality modifies a skill check is up to the Director. There is no specific system for the effect of Basic Qualities on skill checks nor are Skills inherently related to one specific Basic Quality.

**Example:** Steve's character, Scotty McDervish, is trying to smash through a heavy wooden door. The Director decides that this is an average task and sets the DL at 8. Scotty's Property Damage Skill is a 4, so he needs to roll a 4 or more to break the door. However, Scotty also has Strength 2, and the Director thinks that's relevant to the check. He gives Steve an additional +2 on the roll, making the task very easy. He rolls a 3 and the door is torn from its hinges.

There are no automatic successes or failures on a skill check based on the die roll. For example, a 1 is not an automatic failure, nor is a 10 an automatic success. Thus, some skill checks will be automatically successful without a die roll, while other checks will be impossible at the character's present skill level.

### Critical Successes, Mixed Successes, and Fumbles

This section of rules is optional. While it can increase the drama of certain skill checks, it can also be more complicated than a particular skill check requires or deserves. It is up to the Director to decide whether a particular roll will have a possible critical success, mixed success, or fumble.

During a normal skill check, if a 10 is rolled, the player can roll another d10. If this second result is also a 10, and the resulting total of 10 + Skill level exceeds the assigned DL of the task, a critical success has occurred. The exact results of this are up to the Director, but truly fantastic results should be possible with a critical success. The effects of a critical success should be used to enhance the drama of the present scene, or maybe even the tone of the story as a whole.

In a similar fashion, if the die roll for a skill check is exactly the number needed for success, a mixed result occurs. This should still qualify as a success, but the Director might also impose some minor temporary penalty on the character as well.

**Example:** Scotty has a crane load of steel girders dropped on him. As he sees them crashing down, he decides to punch them out of the way as they fall. The Director decides this is a DL 12 task for the Property Damage Skill. Steve rolls an 8, plus



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opposite of a critical success. The effects are up to the Director, but something simply awful (yet dramatically interesting) should occur. While accomplishing this specific task should be a failure, a fumble should not de-rail the story or make it impossible for the character to act. Like a critical success, a fumble should be used to enhance the drama of the story, not be an arbitrary penalty for bad die rolls.

**Skill vs. Skill**

Oftentimes two characters are either competing to complete the same task or they are working directly against one another. Some examples of this would be two mystical characters using the Ki Skill to manipulate the same object, a hero hiding with Stealth while another character searches with the Perception Skill, or two Fighters staring one another down with Intimidation. In these cases, each character makes a skill check.

After the skill checks are made, the results are compared. The character who rolls higher wins the contested task at hand. If a single Skill vs. Skill check produces a tie, the participants can roll again. The Director could also just rule the contest a tie and not require additional rolls.

Scotty's Skill level of 4, equals 12. He succeeds at bashing the girders away from him, but he strains a muscle after a single near miss. The Director says that Scotty will suffer a -2 on appropriate physical tasks until he gets some rest.

Finally, the opposite of a critical success can also occur. If a 1 is rolled on a skill check, roll another d10. If this second result is also a 1, and the resulting total of 1 + Skill level is less than the assigned DL of the task, a fumble occurs. A fumble is the exact

**Example:** Asuka the Ghost Archer is trying to sneak past the guards at the Fortress of Endless Nightmares. She has a Stealth Skill of 6. The guards at the gates only have Perception Skills of 2. Jen, Asuka's player, rolls a 5, plus 6, for a total of 11. The Director rolls an 8 for the guards, for a total of 10. Asuka wins the contested skill check. The Ghost Archer slips through the gates to wreak vengeance against the Midnight Emperor.

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## SKILLS

### Skills Without Skill Levels

There may be circumstances in which a character must make a skill check but lacks any levels in the necessary Skill. In this situation, it is up to the Director to determine whether or not the character

#### Combat Skills

- Defense
- Evasion
- Tactics
- Combo
- Ki

#### Non-Combat Skills (Mechanical)

- Agility
- Climactic Super Move
- Gadgeteering
- Magic
- Power
- Psychic
- Reaffirm Purpose
- Realize Potential
- Stance Evaluation
- Thug Thrashing

#### Non-Combat Skills (Narrative)

Animal Handling	Knowledge	Specialization
Acrobatics	Lockpicking	Spirituality
Athletics	Lost in the Crowd	Stealth
Awareness	Meditation	Street Society
Call Forth Wisdom	Occupation	Technological Aptitude
Cooking	Perception	The Fighting World
Danger Sense	Performance	Zen State
Deduction	Presence	
Draw Ki	Property Damage	
Endure Great Hardship	Receive Wisdom	
Fast Reflexes	Sense Ki	
Grim Determination	Shadowing	
High Society	Sleight of Hand	
Intimidation	Smooth Talking	

can succeed at all with the skill check. For example, it is reasonable to assume that any character could attempt a Perception Skill check or a Smooth Talking Skill check. However, a character without Draw Ki would not be able to attempt a skill check without levels in that Skill. The Occupation Skill can often be used as a replacement in many cases where a character lacks a particular skill (see the description of the Occupation Skill below).

If the Director does allow a character to make a skill check without any levels in the appropriate Skill, the check is made by rolling a d10 and adding nothing. However, if the Director rules that the task is impossible without Skill levels, the character automatically fails.

## Skill Descriptions

The following sections contain descriptions of all the Skills in the game. For convenience, all the Skills, combat, mechanical, and narrative, have been listed alphabetically in their own sections.

Despite the unusual nature of many of the Skills in the game, new additions to the list should not really be necessary. If a Skill appears to be missing, it is likely that it could be resolved with an appropriate Occupation, Knowledge, Presence, Smooth Talking, or Specialization roll.

The three Basic Qualities are also listed here as Skills. In addition to using Basic Qualities to modify other skill checks, the numeric value of a Basic Quality can be used as a Skill for a skill check. For relatively easy feats that are still not guaranteed success, a DL of 4 should be used. For more prodigious feats, the DL should be 8. For miraculous feats, the DL should be 12.

If the Director wants a general roll to determine if a

character knows something without possessing a specific Knowledge Skill, the character can make a straight d10 roll with no levels added. A DL 4 should be sufficient for fairly common knowledge, while a DL 12 might be necessary for obscure knowledge (if the Director deems that the character could know it at all). Several Qualities specifically add bonuses to skill checks involving knowledge and/or intelligence.

Some Skill descriptions make reference to Story Points. These are a resource for manipulating rolls and events in favor of the players. They are explained in full detail in Chapter 3.

## Combat Skills

**Combo:** This Skill represents the Fighter's ability to accurately string attacks together in combination. In the combat system, it limits the maximum number of hits in a single Combo (which means it must be at least level 2 to be used). Like all combat Skills, it has little or no narrative application outside of the combat system. Unlike all other Skills, this Skill is not limited to level 10; it has no upper limit (though it has a practical limit of 23, the highest possible Control in a single turn).

**Defense:** This important combat Skill is absolutely required for any character that wants to succeed in combat. While there are three different defensive Skills, this particular one is always considered the default mode of defending oneself. If circumstances do not permit the use of Evasion or Tactics, Defense is used. Thus, it is an important Skill for all characters. It specifically measures the character's ability to block attacks, as well as the knowledge of when to block, when to move, and when to attack. Like all combat Skills, it has little or no narrative

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## SKILLS

application outside of the combat system.

**Evasion:** This Skill is an alternative form of defense. It measures the character's ability to duck, sidestep, dodge, and leap out of the way of attacks. It has little or no specific narrative application outside of the combat system. There is a difference between this Skill and the mechanical non-combat Skill called Agility. Evasion covers the Fighter's ability to avoid attacks by Fighters in martial arts combat, while Agility represents the Fighter's ability to avoid attacks when being attacked by lesser opponents.

**Ki:** This combat Skill has a specific purpose in the combat system, and is only necessary for those characters that have Special Moves with the Ranged Element. For many characters, the Skill represents proficiency with manipulating one's personal life force or ki, usually for use as an offensive weapon. However, at the Director's discretion, this Skill might also be used outside of combat to generate low-level magical or supernatural effects that only affect the character himself. For example, the character might be able to heal a debilitating injury faster, recover from poison, or even generate a glowing field around himself to produce light.

While this Skill is always called "Ki," it can also be understood and listed instead as "Gadgetry" when the Ranged attacks are the result of mechanical devices rather than mystical or supernatural power. The game effects are the same. Gadgetry is used wherever Ki is listed in the rules, with the obvious exception of the non-combat magical effects described above (unless the Director permits it). It should be noted that Gadgetry is not ability with mechanics or inventing. It should only be possessed by characters who have skill with and regular access

to lots of mechanical, often high-tech, equipment.

**Tactics:** This Skill is an alternative defense. It measures the character's ability to know how to best respond in any given combat situation and to know the precise timing to make the best use of the opportunities that present themselves. It has little or no specific narrative application outside of the combat system.

### Why No Offensive Skills?

Players will note that there are three distinct skills used for defense in combat, but not a single skill that determines a character's offensive ability. This is deliberate. At the most basic level, hitting another character in a fighting game is nothing more than determining whether the opponent is standing in the place an attack hits. This is literally determined by comparison of the computer's "hit boxes" and determining if there is an intersection between an attack's "hit box" and the location of the opponent. In a fight between two relatively unskilled players, each player will have an easy time hitting his opponent, simply by closing with him and hitting attack buttons. The real challenge in a fighting game is not hitting the opponent, but learning how to avoid being hit, via blocking, evasion, and counterattack techniques.

Thus, as the metagame of Fight! is based on the mechanics of a fighting video game, it makes sense to focus on the defensive ability of a character. As such, it is recommended that players develop all three defensive skills to effective levels for their characters. In turn, the offensive ability of a character (actually meaning the ability of the player of that character in a video game) is represented by Control, the tactical use of Fighting Spirit, and the ability to do longer Combos accurately.



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taking any levels in it. Furthermore, this Skill also requires the other secondary Skills listed below to be at a level at least equal to 1/2 (round up) of the Gadgeteering skill level (thus, Gadgeteering 4 requires all related Skills to

be at least 2 levels).

**Mechanical Skills**

**Agility:** This Skill is usually used only when facing Thugs. It is used to dodge their ranged attacks, even gunfire, with impressive evasion techniques, flips and dodges, and extraordinary luck. Like many of the conventions of the fighting game genre, it is not intended to be a “realistic” skill. This Skill can also be used as a defensive option in Dramatic Combat against Thugs.

**Climactic Super Move:** This special Skill represents the ability of a character to pull out powerfully destructive techniques, but only when they are losing. Such attacks are usually accompanied by flashes, explosions, and huge changes to the immediate environment (physically and perhaps spiritually as well). Its main use is for Dramatic Combat, but the Director may allow a Climactic Super Move skill check in desperate non-combat situations, such as destroying an ancient magical monolith before it summons enough power to destroy the world. In this way, it is like the Property Damage Skill, though this Skill (as the name suggests) only works in climactic situations and can generate much more impressive effects.

**Gadgeteering:** This special Skill requires a character to also possess the Quality of the same name before

This Skill represents access to and proficiency with powerful high-tech equipment (and usually, though not necessarily, skill at creating it). In game terms, the Skill allows the character to do almost anything, provided it can be described in terms of the high-tech equipment that is being used. The Director simply assigns a DL to determine the difficulty in having the right equipment on hand in the present situation (with lower DLs when it facilitates moving the story forward). This Skill requires significant Director adjudication, but it helps to better define many character concepts, as well as increasing opportunities to use non-combat powers.

**Example:** Max Damage the cyborg warrior has Gadgeteering 4. On a mission against the evil Striker Corporation, Max finds himself trapped in an energy cell. He sees the controls only 10 feet away, but he can't reach them. He decides to use a remote control to activate the controls and free himself. The Director likes this idea and decides to set the DL at only 8. Max's player rolls a 6, giving Max a total of 10. Max makes an adjustment to the settings on his cybernetic arm, aims it at the control panel, and activates the release. The energy cell disappears and Max heads further into the complex.

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The secondary Skills required for Gadgeteering are: Ki (understood as Gadgetry), Thug Thrashing, Climactic Super Move, Property Damage, Endure Great Hardship, Awareness, and Perception. Note that this Skill is to be distinguished from “Gadgetry,” which is simply an alternative name for the Ki Skill.

**Magic:** This special Skill requires a character to also possess the Quality of the same name before taking levels. Furthermore, this Skill also requires the other secondary Skills listed below to be at a level equal to 1/2 (round up) of the Magic skill level (thus, Magic 4 requires all related Skills to be at least 2 levels). This Skill represents mastery of sorcery and magical powers. In game terms, this Skill allows the character to do almost anything, limited only by the Director. The Director simply assigns a DL to determine the difficulty in knowing and being able to use the right power in the present situation (with lower DLs when it facilitates moving the story forward). This Skill requires significant Director adjudication, though it is intended to be the most powerful of the Skills of its type (i.e., Magic, Psychic, and Gadgeteering) and it helps to better define many character concepts. It also increases opportunities to use non-combat powers.

**Example:** Yasa, expert explorer and burgeoning master sorcerer, is traveling the depths of the earth looking for the mystical entrance to the lost shrine of the Itagaki-Ryu. Realizing she is lost, she draws upon her magical techniques to find her way. The Director sets the DL at 10, though Yasa’s Magic Skill is only a 2. Still, she manages to roll a 9, giving her a total of 11. A series of tiny, twinkling lights suddenly appears leading down a pathway Yasa had not noticed before and the journey continues.

The secondary Skills required for Magic are: Ki,

Meditation, Climactic Super Move, Property Damage, Sense Ki, Draw Ki, Danger Sense, Spirituality, and Grim Determination. This long list of requirements highlights the power and potential uses of the Magic Skill.

**Power:** This special Skill requires a character to also possess the Quality of the same name before taking levels. Unlike other special Skills of this type (i.e., Gadgeteering, Magic, and Psychic), this Skill does not require any other secondary Skills. This Skill represents proficiency with one specific “super power,” defined by the Quality. The Director assigns a DL to determine the difficulty of using the power in the present situation, if it can be used at all (also at the Director’s discretion). Likewise, the player defines the character’s power when the Quality is chosen, but the specifics of this power are up to the adjudication of the Director.

**Example:** Dominic Kane is a scion of an ancient bloodline, each member possessed of unique supernatural powers. In Dominic’s case, this is the ability to fly. He has 6 levels with the Skill Power (Fly). During a chase, Dominic loses the young princess he was hired to protect. He follows the trail to her location in the penthouse of a downtown skyscraper. He realizes he’ll never be able to fight his way through inside, so he decides to fly to the penthouse directly. However, the kidnappers’ dark ritual in progress has created a tremendous thunderstorm with high winds. The Director sets the DL at 8. This is not enough to daunt the blood of the Kane dynasty. Dominic’s player rolls a 4 and begins the liberation of the princess.

**Psychic:** This special Skill requires a character to also possess the Quality of the same name before taking levels. Furthermore, this Skill also requires the other secondary Skills listed below to also be at a level equal to 1/2 (round up) of the Psychic skill

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level (thus, Psychic 4 requires all related Skills to be at least 2 levels). This Skill represents an array of useful psionic abilities. In game terms, it allows the character to do almost anything, limited only by the very specific category of special effects defined as “psychic powers.” The Director simply assigns a DL to determine the difficulty in knowing and being able to use the right power in the present situation (with lower DLs when it facilitates moving the story forward). This Skill requires significant Director adjudication to keep it focused on psychic abilities, but it helps to better define many character concepts, as well as increasing opportunities to use non-combat powers.

**Example:** Therese is one of the greatest psychic minds of the 18th century. But at the moment, she has no idea where the blessed kensai will be born. She decides to use her precognitive powers. Therese has Psychic 7. However, the Director thinks this would push the limits of even her powers, so he sets the DL at 16. Therese’s player rolls an 8, which is only a 15. Her powers failed her, but the Director decides to give her a vision anyway as a clue.

The secondary Skills required for Psychic are: Ki, Meditation, Property Damage, Sense Ki, Zen State, and Grim Determination.

**Reaffirm Purpose:** A character with this Skill needs to define a purpose, which can be vague or extremely specific, and which stays the same for the life of the character. It is the character’s overarching motivation in life. Thus, it should not be something that can be accomplished easily or ever, or it must be something that would still inspire the character even after it was accomplished. Examples might include being the best fighter in the world, defeating a worldwide evil organization, or killing every member of a family line.

Whenever the character is struggling, especially in regard to this purpose, a successful skill check can give them a boost to rise up and carry on. The DL of such a check is determined by the Director, based on how much or how little he thinks the character needs to reaffirm his purpose in order to succeed. A common boost would be the award of a Story Point.

In addition to a character’s primary purpose, a character can also choose a temporary purpose that can change depending on the scene at the Director’s discretion. For example, if the character was trying to protect an important person and that person was in great danger, the character could Reaffirm Purpose in regard to that purpose. The game effects are the same, though the DL would normally be higher.

**Realize Potential:** Characters with this Skill learn quickly and strive to always become better. When exceptionally good or bad things happen to them, a Realize Potential check can gain them concrete benefits. The Director determines whether or not the success or failure was significant enough and whether or not the situation is significant. If it is, he sets a DL for the Realize Potential skill check. If it is successful, the character gets a bonus decided by the Director, usually a Story Point.

There is another use for this Skill as well. If a character is defeated by an opponent of equal or greater Power Level, and the Director knows that a rematch is definite, the character can make a Realize Potential check. Based on this result, the character can design a new Special Move that is intended to help him defeat that specific opponent. The Director has final say on such a move, and may even design it himself. The nature of the new move may not have much specifically to do with beating

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the opponent in game terms (though it might). The level of the move is equal to the Realize Potential skill check divided by 3 (round up). This new move costs the character nothing, but it can only be used against that specific opponent.

This particular use of the Skill should normally be done only once or twice during a campaign, but if the campaign centers on characters constantly training in new techniques and rivalries are fierce and commonplace, this rule could be invoked more frequently.

**Stance Evaluation:** A character with this Skill is familiar with many different martial art styles and can detect them simply from a fighter's stance. A successful roll might allow knowledge of some of the Elements of an opponent's Special Moves. For every 4 points rolled on a Stance Evaluation Skill check (round down), the character may ask the Director if his opponent possesses a Special Move with a specific Element built into it. For example, with a skill check result of 12, the player might ask the Director, "Does my opponent possess Special Moves with the Interrupt, Throw, or Ranged Elements?" The Director must answer truthfully (though this always up to his own discretion, based on the needs of the story!).

**Thug Thrashing:** This Skill represents a character's proficiency in fighting multiple opponents at once. To a lesser degree, it also measures a character's simple street-fighting prowess apart from stylized technique. Characters with high Thug Thrashing Skill know how to use the environment, body positioning, and special techniques to rapidly engage opponents at close range. This Skill drastically increases a fighter's combat effectiveness in Thug Thrashing Combat.

## Narrative Skills

**Acrobatics:** This Skill allows the character to leap, flip, vault, and tumble as an accomplished gymnast or circus acrobat. It can be used to navigate difficult terrain or achieve greater heights with vertical leaps. For example, a character being chased through back alleys could use the Athletics Skill to leap over fences, or he could use the Acrobatics Skill to leap up to a fire escape leading to the roof. This Skill can also be used as an option to avoid ranged attacks from thugs or as a defensive option in Dramatic Combat.

**Animal Handling:** This Skill is used for training animals, commanding animals, and dealing with unfriendly or wild animals. Skill checks might be used to teach an animal a basic trick, to command an animal to do something it would normally be unwilling to do, or as an "interaction" Skill with non-domesticated or hostile animals.

**Athletics:** This Skill is used for athletic feats, especially difficult, over-the-top feats. Skill checks against Athletics should be made for most athletic endeavors (though see Fast Reflexes and Speed for other similar skill checks). Some examples would be climbing a rock wall, jumping from one rooftop to another, or even the ninja trope of leaping from tree-top to tree-top and running along thin tree branches. The relationship between Acrobatics and Athletics is up to the Director's discretion. Generally, Acrobatics is used for athletic activities that require exceptional training and/or physical ability. Athletics makes a better "default" Skill for skill checks regarding bodily action. Athletics can also be used in Dramatic Combat.

**Awareness:** This is a passive perception Skill. It reflects a character's general awareness of the world

around him at all times. It is not a danger sense (see the Skill of that name); instead, it is used to determine whether or not someone perceives something interesting or important when they are not specifically looking for it. The Director could call for Awareness Skill checks anytime the characters have a chance to notice something important in a scene when they are not actively looking (or he can just allow the character with the highest Awareness Skill to notice).

**Call Forth Wisdom:** This Skill does not measure the character's intelligence; rather, it expresses his intuition about people and the world. It also includes a solid base of philosophical advice to give to others. In situations where a character's insight into life, people, or the universe could help him in his present context, a successful Call Forth Wisdom Skill check should award the character a Story Point to be applied to the present situation. This Skill can also be used to challenge the power of spirits in Dramatic Combat.

**Cooking:** This Skill allows a character to make pleasing food that is creative, functional, or artistic as the needs demand, but which always tastes good. The Skill may have very limited application in a story, but the genre has a number of characters that are distinguished by their exceptionally good or bad cooking ability (see the Cooking Quirk for the latter). Perhaps the Director could require a Cooking Skill check to make a positive impression on an important person in a formal dinner setting.

**Danger Sense:** This Skill serves the very specific function of being an active or passive sense for danger. If the character is about to be ambushed, the Director could make a Danger Sense roll before describing the ambush. If a character suspected he was walking into a bad situation, the player could request a Danger Sense Skill check, which the

Director would likely roll in secret (in case there was in fact no danger at all). This Skill should have much higher DLs to detect spiritual or magical danger, which is covered by the Zen State Skill.

**Deduction:** This Skill is used to help characters connect disparate plot threads that may be confusing (a frequent occurrence in many fighting game storylines). More broadly, a player might ask for a Deduction Skill check to get a hint or clue from the Director. If he rolls high enough, it might entitle the player to a "cut scene," where the Director describes the actions of NPCs who are not in the present scene. Finally, this Skill also represents traditional investigative methods and detective work.

**Draw Ki:** This is an unusual spiritual Skill. It usually works in conjunction with the Sense Ki Skill; a character first attempts to detect the presence of ki, (i.e., life force or spiritual energy, understood however the Director wishes) and then uses the Draw Ki Skill to manipulate it for mystical effects.

It may be possible that a place has obvious ambient ki that can be manipulated without it being sensed first. The Draw Ki Skill can allow any character to effectively use magical powers, limited by the Director's discretion. Usually, ambient environmental ki effects are going to be subtler and/or "natural" effects, rather than flight or blasts of energy. The effects should not be as powerful as the effects allowed by Magic, Psychic, and Gadgeteering. This Skill also has effects in Dramatic Combat.

**Endure Great Hardship:** Characters with this Skill have extraordinary reserves of willpower and spiritual strength. When faced with unbelievable

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punishment of the body, such characters can continue to function. Skill checks for Endure Great Hardship can be used to resist torture or extraordinary damage like falling off a rooftop. It is also used in Dramatic Combat.

**Fast Reflexes:** This Skill is particularly focused. It measures the character's ability to act on the level of pure reflex, as opposed to a character's manual dexterity or his bodily speed or grace. A skill check could be used to see who acts first in the case of a stand off or to see if a character can react in time to a sudden surprise situation.

**Grim Determination:** Characters with this Skill have extraordinary reserves of conviction and psychological endurance. When faced with unbelievable punishment of the mind, such characters can continue to function. Skill checks for Grim Determination can be used to resist psychological torture, the strain of not sleeping for days, mental instability, hallucinogenic drugs, or witnessing things that were not meant to be seen. It is also used in Dramatic Combat.

**High Society:** This is a specialized interaction Skill. It is used to behave properly in upper class and/or formal social situations. Skill checks could be used to determine if the character behaved in a way that did not call undue attention to himself or to impress a person from high society. It could also be used to determine if a character recognized an important figure from those same upper class circles.

**Intimidation:** This special interaction Skill allows the character to instill great fear in another. As a Skill, it involves special techniques that are psychologically more effective than simple brutality or display of force alone. Skill checks could be used

to instill fear in another to such a degree that the character gets what he wants or frightens an opponent into backing down. This Skill is resisted with Grim Determination, or some other Skill at the Director's discretion.

**Knowledge:** This specialized Skill represents a focus on one particular area of knowledge, defined when the Skill is chosen. The area of knowledge might be as broad as "weapons" or as narrowly focused as "straight swords of 6th century southern China." A more focused Knowledge Skill will have lower DLs in its area of focus, but higher DLs for more general knowledge of related subjects; the reverse is true of a more general focus.

**Lockpicking:** A character with this Skill is able to open locks, both mechanical and electronic. It is not a skill at disabling security systems (which is covered by either the Occupation or Technological Aptitude Skills). This Skill could be used to open a locked display case in a museum or to get past a sophisticated vault door housing valuable information.

**Lost in the Crowd:** A character with this Skill can disappear into a crowd and remain so nondescript as to be undetectable. It is a unique kind of stealth skill, applicable only in crowd situations. It could be used to set up an ambush or to escape from pursuers. A character may need to make several skill checks in order to shake off dogged and/or skilled pursuers. Characters with outstanding appearances, reputations, or attitudes will have greater difficulty staying under cover, regardless of their skill level. This can be reflected by assigning higher DLs for such characters.

**Meditation:** Characters with this Skill can achieve a deep meditative state. Such a state is conducive to healing, discernment, and spiritual enlightenment.



Skill checks could allow faster healing (if the Director is imposing any sort of time restraints on healing Life Bar), a bonus on another roll such as Call Forth Wisdom or Grim Determination, or perhaps even a Story Point to be used for some immediate spiritual benefit in the story. Other game benefits of this state are up to the Director. It can also be used occasionally in Dramatic Combat.

**Occupation:** This is a catchall Skill to represent proficiency in any profession the character might have. Any additional skills necessary for this profession are automatically subsumed under this skill heading. Thus, a translator could speak several languages, a lifeguard would know swimming and life-saving techniques, and a cat burglar would know how to case a facility and analyze its security.

Depending on the occupation in question, the Occupation Skill may actually cover a number of different skills. Most skills not found on this list can probably be covered by the Occupation Skill. In particular, this Skill is meant to represent exotic or unusual professions, ones that might prove beneficial in the campaign setting, such as “ninja” or “commando.” Thus, even if a character were an excellent accountant, it would not necessarily be appropriate for such a character to take the Occupation Skill (except perhaps in some really unusual campaigns). This Skill may not be necessary for many traditional concepts in the fighting game genre. Thus, many characters will not even possess this Skill.

This Skill is meant to be open-ended in its application, but the Director can always restrict its usefulness at his discretion. The Occupation Skill can even duplicate specific Skills on the normal skill list, though the Director should increase the DL of the specific skill check in this case.

**Perception:** This is an active perception Skill. It reflects a character’s concerted effort to note something out of the ordinary. This Skill is used whenever the character actively and deliberately tries to sense (usually by seeing or hearing) something around him. This is contrasted with the Awareness Skill, which reflects the character’s passive perception of the world around him.

**Performance:** A character with this Skill is competent in some form of performance, artistic and/or pleasing to others. It may represent singing, playing a particular musical instrument, or dancing. A character could roll this Skill to impress a crowd, to earn a living, or to demonstrate his cultured upbringing to a potential patron.

**Presence:** This interaction Skill determines how much of an impression the character makes when entering a scene. It can also be used when a character prepares in advance to make a strong impression on others or during a scene when the character wants to dazzle or impress onlookers.

The practical effects of this vary widely, but it is a genre convention that some characters go out of their way to look impressive and “pose off.” This is the Skill for them. Any character obsessed with his appearance, or any character who just looks good all the time should have this Skill. It can be used to create a powerful, if superficial, first impression, to attract the attention of a crowd, or to focus attention on the character as a distraction while something else is occurring elsewhere. This Skill is also used in Dramatic Combat.

**Property Damage:** Some characters are masters at style and technique, but characters with this Skill are

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## SKILLS

good at using their training to break things. This Skill could be used to burst down a door, or even a wall, at the Director's discretion. It could also be used to destroy a car or truck with one's bare hands. This is a Skill of wretched excess, meant for explosive good descriptive use in a story, not realism. It is also used in Dramatic Combat.

**Receive Wisdom:** This unusual Skill allows the character to get insights into strange pieces of advice they might come across. This might be in the form of the words of a mentor or mysterious stranger or in deciphering a riddle on an ancient temple wall. If the Receive Wisdom Skill check is successful, the character gains one or more Story Points (Director's discretion) to be applied to the problem or situation at hand.

The difference between this Skill and Call Forth Wisdom is that Receive Wisdom can only be used when the character encounters "wisdom" from another; for example, from a wizened old master, an ancient prophecy, or an encoded riddle. Call Forth Wisdom suggests that the character already possesses a body of wisdom that can be remembered when needed to apply to a problem at hand or instead shared with others. However, Call Forth Wisdom does not help with the interpretation of wisdom found in other sources.

**Sense Ki:** This Skill allows the character to sense the power of ki around them, in his immediate environment and in the people nearby. A successful skill check determines whether or not enough ki is available in the area to manipulate and perhaps how the ki might best be harnessed and used. It might also be used to detect the presence of powerful hostile ki, perhaps including the presence of powerful ki-using opponents hiding in the area. A

high roll might even allow a character to be able to identify a specific person by their ki. This Skill does not provide any ability at manipulating ki, though this Skill should be necessary to get the best benefits out of the Draw Ki Skill.

**Shadowing:** This Skill allows a character to follow another character without being noticed. It is used for urban or wilderness shadowing, by foot or by vehicle. A successful Shadowing skill check means that the target remains unaware of being shadowed (in the case of most NPCs) or the Shadowing Skill can be used in Skill vs. Skill checks against Perception or Awareness (against PCs or important or skilled NPCs).

**Sleight of Hand:** This Skill represents the ability to perform fast tricks with one's hands. It could be used to pick someone's pocket, perform a quick magic trick as a social distraction, or to quickly grab and hide a small item on one's person.

**Smooth Talking:** This interaction Skill can be used for any social interaction between characters that is not based on Intimidation and which is not more suitably represented by either High Society or Street Society. It can be used to persuade, convince, or seduce another. It can also be used to generate a favorable impression. In many ways, it is the "default" interaction Skill.

**Specialization:** This unusual Skill is not exactly a skill by itself, but rather a modifier to another Skill. A character can choose to have a general knowledge about a Skill's use and then define a Specialization for the Skill as well. For example, a wilderness hunter might have the Stealth Skill, and the Specialization: Wilderness Stealth as well. In any situation in which the Specialization would apply, both Skills are rolled at the same DL. If either roll succeeds, the skill check succeeds. If both succeed,

the better result is used and the Director should apply some additional benefit based on the circumstances. A character can have multiple Specializations on the same or on different Skills.

**Speed:** The Speed Basic Quality can be used in skill checks when bodily agility, flexibility, and physical speed of movement are involved. Actions involving fast reflexes are covered by the Skill of the same name instead. A Speed skill check could determine the winner of a foot race or as part of an Action Sequence to resolve a chase through the streets, along with Athletics and other Skills.

**Spirituality:** This Skill covers a character's knowledge and attunement with the deeply supernatural. It could be rolled to determine a character's knowledge of the occult, old legends, or rituals of great power. It also includes knowledge of religion. It does not provide the character with any actual magical ability (which is covered by the Magic Skill). This Skill can also protect the character from the attacks of spirits in Dramatic Combat.

**Stamina:** It is unlikely that the Stamina Basic Quality would need to be rolled as a Skill very often. However, it could be used to determine a character's resistance to a powerful disease, drug, or illness, how quickly a character recovers while in the hospital, or whether or not a character could run for hours without stopping.

**Stealth:** This Skill is the ability to move quietly and hide well in available cover. Its uses are fairly obvious: hiding from pursuers, maintaining a hidden position while hiding from another person, or sneaking past security guards. This Skill is often used in Skill vs. Skill checks with Perception and Alertness. Ninja characters will often have high levels of this Skill.

**Street Society:** This is a specialized interaction Skill

and is in some ways the opposite of the High Society Skill. Characters can use this Skill to get along with the criminal and disreputable elements of society, to determine their knowledge of the major figures at work in the underworld, or to set up a meet to buy weapons on the black market.

**Strength:** The Strength Basic Quality could be used to resolve any test of brute force, such as lifting a heavy object, holding up rubble to help someone escape, or breaking restraints holding the character. The Director should be careful that it is not used to duplicate the effects of Property Damage or Athletics, except perhaps at a much higher DL. Thus, it should not be used to burst down a door or wall or to leap from one roof to another, even though these are also examples of feats of Strength.

**Technological Aptitude:** A character with this Skill possesses detailed knowledge about mechanics and electronics, as well as possessing at least rudimentary skill at building such devices. A skill check could be used to build a mechanical device, disable an electronic security system, or tune a piece of electronic equipment to perform better or differently than it was intended.

**The Fighting World:** A character with this Skill has a basic knowledge of all the Fighters active in the campaign. A successful check will distinguish a Fighter-level NPC from a mere Thug, as well as possibly provide some insight into the opponent's Special Moves. Information gained from this Skill should be general, indicating for instance, the kinds of moves a character uses, rather than specific mechanical information about the Elements that make up those moves, which is the specific province of the Stance Evaluation Skill.

**Zen State:** This Skill represents a character's

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## SKILLS

intuitive awareness of the realms of the spirit around him. It could be used as a sort of “spiritual danger sense” to avoid being possessed by a demon, or it could be used to achieve a spiritual state in which it may be possible to call spirits or travel to other planes, all subject to the Director’s discretion and the needs of the story.

### Action Sequences

An Action Sequence is a special series of skill checks used to resolve an entire scene. It is used when a single skill check would not be adequate to account for the tension involved and usually (but not necessarily) when multiple participants are involved and the action in question requires speed, finesse, or both.

Thus, the Action Sequence sub-system of the skill system allows for a more dynamic way to adjudicate competitive action scenes. It can be used for chases on foot or in vehicles, computer hacking, an infiltration into a secure facility with active security forces, or a debate or negotiation between competing factions. Any situation in which two parties are competing through skill use and in which a single die roll fails to capture the intricacy or potential drama and excitement of the situation could be resolved with these rules.

The use of Action Sequences is optional. The Director can describe a situation and simply require appropriate skill checks. These rules are intended to provide some structure to fuel imagination, encourage the use of more Skills and more creative use of Skills, inject some additional random danger into an event, and/or just to speed along a scene to get to more exciting or more important parts of the

story.

### Developing an Action Sequence

An Action Sequence is composed of four components: The Action Goal, the Skill List, the type of Action Sequence, and the Difficulty Level.

The Action Goal is the number of successes each party is trying to reach with their skill use. The first party to achieve the Action Goal has “won” the Action Sequence, though the specific meaning of winning depends on the situation. In a chase, the winner either catches his quarry or he escapes. In an infiltration, the infiltrators have either reached their goal or else they have been caught by security or forced out of the installation in some way. A short Action Sequence might have a Goal of 2-3. An average length Sequence has a Goal of 3-5. A long Sequence, intended for skilled characters and with frequent opportunities for danger, might have a Goal of 8-10.

The Skill List is the list of Skills each individual or team may use without penalty in the Action Sequence. The number of Skills on the Skill List is up to the Director, though four is usually a good default number.

**Example 1:** The Skill List for a foot chase Action Sequence includes Speed, Acrobatics, Athletics, and Fast Reflexes.

**Example 2:** The Skill List for an Action Sequence involving a team fighting their way into a guarded research facility could include Thug Thrashing, Property Damage, Athletics, and Stealth.

**Example 3:** The Skill List for an Action Sequence involving computer hacking could include Occupation: Hacker, Knowledge (Computers),

Deduction, and Technological Aptitude.

It should be noted that many stereotypical characters in the source material might not be good at many different kinds of Action Sequences aside from chases and fighting through security forces!

There are two kinds of Action Sequences: Standard and Contested. In a Standard Action Sequence, the characters compete against a static DL determined by the Director. All skill checks are made against the same DL.

The Difficulty Level is based on the challenge of the Action Sequence. For an easy Action Sequence, the DL is 8. For a moderate Action Sequence, the DL is 12. For a difficult Action Sequence, the DL is 16. If a character uses a Skill that is not on the Skill List, the DL is increased by 4. The characters fail a Standard Action Sequence if they fail a number of skill checks equal to the Action Goal before succeeding at the same number of skill checks.

In a Contested Action Sequence, the characters are competing against other characters, whether an NPC Fighter, a group of Fighters, or a Thug group. In this case, the skill check of one of the PCs is rolled against the skill check of one of the NPCs. Whoever wins the check earns a success towards the Sequence's Action Goal. A tie roll does not earn a success for either side. If a character chooses a Skill that is not on the Skill List, the opponent gains a +4 on their skill check. When one side achieves successes equal to the Action Goal, that side has won the Action Sequence.

## Resolving an Action Sequence

It is up to the Director to decide whether or not to let the players know what the Skill List is before the Action Sequence begins.

After establishing the parameters of an Action Sequence, the player characters take turns choosing what Skill they wish to check. Every character on the team must make a single skill check before any character may make a second skill check. Thus, a single character cannot make all the rolls for a team of characters. The Director chooses who goes first in declaring a Skill, especially in an Opposed Action Sequence. This may be important, as the character declaring second gets to choose his skill choice after hearing his opponent's skill choice.

A character is free to use whatever Skill he wishes to make a skill check, and different characters may choose to use the same Skill on their turn. However, each character can only use each Skill once in the whole Action Sequence. Furthermore, the player must be able to explain in narrative terms how the Skill is being used and how it will help the characters "win" the Action Sequence. The Director should be open to creative skill use, but he is also free to veto a skill use that seems too far-fetched in the circumstances. On the other hand, if the player is exceptionally creative or descriptive with a skill use, an award of a Story Point is warranted.

The use of certain Qualities may be appropriate in an Action Sequence. In this case, a Story Point can be spent to achieve an automatic success, regardless of DL or the roll of the opponent. If it normally costs a Story Point for a character to use a Quality in a story, the character can spend two Story Points instead to achieve an automatic success. If two opposing characters both do this, their efforts cancel one another out, neither scoring a success.

## Example of an Action Sequence

Cannon McCabe and his allies decide to fight their

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way into the inner labs of the sinister Akira Corporation. The Director chooses to resolve the infiltration as an Action Sequence before having the heroes reach the climactic fights against the corporation's most powerful forces.

The player characters are Cannon, the ninja Sho, and the elemental warrior Koichiro. The Director decides to use the Skill List of Thug Thrashing, Property Damage, Athletics, and Stealth. While this is the same as the example provided above, the Director has decided to not tell the players the Skill List. This Standard Action Sequence has an Action Goal of 4 and a Difficulty Level of 8.

The Director describes the building the heroes are invading and gives them a chance to think about their approach after telling them that he plans to resolve this as an Action Sequence.

Sho's player chooses to go first and chooses Stealth. He describes their entrance through an external air duct, and even describes various other labs they see on their way through the facility. He rolls a total of 10, easily scoring the 1st success towards the Action Goal.

Cannon's player goes next and chooses Athletics. Cannon's player suggests that the team needed to navigate through a trap-laden gauntlet to get to the inner portion of the labs. The Director likes this idea and adds some additional details. Another high roll of 9 and the team is halfway to their goal (though they do not know that).

Koichiro's player decides that a direct route straight to the mastermind's lab would speed things along, so he chooses to use his Climactic Super Move. He describes an enormous blast of electrical energy

that blows holes through several walls, providing a convenient shortcut away from the trapped hallways. This Skill is not on the Skill List, but the Director thinks it fits the character's style, so he allows it. The DL is increased to 12. Despite this, Koichiro's player rolls a 10, for a total of 15. Another success! Only one more to go.

At this point, each of the characters has gone once and they must start over again taking turns. However, they are not required to use the same order the second time around. Cannon, inspired by Koichiro, decides some further Property Damage is in order. He describes kicking down security doors with brute force in the restricted part of the building. Unfortunately, his total is only a 6, so the team has its first failure. Three more of those and the team will have lost the Action Sequence. The Director describes that the doors in this part of the facility are all super-reinforced, making them much harder to bash down.

Sho's player, hoping that they are near their goal, chooses to use Thug Thrashing. He describes the team's inevitable contact with elite security forces, along with some colorful descriptions of some attacks that the Director feels warrants a Story Point. Sho's player then rolls a total of 11, achieving the 4th and final success required by the Action Goal.

At this point, the Director informs the team that, as the last of the guards is dispatched, the door in front of them is definitely the lab they seek. At this point, the Action Sequence ends and the Director returns to normal narration. The players have had a fairly detailed description of their fight into the Akira Corporation, all resolved with only five die rolls.



**SKILLS****Using Action Sequences in the Story**

The rules for Action Sequences are meant as a shorthand way to generate a dramatic situation worth playing through, but without the necessary prep time or play time to resolve in a more detailed fashion. The abstraction in the narrative also allows one's imagination to create more interesting scenes than a series of skill checks alone might provide.

The Director should not make the "loss" result of an Action Sequence an occasion to de-rail his own story. Instead, he should use the loss as a complication to put the characters in a more interesting place; perhaps one that is more difficult to resolve, but not one that is an outright failure.

Use Action Sequences as a way to add more action and drama to a story, but don't use them as a way to randomly destroy the forward momentum of a story in progress.

Skills on the Skill List of all the characters on the opposing side. This number can be added to 6 to generate a Difficulty Level for the Glory calculation. However, this formula may be more complicated than desired; in this case, the Director can simply estimate the Glory award for the Action Sequence.

**Earning Glory for an Action Sequence**

Successfully completing an Action Sequence is also worth a small amount of Glory for each member of the winning side. The formula for earning Glory in a Standard Action Sequence is as follows: multiply the Action Goal by the Difficulty, and then divide by 10 and round off normally.

**Example:** The Action Sequence described above would be worth  $4$  (Action Goal)  $\times$   $8$  (Difficulty Level), divided by 10. Thus, each character would receive 3 Glory.

For a Contested Action Sequence, the Director should calculate the average skill levels of all the

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## *QUALITIES, WEAKNESSES, AND QUIRKS*



### 3. Qualities, Weaknesses, and Quirks

This chapter provides descriptions for all of the Qualities, Weaknesses, and Quirks available to a character. It also contains rules for the use of Story Points, a flexible resource that allows players to manipulate die rolls and circumstances in the story for their own benefit.

The rules for acquiring Qualities, Weaknesses, and Quirks are also summarized here, as well as some recommendations about the use of certain traits in certain campaigns. Some of these traits specifically reference the “metagame” of *Fight!*: the hypothetical video game on which the campaign is based and the engagement of the players of that video game. Not all campaigns will want to break this “fourth wall,” and as such, these traits should be strictly moderated by the Director.

#### Choosing Qualities

A character begins with four Qualities at Power Level 1. He can gain additional Qualities by choosing Weaknesses; each Weakness chosen allows an additional Quality. As noted in Chapter 1, the character can also choose less than four Qualities in exchange for additional Skills or Fighting Spirit, but all characters must choose at least one Quality.

At Power Level 2, and every subsequent even-numbered Power Level, the character either gains a new Quality or, with the Director’s permission, loses an existing Weakness.

In regard to choosing Qualities, Weaknesses, and Quirks, not every aspect of a character needs to be defined by these traits. The character may need

more than eight Qualities to model the character ideally, or conversely, there may be less than eight appropriate Qualities to fill all of the available slots. In either case, these traits should be chosen with attention paid to the most important attributes of the character.

#### General Notes Regarding Qualities, Weaknesses, and Quirks

Many Qualities and Weaknesses make use of Story Points. The way in which the Quality is used may require a Story Point in order to get the benefit or the effect of the Weakness on the character may earn a Story Point. Full rules for Story Points are included at the end of this chapter, after the descriptions of the Qualities, Weaknesses, and Quirks.

There are also many Qualities that have effects on combat. Some of these are due to physical characteristics, such as a character being exceptionally big or short. However, some of them are essentially personality traits (such as being exceptionally driven) or physical traits without appreciable combat effects (such as being buxom). If the Director wishes to keep the combat system more “pure” and tactical, he can choose to ignore the combat benefits of these non-physical Qualities. However, these combat effects should usually be allowed.

Some of these Qualities and Weaknesses apply solely to a metagaming perspective, relating more to the fictional hypothetical fan playing the video game represented by the characters and the campaign. As such, they should not be allowed in more serious campaigns. Such Qualities generally

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## **QUALITIES, WEAKNESSES, AND QUIRKS**

have effects on combat as well.

Many of the Qualities and Weaknesses below mention "interaction skills." This is a general term to represent any skill check that applies to social interactions: any attempt to charm, deceive, seduce, persuade, intimidate, or placate another character. It does not apply to any specific set of skills; the Director determines what constitutes the use of an interaction skill.

Some Qualities are specifically defined as appearance Qualities. A character with three appearance Qualities may stack the bonuses and receive an additional +1 on interaction skill checks on top of the total. Attractive and Dashing (for male characters) and Attractive and Beautiful (for female characters) only count as one Quality for this calculation. For example, a male character has the following qualities: Attractive, Dashing, Bishounen, and Sharp Dressed. Attractive and Dashing give a +2 bonus on interaction skill checks involving female characters. Bishounen gives a +1 bonus on all interaction skill checks. Sharp Dressed gives a +1 bonus on all interaction skill checks (and +2 in certain circumstances). Thus, in most interaction skill checks involving female characters, the character would receive a +5 bonus (+2, +1, +1, and +1 for having three appearance Qualities).

As another example, a female character has the following qualities: Attractive, Sexy, and Cute. Each of the three Qualities individually gives a +1 bonus on interaction skill checks involving male characters. Thus, for all interaction skill checks involving male characters, the character would receive a +4 bonus (+1, +1, +1, and +1 for having three appearance Qualities).

The details of many Qualities and Weaknesses are deliberately left vague. Qualities should always be useful enough in a game that they are worth taking, while Weaknesses must both come into play often enough and be debilitating enough to make them worth the Qualities they earn. Specific details, however, are often dependent on the campaign, the Director, and the player. This is especially so in regard to those Qualities that are very similar to one another. For example, the Qualities Connections, Followers, and Influence all represent similar resources. It is up to the Director and the player to adequately define the differences between them.

It is the Director's job to make sure that the characters' Weaknesses actually manifest during the game. In fact, scenes and even whole stories can be structured around the characters' Weaknesses. By taking a Weakness, a player is "permitting" the Director to use these traits to complicate his character's life. For example, a character with Dull Personality as a Weakness should occasionally have to interact with NPCs in order to advance the story.

However, a player may also inconvenience his own character through his Weaknesses, beyond what the Director has chosen to include in the course of a story. In these cases when the player takes the initiative to hinder his character through his Weaknesses, the Director should award a Story Point.

Quirks are a lesser form of Weakness. For the most part, they are guidelines for role-playing. However, if a player deliberately role-plays a Quirk in such a way as to inconvenience his character (Director's discretion), the character earns a Story Point. Characters are encouraged to take one or two Quirks for their character. If a character takes three to five Quirks for his character, this counts as a Weakness and is worth an additional Quality.

**QUALITIES, WEAKNESSES, AND QUIRKS****Choosing Qualities, Weaknesses,  
and Traits for NPCs**

When designing opponents for the PCs to face, the Director should strive to be fair when choosing Qualities and Weaknesses for the NPCs. For example, if the players have designed Fighters with Qualities like Attractive, Connections, Influence, and Fame, then in general it would be inappropriate for the Director to make an NPC Fighter with a number of Weaknesses that will have no effect on the single fight scene in which the character is featured, and then to exchange most of the character's many Quality choices for additional Combat Skills and Fighting Spirit. The players' Quality choices have indicated a desire for stories that involve more than endless fight scenes as a way to advance the plot, and the Director has responded by throwing a monster at them with little depth and a host of serious Weaknesses that will never manifest during his short time on stage.

The reverse is also true: if the player characters are the ones who are the thinly-developed combat monsters, then the Director should not bother with detailed creations with interesting backgrounds and varied resources at their disposal when they are just going to end up as defeated victims at the PCs' feet.

Exceptions exist. Sometimes the Director intends an opponent to be a brutal force that forces the player characters to work hard in order to defeat him, and sometimes a well-developed villain will get a second chance to use his extensive resources after being soundly defeated by the protagonists of the story.

Overall, the Director should choose Qualities and Weaknesses for NPCs that will contribute to the quality and depth of the story and that will also make interesting and challenging opponents for the player characters.

**Qualities**

Attractive	
Beautiful (females only)	
Big	
Bishounen (males only)	
Buxom (females only)	
Charming	
Connections	
Cute (females only)	
Dashing (males only)	
Driven	
Fame	
Followers	Power
Friend	Powerful Item
Gadgeteering	Psychic
Genius	Reputation
Great Destiny	Sensei
Gun Expert	Sexy (females only)
Immortal Being	Sharp Dressed (males only)
Influence	Short
Intelligent	Suggestive Attire (females only)
Intimidating	Tall
Light	Technique
Lucky	Theme Music
Magic	Tomboy (females only)
Mobility	Wealth
Pet	Weapon Expert



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## QUALITIES, WEAKNESSES, AND QUIRKS

### Weaknesses

Amnesia  
Annoying Voice  
Bad Reputation  
Code  
Curse  
Dangerous Job  
Dark Side  
Dependence  
Doomed  
Dull Personality  
Duty Bound  
Fanatic  
Fearsome Appearance  
Fragile Self-Image  
Glass Jaw  
Haunted  
Honorable  
Hunted  
Obsession  
Phobia  
Physical Handicap  
Poorly Drawn  
Ritual  
Significant Other  
Style Weakness  
Thick  
Ugly  
Unattractive  
Unintelligent  
Unlucky  
Vow  
Warped

### Quirks

Age	Disgraced	Nosebleeds (males only)
Arrogant	Distinctive Appearance	Pacifist
Attitude	Fan Service (females only)	Reckless
Brutal	Glutton	Revenge
Bumbling Friend	Greedy	Rivalry
Clueless	Immature	Scarred
Cooking	Impulsive	Secret
Dead Serious	In Love	Short-Tempered
Demure	Lecherous	Suspicious
	Loves Combat	Unworldly





## QUALITIES, WEAKNESSES, AND QUIRKS

### Buxom, Fan Service, and Suggestive Attire: All in the Eye of the Beholder

Some groups of players may have problems with the Qualities Buxom and Suggestive Attire and the Quirk Fan Service. They make specific game allowances for certain common genre conventions about female characters in fighting video games, but some groups might find them offensive. Other groups may not take offense to these game elements, but may instead just find them silly. If either case applies, they should be removed from the list of available options for characters.

In games in which Buxom, Fan Service, and Suggestive Attire are allowed (which is the default assumption of the rules), it must be emphasized that what constitutes "buxom," "fan service," and/or "suggestive attire" must be understood from the perspective of the specific campaign setting in which they are used. In the case of more unusual campaign settings, these elements may represent more extreme notions. For example, in a campaign setting in which all the Fighters are buxom athletes, a character with the Buxom Quality must be buxom even by comparison to the other Fighters in the campaign in order to take this Quality.

Similarly, in a campaign set in the world of supermodel martial artists fighting solely in their lingerie (a ridiculous concept for a fighting game to be sure!), the characters should not all take the Suggestive Attire Quality, as such attire is "normal" for this campaign setting. In such a setting, a character that did take the Suggestive Attire Quality must be quite scantily clad indeed.

In theory, the opposite extreme might be true, but the Director should be cautious about allowing the same game effects to apply. For example, in a campaign in which all the Fighters are male except for one female, whose fighting attire happens to show a little cleavage, one could make the case that any or all of the three Qualities under discussion could apply to this character in that setting. However, this is not the intent of the rules as written.



# 3

## QUALITIES, WEAKNESSES, AND QUIRKS

### Quality Descriptions

This section describes all of the Qualities in the game. They are listed alphabetically. It should be noted that some Qualities require other Qualities as prerequisites and that some Qualities are restricted to male or female characters.

**Attractive:** This appearance Quality represents generic good looks that are recognizable as such but not outstanding in any regard. This is a fairly common Quality for heroic characters. It is also extremely common that female characters in the source material (heroic or villainous) have at least this level of attractiveness. This Quality gives a +1 bonus on interaction skill checks when dealing with the opposite sex.

**Beautiful:** (females only) This appearance Quality is the highest level of appearance traits for female characters. The Attractive Quality is a prerequisite for this Quality. Such characters possess a sort of virginal, pure, and/or untouchable beauty. A character with the Beautiful Quality gets a +2 bonus on interaction skill checks when dealing with the opposite sex. This replaces the +1 bonus for the Attractive Quality.

**Big:** A character with this Quality is huge. He is often as broad as he is tall and covered with bulky muscles or fat. Sometimes the character is tall as well. The character's proportions are definitely beyond human. This Trait is often possessed by wrestlers and bruisers who rely more on force than technique.

The character receives -1 damage from all attacks in combat (minimum 1) and also receives a +1 to his Stun Threshold. By moving into Range 0, the

character can choose to push his opponent back 1 Range, which can also be used as an additional free Maneuver towards an Environmental Hazard, unless the opponent is also Big or Tall. The character is only Knocked Back by attacks that do 2 or more points of damage. However, any combatant attacking this character receives a +1 Accuracy on all his moves (including Basic Moves) in combat. Furthermore, jumping or moving with the Mobile Element for the Big character costs 2 FS instead of 1.

**Bishounen:** (males only) This appearance Quality represents a fairly common fighting game stereotype, especially among high-ranking villains (though there are many bishounen heroes as well). The character is thin, has delicate features, long hair, and a flair for fashion. The Attractive Quality is a prerequisite for this Quality. This gives a +1 bonus on interaction skill checks when dealing with either sex, who cannot deny the character's noteworthy appearance, and who might also be surprised or confused about the character's beauty.

Once per combat round, the character can target an opponent who has both higher Life Bar and Fighting Spirit than himself at the end of a turn. If the character spends one Story Point, then either the opponent underestimates the character, based on his apparent harmlessness or frailty, or the bishounen character himself becomes inspired by his own beauty (depending on the character concept). As a result, the opponent suffers a one die size penalty on Initiative on the following turn. This ability can also be used against a Thug Group once per combat regardless of current Life Bar and Fighting Spirit.

**Buxom:** (females only) There is a stereotype in many fighting games in which some or all of the female Fighters are blessed (or cursed) with chests that seem to defy gravity, flowing gracefully (and

## QUALITIES, WEAKNESSES, AND QUIRKS

totally unrealistically) about as they fight. This implausible physical characteristic has no purpose in the video game other than providing gratuitous fan service, attracting the attention of male players. Thus, a Buxom character receives +2 on interaction skill checks when dealing with males.

The down side of this Quality is that such characters will also have to deal with men speaking directly to their chests, the accosting hands of horny old and young men and, in darker campaigns, unusually bleak treatment at the hands of lecherous villains. A player can allow her character to willingly suffer this negative attention during a story to earn a Story Point.

If the character spends one Story Point at the start of a combat, then male opponents are so enthralled by the character's unnatural "poetry in motion" that they suffer a one die size penalty on Control (not Initiative) on the first turn in which they fight a Buxom opponent.

**Charming:** The character has a likeable personality. He may be charming, charismatic, funny, inspiring, nice, or all of the above. This Quality has nothing to do with the character's appearance. As a result of his disposition, the character receives a +1 on all interaction skill checks.

**Connections:** The character has a number of contacts and connections he can draw upon. These might be because the character is wealthy, or politically influential, or a well-connected celebrity. Similarly, the character's connections might be criminal contacts or friends and allies from a temple or martial arts school. During a story, the character can spend a Story Point to draw upon these resources. This might take the form of allies to provide assistance or a distraction, access to a restricted site or event, or information that would

otherwise be hard or impossible to get.

**Cute:** (females only) This appearance Quality represents a particular aspect of an attractive female character's appearance. It serves as a modifier to other appearance-related Qualities. A Cute character must also have the Attractive Quality, and may have the Beautiful and/or Sexy Qualities as well. Many heroic females in fighting games have this Quality, often claiming more fans than more voluptuous or sensual female characters. Cute characters receive a +1 bonus on interaction skills when dealing with males, which stacks with other appearance Qualities.

**Dashing:** (males only) This appearance Quality is the highest level of appearance for male characters. The Attractive Quality is a prerequisite for this Quality. Such characters represent the most handsome and charismatic men. As male villains are often Bishounen, the lead male hero is often Dashing. Regardless, a character's moral point of view does not limit their choice of appearance Qualities. A character with the Dashing Quality gets a +2 bonus on interaction skill checks when dealing with the opposite sex. This replaces the +1 bonus for the Attractive Quality.

**Driven:** Characters with this Quality are dynamos of self-motivation. They tend to be rigid in their habits and utterly addicted to training. These characters receive a +1 bonus on all their die rolls (outside of combat) when they are either on the losing end of a situation or during the climax of a story (as defined by the Director). The Director can limit this bonus if he wishes, or even allow it to be used in combat. The character can also spend a Story Point to "override" the Director's limitation or to use the Quality in combat (provided the normal conditions for its use are also in place). While only a small

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## QUALITIES, WEAKNESSES, AND QUIRKS

bonus, its use in combat can have a dramatic effect. Because of this, this should be reserved for appropriately climactic confrontations.

**Fame:** The character is famous. This might be a limited form of fame, such as within a specific subculture, but is generally intended to represent widespread acclaim. This Quality also means that the character is liked (i.e., famous, not infamous). By spending a Story Point, the character can benefit from his Fame, by getting help from perfect strangers or access to exclusive events. Fame should be allowed to accomplish powerful effects, but the player can also choose to willingly inconvenience his character during a story on account of his Fame in order to earn a Story Point.

**Followers:** This character has a fairly large group of followers at his beck and call. These might be members of a street gang the character leads, corporate security, personal bodyguards, a fawning fan club, or the like. By spending a Story Point, the character can use these Followers for his purposes, such as performing errands or gathering information. While the Followers may be considered combat-trained (e.g., street thugs or soldiers), this Quality cannot provide people who can fight in place of the character. They serve only in a support role. If appropriate, the Director could consider the Followers a Thug group in combat.

**Friend:** A character with this Quality possesses a devoted friend, who is almost always much more subdued than the character himself, and hardly ever a Fighter. This Friend supports the character, cheers him on, helps him out as he is able to, and points out things the character might miss. By spending a Story Point, the player can use this Quality to essentially get a "story assist" from the Director: the

Friend uncovers a critical clue, has already done necessary research, inspires the character to get a needed Realize Potential roll, or simply points out a critical plot point that has been missed.

While this NPC should not be abused (for that, see the Significant Other Weakness), the player may willingly choose to place his character's Friend in harm's way or get him into trouble, requiring the character's intervention to save him, in order to earn a Story Point. This Quality is not representative of the loud, bumbling buddy; for that, see the Quirk Bumbling Friend.

**Gadgeteering:** This Quality is a combination of both a Quality and a Skill. Taking this Quality is a prerequisite for taking the Gadgeteering Skill (see the Skill description in Chapter 2). A character with this Quality is capable of designing almost any technological device, often very quickly and sometimes with very few raw materials.

**Genius:** This Quality requires the Intelligent Quality as a prerequisite. The character is truly brilliant, far beyond the intellectual powers of most people. As a result, the character receives a +4 on any skill check in which the Director determines his superior intellect would be a factor. This replaces the +2 bonus of the Intelligent Quality.

**Great Destiny:** This character is destined for some great purpose, such as becoming a powerful ruler, reviving a great, lost tradition of the martial arts, becoming the greatest warrior in history, or saving the world. This has obvious and significant effects on role-playing the character and the structure of the campaign featuring the character. Furthermore, when the player spends a Story Point to modify the circumstances of the story, if the circumstances can be specifically related to the character's Great Destiny, the story changes can be even more



## QUALITIES, WEAKNESSES, AND QUIRKS

dramatic and portentous. What occurs should clearly be related to the character's destiny and should also further it towards completion (which may or may not happen in the course of the campaign).

**Gun Expert:** This Quality is not as common in the source material, as guns are rarely a part of martial arts combat. However, this Quality represents a high degree of skill with modern firearms. Despite the word "expert" in the title, this is an appropriate Quality for any character who has had formal military training, especially in some branch of elite forces. Given the highly abstract nature of the gun rules in the game, this Quality gives a +3 bonus on any skill check related to firearms. If appropriate for the campaign, the Director should allow characters with this Quality to pull off amazing action-movie stunts with guns, often accompanied by graceful acrobatics.

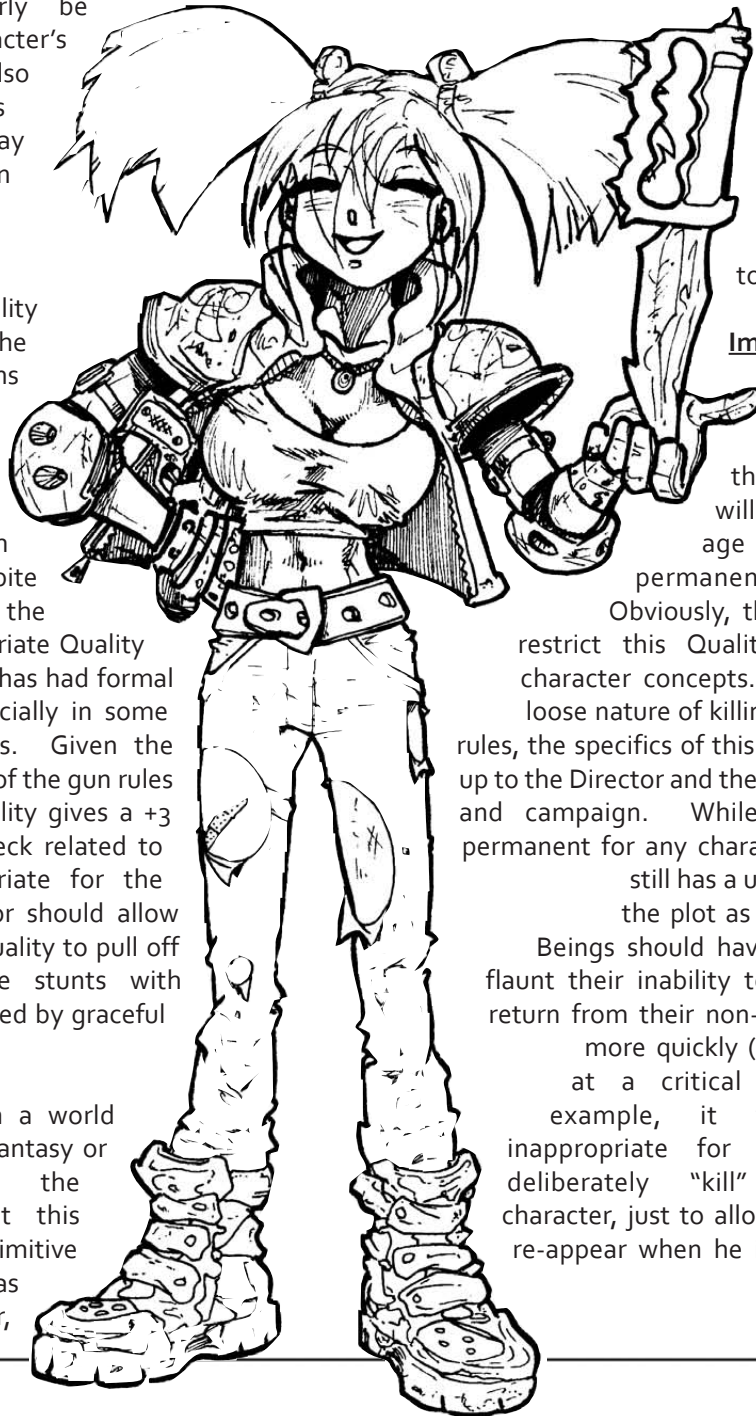
In a campaign set in a world without guns (e.g., a fantasy or historical setting), the Director may permit this Quality for use with primitive ranged weapons such as bows. Note, however,

that the default Quality does

not permit such bonuses in a modern setting (i.e., a Gun Expert is not also a bow expert), unless the character takes the Quality twice to represent this.

### **Immortal Being:**

This supernatural Quality means that the character will never die of old age and cannot be permanently killed. Obviously, the Director should restrict this Quality to appropriate character concepts. Due to the very loose nature of killing and death in the rules, the specifics of this Quality are largely up to the Director and the events of the story and campaign. While death is rarely permanent for any character in Fight! who still has a useful role to play in the plot as a whole, Immortal Beings should have opportunities to flaunt their inability to be killed and/or return from their non-permanent deaths more quickly (often re-appearing at a critical moment). For example, it would not be inappropriate for the Director to deliberately "kill" the Immortal character, just to allow the character to re-appear when he is most needed or



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## QUALITIES, WEAKNESSES, AND QUIRKS

when the story would benefit the most.

The player may choose to spend a Story Point to do something fatal without serious consequence (such as escape by leaping out of a 70th-story window). The player may choose to do this without spending a Story Point, but the Director may choose to impose some temporary hardship as a result (for example, in the above situation, perhaps the character needs to wait an hour before his limbs re-align from the impact).

**Influence:** This Quality represents the ability to manipulate and/or control a group of people or a sub-culture. For example, a character may have Influence in the criminal underworld, or in mass media, or in the halls of political power, or over a particular school or style of martial arts. A character with this Quality must define the nature of his Influence and this Quality can be taken more than once to represent other areas of Influence. By spending a Story Point, a player can make use of his Influence to get favors, assistance, or information.

This Quality is similar to both Connections and Followers. Connections applies to personal, largely peer relations in a group. Followers are underlings personally and specifically committed to the character. Influence is an abstract authority, potentially over a large group, but without any personal relationship or loyalty. Influence may gain the character a favor, but it doesn't mean the one granting the favor likes or even knows the character.

**Intelligent:** The character is very intelligent and probably also very well educated. As a result, the character receives a +2 on any skill check in which the Director determines his impressive intelligence would be a factor.

**Intimidating:** The character is intimidating, whether through a cold stare, a disturbing presence, or a demanding demeanor. This has nothing to do directly with the character's appearance, though an Intimidating character often has a "look" about him. As a result of his disposition, the character receives a +2 on all interaction skill checks intended to frighten or coerce by force.

**Light:** This Quality is uncommon in fighting games, but when it occurs, it is almost always possessed by female or child characters. A character with this Quality is usually smaller than a normal character, but not short enough to possess the Short Quality (though a character could have both Qualities). The character is much lighter than other characters. As a result, the character can jump 3 Ranges without attacking or 2 Ranges with an attack without spending FS in either case. However, attacks with the Juggle Element do +2 damage against this character, as it is easier to keep them juggled in the air. Furthermore, a Light character's Stun Threshold is also reduced by 1.

**Lucky:** Some characters display extraordinary good luck in their lives. This is often manifested in scenes that are intended to be more comic relief than plot development. In fact, this Quality works best in a campaign that highlights comedic storylines more often than the gritty serious ones that are the default presumption of most campaigns. The Director may thus choose to disallow this Quality if it fails to match the tone of the game or of a particular character (as even serious campaigns often have one or more comedic characters).

This Quality allows the player to re-roll three skill checks during the course of a session, at no cost in Story Points. Furthermore, when the character with this Quality uses a Story Point to modify



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circumstances in his favor, far more extreme or implausible events can (and should) happen. Finally, during a story, this character will also have general good luck at the Director's discretion. If the character spends a Story Point to manifest his good luck in combat, then some or all of the character's three skill re-rolls for the session can also be used in combat to re-roll any roll.

**Magic:** This Quality is a combination of both a Quality and a Skill. Taking this Quality is a prerequisite for taking the Magic Skill (see the Skill description in Chapter 2). A character with this powerful Quality is capable of creating almost any supernatural effect imaginable, limited solely by his level of skill. Sometimes effects may be instantaneous, other times they may be great rituals, but there are no theoretical limits (beyond the Director's discretion and the needs of the story and the campaign) to what the character can potentially do.

**Mobility:** This character can move swiftly and with great control. Because of this, when the character moves 2 Ranges and then attacks, he can choose to simply take a -2 penalty to Accuracy instead of spending 1 FS. If the character also possesses the Big Quality, there is instead no penalty to Accuracy, but the movement costs 1 FS (rather than 2 FS, as is normally required for Big characters).

**Pet:** This Quality represents an animal or creature that accompanies the character. The choice of animal is up to the player, but this Quality is intended to represent unusual animals such as highly intelligent dogs, panthers, bears, or birds of prey, or else supernatural companions such as demons or spirits. The more "mundane" the choice of pet (e.g., a cat or small dog), the more likely that it is an extraordinary member of its species.

While the Pet may have the ability to assist the character in combat, any game effects related to combat should be built into the descriptions of the character's normal Special Moves. For example, if the character can make his dog charge forward and attack his opponent, this ability can be constructed as a Special Move with the Ranged Element to reflect the fact that the Fighter himself does not close with his opponent as he attacks.

Additionally, the player and Director must define the non-combat abilities and uses of the Pet. During the course of the story, a player can spend a Story Point to make the Pet do something exceptional, beyond its normal expected abilities. While the Pet should not be manipulated or abused by the Director (for that, see the Weakness Significant Other), the player may willingly choose to place his character's Pet in harm's way or get him into trouble, requiring the character's intervention to save him, in order to earn a Story Point.

**Power:** This Quality is a combination of both a Quality and a Skill. Taking this Quality is a prerequisite for taking the Power Skill (see the Skill description in Chapter 2). A character with this Quality possesses one specific supernatural ability or superpower, generally without specific combat application. Some examples might be flight, or telekinesis, or the ability to walk through walls. If the Power is very specific (such as "Flight"), then the DL of skill checks using the Power Skill should be lower, while if the Power is broader (such as "Wind Powers"), then the DL of skill checks should be higher for specific uses of the power.

Powers with specific combat applications (such as a blast of energy), or the combat applications of other Powers (such as using telekinesis as a form of

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## QUALITIES, WEAKNESSES, AND QUIRKS

ranged attack) are simply designed as normal Special Moves. In fact, a character's Special Moves may include several "powers" without the character taking this Quality. This Quality (and its Skill) is only necessary if the character can use the Power in flexible ways outside of combat.

**Powerful Item:** This Quality represents a specific item that the character possesses. It may be a specific piece of high-tech equipment, or it may be an ancient magical artifact. While such an item may have combat applications (e.g., a magic sword), any game effects related to combat should be built as normal as Special Moves. In fact, a character with a magic sword (for example) that does nothing but give him combat abilities does not need this Quality. Its abilities are wholly represented by the character's Special Moves.

The player and Director must define the non-combat abilities and limits of the Powerful Item. During the course of the story, a player can spend a Story Point to activate those abilities. This Quality can also represent access to a powerful place, such as an extradimensional fount of mystical energy, access to a high-tech lab, a personal arena suffused with the Fighter's own ki energy, or the seat of power of a kingdom or nation.

**Psychic:** This Quality is a combination of both a Quality and a Skill. Taking this Quality is a prerequisite for taking the Psychic Skill (see the Skill description in Chapter 2). A character with this Quality is capable of effecting any superpower broadly defined as a mental, psychic, or psionic ability, limited solely by his skill level and the Director's discretion.

**Reputation:** A character with this Quality has some

form of good Reputation. People know of the character and have reason to like, trust, and/or respect him. In general, this means that people meeting the character for the first time will be predisposed toward positive social interactions with him. However, the player may also spend a Story Point during a social interaction to play on his Reputation (when appropriate) to get people to do what he wants, regardless of interaction skill checks.

**Sensei:** The character with this Quality still has access to his original teacher or to a current teacher who possesses extraordinary wisdom, extraordinary skill, secret knowledge, and/or secret martial arts techniques. By spending a Story Point, this character can provide the character with the wisdom or training or perhaps equipment needed (often in the form of ancient artifacts) to solve a problem. The player should come up with a reason why the Sensei himself is not involved in the events of the campaign, considering his own high level of power.

While this NPC should not be abused (for that, see the Significant Other Weakness), the player may willingly choose to place his character's Sensei in harm's way (of course, what constitutes "harm" to a powerful Sensei must be great indeed) or otherwise get him into trouble, thus requiring the character's intervention to save him, in order to earn a Story Point.

**Sexy:** (females only) This appearance Quality represents an alluring, distinctly sexual dimension of a character that acts as a modifier to other appearance-related Qualities. A Sexy character must also have the Attractive Quality, and may have the Cute or Beautiful Qualities as well (though the combination of the sensual Sexy Quality and the pure Beautiful Quality is uncommon). Many of the most popular fighting game females tend to have all

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three of the Attractive, Cute, and Sexy Qualities. Sexy characters receive a +1 bonus on interaction skills when dealing with males, which stacks with other appearance Qualities.

**Sharp Dressed:** (males only) A male character with this appearance Quality is always impeccably dressed. It should be noted that, in the source material, this Quality typically manifests according to the standards of “metrosexual” or “Euro” meets glam rock star, and may often include fashions “regular” people would never try to pull off. The effect of this Quality is to provide a +1 on interaction skill checks, or a +2 with people who would normally be impressed by exceptionally fashionable characters.

**Short:** Characters with this Quality are noticeably shorter than normal. In fighting games that strive for some sense of “realism” (a term used loosely in any fighting game), this trait is not extreme. In most games, however, characters with the Short Quality are very short, sometimes no more than about three or four feet tall. This Quality is often possessed by strange old men who laugh and/or drink a lot. The character receives a +2 to Defense Totals when trying to Evade attacks, but receives a –2 penalty (instead of –1) to Accuracy on attacks made at Range 2.

**Suggestive Attire:** (females only) This Quality is another convention of the genre that is somewhat commonplace. Some female characters wear clothing (if it can be called that) that is simply inappropriate for the weather, for fighting, or even for being seen out in public. This does not represent the typical skintight or short skirt outfits worn by most female fighters, but rather truly extreme outfits with substantial cleavage, thongs, lingerie, and the like. The power of this Quality is easily subject to abuse; the Director should feel free to

restrict its application. There is absolutely nothing realistic about this Quality; in fact, it’s fairly ridiculous, but it is a part of some character concepts.

The character’s gratuitous display of flesh is worth a +1 bonus on interaction skill checks when dealing with males. Such characters are also subject to the negative attention encountered by Buxom characters (see above). A character with both Qualities may be subject to significant role-playing challenges and more than a few unpleasant situations (some intended to be humorous, some anything but, depending on the tone of the campaign). A player can willingly suffer this negative attention during a story to earn a Story Point.

Most importantly, however, if the character spends a Story Point at the beginning of a combat, she proves to be less vulnerable to harm when she wears less clothing. As such, the character receives –1 damage from all attacks in combat and also receives a +1 to her Stun Threshold. This becomes –2 damage and +2 Stun Threshold if the character also has the at least one of the three Qualities Buxom, Beautiful, or Sexy.

**Tall:** Some fighting game characters tower over their opposition. This Quality represents the effects of this height. Such characters are not necessarily huge, just tall. However, many characters that have the Tall Quality also have the Big Quality. Due to the length of the character’s limbs, the character does not suffer a penalty to Accuracy at Range 2, though this bonus only applies to Basic Moves, not Special Moves. Due to his impressive height, the character receives a +1 bonus on interaction skill checks when trying to intimidate someone. Using the Evasion

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## QUALITIES, WEAKNESSES, AND QUIRKS

Skill to defend against attacks made by this character receive a +1 bonus to Defense Totals.

**Technique:** This special Quality requires permission from the Director. A “Technique” is a special ability useable by the character that is not available to any other Fighter character in the campaign. The form of this special ability is an optional rule for combat that applies only to the character. For example, the default combat rules do not allow a character to combine a moving Evade with Defense (which is called an Aerial Block in a fighting game). In a campaign using the default combat rules, a character could take the Technique Quality and use the rule for Aerial Blocking for his character.

The Director must approve all Techniques, as some rules are far more powerful than others. If a player wanted a particularly powerful Technique, the Director may allow it at the cost of more than one Quality. The default rules for Fight! in this book do not have many rules options suitable for the Technique Quality. Future supplements will contain many more options, or the Director can create his own.

**Theme Music:** This Quality is a metagame Quality and thus requires the Director’s permission. In fighting games, the soundtrack played while the character is fighting may be exceptionally exciting, well written or memorable. This Quality has combat effects. The strong positive vibe of the character’s soundtrack is inspiring enough to allow him to automatically recover Fighting Spirit equal to his Power Level every full 10-count of combat. Thus, the character would recover Fighting Spirit when the time count dropped to 89 or less, and then again when it dropped to 79 or less, and so on.

**Tomboy:** (females only) This appearance Quality represents another common fighting game stereotype. The character is muscular, has short hair, and perhaps even dresses as a man. Despite this, male characters often find the character attractive anyway. This gives a +1 bonus on interaction skill checks when dealing with either sex. However, characters may not realize the character is female at first. Until the character’s gender is realized, the character does not receive the Tomboy bonus. A player may use the character’s gender ambiguity to willingly inconvenience her character during a story in order to earn a Story Point. A character with this Quality may also be Attractive, Cute, and/or Sexy, though they may not be Beautiful.

**Wealth:** The character is extremely wealthy or has easy access to a lot of money. The benefits of this are readily discernible, though Wealth can also create distinctive problems. By spending a Story Point, the character can get any sort of assistance needed that would be available by throwing money at the problem. The character may hire specially trained technicians, researchers, fast or secretive means of transportation, etc. It is up to the Director to determine whether or not a particular resource is available, as well as how long it takes to materialize. In general, as long as the request doesn’t circumvent the whole story, it should be permitted. If the player willingly chooses to have his character suffer from the unique problems of great wealth (fees and taxes, delays in fund availability, unwanted media and banking attention, theft, etc.), the Director may award a Story Point.

**Weapon Expert:** This Quality represents extraordinary skill with all forms of melee weapons. The character receives a +3 bonus on any skill check or combat roll in Thug Thrashing combat related to melee weapons. This Quality does not apply to rolls

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involving primitive ranged weapons such as bows (which is the province of the Gun Expert Quality).

up to no good. The reputation is established enough that it will be difficult for someone who does not know the character to see past it.

### Weakness Descriptions

This section describes all of the Weaknesses in the game. They are listed alphabetically. Remember that the Director has a responsibility to make sure that Weaknesses actually have an effect on the game. A Weakness that never comes into play is not a Weakness.

**Amnesia:** The character does not remember his past. How much he has lost or whether he will ever regain his memory is up to the player and the Director. This gives them both significant freedom to alter the character's understanding of himself to best suit the campaign's story, though the Director should do this with the interests of the player in mind.

**Annoying Voice:** This Weakness is a metagame Weakness and thus requires Director permission. The voice acting in fighting games (especially after dubbing for localization) often leaves much to be desired. Secondary heroes and comedic sidekicks often have loud, nasal, or silly voices. The character with this Weakness has one of these voices. Because of the character's ridiculous voice, the hypothetical "players" mock the character. The character loses 1 Glory point every session of play and has a -1 penalty on all his interaction skill checks.

**Bad Reputation:** The character has a bad reputation that may or may not be accurate. Regardless of whether or not it is accurate, people treat the character accordingly and expect him to behave in a certain way. This may mean, for example, that people expect him to be a delinquent who is always

**Code:** A Code is similar to the Vow Weakness or (somewhat less so) the Obsession or Fanatic Weaknesses. The player must describe the strict dictates of the character's Code (with the Director's approval) and abide by them always. Common codes would include the samurai's code of bushido or a more generic code to always fight honorably. The effects of failing to abide by a character's Code are up to the Director, but should be suitably severe. A character may live by a code and not take this Weakness; this version of a code is a way of living that is strongly tied to a character's self-identity.

**Curse:** A character who is cursed has been afflicted by some supernatural force either in his own past or the past of his family. This can manifest in any number of ways and it may or may not yield concrete game effects. The player should come up with the story of the Curse and then work with the Director to determine its actual effects. A curse that has major effects need not see those effects turn up in the game very often, while a relatively minor curse may have a consistent permanent (albeit lesser) effect on the character.

**Dangerous Job:** A character with the Dangerous Job Weakness has an employer who places him in hostile situations frequently. This usually means combat, but it can also refer to other life-threatening situations. The player and Director must work out the details of the character's employer. The game effects of this should be manifest in the kinds of stories the character participates in. The Director should make sure the character has to occasionally do things he would

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rather not do, get thrown into dangerous situations, and be involved in frequent fights, usually (but not solely) of the Thug Thrashing variety. This Weakness often contributes significantly to establishing an entire character concept. The job must be a genuine liability to the character, not just an excuse for comparatively easy extra Glory during stories.

**Dark Side:** Usually, this Weakness would only be taken by a heroic character (though the Director might permit a villainous character to have a “really, really Dark Side”). Despite the character’s noble nature, he possesses an evil side that he may or may not be aware of. Under the right circumstance, always at critical moments, his Dark Side may come to the fore, causing the character to do destructive or reprehensible things. The character also may or may not be aware of what he has done during the dark time.

The Director may choose to develop some sort of sliding scale for the character’s loss of control, informing the player that circumstances have pushed the character another step closer to losing control, thereby allowing the character the chance to act in such a way as to regain it, or he may just impose it on the character when dramatically appropriate. The control and/or elimination of the Dark Side is often a driving motive for the character.

**Dependence:** The character with this Weakness is dependent on something else to survive. This could be a dependency or addiction to a substance, but in this case, it would need to be a profoundly deep addiction and/or a very dangerous substance to qualify (e.g., a character who smokes does not qualify for this Weakness in most cases). The Dependence might instead be to something else for a non-human character. An amphibious being may

need water. An ancient spirit may need to meditate in its sacred grove. The effects of failing to meet the Dependence should be decided on by the Director and the player.

**Doomed:** This character is doomed to some ignoble or dark fate, such as dying at the most important point in his life, failing to ever achieve his life’s purpose, or even being responsible for the world’s destruction. This will probably have an effect on the character’s self-perception as made manifest through role-playing. Furthermore, the Director can impose more severe hindrances on the character before awarding a Story Point, especially if the Director furthers the character’s doom. Whether the doom actually comes to pass during the course of the campaign should be up to the Director (with input from the player).

**Dull Personality:** For whatever reason, the character fails to make a positive impression on others. He may be boring, dull, lack social skills, or be unintentionally annoying. As a result, the character suffers a –1 on all interaction skill checks.

**Duty Bound:** A character with this Weakness is obligated to serve someone or something else. This may be a particular person, such as an elder family member, an organization such as a school or corporation, or even an ideal embodied in a philosophy or religion. The duty should be understood as more than just a job; the character has a psychological attachment to the idea of doing well in the performance of his duty. The Director should create situations that cause conflict between the character’s duty and other options that may be easier, better, or more desirable. The Director should impose consequences if the character fails to live up to his duty, especially by choice.

**Fanatic:** A character with this Weakness must define



## QUALITIES, WEAKNESSES, AND QUIRKS

what he is a Fanatic about. This should be something fairly significant. It also should not fall under the purview of Obsession or Vow. Fanaticism usually relates to an ideal, philosophical or religious system, or lifestyle. The player and Director must work together to define the typical behaviors of the Fanatic. The Director should assign penalties or other consequences if the character fails to act according to his fanaticism. The player can inconvenience his character on account of his fanaticism by choice in order to earn a Story Point. From a role-playing perspective, such a character will also be annoyingly one-tracked in his thought and often talk or think of little else.

**Fearsome Appearance:** This Weakness represents an unusual appearance that can be broadly defined as anything that is definitely not normal and usually will provoke a negative reaction. It can be a monstrous appearance (which may or may not also be Ugly) or a supernatural quality that simply makes other people uncomfortable. A character with this Weakness suffers a -4 on Lost in the Crowd skill checks. Furthermore, the character also suffers a -1 penalty on all interaction skill checks. On the other hand, the strange nature of the character's appearance is worth a +1 bonus on interaction skill checks if the character is trying to frighten or intimidate someone. If applicable, these bonuses and penalties stack with the Ugly Weakness.

**Fragile Self-Image:** This character is usually overconfident in his actions, but this actually masks a severe lack of confidence. If the character ever loses a significant fight (defined by the Director according to the specific character), he loses 10 Glory points immediately and subsequently suffers a -1 penalty on all skill checks until he wins a significant fight (as defined by the Director).

**Glass Jaw:** This dangerous Weakness is a tough

thing for a fighter to live with. The character has a -2 Stun Threshold.

**Haunted:** Characters who are Haunted can be tormented in one of two ways. The haunting might be literal, in which case, the character will have frequent interaction with frightening, bothersome, or malevolent spirits. The other form of the Haunted Weakness is the torment the character feels over the events of one's past; in this case, the player needs to describe what happened that now gives the character frequent nightmares, bouts of depression, and lack of confidence about his choice of actions. Either version of this Weakness may lead to penalties on skill checks and/or a misperception of reality on the part of the character.

**Honorable:** Honorable characters abide by a simple, specific form of code related to their general way of life and how they treat others. In combat, an Honorable character will not strike an opponent who has been Stunned or Knocked Down. As a slightly beneficial side effect of this Weakness, people who know of the character's honor may treat the character with respect. On the other hand, villains will exploit this Weakness.

**Hunted:** A character who is Hunted needs to define who is hunting him and why. This Weakness should not usually be defined as another specific Fighter (which is usually a Rivalry instead). However, the hunter should have the resources to send lots of troops at the Hunted character. The Director should feel free to send mobs of Thug-level opponents at the character during each story. Ideally, this Weakness should be worked into the story rather than serve as a distraction from it. The Director should keep this in mind when choosing opponents for the character. Also, like the Dangerous Job

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## QUALITIES, WEAKNESSES, AND QUIRKS

Weakness, being Hunted is supposed to be a liability, not a persistent low-level opportunity to earn extra Glory beyond the other characters.

**Obsession:** This Weakness does not represent a character's ideological stance (that is covered by the Fanatic Weakness), but rather his obsession with a specific item, person, plan, or idea. The player must clearly define the object of his Obsession. Though it is possible that the Fanatic Weakness might be understood in a heroic (if overzealous) light, Obsessions are often darker psychological territory. From a role-playing perspective, this Obsession usually dominates the character's mind, so that he cannot easily concentrate on anything else. This results in a -1 penalty on all skill checks except those related to the Obsession (Director's discretion). The player can inconvenience his character on account of his Obsession by choice in order to earn a Story Point.

**Phobia:** The character suffers a profound, irrational fear of something. The choice of Phobia needs to be common enough (as deemed by the Director) that the character has a reasonable chance of encountering it during his adventures. When exposed to the presence of the Phobia object, the character must either flee or else become paralyzed by fear. If the player willingly exposes his character to the object of his Phobia, the Director can award a Story Point.

**Physical Handicap:** The character with this Weakness has a significant Physical Handicap. This is an uncommon Weakness for a fighting game character. The Director must approve the handicap. Examples include missing arms, legs, or eyes, or perhaps strong asthma or a lasting, debilitating illness. The Physical Handicap is generally not

considered to have any effect on combat (the character is assumed to have trained to compensate), but the Director can impose whatever limitations seem appropriate outside of combat (e.g., a character with one leg moves slowly during a chase, a character with asthma cannot do prolonged physical activity, a blind character cannot read, etc.)

**Poorly Drawn:** This Weakness is a metagame Weakness and thus requires Director permission. It represents a poor visual concept on the part of the hypothetical character artists who "draw" the character for the "game" that is the campaign. The players are bored by the character's appearance and do not connect with him. As such, all Special moves and Combos performed by the character are worth -1 Glory point.

**Ritual:** A character with this Weakness has either a need to be recognized for his exploits wherever he goes or a ritual or series of rituals that he absolutely must adhere to in order to function in day-to-day life. The player should define the exact nature of the Ritual; this could be a calling card left behind by the character at a scene, a catch phrase that has to be spoken aloud, a move that has to be used to finish an opponent, or a routine that must be followed before entering combat. The character's Ritual must be performed or satisfied in all cases; he cannot be convinced to not perform it. This might provide a tactical weakness in combat, ruin an undercover action or disguise, or delay a character's plans. Should the Ritual be violated in some way, the Director should impose penalties on the character until he atones appropriately.

**Significant Other:** The character has some sort of Significant Other in his life. This could be a lover, best friend, child, sibling, or whatever that the character cares deeply about and wants and/or needs to protect. Generally, the feelings are

## QUALITIES, WEAKNESSES, AND QUIRKS

reciprocated in this situation. The Director is free to threaten, kidnap, or otherwise endanger the Significant Other during stories. This Weakness can easily be combined with the Quirk In Love. The player should not be able to easily ignore or blow off his Significant Other without real consequences for his character.

**Style Weakness:** The character's martial arts style is not well suited to facing opponents using certain techniques or his style is predictable. One example of this is the supposed weakness of traditional Western Boxing to kick attacks. This Weakness has combat effects and thus requires the Director's permission. When facing an opponent with Style Weakness, a combatant may make a DL 8 Stance Evaluation roll. In addition to the normal benefits of the roll, if it succeeds, all attacks against the character with Style Weakness do +1 damage.

**Thick:** This Weakness is only available to characters who also have the Unintelligent Weakness. This character is just plain stupid. He is not creative in his thoughts, cannot understand detailed plans, and gets a -3 on any skill check that would involve intelligence or education (Director's discretion). This replaces the -2 penalty of Unintelligent.

**Ugly:** This Weakness represents the worst appearance possible. Such characters are hideous to behold. In fighting games, this can sometimes be quite graphic. It is rare among females in the genre. The effect of this Weakness is a -3 penalty on all interaction skill checks when dealing with a member of the opposite sex. On the other hand, being disgusting to behold is worth a +1 bonus on interaction skill checks if the character is trying to frighten or intimidate someone. Characters with this Weakness cannot acquire any positive appearance Qualities and female characters with this Weakness cannot acquire the Buxom Quality,

regardless of the condition of their figure. A character with this Weakness must also have the Unattractive Weakness, though the Ugly penalties supercede the Unattractive penalties.

**Unattractive:** Some characters just don't have a lot going for them in the looks department. This appearance Weakness yields a -1 penalty on interaction skill checks when the character is dealing with the opposite sex.

**Unintelligent:** This character is significantly less intelligent and/or less educated than most people. As such, he gets a -2 on any skill check that would involve intelligence or education (Director's discretion).

**Unlucky:** Some characters display an extraordinary amount of bad luck in their lives. This is often manifested in scenes that are intended to be more comic relief than plot development. In fact, this Quality works best in a campaign that highlights comedic storylines more often than the gritty serious ones that are the default presumption of most campaigns. The Director may thus choose to disallow this Quality if it fails to match the tone of the game or of a particular character (as even serious campaigns often have one or more comedic characters).

This Weakness allows the Director (not the player) to force the player to re-roll up to three skill checks during the course of a session, with no Story Point reward. Furthermore, when the character with this Weakness chooses to inconvenience himself for a Story Point reward, far more extreme, implausible, and unpleasant events can (and should) happen. Finally, during a story, this character will also have general bad luck at the Director's discretion. This

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## QUALITIES, WEAKNESSES, AND QUIRKS

should usually just be used for humorous effect. If the Director wishes to allow this Quality to have combat effects, then some or all of the character's three skill re-rolls for the session can also be used against the character in combat to re-roll any roll.

**Vow:** This Weakness represents a vow or series of vows that the character has taken which are likely to affect his behavior on a fairly regular basis. It can represent the religious rules of a monk, a stout warrior's vow of purity, or an evil desire for vengeance. The nature of the Vow should not be so obscure that its application in the game is barely seen. The character is committed to the Vow, but this does not necessarily mean that the character is always completely comfortable with it, and the character can still be subject to temptation.

Because of this Weakness, the character will be inhibited in his actions in some way and will be tempted with some regularity during his adventures. If the character ends up breaking his vow, he will have a -3 penalty on all his die rolls until a journey of repentance is taken (a special story or series of scenes designed at the Director's discretion).

**Warped:** This Weakness can cover a number of different afflictions. A Warped character may be physically or mentally Warped. Thus, this Weakness covers any physical deformity or insanity the character may be burdened with. In any case, such afflictions will be difficult to conceal and hard to live with, though the exact details are up to the Director to decide. Physical afflictions will often have a negative effect on social interactions, while mental afflictions may control or limit character actions.

## Quirk Descriptions

This section describes all of the Quirks in the game. They are listed alphabetically. Remember that Quirks are intended to be descriptors of major personality traits of a character. They should occasionally hinder or define a character's actions, but they should not be as debilitating as Weaknesses. Because they have a limited mechanical effect on a character, the Director may allow players to come up with their own Quirks.

**Age:** The character is particularly old, perhaps even ancient, or else very young, such as a child. This has no specific game effects – fighting games are filled with spry old men and immensely powerful children – but it will affect the way other people perceive and relate to the character.

**Arrogant:** The character is convinced of his own superiority and has no problem sharing this self-knowledge with others. This perception may or may not be accurate. In any case, the perceptions and attitudes of other people towards the character will certainly be colored by this arrogance.

**Attitude:** Many characters in fighting games, both heroes and villains, are so cool as to radiate an "aura of attitude" when they are around. Characters with this Quirk may occasionally have difficulty hiding in crowds or appearing sincerely humble in their interactions with others. Others may be inclined to either challenge the character or to act subservient around them.

**Brutal:** Characters with this Quirk are harsh fighters in combat. They enjoy bullying the weak and using dirty tricks, and they have no compunctions against beating opponents who are already down. This may result in legal difficulties, a loss of respect and

## QUALITIES, WEAKNESSES, AND QUIRKS

honor, a recognized bad reputation, and few friends.

**Bumbling Friend:** The character has a good friend who is always willing to help in any way he can. However, despite this friend's best intentions, he rarely proves to be of much help. Typically such a character is loud, clumsy, not too bright, and/or socially inept. While the friend may occasionally prove useful (more often by accident), he is usually a liability to the character when he is around.

**Clueless:** This Quirk is not an assessment of the character's intelligence. Rather, a character with this Quirk is curiously unaware of his environment, the feelings of those around him, and the meaning of clues presented to him. While there are no specific game mechanics to reflect this, the Director may choose to withhold information from the character when describing a situation.

**Cooking:** Any food the character prepares will be horrible and will cause temporary illness in anyone who eats it. The character may be aware of this or instead believe that he is actually an excellent cook. This Quirk is usually used as a source of comic relief in a story.

**Dead Serious:** Despite the occasional light-hearted scene in the plot of a fighting game, some characters seem to have no part whatsoever in it. This character is one of them. The character never laughs, rarely appears noticeably happy, and is usually an extremely focused individual. This should be clear through the player's role-playing. It may have an effect on the character's social interactions.

**Demure:** This Quirk is in some ways the opposite of the Attitude Quirk. The character rarely makes eye contact or exalts himself in any way, and may regularly put himself at the service of others. This attitude persists, even after having beaten an

opponent in combat. In fact, the Demure character will often apologize for winning. In the source material, this Quirk is more common among female characters.

**Disgraced:** At some point in his past, the character was disgraced in some way. He may have been thrown out of his dojo, killed a friend accidentally, violated a vow, or felt his reputation or honor was ruined by a past fight. This character will be somewhat morose and/or angry and will usually be devoted to undoing the causes of his disgrace.

**Distinctive Appearance:** The character's appearance makes him stand out, even beyond the normal standards of most fighting game characters. The character is not frightening (see Fearsome Appearance) nor is he merely ugly (see Ugly). This would be an appropriate Quirk for a character that dresses in a way that makes him stand out in a crowd, even a crowd of Fighters. Penalties to Lost in the Crowd Skill checks are appropriate.

**Fan Service:** (females only) Many female fighting game characters fight exclusively in short skirts (often school uniforms). As such, when they fall or leap or kick high, the players are treated to a clear view of their underwear. Similarly, other characters walk, pose, stretch provocatively, and/or fall over frequently when they move, whether deliberately or accidentally, also revealing their underwear or at least acting in an overtly sexual manner. This is often intended for comic effect, albeit of a particularly lowbrow variety. This character is one of those characters. Apt descriptions of the character's fan service, if it inconveniences the character in some way, could be worth a Story Point.

**Glutton:** This character will eat at every opportunity

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## QUALITIES, WEAKNESSES, AND QUIRKS

which presents itself, will eat a lot, and will often make an embarrassing display of himself while doing so. The character is not necessarily fat. This Quirk is best used for occasional comic effect and to perhaps provide a distraction to the character.

**Greedy:** The character is constantly in pursuit of material gain, whether through money or possessions. This is a primary motivation for the character's actions and, unless the character makes an effort to keep it secret, will usually color the perceptions and reactions of people around him.

**Immature:** This is another common stereotype, usually among female characters. Despite being fully-grown in years, this character still acts like a child. This manifests in the character through high and/or loud voices, frequent temper tantrums, unusual moments of stupid courage or unreasonable fear, and making a general nuisance out of himself.

**Impulsive:** A character with this Quirk possesses boundless energy and an inability to stay in one place for too long. The character is bored with excessive planning and usually flies off on his own without proper discretion. As a result, the character often ends up in trouble. An Impulsive character is not necessarily Reckless; the Impulsive character may choose a prudent course of action, but only because it was the first idea he came up with.

**In Love:** Love relationships sometimes play a role in the plot of fighting games. A character who is In Love needs to first define whom he is In Love with. This is usually another player character or a prominent NPC. In any case, the object of the lover's affection should be around fairly frequently, but does not necessarily need to have reciprocal feelings. This Quirk may occasionally be played for

laughs. In this case, the character In Love will sometimes do stupid things. The player can earn a Story Point by suggesting that the beloved be endangered, but this story idea should be used sparingly, as it more properly falls under the Weakness Significant Other.

**Lecherous:** Characters with this Quirk will always be making inappropriate comments to members of the opposite sex, peeping in locker rooms and showers, and grabbing other characters in socially unacceptable ways. Such behavior often results in social ostracism and frequent beatings at the hands of those who have been ogled. The targets of lechery in the source material are almost always women, regardless of whether the lecher is male or female.

**Loves Combat:** A character with this Quirk thrills to the excitement and danger of combat. He is not necessarily brutal or violent. This may not seem like a liability in a fighting game, but this character will look for any excuse to fight, even when it would be better or more prudent not to.

**Nosebleeds:** (males only) This Quirk is also intended for more light-hearted campaigns. It is not well suited for serious games. A character with this Quirk often suffers sudden and embarrassing nosebleeds when he experiences something that would be sexually arousing. On rare occasions, the nosebleed may be severe enough to cause the character to pass out from blood loss.

**Pacifist:** This is a difficult Quirk for a fighting game. The character will not willingly initiate combat and, if forced in some way, will seek to end combats as quickly as possible. While such sentiment is undoubtedly noble, this can prove to be a difficult Quirk for the player and the Director to work with. It might be worthwhile for the Director and the player



## QUALITIES, WEAKNESSES, AND QUIRKS

to establish a set of circumstances or kinds of opponents toward which the character is “less pacifistic.”

**Reckless:** A character who is Reckless makes unnecessarily bold choices in his actions. Such characters are usually loud and enthusiastic and have little interest in caution. Because of their rashness, they usually get into trouble over their heads. This is not the same thing as Impulsive; a Reckless character may deliberate over his actions but will ultimately choose an action that will generate “big” results (whatever that may mean in a specific situation).

**Revenge:** A character with this Quirk has a need for revenge. The target of this revenge should be someone or some group that is accessible during the events of the campaign, and ideally is a person or group that is directly related to the main plot of the campaign. The character seeking Revenge will act irrationally when faced with an opportunity to get back at the offender. This may be a dominant component of the character’s reason for fighting.

**Rivalry:** A character with a Rivalry needs to define who the Rivalry is with and what the nature of the Rivalry is. The other character should ideally be a character that is around somewhat frequently, but if not, then the Rivalry should be even more intense and fierce when both characters are around. The other character may not share the sense of Rivalry, but this is much less interesting. The rival can be another player character, which can make for some great stories, but the Director should be aware of the possible danger of bad player dynamics. Characters with rivalries will often do stupid things. Common rivals are siblings or fighters from the same school.

**Scarred:** A character who is Scarred has a large scar

somewhere on his body or has numerous small scars all over (or perhaps both). This may make the character hideous or ruggedly attractive. In either case, however, he will have a harder time avoiding being noticed in public. Alternatively, the character may be Scarred in a psychological sense, as a result of some past trauma.

**Secret:** This Quirk can represent any number of things. The character might have a secret identity that needs to be maintained, he could be carrying the guilt of a secret crime committed in the past, he could be lying about his true identity, or he could be an undercover operative. In any case, the character must work diligently to maintain his Secret, as it would be bad (or at least the character is convinced that it would be bad) if the Secret were revealed. The specific ramifications of this revelation are up to the Director and the player.

**Short-Tempered:** The character is prone to bouts of extreme anger and loses his temper with little provocation. This affects the way others perceive the character, as well as causing significant social inconvenience and lots of unnecessary fights.

**Suspicious:** A Suspicious character is unwilling to trust the motivations of others. As such, they are less willing to accept help from others and may be reticent in offering help. It should be noted that this Quirk is not paranoia, just a certain lack of trust in others. Because of this Quirk, such a character may also have problems persuading others.

**Unworldly:** The character is unaware of the workings of the world. He may have been raised in an isolated martial arts camp, sheltered by an excessively protective family, or may even be a stranger to the world (an alien or spirit). This

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## **QUALITIES, WEAKNESSES, AND QUIRKS**

character will not be able to relate well with modern technology, cultural mannerisms and slang. The Director may occasionally use this unfamiliarity to cause the character inconvenience at an important moment.

### **Story Points**

Story Points are a mechanic that allows the Director to reward the players for engaging the genre as well as to manipulate the flow of the story by giving the players the opportunity to improve their chances of success at critical moments.

Normally, the Director will give each character one Story Point at the beginning a session. There are several ways to acquire additional Story Points.

In combat, when a character is reduced to 1/10th of his Life Bar and then wins, he earns a Story Point.

A player may inconvenience his character by choice during a story through his Weaknesses and/or Quirks. The Director may reward this with a Story Point.

When the character suffers a catastrophic failure (as defined by the Director), he earns a Story Point.

The use of certain skills (such as Reaffirm Purpose and Realize Potential) can earn Story Points.

When a player role-plays exceptionally well and/or entertainingly, the Director may award the player with a Story Point. Similarly, when a player role-plays the genre exceptionally well, especially the excessively serious melodrama of fighting game characters, the Director should award a Story Point.

When a player provides exceptionally cool descriptions of his actions (inside or outside of combat), the Director may award a Story Point.

Finally, the Director can manipulate events in the story against the characters and then compensate them with a Story Point. For example, the Director could allow a villain to escape despite the heroes' attempts to pursue and capture him. By guaranteeing the villain's escape, the Director gives each of the characters a Story Point. This technique should be used by the Director with discretion; it should only be used when the effect of it will improve the overall narrative flow of the story.

Story Points are saved from session to session, though the Director may restrict the maximum number a character may have at any one time.

### **Using Story Points**

There are a number of ways in which Story Points can be used in the game.

Some Qualities, such as Connections, Followers, and Influence, require the use of Story Points in order to gain their benefits.

A character can use a Story Point to re-roll any skill check immediately after it is rolled. The character must abide by the results of the re-roll, regardless of whether they are better or worse.

A player can spend a Story Point to gain a sudden insight into his character's current situation. For example, if the players seem unclear as to what they should do next to move the story along, one or more of them could spend Story Points in order to have their characters receive sudden, special insights from the Director to advance the story. The Director

## QUALITIES, WEAKNESSES, AND QUIRKS

should make these insights fairly obvious, not cryptic, so as to justify the use of Story Points. Certain specific Qualities also use Story Points to give hints or assistance. The general insights gained by spending Story Points as described here should not be as useful as those gained by those Qualities.

**Example:** Despite collecting a number of clues about the whereabouts of the headquarters of the Cartel of the Iron Lords, the player characters are unclear as to how they should proceed. Cannon McCabe's player decides to spend a Story Point for an insight. Suddenly, Cannon remembered something he heard one of the Cartel's goons say in a previous confrontation. The Director tells the group that the Cartel has moved their headquarters to a downtown skyscraper. Based on earlier clues they had uncovered in the story, the group now knows where to go.

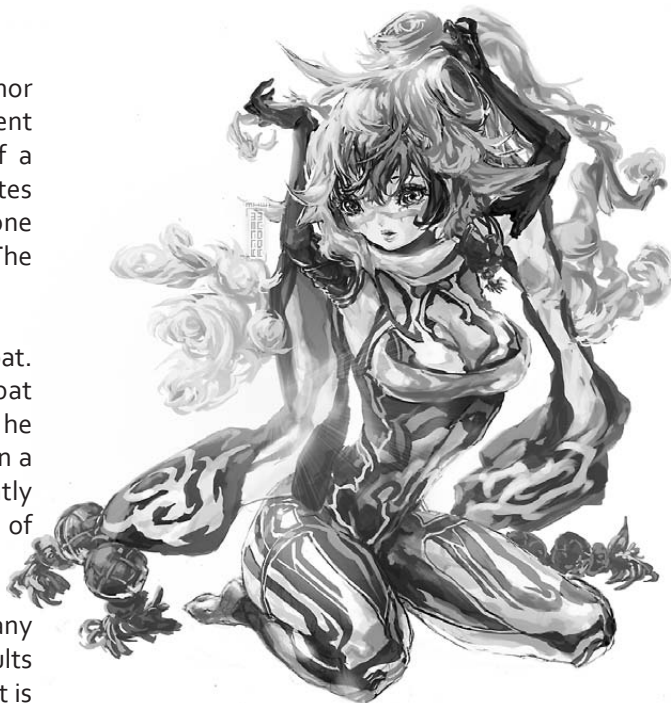
A player can spend a Story Point to make minor modifications to his circumstances in the current scene. For example, a character is pushed off a rooftop. The player spends a Story Point and states that his character lands on a fire escape only one floor down, but out of sight of his opponent. The Director decides this is reasonable and allows it.

Normally, Story Points cannot be used in combat. However, if the Director deems a combat sufficiently critical to the character or the story, he can allow the use of Story Points to modify rolls in a fight. Keep in mind that this can significantly lengthen a normal combat, especially if a lot of Story Points are available for use.

In combat, a Story Point can be used to re-roll any roll. As above, the character must keep the results of the second roll, regardless of whether the result is better or worse.

A Story Point can also be used in combat to give a Special Move an Element it does not normally have for a single use. This needs to be explained in some appropriate narrative way. For example, it might be difficult to describe a crescent kick attack suddenly gaining the Ranged Element, but perhaps the Fighter launches the kick into thin air and his ki projects a wave of force at his opponent. If the Element desired counts as more than one Element normally when building a Special Move, the Element costs an equal number of Story Points.

Finally, a Story Point can be used to recover  $1d4$  plus Power Level in points of lost Life Bar or  $1d10$  plus Power Level in points of lost Fighting Spirit. This cannot bring Life Bar or Fighting Spirit above the character's normal starting totals.





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## ***BASIC MOVES, SPECIAL MOVES, AND SUPER MOVES***



## 4. Basic Moves, Special Moves, and Super Moves

Special Moves are one of the defining characteristics of fighting video games. Aside from their distinctive appearances, what makes players choose to play and master particular characters are an appreciation of their Special Moves, in both their visual flair and their specific combat application. This chapter explains the distinction between the different kinds of moves that Fighters can use in combat, as well as provides rules for designing unique Special Moves. With these rules, characters can throw blasts of destructive ki, launch punches and kicks that send their opponents flying high into the air, turn invisible during combat, and use attacks designed to work around any defense. The system is designed to be flexible enough to duplicate almost any effect seen in a fighting video game.

The term “move” refers to a specific form of attack – it may be as simple as a jab or roundhouse kick, or as impressive as the massive emanations of destructive ki that describe a character’s Super Move. In exceptional cases, a “move” might also be a special form of non-attack action available to a specific Fighter.

Most moves need to be designed by the player or Director as individual, unique options for a specific Fighter. This is done by “building” the move as a series of Elements and Liabilities that define how the move is used in combat. Some moves may simply be more accurate or damaging than others, while others may provide special options or allow the move an exception to a normal rule.

## Definitions

Basic Moves are the attack forms available to all characters. They represent all the “normal” attacks used in hand-to-hand combat, such as punches, kicks, elbows and head butts. Generally, these moves have the same game mechanics for all characters, no matter how they are defined by the player.

Special Moves are the unique attacks of a particular character. They are acquired by spending Move Points both at character generation and when a character advances in Power Level. The Move Points spent determine the level of the Special Move, which in turns establishes how many Elements can be used to build the Special Move, which describes the move’s mechanical role in combat. The actual visual description of a Special Move is very important, for it is these moves that define and characterize a Fighter and his martial arts style. Thus, regardless of the move’s game effects, it is up to the player to provide appropriate and interesting descriptions for his Special Moves.

Super Moves are a particular kind of Special Move. In most ways, they are the same as regular Special Moves; however, they are made up of more Elements, they are a little more damaging, they have a couple Elements and Liabilities available that are not available for regular Special Moves, and a Fighter needs to accumulate Super Energy in combat before he can use a Super Move.

These are the three primary kinds of moves in the game. Future supplements will detail many additional options for Basic, Special, and especially Super Moves.

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## **BASIC MOVES, SPECIAL MOVES, AND SUPER MOVES**

This chapter also presents additional rules options: modifying Basic Moves, rules for Basic Taunts in combat, Basic Throws, and a special form of Combo called an Attack String, which can be used to better replicate the Special Moves found in many 3-D fighting games.

### **Basic Moves**

No move needs to be designed to enable a character to punch another character. A Fighter's standard attack forms are summed up under the category of Basic Moves.

All Basic Moves can be defined however the player wants for his character. For a big brawler, a Basic Move might be a roundhouse punch, a knee, or a brutal head butt. For a quick kung fu fighter, a Basic Move might be a snap kick, an open palm strike, or an elbow. The specific differences between these attacks are not defined by the game rules; all Basic Moves are considered equivalent to one another. While each character might have different descriptions for his Basic Moves, in a fighting video game, any given character is consistent with his style of Basic Moves. For example, a character defined by his long, straight kicks does not suddenly start using elbow and knee strikes. This is another way in which a character's unique fighting style is defined.

In game terms, all Basic Moves are considered L1 moves and thus can always be used, no matter what the Fighter rolls for Control in combat. A Basic Move always does 1d4 damage, modified as usual by the attacker's Strength and the defender's Stamina.

### **Sweeps**

In many fighting games, a low strong kick also functions as a sweep that knocks down the opponent. If the Director wishes to include this option in his game, it functions as a modified Basic Move. Instead of requiring only 1 Control like a normal Basic Move, a Sweep requires 3 Control. It does the same damage as a normal Basic Move, but it also includes the Hits Low and Knocks Down Elements (see below).

If the Director does not wish to use this as a campaign option for all characters, it could also be acquirable by a character with the Technique Quality.

### **Basic Throws**

It is rare to have a fighting game in which each character does not have at least one Throw attack. To represent this, the Director might wish to allow all characters to gain at least one Throw attack for which they do not have to spend Move Points. At Power Level 1, every character receives one or more (as decided by the Director) additional L2 Special Moves for free. These Special Moves must include the Throw Element. Any additional Throws must be acquired as regular Special Moves.



**BASIC MOVES, SPECIAL MOVES, AND SUPER MOVES****Basic Taunts**

Many fighting games allow all characters to taunt their opponents in combat. If the Director wants to include this option, the following rules apply. Some characters build more impressive taunts as Special Moves, or even Super Moves. However, the following rules are for basic, insult-dishing, trash-talking taunts or gratuitous displays of attitude.

A Taunt is considered to be a Basic Move, and therefore requires only Control 1 to perform. Provided that the character gets to act before his opponent, he will immediately gain 1d4 Glory. A Basic Taunt cannot be put into a Combo. A Taunt can only earn Glory once during a combat. A Fighter can gain Glory for Taunting a Thug group.

costs a number of Move Points to purchase equal to its level. Thus, a Level 4 (L4) Special Move costs 4 Move Points. The one exception is L2 moves, which cost 3 Move Points rather than 2 Move Points. Thus, L2 and L3 moves cost the same, though an L3 move has an additional Element, while an L2 move only requires Control 2 to use in combat.

**Special Moves**

The power, complexity, and flexibility of a Special Move are determined by the Level of the Special Move. The vast majority of Special Moves are Level 2 through Level 5. There are no Level 1 Special Moves; a Level 1 move is a Basic Move. Special Moves of Level 6 or higher are permissible, though uncommon in the source material. A move's Level is abbreviated "L." For example, a Level 3 Special Move is referred to as an L3 move.

The Level of a Special Move determines the number of Elements that are used to make up the details of the move, as well as the Control roll necessary to use the move in combat.

A Fighter acquires Special Moves through the expenditure of Move Points. Each Special Move



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## **BASIC MOVES, SPECIAL MOVES, AND SUPER MOVES**

### **Move Levels and Controller Motions**

The philosophy behind Move Levels is based on a system of evaluating the standard controller motions used in fighting games. Basically, the number of controller directions required plus the number of buttons pressed should equal the Special Move's level. The one important exception to this is that any "quarter sweep" motion (e.g., down, down-forward, forward – the classic "fireball" motion) counts as only two directions rather than three because the rolling motion is easy to perform. This likewise applies to a "half sweep," which is two quarter sweep motions and thus is reckoned as four directional presses rather than five.

Using this formula, a standard fireball (down, down-forward, forward with a button press) is an L3 move. The standard "dragon punch" motion (forward, down, down-forward with a button press) is an L4 move. A typical "command move" (one direction and a button press) is an L2 move. A 360-degree controller motion with a button press is an L9 move (though many "360 degree" moves can actually be performed with only 270 degrees of motion, thus making them perhaps only L7 moves). This means that the vast majority of Special Moves should be L3-5, while most Command Moves (almost by definition) are L2. Special Moves that simply require repetitive button pushes of the same kind would be considered L2 or perhaps L3, depending on how slowly the move begins in the game. Special Moves of L6-8 are rare according to these guidelines, except in the case of attacks that require multiple button presses at the same time (as is the case in some Super Move systems) or unusual directional combinations. Using these guidelines, it becomes much easier to translate an existing fighting game character's Special Moves into Fight! Special Moves.

### **Building Special Moves**

Special Moves are constructed from a base template modified by Elements and Liabilities. Elements enhance the power of a Special Move or allow it to be used in additional ways in combat. Liabilities limit the power or flexibility of a move. Special Moves have a base Accuracy modifier of +0 and do 1d6 damage, modified by the attacker's Strength and the defender's Stamina. Elements and Liabilities can increase or decrease a Special Move's base Accuracy and damage.

When building a Special Move, a move is allowed a

number of Elements equal to its Level + 1. For example, an L3 Special Move is built with four Elements. A Move can be constructed with Liabilities to allow additional Elements. Each Liability allows an additional Element to be added to the Special Move. One is not required to use all the available Elements when building a move.

When designing Special Moves, not every effect of a move needs to be defined by Elements and Liabilities. This is especially so when attempting to interpret a specific Special Move from an existing video game series. There may simply not be enough Elements available to build the move perfectly. In this case, the move should be designed with attention paid to its most important characteristics, those that principally define the move's role in the

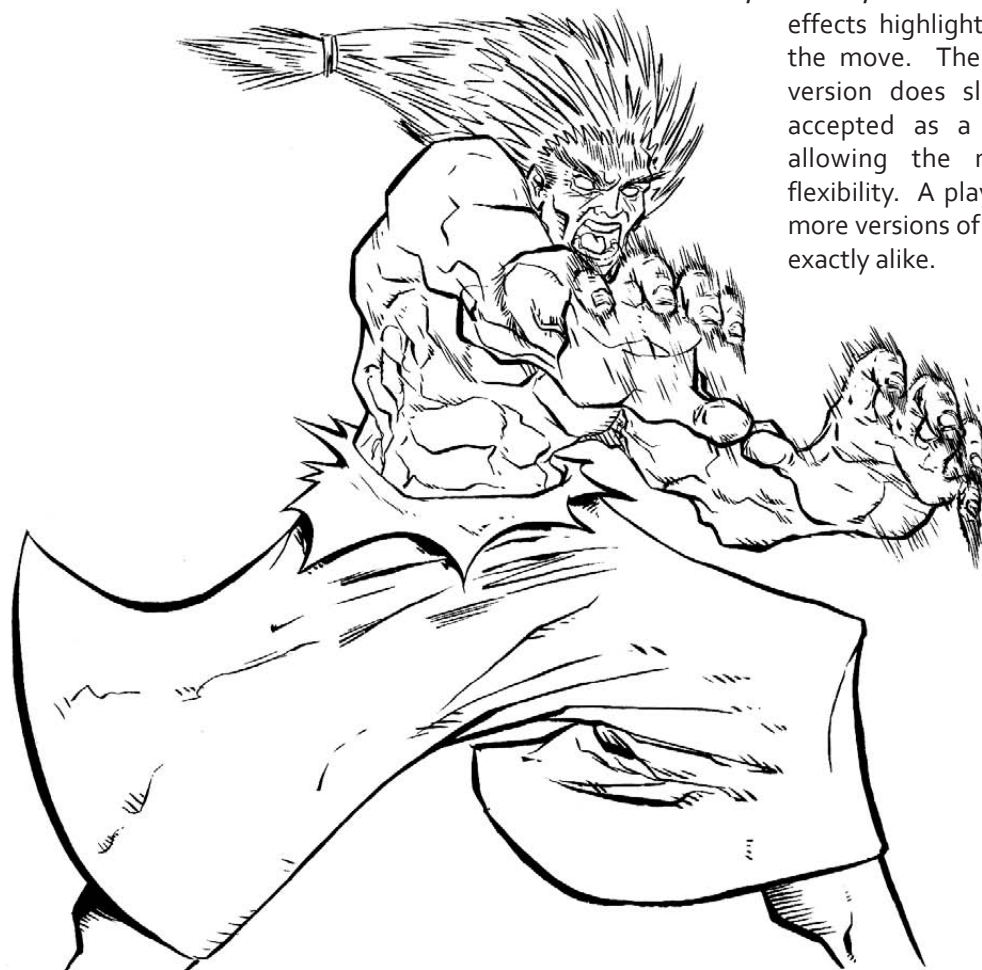
## **BASIC MOVES, SPECIAL MOVES, AND SUPER MOVES**

overall repertoire of the character. If an undefined Element should become critical during a fight, especially for dramatic or narrative purpose, the Director can adjudicate the situation as necessary.

Once a move is designed, it cannot be modified later. However, characters receive enough points to spend on Special Moves as they advance in Power Levels that a character could re-design the same Special Move as a new move, and then just choose to ignore the original move. Designing multiple versions of the same Special Move can also be a way

to highlight different uses of a Special Move when there are not enough Elements available to build it completely as a single move. For example, a character possesses a high-damage punch meant to be used on opponents as they jump towards the character. However, to get the extraordinary damage he wants, the player doesn't have enough Elements to also include the Anti-Air Element. So he builds two versions of the same move: one with very high damage and the other with slightly less damage and the Anti-Air Element. From the perspective of the character, he has only one move, not two; however, the two different sets of game effects highlight different ways to use the move. The fact that the Anti-Air version does slightly less damage is accepted as a minor side effect of allowing the move to have more flexibility. A player cannot have two or more versions of a Special Move that are exactly alike.

The Director can disallow any Liability or Element on a particular move. It is not too difficult to assign a Liability to a Special Move that makes the move stronger in most cases, with a single negative exception that will rarely come into play based on the character's other moves and general play style. Likewise, certain Elements may prove to be too



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## **BASIC MOVES, SPECIAL MOVES, AND SUPER MOVES**

powerful when combined with other Elements. Finally, some Elements may affect conditions that only apply if certain campaign options are in place, and are therefore not appropriate in all games.

Once the design of a Special Move is finished, it should be given an evocative name, which may or may not have anything to do directly with the move's purpose or description. It may be as simple and descriptive as "Rising Flaming Uppercut" or as

enigmatic as "Violet Swan Strike of Liberating Moonlight." Characters often shout the name of their Special Moves as they use them in combat, so

### Move Elements

Aerial	Knockback Advance
Always Does Damage	Mobile: Full movement after attack
Anti-Air	Mobile: Increased movement
Area Effect (2 or 4)	- Only 2 Ranges (0)
Bounce	- Moves Low
Charge Back	Mobile: Movement before or after attack
Counter	Pass Through
- Counter only (0)	Position Shift
Critical Hit	Power Up: Extra Control
Easy to Combo	Power Up: Life Bar
Evade Ranged	Priority
Explosive (3 or 5)	Ranged (2)
- Reduced damage (2)	- Accuracy for Damage
Fast Recovery	- Draw Closer
Hard to Evade (1-2)	- No Ranged Response
Harry	- Short Range
Hits Low	- Very Fast
Increased Accuracy (3-6)	- Very Slow
Increased Damage (1-6)	Reach
Increased Glory (1+)	Reversal
Increased Knockback	Subtle
Increased Stun	Teleportation (2)
Interrupt	- End in mid-air
Interrupt only (0)	Temporary Invulnerability (3)
Invincible Interrupt	Temporary Technique (1+)
Juggle	Throw (2 or 0)
- Launcher	- Carrying Grapple
- Spinning Juggle	- Hurl
Ki and Strength	- Sustained Hold (2)
Knocks Down (2)	Unblockable
- Only at the end of a Combo (1)	

some effort should be spent to make them as memorable as possible. Hundreds of examples for inspiration can be found in fighting games.

The following lists contain all the basic Elements,

**BASIC MOVES, SPECIAL MOVES, AND SUPER MOVES**

Liabilities, and Exotic Elements that can be used in the construction of Special and Super Moves. Additional options and modifier Elements and Liabilities are also included. A number in parentheses indicates the Element or Liability in question counts as more or less than one Element or Liability. See the descriptions below for detailed information.

**Move Liabilities**

Behind Opponent  
 Cross-Up  
 Decreased Accuracy (1-3)  
 Decreased Damage  
 Limited Damage: Knock Back Only  
 Limited Damage: Stun Only  
 Limited Move  
 Limited Movement: Movement away only  
 Limited Movement: Must move forward  
 1 Range  
 Limited Movement: No movement before attacking  
 Limited Use (2)  
 - Can Reload (1)  
 Negative Positioning  
 No Combo  
 No Damage (2)  
 No Super Energy  
 Non-Finisher  
 Only When Prone (2)  
 Random Element  
 Range 0  
 Self-Damage: Damages Attacker (2)  
 Self-Damage: Stuns Attacker (2)  
 Self-Prone  
 Slow Recovery  
 Super Energy (2)





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## **BASIC MOVES, SPECIAL MOVES, AND SUPER MOVES**

### **Exotic Move Elements**

- Absorbs Attacks
  - Absorb All Attacks
  - Absorb and Use Ranged
  - Transform Energy
- Bomb
  - Moveable Bomb
  - No Range
  - Short Timer
- Borrow Identity
- Copies Moves
- Entangle (2)
- Fake (2+)
- Flight (2)
- Free Movement (2)
- Gradual Effect
  - Delayed Onset
- Healing (2-3)
  - Heal others
  - Only heal others
- Illusionary Doubles
  - Defensive Illusion (2)
  - Offensive Illusion (1+)
- Invisibility
  - Maintain Effect
- Power Enhancer (1+)
  - Delayed Onset
- Reflection
- Style Change
- Super Move Enhancer (2)
  - Not Stunned (2)
- Suppression: Suppress Special Moves (2)
  - Suppress Super Moves
- Suppression: Suppress movement
- Suppression: Suppress Special Moves and movement (5)
  - Suppress Super Moves
- Taunt
  - Modify Super Energy
  - Element Addition

### **Exotic Move Liabilities**

- Move Sub-Set
- Multi-Part Move: Multi-Part Attack
- Multi-Part Move: Multi-Part Throw
- Prop
  - Recover Prop with Special Move
- Random Move

### **Additional Elements for Super Moves Only**

- Breakthrough (1-4)
- Decreased Super Energy Cost
- Extended Duration
- Increased Accuracy (3-9)
- Increased Damage (1-8)
- Infinite Supers (5)
- Invincibility (1-4)
- Unique Super Move

### **Additional Liabilities for Super Moves Only**

- Increased Super Energy Cost (1-3)
- Limited Choice



**BASIC MOVES, SPECIAL MOVES, AND SUPER MOVES****Weapons**

A player might be looking for the list of weapons so he can compare the relative merits of arming his character with either a katana or a naginata. But there is no list of weapons. The reason for this is twofold. The first reason is that Fight! tends to concentrate on unarmed martial arts. The second reason is that weapons in Fight! possess no characteristics to distinguish their use in combat from the capabilities of an unarmed combatant. Thus, if a character wields a katana in combat, the descriptions of his Basic Moves and Special Moves will include the sword, but the game effects will be no different from the moves of an unarmed character. This preserves game balance and also accurately represents the source material. However, in many games, a weapon provides better reach or damage, which make the Reach Element and the Increased Damage Element appropriate choices for a weapon user's Special Moves.

**Standard Liabilities**

Two of the most common Liabilities for a Special Move are Decreased Accuracy and Decreased Damage.

**Decreased Accuracy:** Up to three Liabilities can be taken on Decreased Accuracy. Each such Liability subtracts 1 from the move's Accuracy. This Liability cannot be applied to a Special Move that does not attack an opponent, though it can be applied to a Special Move that attacks an opponent but does no damage.

**Decreased Damage:** One Liability can be taken on Decreased Damage. This decreases the base damage to 1d4 before being modified by the

attacker's Strength and the defender's Stamina. This Liability cannot be taken on a move with the No Damage Liability, and a move cannot have both Decreased Damage and Increased Damage.

**Standard Elements**

Two of the most common and universally useful Elements for a Special Move are Increased Accuracy and Increased Damage.

**Increased Accuracy:** Up to six Elements can be spent on Increased Accuracy. Each three such Elements adds +1 to the move's Accuracy. A move's Accuracy bonus is often a representation of how fast the move is to execute. A Special Move with a fast execution speed lessens the amount of time the defender has to respond.

**Increased Damage:** Up to six Elements can be spent on Increased Damage, which increases the base damage of a Special Move beyond 1d6. This new base damage is then modified by the attacker's Strength and the defender's Stamina as usual.

- One Element increases the base damage to 1d6+1.
- Two Elements increases the base damage to 1d8.
- Three Elements increases the base damage to 1d8+1.
- Four Elements increases the base damage to 1d10.
- Five Elements increases the base damage to 1d10+1.
- Six Elements increases the base damage to 1d12.

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## **BASIC MOVES, SPECIAL MOVES, AND SUPER MOVES**

### **Special Move Liabilities**

Each of these Liabilities earns one extra Element with which to construct a Special Move.

**Behind Opponent Liability:** In order to use this move, the combatant must move forward to Range 0 and then continue to move “through” his opponent to Range 1 on the other side. The combatant can then use this move at any time up until either combatant moves or is moved again (including movement from Knock Back). Alternatively, an attacker using a move with this Liability can use movement and a Maneuver Check towards a Distance of 1 as a special way to maneuver behind the opponent. If the Maneuver Check is successful, the character can use a move with this Liability until one of the combatants moves or is moved.

**Cross-Up Liability:** This move can only be used if it is used in a Cross-Up situation. Otherwise, it automatically misses.

**Limited Damage Liability:** This move does not do normal damage. This Liability can be used for various kinds of Special Moves such as a healing move. The specific effects must be defined when the move is designed and cannot be changed later. Either 1) the move may do Knock Back only, or 2) the move may do only Stun Damage. In this latter case, the attacker rolls damage normally and applies it to the opponent’s Stun Threshold, but the opponent loses no Life Bar.

**Limited Move Liability:** This is a catchall Liability to represent any minor Liability not otherwise covered here. It is up to the Director to determine the specific effects, but they should be comparable to

other existing Liabilities. Some examples might be an attack that can only hit an opponent at Range 1, but not Range 0 or Range 2, or an attack that is Hard to Evade, but only against opponents with the Tall Quality. Limitations that will rarely come into play or that have little real effect on combat should not count as a Liability. This Liability is subject to abuse and therefore should be restricted by the Director as necessary.

**Limited Movement Liability:** This move permits only limited movement in some way. The specific effects must be defined when the move is designed and cannot be changed later. It could be any one of the following: either 1) the move does not allow any movement before attacking, or 2) the move only allows movement away from one’s opponent, not towards, or 3) the move always requires forward movement of at least one Range before attacking.

**Negative Positioning Liability:** When this move is used, the opponent can Maneuver the attacker 1 Distance for free. Alternatively, the attacker simply receives a one die penalty on his Initiative roll on the following turn. This Liability often represents an attack that turns the attacker away from his opponent immediately after using it.

**No Combo Liability:** This move cannot be placed at the beginning, middle, or end of a Combo in any circumstances. The Director may choose to disallow this Liability.

**No Super Energy Liability:** This move does not produce any Super Energy when it is used. This Liability is only available in campaigns that allow Super Moves and in which Super Energy is built up by the use of Special Moves. It is also only allowed on moves acquired at Power Level 3 or later.

**Non-Finisher Liability:** This move, while capable of

## BASIC MOVES, SPECIAL MOVES, AND SUPER MOVES

damaging an opponent, cannot defeat an opponent. If the attack would bring the opponent below 1 Life Bar, his Life Bar remains at 1.

**Random Element Liability:** This Liability must be attached to another specific Element of this Special Move. When the move is used, the Element may or may not work. The attacker rolls a die; on an even number, it works. Otherwise, it does not. If that would somehow make the move or attack impossible, the action is lost.

**Range 0 Liability:** This attack can only be used when at Range 0. However, the attack still receives a +1 bonus to Accuracy.

**Self-Prone Liability:** After this move is used, whether the attack succeeds or not, the attacker is Knocked Down and must use his action on the following turn to stand up.

**Slow Recovery Liability:** After this move is completed, there is a pause before the Fighter is able to continue with his next action. If this move misses, the attacker suffers a one die size penalty on Initiative on the following turn.

### Major Special Move Liabilities

Each of the following Liabilities earns two extra Elements with which to construct a Special Move.

**Limited Use Liability:** This move can only be used 5 times in a single combat. At the Director's discretion, this may be limited to only 5 times per day total. It may represent the limited ammo of a gun or crossbow, or limited reserves of personal energy to power the attack.

As an alternative, the attack may only be used three

times in a single combat, but using one's action for the turn to reload rather than to attack allows another three uses. This alternative Liability is only worth one extra Element, not two.

**No Damage Liability:** This move earns Glory the first time it is used in a combat, but it otherwise has no other immediate offensive application. It does no damage, no Stun damage, and causes no Knock Back. This Liability can be used for various unusual kinds of special moves such as a self-healing move. If a Special Move built with this Liability ends up with unused Elements and the move is the first move of a Move Sub-Set or Multi-Part Move (see below), then a follow-up move in a Combo does full damage, not half damage as usual.

**Only When Prone Liability:** This move can only be used after the combatant has been Knocked Down. This move modifies the normal Knock Down procedure. Instead of losing an action, this move can be done instead. However, this move has a -1 Accuracy. The move cannot be used in any other circumstance and the combatant still needs to use an action to stand up afterwards.

**Self-Damage Liability:** When this move is used, regardless of whether or not it hits, the move's base damage (unmodified by Strength or Stamina) is also rolled against the attacker. Alternatively, the move may do no damage to the attacker, but instead automatically Stun the attacker after the attack.

**Super Energy Liability:** This move requires 10 Super Energy to use, but it is not a Super Move. This Liability is only available in campaigns that allow Super Moves and only on moves acquired at Power Level 3 or later.

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## **BASIC MOVES, SPECIAL MOVES, AND SUPER MOVES**

### **Special Move Elements**

Most of these Elements count as a single Element towards the total allowed Elements of a Special Move. However, some of these Elements count as two or even three Elements.

Some Elements are modifiers for other Elements and can only be taken if the move has the base Element in question. On the other hand, some modifier Elements are actually Liabilities and instead earn an extra Element with which to build

the move.

**Aerial Element:** This move involves the Fighter leaping high into the air before attacking or as part of the attack. It is often combined with the version of the Mobile Element that allows 2 Ranges of movement before attacking, though this is not a prerequisite. If a move with this Element is used and the attacker is interrupted by an opponent who had held their Initiative, the attacker receives a +2 bonus on his Defense Total if he chooses to use the Evasion Skill to avoid the attack.



**BASIC MOVES, SPECIAL MOVES, AND SUPER MOVES**

Special rules apply if a move with this Element is used and the defender chooses to use any Defensive Response other than the Anti-Air/Juggle Response. If the attacker using the Special Move with the Aerial Element misses, he can use his full Evasion Skill against the defender's attack, rather than half his Defense Skill as normal.

**Always Does Damage Element:** Even if this move misses, the defender loses 3 FS. If the defender is unable or unwilling to lose a full 3 FS, he loses 1 LB instead. This is an uncommon Element in the source material, but it can be used to create a Special Move that is so strong that it crashes through an opponent's defenses.

**Anti-Air Element:** This move is intended to specifically counter attack as a combatant jumps toward the attacker. The move allows the Anti-Air Response Defensive Response.

**Area Effect Element:** This Element counts as two Elements. This move affects all opponents immediately surrounding the attacker. All characters (friend or foe) standing at Range 0 or 1 (but not Range 2) from the attacker are attacked by this attack simultaneously. Separate attack rolls are made against each target and FS must be spent to modify each individually as desired. Each target can choose their own defensive option against the attack, and the user of the attack can be subject to multiple Defensive Responses. In this case, all effects of these Responses (e.g., Knock Back, Knock Down) are put into effect after all attack rolls have been made. Damage from this move is -1 against other Fighter-level opponents (minimum 1), but it has full effect on Thugs. If





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## **BASIC MOVES, SPECIAL MOVES, AND SUPER MOVES**

the Special Move also has the Ranged Element, this Element counts as four Elements.

**Bounce Element:** This move forces the opponent to the ground with such ferocity that he bounces back into the air, giving the attacker an opportunity to juggle the opponent in the air for more damage. Taking this Element also requires the Knock Down Element. If the attack hits, the attacker must make a Tactics skill check against DL 8. If he succeeds, he juggles the opponent for +3 damage and +2 Glory. This move can be put into a Combo, even though Special Moves with the Knocks Down Element normally can only be put at the end of a Combo. However, if the Tactics skill check fails, the Combo automatically misses.

**Charge Back Element:** This move is prepared by doing a “charge back” or “charge down” movement. Many fighting games have characters whose Special Moves are dependent on first holding the joystick away from the opponent or down for a few seconds before attacking. The result in these games is to have a more defensive character who often retreats and blocks more frequently. If the combatant has Initiative and wants to use a Special Move with this Element, he must do one of the following: 1) Retreat 1 Range before attacking; 2) The combatant must have successfully defended against the last attack made against him using his combined Defense and Evasion Skills; or 3) Roll Control 2 points higher than normally necessary for the Special Move.

The advantage of the Charge Back Element is that if the character Holds his Initiative, he is considered to be on Full Defense (using the Defense Skill, not the Evasion Skill), even though he may attack later in the same turn. If the Fighter fails to obtain Initiative, the character can choose to be on Full

Defense and, if the opponent’s attack misses, the defending character can then attack with a Special Move that has this Element. In either of these cases, however, the character does not get an Initiative or Control bonus, as is usually the case with Full Defense. The Director may require that a character must have most or all of his Special Moves with the Charge Back Element, or else none may be. This would be consistent with the source material.

**Counter Element:** This move is specially designed to block an opponent’s attack while launching an immediate counterattack. This move allows the defender to use the Counter Response Defensive Response, though the move can also be used normally. There is one optional Liability and one optional Element that can modify this Element.

The cost of this Element is balanced by a Liability if the move can only be used as a Defensive Response and not as a regular attack. For the cost of two additional Elements, a Special Move with the Counter Element can be made into an Invincible Counter. In this case, the Defense Total for the Counter receives the Fighter’s Total Defense bonus, and if the Counter attack hits, it receives the benefit of the Increased Knockback Element.

**Critical Hit Element:** This move occasionally hits opponents in such a way to create a brief opening to press the offensive. If the damage rolled is an even number, the attacker receives a two die size increase to either Initiative or Control next turn, determined before they are rolled. Unlike the typical use of the term in other role-playing games, there is no other mechanical definition of a “critical hit” for this Element.

**Easy to Combo Element:** This move is well suited for use in Combos. When this Special Move is included in a Combo, the Control cost of the Combo



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is reduced by one. This effect is cumulative if multiple moves with this Element are put into the same Combo.

**Evade Ranged Element:** This move is particularly effective against attacks with the Ranged Element. For example, the move may pass through the attack or it may slide under it. This move can be used for the Evade Ranged Defense Response.

**Explosive Element:** This fairly uncommon Element counts as three Elements. This move affects all opponents within a short distance from the attacker. All characters (friend or foe) standing at Range 0-3 from the attacker are attacked by this attack simultaneously. Separate attack rolls are made against each opponent and FS must be spent to modify each individually. Damage from this move is -2 against other Fighter-level opponents (minimum 1), but it has full effect on Thugs. As a Liability (reducing the cost for the Explosive Element to two Elements), the damage from this attack can be further reduced by 1 for each Range step away from the target (e.g., a target at Range 3 would suffer -3 damage, or -5 if the target was a Fighter). If the Special Move also has the Ranged Element, this Element counts as five Elements.

**Fast Recovery Element:** This move is easy to recover from or can be cancelled out of, making it easier to progress into the next attack, or the move improves the position of the attacker in relation to his opponents. If this move hits, the attacker gets a one die size increase on the following turn that can be applied to either Initiative or Control.

**Hard to Evade Element:** This move has some characteristic that makes it difficult to Evade. For a normal Special Move, it may be a mid-striking or overhead move that hits crouching opponents more easily, a move that hits an opponent both high and

low simultaneously, or an attack that swings in a wide arc vertically or horizontally. For a Special Move with the Ranged Element, it may strike from an unusual angle, such as diagonally up, straight up from the ground, straight down from the sky, as a wide beam, or some combination of these. Perhaps the Ranged attack can even be re-directed once it is launched.

Regardless of how the move is defined, the effect is to give a +1 Accuracy against an Evading opponent. Two Elements can be spent on this Element to make it a +2 Accuracy for particularly difficult to Evade attacks. In the case of Special Moves with the Ranged Element, this could apply to arcing beam attacks, prolonged beam attacks, or homing attacks that are incredibly difficult to avoid.

**Harry Element:** This move harries or confuses the opponent in some way, such as hitting him and turning him away from the attacker with the force of the blow. The defender suffers a one die size penalty on his next Initiative or Control roll (this is the defender's choice, made before the rolls on the following turn).

**Hits Low Element:** This move hits the opponent low, requiring a crouching block to successfully defend or else a jump to leap over the attack. This attack receives a +1 Accuracy when the opponent defends with the Defense Skill, but a -1 Accuracy when the opponent uses the Evasion Skill. It has no effect against the Tactics Skill. If the defender combines Defense and Evasion, there is no modifier to Accuracy.

**Increased Glory Element:** This move is either especially flashy or, more commonly in the source material, this move hits multiple times but counts as

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## **BASIC MOVES, SPECIAL MOVES, AND SUPER MOVES**

a single move. For example, some Special Moves may hit a dozen times, but only do damage once. This is actually a common Element in the source material. Each Element spent on this Element increases the move's Glory award by 2.

**Increased Knockback Element:** If this move hits, it knocks the defender back 2 Ranges, rather than just one.

**Increased Stun Element:** This move hits with such force that its effective damage for the purposes of application against an opponent's Stun Threshold is increased by 2. Thus, an attack that does 4 Life Bar damage would count as 6 points of damage when compared against the opponent's Stun Threshold to determine whether or not the opponent is Stunned.

**Interrupt Element:** This move can be used to Interrupt another combatant's attacks with the Interrupt Defensive Response. Such moves are usually designed as counter attacks, but with a different tactical requirement than the Counter Element. This Element can also be used to represent a static field of some sort that will damage any opponent who accidentally or deliberately touches it. Examples of this would be a burning ki field or a twirling weapon. The character sets it off as an opponent approaches. However, this Element does not need to specifically "represent" anything – it may be applied to any Special Move that the character has learned to use as a fast response to an opponent's attack.

The cost of this Element is balanced out by a Liability if the move can only be used as a Defensive Response and not as a regular attack. For the cost of an additional Element, this Special Move can be made into an Invincible Interrupt. In this case, the

Tactics roll for the Interrupt receives a +2 bonus.

**Juggle Element:** This move knocks the opponent high into the air, thus increasing the possibility of stringing together a longer Combo against the opponent before he hits the ground. If this move begins a Combo, it does +2 damage and the Combo is worth +1 Glory. Taking this Element requires the Knock Down Element as a prerequisite; however, this Element is an exception to the normal rule that a move that Knocks Down cannot begin a Combo; instead, the Knock Down effect is delayed until the end of the Combo. If a Combo begins with a move with the Juggle Element, another move with this Element can be placed later in the same Combo and still receive the damage bonus. The Juggle Element can also be further modified by either of the following modifier Elements.

**Launcher Element:** This Element launches the opponent even higher into the air, allowing even more hits, changing the +2 damage of the Juggle Element to +4 damage instead. However, Launchers cannot be used too quickly in succession. A DL 10 Tactics skill check is necessary in order to use two Launchers in the same Combo. Failing this roll means the Combo automatically misses.

**Spinning Juggle Element:** This Element can only be applied to a move with the Launcher Element. Because this attack also spins the opponent around uncontrollably while they are juggled in the air, no Breakfall is possible, if those optional rules are in use in the campaign.

**Ki and Strength Element:** This move uses Ki effects in conjunction with normal physical moves, such as a powerful punch that also involves the attacker's fist bursting into flames. Many times, this is merely the special effect of the move and does not require this

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Element. If it is mechanically relevant to how this move is used in the character's repertoire of moves, then this Element can be applied. The base damage is calculated from the character's Ki score (see Ranged Element) and then Strength modifies damage as usual.

**Knock Down Element:** This extremely common move Element counts as two Elements. If this move hits, the opponent also suffers a Knock Down in addition to Knock Back, damage, and Stun Damage.

If the move only causes Knock Down when it is the last move of a Combo, this is a Liability, reducing the Element cost to one.

**Knockback Advance Element:** This move allows the attacker to optionally advance after Knock Back, moving forward up to the same number of Ranges as the opponent was Knocked Back, if so desired. If the opponent was Knocked Back towards an Environmental Hazard, the attacker must also move towards the Hazard if he chooses to use this Element.

**Mobile Element:** This Element covers a number of options that apply to movement that occurs during the execution of a Special Move. The specific effects of this Element must be defined when the move is designed and cannot be changed later. One of the following options can be chosen: 1) The move allows full normal movement after attacking; however, the attacker cannot move before attacking; 2) The move allows only 1 Range of movement before attacking (as usual), but this movement can be used before or after the attack takes place; 3) The move travels quickly, either because of fast ground-based movement or because it is a special form of jumping or aerial attack (also see the Aerial Element). This Special Move allows 2 Ranges of movement before attacking for a cost of 1 FS, just like a jumping Basic

Move. Optionally, this move can allow 3 Ranges of movement without attacking, but not if this movement would bring the Range to 0. This third option is a very common Element in fighting video games.

The cost of the first option is balanced out by a Liability if the character must move after attacking. The cost of the third option is balanced out by a Liability if the move allows 2 Ranges of movement before attacking (or 3 Ranges without attacking), but which cannot move only 1 Range. There is also one modifier Element for this third option.

**Moves Low Element:** The movement forward occurs at crouching height, making it possible that attacks will pass over the attacker's head. If the attacker is interrupted by a character who has held their Initiative or the attacker needs to defend himself against a Defensive Response, he receives a +2 bonus to Defense Total if using Evasion or a +1 bonus to Defense Total if defending against a Defensive Response.

**Pass Through Element:** This move allows 2 Ranges of movement without any cost in FS, but it can only be used if that movement would bring the Range to exactly 0 or pass through the opponent to Range 1 or 2 on the other side.

**Position Shift Element:** This move allows the attacker to shift to one side as he attacks, to shift the defender to one side if the attack hits, or to cause the combatants to switch positions. While this does not change the Range between the combatants, the attacker can move the defender 1 Distance towards an Environmental Hazard if the attack hits. This effect is in addition to normal Knock Back.

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**Power Up Element:** This move does more damage when first powered up. There are two versions of this Element; the specific option must be chosen when the Special Move is designed and cannot be changed later. Regardless of which option is being used, all the decisions about the use of the Power Up Element must be made before an attack roll is made.

The first option for this Element allows a Special Move to do +1 damage per +1 Control required by the move. For example, a Fighter wants to use his L3 Special Move with the Power Up Element. On this turn, he has rolled Control 5. Thus, he could choose to use the move with no modifier and get a +1 Accuracy bonus for having more Control than needed for his chosen move (see the Combat chapter) or he could treat this move as requiring 2 more Control and thus do +2 damage. He could also treat it as requiring one more Control, gaining both +1 damage for the Power Up Element and +1 Accuracy for still using a move requiring less Control than the amount rolled for the turn. The maximum Control allowed for extra damage is equal to twice the move's normal level. Thus, an L3 move could do up to +3 damage for 6 Control.

The second option for this Element allows the move to require one Control more than usual, but it then does +1 damage per 1 Life Bar spent. The maximum Life Bar that can be spent for extra damage is equal to the character's Power Level. For example, a PL 4 combatant could spend 4 Life Bar to gain +4 damage on the attack.

**Priority Element:** This move is executed quickly and connects first even in near-simultaneous attack situations. This move breaks ties in the case of simultaneous Initiative. It can also be used for the Priority Defense Response.

**Ranged Element:** This move can be used at significant range from an opponent. This Element counts as two Elements when applied to a Special Move. The classic stereotype of a Special Move with the Ranged Element is the ki blast or fireball, though this might also be an energy beam, a thrown knife or grenade, a magical or supernatural effect, some form of shockwave along the ground, or however else the designer of the move wishes to define it. A move with the Ranged Element can hit a target without penalty at any Range from 0 to 4 (and still receives a +1 Accuracy at Range 0). Normally, such an attack can still not hit an opponent at Range 5, but this is left to the Director's discretion. It should be permitted if two characters are both capable of attacking their opponent at that range (though adjudicating this goes beyond the normal combat rules).

Unlike all other Special Moves, the damage for a Special Move with the Ranged Element is based solely on the character's Ki skill and is not modified by Strength.

If the character has a Ki skill of 1-3, the base damage of the Special Move is 1d4.

If the character has a Ki skill of 4-7, the base damage of the Special Move is 1d6.

If the character has a Ki skill of 8-9, the base damage of the Special Move is 1d8.

If the character has a Ki skill of 10, the base damage of the Special Move is 1d10.

There are a significant number of additional Elements and Liabilities that can be applied to Special Moves with the Ranged Element.

**Accuracy for Damage Element:** The move can be powered up to trade accuracy and range for additional power. Before an attack is made, for each 1 Range reduction from the normal maximum Range of 4, as well as an additional -1 Accuracy, the attack gains +2 damage. Thus,

## **BASIC MOVES, SPECIAL MOVES, AND SUPER MOVES**

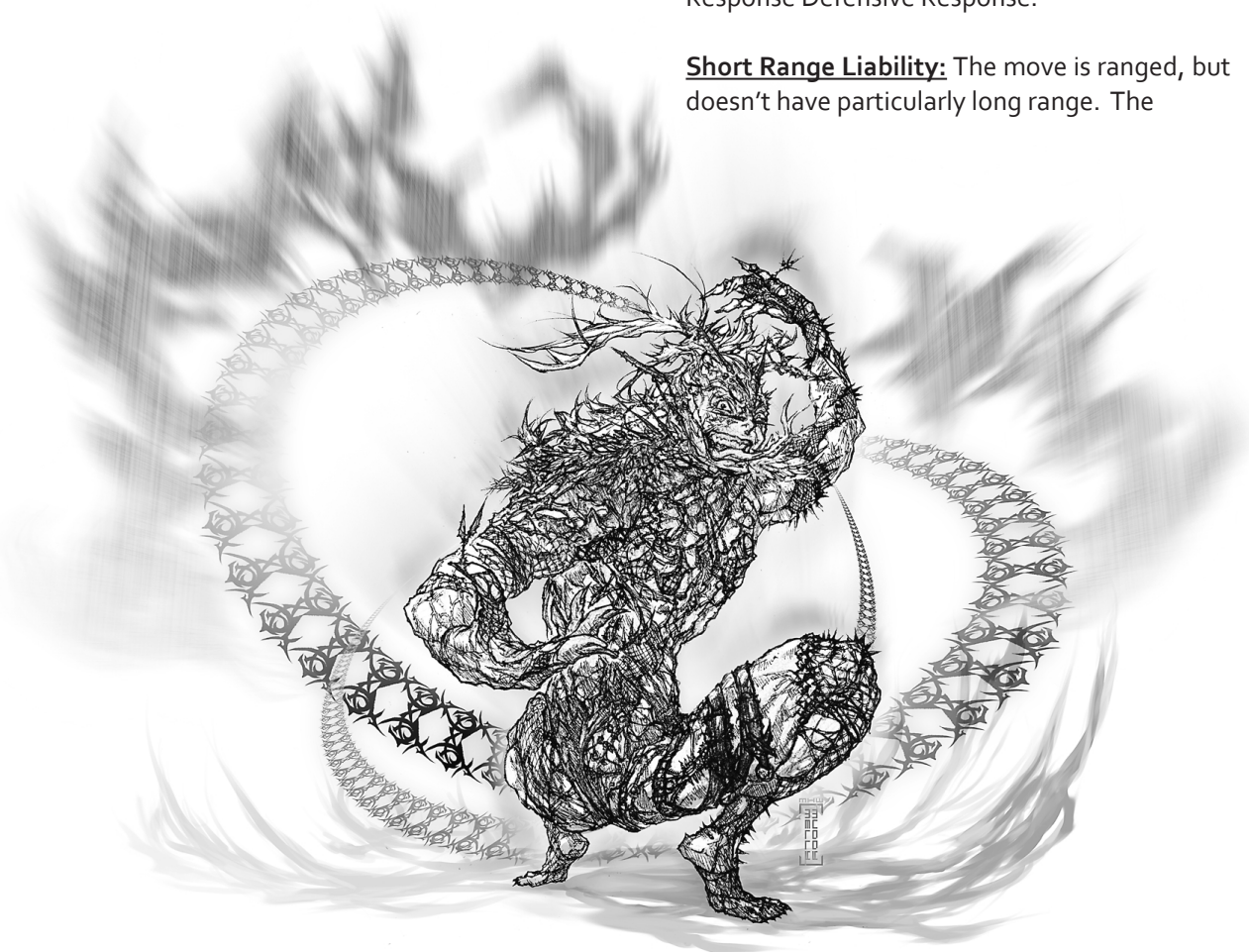
for an attack from Range 2, the attacker could choose to reduce max range by 2 (to Range 2) and take an additional -2 to hit to add +4 damage.

**Draw Closer Element:** The move physically draws the target closer to the attacker. For example, it could be a tractor beam or dragging an opponent closer after impaling him. Instead of doing Knock Back, this move draws the

opponent closer as many Ranges as would normally have been done by Knock Back, though no closer than Range 0 (i.e., the attack won't draw a close opponent through the attacker's Range to the other side). The Increased Knock Back Element can be further applied to this Element, instead increasing the Ranges that the opponent is drawn closer.

**No Ranged Response Element:** The move cannot be prevented with the Ranged Response Defensive Response.

**Short Range Liability:** The move is ranged, but doesn't have particularly long range. The





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move can be used at Ranges 0-3, rather than 0-4.

**Very Fast Element:** The attack form of the move (e.g., the bolt of energy, fireball, thrown knife, etc.) travels very quickly. At Ranges 0-2 only, the speed of this move provides an additional +1 bonus to Accuracy.

**Very Slow Liability:** The attack form of the move (e.g., the bolt of energy, fireball, thrown knife, etc.) travels very slowly. At Ranges 3 or greater, the speed of this move provides a -1 Accuracy penalty.

**Reach Element:** This move can be used further away than most moves, though not as far as a move with the Ranged Element. The move might represent stretching limbs, an overextended fighting style, tentacles, or a whip. A move with the Reach Element can hit a target without penalty at any Range from 0 to 2 (and still receives a +1 Accuracy at Range 0). Furthermore, the attack can hit at Range 3 with a -2 Accuracy.

**Reversal Element:** If the Fighter possesses a move with this Element and is Knocked Down, he can attempt to perform a Reversal. How this Element is used depends on when the combatant is Knocked Down.

If the Fighter is Knocked Down and has not yet acted this turn, he can attempt to perform the move with the Reversal Element instead of just standing up on this turn. He must have enough Control to use the move (the normal rules for Hit Stun do not apply in this case) and he must be within Range. The attack has a -2 Accuracy penalty. If it hits, the combatant is considered to be standing and he does not suffer an Initiative penalty on the following turn. If he misses,

however, he is still considered to be standing, but he suffers a two die size penalty on Initiative on the following turn (instead of the usual one die size penalty).

If the Fighter is Knocked Down and he has already acted this turn, he rolls for Initiative normally on the following turn. If he gets Initiative and has enough Control to use a move with the Reversal Element, he can use this move to attack at the same time as he stands up. In this case, there is no penalty to Accuracy. If he does not get Initiative but still rolls enough Control to perform the move with the Reversal Element, he can use the Reversal Response Defensive Response if he is attacked right after he stands up when his turn to act comes up.

**Subtle Element:** This move has some characteristic that makes it difficult for opponents to use Tactics against it. In a video game, this usually means that the move has a very subtle starting animation before the attack is launched or the attack is extremely fast and hard to predict. Regardless of how the move is defined, the effect is to give a +1 Accuracy against an opponent using Tactics.

**Teleportation Element:** This Element counts as two Elements. This Element includes the benefit of one of the options covered by the Mobile Element, allowing movement of 2 Ranges before attacking, though instead with no FS cost. The movement associated with this move is teleportation, and as such, can pass through intervening obstacles outside of combat. It would also include turning into shadow or sinking into earth and coming up again in another place.

As an additional Element, the teleportation can end in mid-air, which adds a +2 bonus to Evasion, but the defender must choose to move away from the attacker if the Evasion is successful. This ability also



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has additional non-combat applications to reach places otherwise out of reach.

**Temporary Invulnerability Element:** This Element counts as three Elements. This move makes the attacker temporarily immune to all attacks. If this attack is interrupted by an opponent with held Initiative or an opponent using a Defensive Option, or if this move attacks at the same time as the opponent's due to simultaneous Initiative, the attacker using this move automatically takes no damage, no Knock Back, no Stun damage, no Knock Down, and does not suffer from Hit Stun from the opponent's attack.

**Temporary Technique Element:** This unusual Element allows the character to gain temporary use of a Technique, as if the character possessed the Technique Quality. The Technique is granted for the entire duration of the turn on which this Special Move is used and until the end of the Fighter's action on the following turn. The specific Technique must be indicated when the move is created. At the Director's discretion, if the Technique is very powerful, this Element may cost two or more Elements. The base rules in this rulebook contain few options for Techniques; future supplements will include more.

**Throw Element:** This Element counts as two Elements. It is a very common Element in fighting games. Several special rules apply to Throws. In many fighting games, throw moves are unblockable, or are at least very difficult to block or avoid. This situation is also the default rule in Fight! As such, a move with this Element receives +1 Accuracy. If the Director instead decides that Throws are blockable in a campaign, moves with this Element do not receive a bonus to Accuracy, but this Element itself also does not count against the total allowed Elements of a move; it is instead a "free" Element.

A move with this Element only permits movement of 1 Range, and this movement always costs 1 FS. Furthermore, an attack with this Element can only occur at Range 0, and the Range 0 Liability cannot be applied to the move. All moves with the Throw Element receive the Knock Down Element at no cost and are also considered to have the Priority Element in cases of simultaneous Initiative. However, their damage does not count against an opponent's Stun Threshold. The Throw Element can also be further modified by any of the following modifier Elements.

**Carrying Grapple Element:** If the attacker uses this Throw at Range 0 without moving first, the attacker may spend 1 FS to continue moving with the defender 1 Distance towards an Environmental Hazard. In a fight with multiple combatants, the attacker also moves himself and his opponent 1 Range.

**Hurl Element:** If the attack succeeds, the defender is not only Knocked Down, but is also thrown 2 Ranges away from the attacker. This replaces normal Knock Back. The attacker can make a Tactics check (not a Maneuver Check) against DL 8 to hurl an opponent 2 Distances towards an Environmental Hazard. Unlike a normal attack with the Throw Element, a move with this Element can be used at the beginning of a Combo or in the middle of a Combo. However, it can only be followed immediately by a Special Move with the Ranged Element. This Ranged move then ends the Combo.

**Sustained Hold Element:** This Element counts as two Elements and represents a bear hug, choke hold, or other attack form in which the attacker maintains the hold rather than throwing

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the opponent to the ground immediately. When this attack hits, it does damage and the opponent suffers Hit Stun. Regardless of remaining Control, the defender cannot act on this turn.

On the following turn, when Initiative is rolled, the attacker with the Sustained Hold increases his die size for Initiative by two. If the attacker using the Sustained Hold gets Initiative, a second damage roll divided by 2 (round down) is made immediately, and the defender is Knocked Down. Initiative then proceeds as normal. If the attacker does not get Initiative or Initiative is simultaneous, Initiative still proceeds as normal. In this latter case, the Sustained Hold does no additional damage, but the defender is still considered Knocked Down and thus must still use his action for the turn to stand up and the attacker is still considered to have used his action for the turn on the Sustained Hold.

In a combat involving multiple combatants, both combatants involved in the Sustained Hold are immune to attacks until the Sustained Hold is completed on the second turn.

This move can only be put into a Combo as the last move of the Combo. The Glory earned from a Sustained Hold is tallied with the first damage check. If the second damage check does not occur, the move earns 1 less Glory. The combatant is still considered to have earned Glory for the move for the present combat; if he uses it again successfully for both turns, he does not earn the lost point of Glory back.

**Unblockable Element:** This Element requires the Knock Down Element and the Increased Stun

Element as prerequisites. This four Element combined cost gives this move a +4 Accuracy, but only against Defense (i.e., not against Evasion or Tactics). However, the slow build-up for an Unblockable move gives it a -2 Accuracy against Evasion and Tactics.

### **Examples of Creating Special Moves**

Christine is trying to create a straightforward fireball move for her high school ninja character. She describes it as a glowing purple ball of force. She spends 3 Move Points to create a Level 3 (L3) Special Move. As an L3 move, she has 4 Elements with which to build the move. She could choose Liabilities to increase this allowance, but she chooses not to.

A fireball attack obviously needs the Ranged Element, which counts as two of the four Elements Christine has to create the move. With the remaining two Elements, she chooses to increase the move's damage by one die size. The final move is L3, +0 Accuracy, Ranged, and, because Christine's character has a Ki skill of 4, has a damage of 1d8.

Wayne wants his heroic Fighter to have a rising punch, fist crackling with electrical energy, that launches his opponent high into the air. He spends 4 Move Points to create an L4 Special Move composed of 5 Elements.

Wayne decides to make the move an anti-air move, as well as a move that can begin a juggle. So he chooses the Anti-Air and Juggle Elements. He also decides to add the Power Up Element, choosing the option to exchange Control for damage. To add a distinctive descriptor to the move, Wayne decides that his Fighter's fist creates an aura of electricity like a shield around his fist. He builds this as the Hard to Evade Element. Finally, he uses the last

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Element to increase the Special Move's base damage. The final move is L4, Anti-Air, Juggle, Power Up, Hard to Evade, and has a base damage of 1d6+1.

Bob decides he wants an over-the-top Special Move that draws all the light from the immediate area and transforms it into a forward punch of incredible destructive force. He decides to make the Special Move only L4, costing 4 Move Points and providing 5 Elements with which to work.

Since Bob wants the move to be both Unblockable and damaging, he decides to take some Liabilities to earn some additional Elements. He decides the move will have -1 Accuracy, earning one extra Element, as well as the Limited Movement Liability, defined as an inability to move before attacking. This also earns an extra Element, providing a total of 7 Elements.

Bob takes the Unblockable Element, which requires the Increased Stun and Knocks Down Elements. This takes 4 of his available 7 Elements. For the three Elements remaining, he

chooses to increase the Special Move's damage.

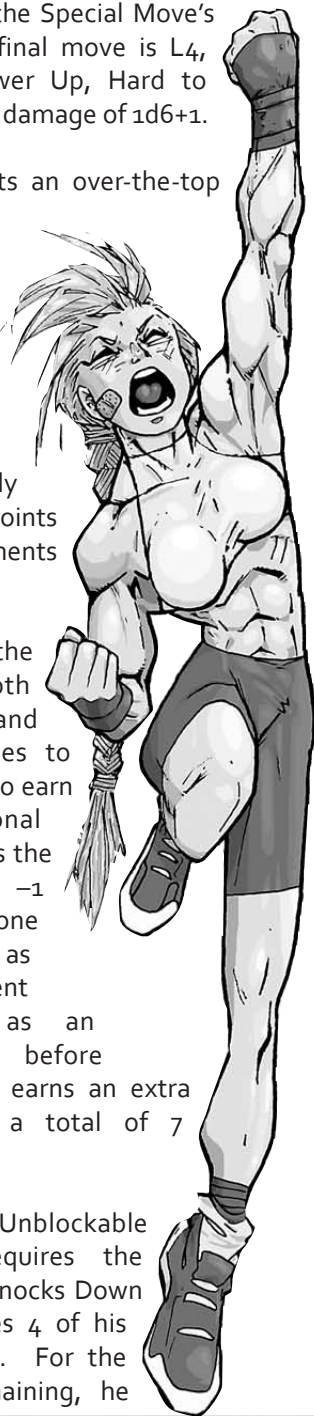
The final move is L4, -1 Accuracy, Limited Movement, Unblockable, Increased Stun, Knocks Down, and has a base damage of 1d8+1. Bob's "Abyssal Reckoning of the 10,000 Hells" is now complete.

More examples of Special Moves can be found in Appendix 2.

### Exotic Special Moves

Most Special Moves can be designed with the above Elements and Liabilities. However, there are a number of more unusual kinds of Special Moves in fighting games that are not as easy (or impossible) to accurately emulate using the normal rules. Some of these special kinds of Special Moves are somewhat common, while others are very rare. This section describes exotic kinds of Special Moves and describes the cost in Elements necessary to make use of these rules. Some of these exotic kinds of Special Moves are actually Liabilities, not Elements, and thus earn additional Elements for use in the construction of the move.

The effects of many of these Elements do not directly affect an opponent in terms of damage. Any attempt to damage an opponent requires an attack roll. However, other effects do not require an attack roll of any kind. Simply doing the move as one's action for the turn creates the effect. For example, a Special Move with the Invisibility Element and also built to do no damage does not need to hit an opponent to create the Invisibility effect; simply by choosing to do the move, the effect happens. If this example move also did damage, an attack roll would be needed to



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determine if an opponent was hit and damaged, but the Invisibility effect would occur regardless.

For effects that last for a specific time count, the effect ends at the end of the turn in which the time roll equals or exceeds the duration.

### **Exotic Special Move Elements**

**Absorbs Attacks Element:** This Special Move, usually an energy shield of some kind, absorbs the power of Ranged attacks launched against the character. This move may or may not do damage itself. This Element has the Interrupt Element as a prerequisite. In order to absorb an attack, the combatant must use the Interrupt Defensive Response. If successful, the attack is absorbed and does no damage. There are a couple optional Elements available that modify this Element.

**Absorb All Attacks Element:** The Defensive Response can be used against any attack, not just Ranged attacks. This counts as two Elements.

**Absorb and Use Ranged Element:** Beginning on the turn after a Ranged attack was absorbed, the absorbing character can then use the Special Move as if it were his own. It can be held until the end of the present combat. It will possess all of the same characteristics as the original owner's, including damage. This counts as two Elements.

**Transform Energy Element:** Damage for the absorbed attack is still rolled but it becomes either Super Energy or Fighting Spirit. This decision must be made when the move is

designed and cannot be changed later. The damage in this case is not modified by Strength or Stamina. The Director must approve transformations into Fighting Spirit, as there are no examples of this in the source material and it may prove to be too powerful in play.

**Bomb Element:** Some Special Moves allow the character to place a damaging hazard on the battlefield and then move away from it. These hazards then explode, damaging anyone near them. When an attack with the Bomb Element is used, the location of the bomb becomes an Environmental Hazard and the Range the character is away from other combatants at the time becomes the Distance away from the Hazard. It will explode after a 1d8 count (rolled when it is first placed) at the beginning of the following turn before Initiative is rolled. When it explodes, an attack is rolled against anyone within Distance 2. The attack roll is against the opponents' Defense Skill, and the attacker cannot spend FS on Accuracy. Full damage is rolled against anyone at Distance 0, and half damage is rolled against those at Distance 1-2. Damage is not modified by Strength or Stamina. There are some additional Liabilities available for this Element. A single Liability balances the cost of this Element. More than one Liability actually changes this Element into a Liability instead.

**Moveable Bomb Liability:** At Distance 0 and before it explodes, it can be moved by any Basic Move. It is considered to have a Stamina of 0. The bomb is moved 1 Distance away from the attacker and towards any character for each 2 points of "damage" done (round up).

**No Range Liability:** This Bomb does damage only at Distance 0.

**Short Timer Liability:** In this case, the Bomb

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explodes after a time count of 1d8-4. If the result is zero, it explodes immediately.

**Borrow Identity Element:** This is a truly unusual ability, rare even in fighting games. As such, the Director may restrict its usage. A Special Move with this Element does not just borrow another character's moves; instead, it turns the fighter into another specific Fighter with access to all of the resources available to that character.

While transformed, all of the character's Basic Qualities, Special Moves, and other Qualities and Weaknesses (at the Director's discretion) are replaced by those of the character who he has turned into. This effect lasts for a time count of five. The character cannot use this ability outside of combat unless he also has the Power Quality or uses the Magic, Psychic, or Gadgeteering Qualities to do so. The character keeps his own Life Bar and Fighting Spirit.

Transforming into each specific Fighter is a separate Special Move. Each can be learned only after facing the character to be copied in combat for the duration of a full "round" (i.e., either a 99-count or until one of the Fighters is defeated). The Special Move must be at least L3. It usually does no damage on its own.

In addition to the Element cost applied to each Borrow Identity Special Move, if a character has even one Borrow Identity Special Move, every other Special Move the character possesses also incurs a one Element cost of its own. For example, the Director is designing a new villain with the power to transform into the heroes over the course of the campaign. Because he has Special Moves with this Element, all of his other Special Moves have one less Element than usual. Thus, the Fighter's L3 moves would only have 3 Elements rather than 4.

**Copies Moves Element:** Some characters have the ability to temporarily borrow another character's Special Moves. A Special Move with this Element does less damage to the opponent, but it also copies one of the opponent's Special Moves. When the damage for the attack is rolled, it is translated into Move Points. One Special Move of the attacker's choice is copied, limited by the Move Points rolled. The remaining damage is applied as regular damage. The copied Special Move will remain for a 5-count, starting from the turn of the successful attack, with a minimum of one full turn. The copied Move shares the characteristics of its original possessor; it does not use the attacker's Basic Qualities and skills. Furthermore, the attacker must lose one of the Special Move's normal Elements (attacker's choice).

**Entangle Element:** This Element counts as two Elements. This is an attack that inhibits the opponent in some way. It could represent a net, a freezing attack, ice under his feet, or temporary mind control. In any case, if the opponent has not yet acted this turn, he loses his action for the turn, regardless of Control, and he suffers a one die size penalty on Initiative on the following turn. However, if the character is hit again before the next turn (including by a subsequent move in a Combo that previously included the attack that produced the Entangle effect), the Entangle has no effect.

**Fake Element:** This Element counts as two or more Elements. Some characters have versions of their normal Special Moves that are Fake moves. The animation for the Special Move begins, but the attack never occurs. Instead, the fake move suddenly ends, freeing the Fighter to act in another way. The purpose of such a move is to lure the



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opponent into responding to a specific Special Move and then countering the opponent in an unpredictable way. This Element automatically includes the No Damage Liability.

In order to use this Element, the character must win Initiative. He then chooses to use the Special Move with this Element. This does no damage. However, it gives a bonus to the character's Defense Total for the remainder of the turn when using Tactics. The bonus is +2, plus an additional +1 per additional two Elements used for this Element. For example, for a cost of four Elements, the character would receive a +3 bonus on Tactics Defense Totals for the remainder of the turn.

**Flight Element:** This Element counts as two Elements. This Element means that the character has the ability to fly, but only temporarily. If a character wishes to be able to fly regularly outside of combat, they must take the Power Quality, or use the Magic, Psychic, or Gadgeteering Qualities to do so. Even characters with those Qualities must build a move with this Element in order to use their power in combat.

By using this Special Move, the character flies for a time count duration of five, with a minimum of one full turn. While flying, the character gets a +4 to Evade attacks. On the other hand, only Special Moves with the Hard to Evade Element or the Aerial Element can be used while flying. A Special Move with this Element does no damage to the opponent, and the move does not get the benefit of the No Damage Liability. The character is assumed to land at the beginning of the turn after the time runs out.

**Free Movement Element:** This Element counts as two Elements. A move with this Element allows the

character to move freely without concern for other combatants' location or attacks, though it does not allow any movement on the turn it is used. This may represent turning insubstantial or (more commonly) sinking into the ground and reappearing elsewhere. If this move can only be used more or less instantaneously, i.e., for the duration of a turn before re-appearing, it should be built as a movement-only Special Move with Teleportation (even though the special effects of the Move are actually different). If the character can move freely longer, then this Element applies. The character is immune to Environmental Hazards and all attacks for a 5-count (minimum of one full turn). The character cannot attack during this time and he cannot speed up the duration of this Move.

**Gradual Effect Element:** This Element can be used to create moves that mimic poisonous effects or a simple version of the mystical Dim Mak technique. The rolled damage is divided into three separate damage totals (round up). The attack does damage equal to one of the three damage totals, plus one additional point, on each of three successive turns, beginning with the attack itself and then at the end of each of the next two turns after all combatants have acted. The successive instances of damage do not incur Hit Stun. For example, when the original attack hits, the Fighter rolls five points of damage. Divided by three, rounding up, and then adding one, the attack will do three points of damage each turn for three turns. One additional modifier Element can be added to this Element.

**Delayed Onset Element:** After the attack hits, the character can delay the onset of the damage (which still takes place over three successive turns). This can be anytime within a 10-count. Activating the damage is an action for the Fighter who used the Gradual Effect attack. This activation can also be a part of a Combo; in



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this case, it counts as an L2 move. If the time expires before the damage begins, the attack is lost. Multiple versions of this attack can be in place at once on multiple targets if so desired, but this Special Move can only affect a single opponent once at a time. If hit again before damage begins, the 10-count resets.

**Healing Element:** This Element counts as either two or three Elements, depending on how effective it is. A move with this Element does "damage," except this figure is used to determine healing of the character's Life Bar instead. It is acceptable to have an attack that also heals the user at the same time. In either case, however, damage is not modified by Strength or Stamina. All healing effects occur at the end of all characters' actions; thus, it is possible to be Knocked Out before healing occurs. If the move restores 1/2 of the damage rolled (round down), this Element counts as two Elements. If the move restores all of the damage rolled, this Element counts as three Elements.

Moves that heal other characters are not part of the source material, but this Move may be used on another character as an additional Element if the Director allows it. If other characters can be healed, but the character with this Special Move cannot heal himself, this Liability cancels out the extra Element cost to heal others.

**Illusionary Doubles Element:** There are two versions of this Element: Defensive and Offensive. In either case, the Fighter creates one or more illusionary duplicates to confuse his opponent.

**Defensive Illusion Element:** This Element counts as two Elements and requires the Interrupt Element as a prerequisite. Defensive illusions replace where the character was standing and often put a hazard in his place.

This also includes the "ninja-replaced-by-a-log" disappearing trick. This move may or may not do damage. In order for it to work, the combatant must use the Interrupt Defensive Response. If successful, the character may immediately move 2 Ranges in either direction as well as avoid the opponent's attack as usual, even if his counterattack (if there is one) misses.

**Offensive Illusion Element:** This Element requires the Interrupt Element as a prerequisite. Offensive illusions may or may not include an attack while creating a number of duplicates, confusing the opponent as to which is the real one. For this move to succeed, the combatant must use the Interrupt Defensive Response with a bonus of +1 or more to Tactics. If successful, the attack occurs. Also, at the beginning of the next turn, the character automatically moves as many Ranges as permitted by this Special Move at no FS cost. This Element counts as one Element, plus one Element for each +1 bonus to Tactics and 1 Range of movement permitted. Usually, the number of illusionary duplicates created increases based on the bonus to Tactics provided by this Element.

**Invisibility Element:** This Element counts as two or more Elements. This move makes the character temporarily invisible (though usually an energy outline or distortion in the air of some sort gives a general indication of the character's location). This Element could also be used for any Special Move that hinders the opponent's Initiative or Control, making it harder for them to know when or how to act. When the move is designed, it must be designated as hindering an opponent's Initiative, Control, or both. This move hinders the opponent on the following turn after the Special Move is used. The base cost for this ability is one Element. Each

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additional Element decreases Initiative or Control by one die size. For example, a move that reduced Initiative by one die size and Control by two die sizes would count as four Elements. This Special Move may or may not be an attack itself, but the move does not need to “hit” to be effective. The effect only lasts for the following turn. The following Element can be added as a modifier.

**Maintain Effect Element:** With this Element, the effect lasts until the character invoking the effect actually suffers damage. This counts as two additional Elements.

**Power Enhancer Element:** This Element is used for a Special Move that does nothing by itself, but which powers up a specific subsequent Special Move (defined when this move is designed). This Element represents a summoning of additional power or taking specific stances to enhance the power of another move. Performing the Power Enhancer itself has no special rules. After this, when the affected Special Move is used, it gains a die size of damage for each Power Enhancer move that has been performed before it. This Element costs one Element for each Special Move affected by the Power Enhancer, plus one Element for each time over one that the Power Enhancer can be used prior to using the affected Special Move. For example, if the Power Enhancer could be and was used three times in advance of the affected Special Move, the affected move would increase three die sizes for damage. In this case, if the Power Enhancer affected only one other move, this Element would cost 3 Elements. The following Element can also be added as a modifier.

**Delayed Onset Element:** If the character can choose when to use the benefits of the Power

Enhancer, this counts as an additional Element. The enhancement can be held indefinitely during the same combat. The default effect without this modifier Element is that the Power Enhancer effect is always used immediately when the affected Special Move is used next.

**Reflection Element:** This Element creates a wave or shield that will send a Ranged attack back at the attacker if it is successful. The Interrupt Element is a prerequisite for this Element. This Special Move may or may not do damage itself. This Element will work against any Special Move with the Ranged Element. In order to reflect a Ranged attack, the combatant must use the Interrupt Defensive Response. If successful, the projectile reverses and travels back toward the opponent. The reflecting character gets an opportunity to attack his opponent as if the Ranged attack were his own, using all of the Special Move’s normal attributes. The opponent may use the Defense Skill or the Evasion Skill against this, but he may not use another Defensive Response, and the appropriate Skill is halved (round down). Super Moves cannot be reflected, except by a Super Move with the Reflection Element.

**Style Change Element:** Some characters have multiple martial arts styles with unique move lists for each style. The character uses a particular non-damaging Special Move to switch styles, thereby accessing his different move lists. A Style Change Special Move must be built for each separate “style” the character possesses, and then each style must be populated with its own Special Moves. The Style Change Special Move itself is generally L2 or L3, though it can be any level. Each Style Change Special Move is usually the same level, but they do not have to be. Each must possess the No Damage Liability. Style Change Special Moves can be

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included in Combos. Each subsequent Special Move in a given "style" receives a number of Liabilities equal to  $\frac{1}{2}$  the Level of the Style Change Special Move (round up) + (Total number of Style Change Special Moves-2). The same Special Move can exist in different styles, but it must be built separately as a unique move in each style.

For example, a character with two L3 Style Change Special Moves would receive two Liabilities on each Special Move in each individual style. Another character with five L2 Style Change Special Moves (which would be pretty unusual) would receive four Liabilities on each Special Move in each individual style. If a character had an L2, L4, and L6 Style Change Special Move, each Special Move in the first style would receive two Liabilities, each move in the second style would receive three Liabilities, and each move in the last style would receive four Liabilities.

Each style must have at least one move beyond the Style Change Special Move itself. If the character does not have enough Move Points to build a specific Special Move to go with each Style Change Special Move, it is possible to build a style that has no Special Moves in it. However, the character must build at least one Special Move for the "empty" style as soon as additional Move Points become available. A character cannot create an empty style at Power Level 8. In most cases, no more than one Style Change Special Move should be allowed.

When a character acquires his first Style Change Special Move, any existing Special Moves the character may already possess are considered part of the character's "default" style. When the character uses his Style Change Special Move to switch to the new style, he loses access to his "default" style. He may use multiple different Style Change Special Moves to switch to multiple sets of Special Moves in different styles, but unless he

"exits" all of his styles, he has no access to his "default" Special Moves. To re-access the default moves, he must use the same Style Change Special Move for his current style to "exit" the style and return to default moves. A character can always add new moves to his "default" style. A character built with Style Change Special Moves at Power Level 1 may not have any moves in a "default" style.

For example, Genji has his normal brawling style and his special Void Walker Style, which requires a Style Change Special Move. When he switches to Void Walker Style, he loses access to his default brawling moves until he uses the Void Walker Style Change Special Move again to revert to brawling.

Finally, if a character adds new Style Change Special Moves at later Power Levels, the Special Moves in the new style gain the Liabilities based on the new total number of Style Change Special Moves, as do any new Special Moves added to existing styles, but all previously built Special Moves remain unchanged.

For example, Akemi has two L2 Style Change Special Moves at Power Level 1. Thus, each move in each style receives one Liability. At Power Level 3, Akemi adds a new L4 Style Change Special Move. All moves in this new style receive  $(\frac{1}{2} L4) + (3-2) =$  three Liabilities. All existing moves in the original two styles remain unchanged, even though a third Style Change Special Move has been added. However, at Power Level 4, Akemi adds a new Special Move to one of the original styles. This Special Move now receives two Liabilities, rather than one, based on her current number of Style Change Special Moves, even though other Special Moves in the same style only received one Liability at Power Level 1.

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**Super Move Enhancer Element:** This Element counts as two Elements. A Special Move with this Element increases the effectiveness of a Super Move. It effectively increases the available Super Energy for a short period of time. Beginning on the turn after this Special Move is performed (which usually does not do any damage itself), the character is considered to always have an extra 20 Super Energy for a time count of five (minimum of one full turn), usable for one specific Super Move (defined at this move's creation). After this time, the character is automatically Stunned. This Element is only available for characters of PL 3 or higher. If the character is not Stunned afterwards, this costs an additional two Elements (for a total cost of four Elements).

**Suppression Element:** A move with this Element is usually a manifestation of ki energy or some hi-tech gadget. There are two different kinds of Special Moves that can make use of the Suppression Element. Neither does damage to the opponent, and the move does not get the benefit of the No Damage Liability. However, a successful attack is still necessary to invoke the suppression effect on the opponent.

The first use of the Element counts as two Elements. It prevents one opponent from using any Special Moves for a 5-count (minimum of one full turn). For an additional Element, this Suppression also includes Super Moves.

The second use of the Element prevents the opponent from any movement for a 5-count (minimum of one full turn). This does not prevent Evasion, but it does prevent moving as a result of a successful Evasion.

Having both uses of Suppression on the same move

costs five Elements (or six if Super Move Suppression is also included).

**Taunt Element:** In addition to Basic Taunts described above, characters can make other taunts as Special Moves. In this case, some taunts might allow movement or even do damage (though usually this is very low and usually cannot defeat an opponent). Some taunts are just small personal actions that a character can do that do not readily appear to be attacks or taunts (e.g., adopting a brief meditative pose, posing for the audience, etc.).

Taunts can earn Glory in two ways: a) a move can just be called a taunt without any special Element and earn Glory equal to its Level the first time it is used just like any other Special Move or b) a move can formally be defined as a Taunt with this Element. In this latter case, the Special Move follows the rules for Basic Taunts, including the extra Glory above and beyond the normal Glory for the move itself. A taunt built with this Element can be put into a Combo if so desired. Additional modifier Elements can be added to this Element.

**Modify Super Energy Element:** With this additional Element, Special Moves with the Taunt Element can also increase Super Energy or decrease the opponent's Super Energy (which must be decided when the move is built). Taunts with this Element should do damage, though this damage is not modified by Strength or Stamina. The amount of "damage" rolled is instead the gain or loss in Super Energy, as appropriate.

**Element Addition Element:** With this additional Element, a Taunt can temporarily add an Element to another Special Move. This Element must be designated when the Taunt is designed and it can only be a single cost Element (i.e., the

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Element cannot count as two or more Elements). In order for this Taunt effect to work, the character must either win Initiative or the Taunt must occur in a Combo. A Special Move on the following turn receives the additional Element for that turn only.

### **Exotic Special Move Liabilities**

**Move Sub-Set Liability:** This Liability is a minor version of the Style Change Element. Instead of actually having multiple styles, the character has certain Special Moves that can only be used on the turn immediately following the successful use of some other specific Special Move first (which must be defined when the moves with this Liability are designed) or immediately following the move in a Combo. "Successful use" usually means attacking an opponent, but this may also include the use of the move beyond a Range in which it would normally hit. The character uses his action to perform the move simply in preparation for the move's sub-set. If a subsequent move of the sub-set occurs in the middle of a Combo, it does not cost one extra Control to use. Furthermore, contrary to the normal rule, if the opening move of a move sub-set does not do damage, the first move that does damage is not halved in a Combo. If the opening Special Move Knocks Down, the follow-up move can only be used if the target is standing. Therefore, the opening move cannot be used in a Combo and the attacker also needs to lose Initiative on the following round, in order to allow the defender to stand up. If the attacker wins Initiative, he cannot hold and wait for the defender to stand and then use the follow-up move; the opening move must be used again. As noted above, the Juggle Element is an exception here, but only if the follow-up move(s) occurs in the same Combo.

This Liability differs from the Multi-Part Move Liability because several different Special Moves could follow the opening Special Move. The first, opening Special Move of such a set does not get a Liability; it is a normal Special Move in all respects. The following Special Moves, of which there is no limit (but probably no more than six), all receive this Liability.

**Multi-Part Move Liability:** Special Moves that can only follow specific other Special Moves use this Liability. They fall into two categories: multi-part attacks (MPA) and multi-part throws (MPT). These moves differ from Move Sub-Sets (see above) in that a Multi-Part Move is a specific unchanging sequence of moves, whereas a Move Sub-Set begins with a single Special Move that can be followed by a series of possible moves.

The 2nd and subsequent Special Moves after the 1st making up a MPA get two Liabilities each. If the fighter using the 2nd or subsequent parts of a MPA fails to either get Initiative each turn and hit or else include the later parts as part of a Combo, the multi-part sequence ends and must start over again. These moves are often built as simple L2 Special Moves. A MPA can begin as a single attack and then continue as a Combo or vice versa over multiple turns. If the subsequent parts of a MPA occur in the middle of a Combo, they do not cost one extra Control to use. Furthermore, contrary to the normal rule, if the opening move of a MPA does not do damage, the first move that does damage is not halved in a Combo. If the opening Special Move Knocks Down, the follow-up move can only be used if the target is standing. Therefore, the opening move cannot be used in a Combo and the attacker also needs to lose Initiative on the following round, in order to allow the defender to stand up. If the attacker wins Initiative, he cannot hold and wait for the defender



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to stand and then use the follow-up move; the opening move must be used again. As noted above, the Juggle Element is an exception here, but only if the follow-up move(s) occurs in the same Combo. A MPA can be attached to a Super Move, but this is uncommon.

Multi-part throws are a special version of the Sustained Hold Element. Each subsequent move is usually a limb break of some kind. If the fighter fails to get Initiative each turn and hit or include the later parts as part of a Combo, the multi-part sequence ends and must start over again. A MPT can begin as a single attack and then continue as a Combo or vice versa over multiple turns. If the subsequent parts of a MPT occur in the middle of a Combo, they do not cost one extra Control to use. The 2nd and subsequent Special Moves in a MPT must all have the Throw Element, but they also gain a single Liability. None of the Special Moves requires the Sustained Hold Element. Unlike normal Throws, Knock Down does not occur until the MPT sequence ends.

**Prop Liability:** While it is uncommon, some fighting game characters rely on some sort of prop for some or all of their Special Moves, such as a thrown knife or a handheld weapon. If the character suffers some particular circumstance, he drops his prop and his Special Moves are hindered until he takes an action to pick up the prop again. A Special Move with this Liability thus needs a specified condition (approved by the Director) in which the prop is dropped. For Ranged attacks, this is usually if the attack is Evaded (though not if the combined use of the Defense and Evasion Skills is used to avoid the attack). For other kinds of attacks, it is usually if the character is Knocked Down.

Without the prop, the Special Move cannot be used until it is recovered by spending an action picking it up, either a number of Distances away equal to the number of Ranges that the target was away at the time of attack for a missed Ranged attack, or otherwise simply where the character is presently standing. In some cases, another particular Special Move must be used in order to return the prop. In this case, this Liability counts as two Liabilities.

**Random Move Liability:** A move with this Liability is defined as any attack form in which a number of possible different attacks may occur, some of which are superior to others. It is an uncommon Liability in fighting games. The Special Move is designed as usual, with two changes: 1) an additional roll on the following chart must be made each time before an attack roll with this move is made, and 2) damage is rolled twice, and the lower result is applied.

### **Random Move**

- 1-2: No change.
- 3: Move fails to have any effect at all.
- 4: Opponent receives +3 to either Defense or Evade.
- 5: Opponent receives +2 to either Defense or Evade.
- 6: Opponent receives +1 to either Defense or Evade.
- 7: Move receives an additional +1 Accuracy.
- 8: Move receives an additional +2 Accuracy.
- 9: Move receives an additional +3 Accuracy.
- 10: Damage is 1 die size larger.

### **Attack Strings**

There is a difference in the lists of Special Moves typically found in 2-D and 3-D fighting games. Many of the most detailed 3-D games do not really have many "Special Moves" instead, they have special chain combos. For example, three punches in a row might be a one-two punch, followed by a backhand.

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Yet, this character is incapable of doing this backhand attack except in this specific combo situation. The Director might choose to structure the campaign along these lines instead. This allows for a much different (and ultimately simpler) combat system, relying on lots of Basic Moves and easy to perform Combos.

To simulate this, characters in such a campaign need to purchase two different Combo skills. Both are considered to be Combat Skills. The first is still called "Combo," but it costs twice as many Combat Skill Points. It functions the same as usual with one important exception detailed below. The second Skill is called "Attack String." Like the normal Combo Skill, it represents the number of Basic Moves that can be strung together. The Director can set a limit on this Skill. A game concentrating on hypothetically realistic martial arts would probably have an upper limit of 4-5. A more wild game could go as high as 10 or beyond.

An Attack String is a special Basic Move that has a Control cost and an Accuracy penalty as if it were a Combo of equivalent length to the Attack String Skill level composed entirely of Basic Moves. If it hits, it does damage as a Basic Move, with a bonus again equal to the Attack String Skill level. For example, a character with Attack String 4 could attack with a Basic Move which would have a -1 Accuracy and would do base damage equal to  $1d4+4$ , modified by the attacker's Strength and the defender's Stamina. The character does not need to use his full Attack String Skill. For example, a character with Attack String 5 could launch an Attack String 2 because it required less Control and had no Accuracy penalty, though it would only do base  $1d4+2$  damage, rather than base  $1d4+5$  damage.

for the purposes of inclusion in regular Combos. Thus, Attack Strings can be put together into a Combo with normal Basic Attacks or other Special Moves. On their own, Attack Strings earn 1 Glory, regardless of how long they are.

Because Attack Strings generally replace traditional "Special Moves," Special Moves in a campaign that allows Attack Strings cost as if they were one Difficulty Level higher (e.g., an L3 Special Move would cost 4 Move Points). However, Move Points can also be used to buy the Attack String Skill on a 2 for 1 basis.

The Attack String counts as a single Special Move

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### **Adding Elements to Attack Strings**

In 3-D fighting games, the reason to use certain specific Attack Strings is often because of the additional benefit the specific combination offers. For example, an Attack String of three punches may include a Knock Down at the end of the string that is not present if three punches were not used together. As an optional rule, the Director can permit Elements to be added to the end of an Attack String.

The following Elements can be added to an Attack String. In each of these cases, only the "base" version of the Element is allowed. Modifier Elements or Liabilities cannot be applied. For example, "Hard to Evade" is only the single Element version; the two Element version cannot be added to an Attack String.

- Anti-Air
- Bounce
- Hard to Evade
- Harry
- Hits Low
- Increased Knockback
- Increased Stun
- Juggle
- Knocks Down
- Position Shift

In order to add an Element to an Attack String, the Attack String must first be at least three moves long. After this, additional moves can be sacrificed to instead add the Element. The number of moves required is equal to the Element's normal Element cost plus one. Thus, a 3-hit Attack String that had the Bounce Element would count as five hits, even though it would have the Accuracy and damage of a 3-hit Attack String. A 4-hit Attack String that Knocks Down would count as seven hits, because the Knocks Down Element normally costs two Elements. The extra "cost" for the added Element only applies to the combatant's Control roll and the limits of his Attack String Skill.

These Elements do not need to be acquired in advance in any way. They are available to all characters that use Attack Strings. The Director can add other Elements to the above list if he desires. These rules add tremendous flexibility to the rules for Attack Strings, which makes up for the decreased number of unique Special Moves possessed by all characters.

**BASIC MOVES, SPECIAL MOVES, AND SUPER MOVES****Super Moves**

Special Moves are a Fighter's unique combat abilities. However, beyond the power level of Special Moves are Super Moves, even more extraordinary manifestations of a Fighter's skill and ki. In fighting video games, Super Moves are usually accompanied by glowing power effects, changes in the environment, sudden close-ups of the Fighters' faces, or time slowing down. All of these impressive and powerful effects make Super Moves an entertaining enhancement of a Fighter's normal move set. Thus, it is the default presumption of the rules that characters of Power Level 3 or higher have access to Super Moves (though the Director can choose to exclude them from the campaign).



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In general, Super Moves are simply Special Moves subject to some additional rules. All Super Moves must be L5 or greater. Just like Special Moves, the Level of a Super Move determines the number of Elements that are used to make up the details of the move, as well as the Control roll necessary to use the move in combat.

A Fighter acquires Super Moves through the expenditure of Move Points. A Super Move costs a number of Move Points to purchase equal to its level. However, a character can only acquire a Super Move at Power Level 3 or greater, and in addition, upon reaching Power Level 3, a character must purchase at least one Super Move.

### **Building Super Moves**

Super Moves are also constructed from a base template modified by Elements and Liabilities. Super Moves have a base Accuracy modifier of +0 and do 1d8 damage, modified by the attacker's Strength and the defender's Stamina. Elements and Liabilities can increase or decrease a Super Move's base Accuracy and damage. Super Moves with the Ranged Element still determine damage based on the character's Ki skill, but the damage is increased by one die size. Super Moves do not count their damage against a character's Stun Threshold.

When building a Super Move, a move is allowed a number of Elements equal to twice its Level. A Move can be constructed with Liabilities to allow additional Elements. Each Liability allows an additional Element to be added to the Super Move. All the normal rules for designing Special Moves apply to Super Moves as well, though Super Moves have additional Elements and Liabilities available, and all Super Moves automatically gain the Knocks

Down Element at no Element cost. Furthermore, half (round down) of the total Elements available for a Super Move (including additional ones earned through Liabilities) must be spent on the Breakthrough, Increased Accuracy, Increased Damage, or Invincibility Elements.

When designing Super Moves, not every effect of a move needs to be defined by Elements and Liabilities. This is especially so when attempting to interpret a specific Super Move from a video game series. There may simply not be enough Elements available to build the move perfectly. In this case, the move should be designed with attention paid to its most important characteristics, those that principally define the move's role in the overall repertoire of the character. If an undefined Element should become critical during a fight, especially for dramatic or narrative purpose, the Director can adjudicate the situation as necessary.

The Director can disallow any Liability or Element on a particular move. It is not too difficult to assign a Liability to a Super Move that makes the move stronger in most cases, with a single negative exception that will rarely come into play based on the character's other moves and general play style. Likewise, certain Elements may prove to be too powerful when combined with other Elements. Finally, some Elements may affect conditions that only apply if certain campaign options are in place, and are therefore not appropriate in all games.

There is one special consideration when designing a character's Super Moves. A Super Move must be built according to one of the following four configurations:

1. A combination of 2-3 regular Special Moves possessed by the character. In this case, the Super Move must have all of the Elements

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and Liabilities of all the Special Moves on which the Super Move is based. It may have additional Elements and Liabilities beyond those possessed by the base Special Moves. If Elements and Liabilities conflict with one another, they should be combined, even though the costs of the Element and the Liability are not equal. For example, if the Super Move combines two Special Moves, one with  $-1$  Accuracy and one with  $+2$  Accuracy, the Super Move should have  $(-1 + 2)$  a  $+1$  Accuracy bonus. Because Super Moves automatically have the Knocks Down Element and because Super Moves do no Stun damage, if the Super Move is composed of Special Moves that possess either the Knocks Down or Increased Stun Elements, they do not need to be included in the Super Move.

2. A super powerful version of a single Special Move possessed by the character. In this case, the Super Move must have all of the Elements and Liabilities of the Special Move on which the Super Move is based. It may have additional Elements and Liabilities beyond those possessed by the base Special Move. Because Super Moves automatically have the Knocks Down Element and because Super Moves do no Stun damage, if the Super Move is an enhanced version of a Special Move that possesses either the Knocks Down or Increased Stun Elements, they do not need to be included in the Super Move.
3. A unique move, usually a colorful barrage of attacks. There are no special restrictions on such a Super Move, other than requiring the Unique Super Move Element (see below).
4. A Super version of one of the exotic kinds of Special Moves possessed by the character. In this case, the Super Move must have all of

the Elements and Liabilities of the normal Special Move on which it is based, just as noted above. It may have additional Elements and Liabilities beyond those possessed by the base exotic Special Move. However, if a Super Move is constructed as an enhanced version of a Special Move with an exotic Element, that Element also affects Super Moves. For example, a Super Move with the Reflection Element could also reflect Super Moves with the Ranged Element.

### **Additional Liabilities for Super Moves**

**Increased Super Energy Cost Liability:** Super Moves normally cost 10 Super Energy to use. This Liability increases the cost to 20 Super Energy. If the cost is 30 Super Energy, this counts as two Liabilities, and if the cost is 40 Super Energy, this counts as three Liabilities.

**Limited Choice Liability:** If the character possesses more than one Super Move, but he can only use one specific one during any given fight, all of the character's Super Moves gain this Liability. This choice must be made before the fight begins. This Liability must be chosen for a character's first Super Move, or else none of them may have this Liability. The Director may require this Liability for all characters as a campaign option.

### **Additional Elements for Super Moves**

**Breakthrough Element:** This Element can be applied to a Super Move up to four times. While not required, all Super Moves should possess this Element, as this is what often distinguishes a Super



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Move from a Special Move in a fighting game. Super Moves generally either hit a great number of times, or they cover a huge area, or they hit so hard that they even injure blocking opponents, or some combination of the three. The Breakthrough Element represents this.

If a character using a Super Move misses his opponent, the attacker must calculate how much he missed by on the die roll to hit. If the total missed by is equal to or less than one for each Breakthrough Element the Super Move has, a partial hit has been scored. Some of the hits made it through, or the opponent failed to completely avoid the attack, or some damage made it through the block anyway. In this case, Glory is calculated as normal  $-1$ , and damage is rolled and halved (round down). This partial hit still does cause Hit Stun, Knock Back, and Knock Down. If a Super Move is part of a Combo and is not the first move in the Combo, only half (round down) of the Breakthrough Element applies to the roll to hit.

**Decreased Super Energy Cost Element:** A Super Move with this Element only costs 5 Super Energy to use. This Element cannot be used in campaigns that use multi-level Super Move systems (see below).

**Extended Duration Element:** This Element can only be applied to Super Moves that provide some form of special timed effect as part of an exotic Element (see above). After the Super Move is in effect, each additional 10 Super Energy spent increases the duration by a time count of 5.

**Increased Accuracy:** For a Super Move, up to nine Elements can be spent on Increased Accuracy. Each three such Elements adds  $+1$  to the move's Accuracy.

**Increased Damage:** For a Super Move, up to eight Elements can be spent on Increased Damage. One Element increases the base damage to  $1d8+1$ . Two Elements increases the base damage to  $1d10$ . Three Elements increases the base damage to  $1d10+1$ . Four Elements increases the base damage to  $1d12$ . Each additional Element after four adds  $+1$  base damage to the move's  $1d12$  base damage. This new base damage is then modified by the attacker's Strength and the defender's Stamina as usual.

**Infinite Supers Element:** This Element counts as five Elements. For a time count of 5 (minimum of one full turn), Super Moves can continue to be used freely without any costs in Super Energy (beyond the 10 Super Energy used to launch this Super Move). This Element can only be taken with the Director's permission.

**Invincibility Element:** When a Super Move begins, the character is momentarily invincible. This Element describes how long that invincibility lasts. Up to four Elements can be spent on Invincibility. The way in which this Element is used is described below under Using Special Moves.

**Unique Super Move Element:** This Element must be taken on any Super Move that is not an enhanced version or combination of the character's existing Special Moves.

### **How Super Energy is Accumulated**

In order to use a Super Move in combat, the Fighter must first accumulate Super Energy. This is tallied on a turn-by-turn basis. When the Fighter accumulates 10 or more Super Energy, they may attempt to use a Super Move. A Fighter without Super Moves does not accumulate Super Energy.

The rate at which a Fighter accumulates Super

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Energy is as follows:

1. 1 point of Super Energy per occasion in which one or more Life Bar is lost. Thus, if three different opponents hit a character, he would accumulate three Super Energy. The attack of a Thug group counts as a single opponent in this regard.
2. 1 point of Super Energy per attack performed, regardless of the level of the move used and whether or not the move hit (or even could have hit – an attack launched beyond its effective range will still accumulate Super Energy). Basic Moves included in a Combo do not count as separate moves for this calculation, but individual Special Moves do, provided the Combo hits (see below). If the Combo misses, only 1 Super Energy is gained.
3. 1 point of Super Energy per Combo that hits an opponent. This is in addition to the Super Energy accumulated from Special Moves noted above. Thus, a 3-hit Combo made up solely of Special Moves that succeeds in hitting an opponent is worth 4 Super Energy total.
4. Finally, all Fighters automatically accumulate an amount of Super Energy each turn regardless of their actions equal to the maximum Super Energy allowed for a character in the campaign divided by 20 (round up). This usually means a Fighter gains one Super Energy per turn of combat regardless of any combatant's actions.

No Super Energy is gained by a character on the turn in which he uses a Super Move.

Campaign options presented in future supplements will present alternative ways in which Super Energy is accumulated.

**Using Super Moves**

For the most part, a Super Move is the same as any other Special Move. They can be used as single attacks or they can be used at the beginning, middle, or end of a Combo (even though attacks that Knock Down can normally only be used at the end of a Combo). However, Super Moves differ in that they need Super Energy to use and they have special rules regarding Initiative.

Before using a Super Move, a Fighter must have accumulated enough Super Energy. Super Moves cost 10 Super Energy to perform (or 10 Super Energy per level of Super Move used – see below). Super Moves also cost 1 FS to attempt to use. However, this cost is only applied if the character actually has FS remaining to expend; once at 0 FS, Super Moves can still be performed.

Many Super Moves possess the Invincibility Element. If a combatant wishes to use a Super Move and rolls sufficient Control for it, yet fails to gain Initiative, he may still be able to use the Super Move. If the difference between the combatant's Initiative roll and his intended target's Initiative roll is within as many Elements as spent on the Invincibility Element, he can interrupt the opponent's action as if he had held his Initiative and announce that he is doing a Super Move. In this case, the opponent's action occurs during the Super Move's temporary invincibility. If the opponent has already announced a specific attack, there is no result and no Glory is earned. The character using the Super Move takes no damage, suffers no Hit Stun or Stun, and cannot be Knocked Back or Knocked Down. If the opponent has not yet announced a specific attack, he may instead choose to move away or perform another action such as Re-

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## ***BASIC MOVES, SPECIAL MOVES, AND SUPER MOVES***

focus instead. He may also announce the use of his own Super Move, in which case the second Super Move takes Priority over the first one. If a Super Move is in a Combo and is not the first move in the Combo, the Invincibility Element does not apply, but instead counts as the Easy to Combo Element.

Super Moves always have Invincibility in cases of simultaneous Initiative with non-Super Moves. The effect of this is that the combatant using the Super Move goes first as if the move had the Priority Element and the combatant is also unaffected by the opponent's attack as noted above. In the case of two Super Moves getting simultaneous Initiative, still only one can succeed. Both combatants lose Super Energy, but a special separate Initiative roll is used to determine which character actually launches his Super Move. FS can be spent again on this special Initiative roll as usual and subsequent ties are re-rolled.

### **Structure of Super Move Systems**

The Director must determine the structure of how Super Moves are used and organized in his campaign. In the source material, most Super Move systems fit into one of two categories: a simple single tier system (with a maximum Super Energy of 10) and a 3-tier system (with a maximum Super Energy of 30). In this latter case, a single Super Move may be designed three times to indicate three levels of Super Power (most commonly L5, L6, and L7) or the system may just allow a combatant to store up three uses of a Super Move. However, other versions do exist and variations on the 3-tier system also exist. Some of these variations will be included in future supplements. The single tier system is considered the default system, though the 3-tier system is described in greater detail below.

It is also up to the Director to decide the maximum Super Energy a character can hold onto and if a Fighter's accumulated Super Energy remains between rounds of combat in a multi-round tournament fight. The default rules are a maximum of 10 Super Energy and accumulated Super Energy is lost between rounds of a multi-round fight.

The 3-tier structure for Super Moves uses the same Super Move built at three different consecutive levels such as L5, L6, and L7, and which uses 10, 20, or 30 Super Energy respectively to use increasingly powerful versions of the same Super Move. Such a system requires characters to build the same Super Move at three different levels of power, with each increasing level of power including all the Elements and Liabilities of the previous levels. When building such a Super Move, the character must only spend Move Points equal to the highest level of the Super Move.

For example, in a campaign using the 3-tier structure, a player designs a Super Move that can be used as an L5, L6, or L7 move at a cost of 10, 20, or 30 Super Energy respectively. He will need to design three versions of the same Super Move. The L6 version will have all the Elements and Liabilities of the L5 version, and the L7 version will have all the Elements and Liabilities of the L6 version. Despite building three related Super Moves, however, this Super Move will only cost 7 Move Points total (the highest level of the three tiers) for all three versions. Oftentimes, the only difference in higher-level versions is an increased use of the Breakthrough and Invincibility Elements.

This 3-tier structure is only available if this is the default structure of Super Move systems in the campaign (though a Director might allow it as an unusual Technique Quality). This multi-tiered Super Move counts as only one Super Move when

**BASIC MOVES, SPECIAL MOVES, AND SUPER MOVES**

considering the limit on the number of Super Moves known according to the Power Level chart.

### Transformations

This campaign option exists as a modifier to all Fighters in a campaign. Either all characters have this ability or none do. It is too powerful to be a viable choice for a Technique Quality. This is a system for use in campaigns where every Fighter can transform into a monstrous, animal, or beast form.

In regular campaigns, a character may have some form of Special Move that changes them into a beast, but that is a different, more limited, case (perhaps bought as a form of the Style Change Element). However, the following set of rules applies to all characters in a transforming campaign.

A character accumulates Beast Energy in the same way as Super Energy is accumulated in the campaign (and is tallied separately from Super Energy). 10 Beast Energy is necessary to change into Beast Form, but up to 20 Beast Energy can be accumulated and stored during a single combat.

Transforming is an action. No other attack, action, or movement may be performed on the turn in which the character transforms. However, transforming automatically does damage equivalent to the character's Basic Move (modified by Strength as usual) to all other combatants within Range 0-1. Furthermore, this damage does cause Knock Back except to opponents who are also transforming on the same turn within the same Range.

Once in Beast Form, no more Beast Energy is accumulated until the character reverts back to normal. The 10 Beast Energy used to transform is then lost at the same rate and in the same fashion as it was accumulated. In other words, when the character performs moves and takes damage, he loses Beast Energy. However, the normal Beast Energy accumulated each turn is not lost each turn while in Beast Form. When Beast Energy reaches -1 or less (not 0), and the character is then Knocked Down by any means, the character reverts to human form.

When in Beast Form, Basic Qualities increase. These changes must be decided when the character is created and cannot change. Two of the three Basic Qualities are increased by one point each (to a maximum of two, as usual). Also, all attacks automatically have the Increased Knockback Element, and the character automatically recovers 1 Life Bar at the end of each turn.

One new Special Move Liability becomes available with this campaign option: Only in Beast Form. This Liability means the move can only be used when the character is in Beast Form.

If this campaign option is being used, the following additional campaign option can be added to modify transformations.

**Going Primal:** While in Beast Form, a character may choose to Go Primal. In this form, Beast Energy depletes each turn according to the rate it is normally gained each turn (contrary to the above rule), even if the character does nothing else during the turn, but it still will not drop below 0. While Primal, all of the combatant's moves are +1 Accuracy and +1 damage.



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**COMBAT**



## 5. Combat

The heart of *Fight!* is necessarily fighting. This chapter provides the system to run over-the-top action scenes involving the world's most skilled and deadly Fighters. These battles take place in organized tournament arenas and in the dirty back alleys of the most crime-ridden cities. They occur as melodramatic confrontations between life-long rivals or as adrenaline-fueled brawls against dozens of opponents at once. Some confrontations represent mere steps along the way to a character's goal and some represent the final encounter deciding the salvation or destruction of the whole universe.

The main system presented here is intended for use when Fighters engage in combat with one another. However, two additional sub-systems are also contained in this chapter. The first is the system for Thug Thrashing, which is used anytime Fighters engage in combat with non-Fighters. These opponents are no match for the main characters of the campaign and only pose a threat in far greater numbers. The second sub-system is used whenever the Director wants to streamline combat, adding dramatic flair at the cost of tactical options. This sub-system involves more Skill use during combat as well as character choices based on the narrative elements of the battle, rather than on all the mechanical details offered by a character's Special Moves.

### Staging Combat

It is up to the Director to decide when to formally switch from a normal storytelling mode of direction to the specifics of combat. However, given the nature of the characters and the kinds of situations they typically find themselves in, it should usually be

fairly obvious.

This still leaves certain decisions for the Director based on the needs of the story. He must decide if the fight is going to be one round or multiple rounds. He must decide what the time limit is going to be or even if there is one. He must decide how far apart the combatants are when combat begins. He must also decide if any conditions in the environment are going to have a specific mechanical effect on combat or if they are just going to be descriptive elements with no effect on the rules.

In some cases, these questions are easy to answer. A tournament fight might have established rules about the number of rounds, time limit, and arena conditions such as walls or ring-outs. But if the fight is occurring in the middle of the wilderness, something like a time limit may seem artificial. After all, why should the fight arbitrarily end just because some metagame timer goes off?

This is a valid observation, but the default presumption of the rules is that fights are timed. While this is not required, maintaining the time limit can inspire story elements that add drama to the conflict. Perhaps the timer running out signifies a bomb going off or a fire engulfing the characters in a burning building. Perhaps police or military will arrive on scene to drastically complicate matters related to the ongoing story. Maybe an extra-dimensional portal opens up, flooding the world with demons.

Similarly, drama can be added by using multiple rounds for a combat scene, even in a non-tournament setting. While it may seem strange to have two opponents meet in the woods at the climax of a story with no one around and yet have a



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“best 2-out-of-3” fight, in an area that sort of naturally resembles a fighting stage, possibly with ring outs and other environmental hazards, this irrationality is rarely considered in fighting video games. Multiple rounds are best interspersed with story-critical dialogue between the Fighters (as the whole fight should be). At the end of the first “round,” the defeated character is actually not knocked unconscious, but merely beaten down and taking a moment to catch his second wind. His honorable or gloating opponent waits for him to recover before continuing the fight. In fact, since time in combat can be interpreted loosely, each round of combat may actually represent several hours of non-stop fighting. While a battle may begin while the sun is high in the sky, the second round may occur as the sun goes down, while the third round occurs in the middle of the night.

Thus, while the default presumptions of the rules seem to suggest many trappings of tournament combat, this does not need to hinder creative interpretations that serve to improve the story rather than get in the way of it.

### Combat Sequence

Combat is conducted as a series of turns. A random “time roll” determines how long any given turn is; each count of the time roll usually represents 1-2 seconds of time, but ultimately this is intended as an abstraction. If the story is served by the time count representing a longer amount of time, the Director can adjust it accordingly.

A round of combat ends when only one side remains undefeated or when the time count runs out, whichever comes first. Normally, if the time count

runs out and opposing combatants are still standing, the winner is the side that has the highest percentage of Life Bar remaining. Outside a tournament setting, however, it is up to the Director and the story to determine what “winning” means if time runs out and combatants are still able to fight.

The basic sequence of a turn is as follows:

1. All combatants roll both Initiative and Control.
2. Acting in order of Initiative, characters take actions, often moving and/or attacking opponents.
3. Glory and Super Energy are tallied for all combatants for the turn, as appropriate.
4. The Director rolls the Time Roll and records the result.
5. The Director and players conduct a brief storytelling segment, describing in narrative terms what occurred during the turn.

This sequence is repeated until the round ends.

### Die Sizes

A character’s Basic Qualities, as well as many situations in the combat system, require the player to increase or decrease a die size before rolling a result. For example, a character normally rolls 1d6 for Control each turn. However, having the Basic Quality Speed 1: Control means that the character’s die size for Control is increased by one. Thus, instead of rolling 1d6, the player would roll 1d8. As another example, the base damage for a character’s Special Moves is also 1d6. However, the Strength Basic Quality increases this damage. A character with Strength 2 would increase that damage two die sizes to 1d10 (one size increase would be 1d8). Likewise, the opponent’s Stamina Basic Quality also

modifies the damage suffered. If the Strength 2 character hit an opponent with Stamina -1, the die size for damage would be increased again to 1d12.

The “steps” for increasing or decreasing die size go as follows (listed here from lowest to highest):

1  
1d4  
1d6  
1d8  
1d10  
1d12  
1d12+1  
1d12+2  
Etc.

The lowest a die size can ever become is “1,” in which case no roll is necessary; the result is simply 1. The highest die that can be used in a single roll is 1d12, though there are theoretically an infinite number of die sizes above 1d12. Each die size above 1d12 simply adds 1 to the roll. Rolls above 1d12+3 are pretty rare, however.

## Fighting Spirit in Combat

Fighting Spirit (FS) is an expendable resource used in many different ways in combat. It represents the character’s drive to win, the strength of his convictions, and his will to survive. In combat, Fighting Spirit can be used to increase Initiative and Control, increase Accuracy on attacks, improve one’s defenses, tactically manage one’s movement in combat, control the pacing of combat, among other things. Whether a character loses all of his Life Bar in combat or not, Fighting Spirit should almost always be completely used up by the end of a fight. If that’s not the case, the Fighter simply isn’t fighting with everything he has!

There is one general rule that applies to all expenditures of Fighting Spirit during combat. A combatant may spend Fighting Spirit for particular actions any number of times during a turn. For example, a combatant may spend FS on Initiative, and then to attack, and then perhaps later in the turn to defend, and then to modify the Time Roll at the end of the round. However, the amount of Fighting Spirit a combatant can use for any single application of FS is always limited by their Power Level. Therefore, while a PL 1 character may spend FS five times during a turn, each time no more than 1 FS can be used. This rule is often repeated in the specific rules sections dealing with FS expenditures in a specific situation, but even if it is not mentioned explicitly, this rule always applies.

Fighting Spirit can be recovered in combat by the use of the Refocus action. Furthermore, the first combatant to successfully hit an opponent during a fight immediately regains FS equal to his Power Level. If both combatants hit one another simultaneously, the one doing greater damage receives FS. If damage is equal, no FS is regained. This FS recovery cannot bring a character’s FS above their starting total; thus, if the Fighter has not used any FS, nothing is gained.

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### Metagaming Fighting Spirit

In a combat system so focused on emulation of fighting video game combat, the flexibility of Fighting Spirit might seem out of place. From a narrative point of view, Fighting Spirit is a useful character trait, as references to it are frequent in the source material, even if it is hardly ever defined in any specific way (e.g., "I've never seen such fighting spirit!" "You'll never win – you've lost your fighting spirit." "You are a worthy opponent – your fighting spirit is strong.").

But there is also a metagame way of understanding Fighting Spirit. As a player of the hypothetical video game that the campaign represents, Fighting Spirit measures the player's patience, confidence, and talent at handling crisis situations as they occur during a match.

In the role-playing game, a character who runs out of Fighting Spirit has to rely a lot more on luck to win. In a video game, a player who runs out of Fighting Spirit begins to panic and lose control of the situation, often leading to his defeat. So even though the trait is meant to represent a specific narrative aspect of the genre, it is not without parallel in the metagame of Fight!

## Initiative

The turn begins with each combatant rolling one die each for Initiative and Control. Initiative determines how quickly the character can act in the turn sequence, while Control determines how difficult a move or Combo the character can perform during the turn. Initiative represents a combination of the

character's innate speed in combat, as well as the insight of how to best react to the opponent's actions. Control represents coolness during combat, as well as knowing the best available options to use at any given moment.

The dice used to roll Initiative and Control are based on the character's Speed (see the explanation of Speed in Chapter 1). The base roll is 1d6 for each.

Before all characters roll for the turn, any characters who wish to can spend Fighting Spirit (FS) to increase the die size rolled for one or both. One FS will increase the die size for either Initiative or Control, to a maximum of 1d12 for each. A character can only spend as much FS on increasing Initiative and Control as his Power Level. This limit is applied to both Initiative and Control, not to each of them separately. For example, a PL 1 character could increase either Initiative or Control for 1 FS, but could not spend 2 FS to increase both by one die size (though a PL 2 character could do so). Initiative and Control are rolled as separate rolls and, after applying the effects of Speed and the use of FS, will often use different size dice.

Characters declare their intention to spend FS in this manner, as well as the amount they wish to spend, according to their Power Level, from lowest to highest. If these are tied, the combatants declare according to their Speed Basic Quality, again from lowest to highest. If these are also tied, each combatant rolls 1d6 to break the tie or else just mutually agree on who should declare first.

If the combatant with the highest Initiative on the previous turn also hit an opponent on the previous turn, he gets a +1 bonus on his Initiative roll. If the highest Initiative was tied or if the character with the highest Initiative missed his opponent or didn't attack at all, no one gets this bonus. A character's

Control Bonus is added to his Control roll, if applicable.

The character with the highest Initiative total acts first. A character with Initiative may instead choose to hold his Initiative and let another combatant go first. A character holding their Initiative in this fashion can choose to act at any point later in the turn, including interrupting another character during his action for the turn. If this interruption occurs after another combatant has actually declared a specific attack, a separate Initiative roll is used only to determine the acting order of this exchange of two attacks. FS can be spent to increase this roll as

usual, and Special Moves with the Priority Element automatically gain Initiative over attacks without the Priority Element. Remaining characters then act in Initiative order until all characters have acted or have lost their actions due to events occurring during the turn (e.g., Hit Stun, Knock Down, or Stunning).

### Rolling Initiative and Control

Roll 1d6 separately for Initiative and Control.

The Speed Basic Quality and other factors may affect the die sizes used for this roll.



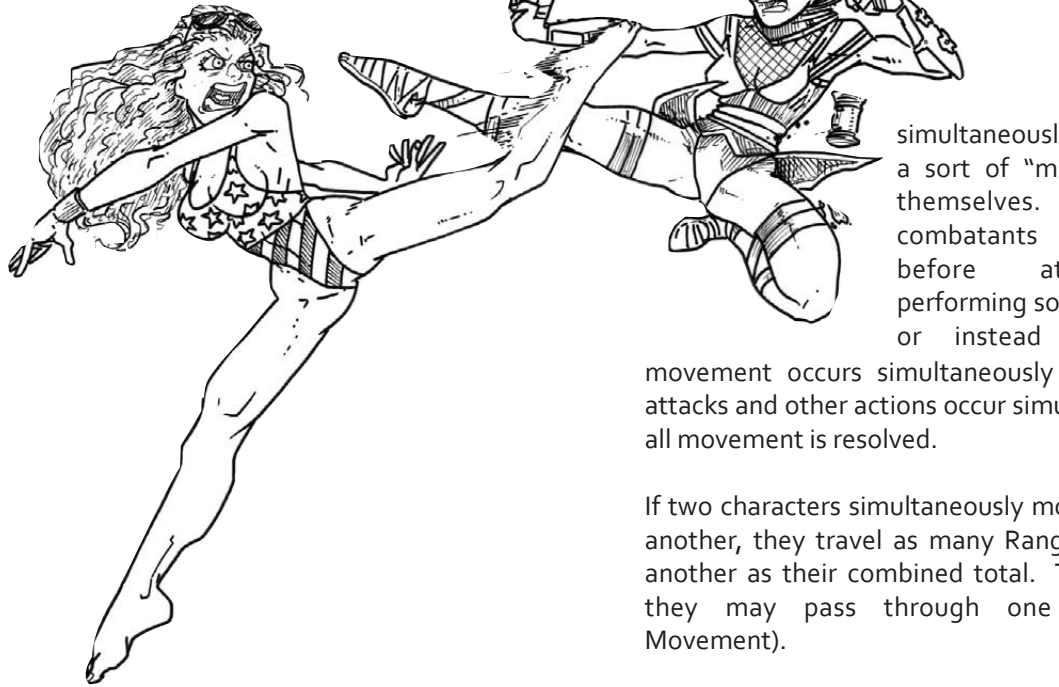
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### Simultaneous Initiative

The limited range of die rolls possible means that combatants will inevitably roll the same Initiative total from time to time. In the case of simultaneous Initiative, the characters often, but not always, act simultaneously.

When characters share the same Initiative total, each of the combatants must declare their actions



before they are resolved. This declaration of actions occurs in reverse order of Control totals, even though the actions themselves may be resolved simultaneously. The declaration needs to be specific. For example, it is not sufficient to declare that one is moving forward; one must specify the number of Ranges he is moving forward. Specific

attacks have to be named also. Characters acting simultaneously cannot perform Combos, either against each another or against other combatants.

After these declarations, combatants acting

simultaneously must conduct a sort of “mini-turn” among themselves. If all tied combatants wish to move before attacking (or performing some other action) or instead of attacking,

movement occurs simultaneously first, and then attacks and other actions occur simultaneously after all movement is resolved.

If two characters simultaneously move towards one another, they travel as many Ranges towards one another as their combined total. This means that they may pass through one another (see Movement).

If not all combatants with simultaneous Initiative wish to move, those who wish to attack or perform some other action without moving resolve their actions before any movement occurs. If there is more than one simultaneous attack (i.e., because more than two characters have simultaneous Initiative), these attacks are resolved simultaneously. After these attacks are resolved, if the other combatants who wish to move or move and then act are still able to act, they then do so. In



this case, all movement is resolved first, then attacks and other actions are resolved.

Any character sharing Initiative with any other opposing combatant can only use the Defense Skill in response to simultaneous attacks; Evasion and Tactics cannot be used, except in the case of a jumping Basic Move. Full Defense can still be declared in place of an attack. A character doing a jumping Basic Move as a simultaneous attack is considered to be using the Evasion Skill for the purposes of determining Defense Total. All normal defensive options are available against other attacks that do not have simultaneous Initiative. Even though the effects of the attacks are simultaneous, the combatant with the higher Control resolves his attack first. This may be important for determining when and how much FS is used in resolving these attacks.

In the case of simultaneous attacks, if one of the attacks is a Special Move that has the Priority Element, this attack is resolved first and is not considered simultaneous. However, the defender still cannot choose any defensive response besides the Defense Skill, just as if the attacks were still considered simultaneous. If an attack with the Priority Element hits, the defender suffers Hit Stun and may lose his action for the turn (see Hit Stun). Any movement before the attack associated with a Special Move with the Priority Element is not considered to have Priority over the movement of other characters with simultaneous Initiative; the Priority Element applies only to the attack itself.

Simultaneous attacks only Knock Back 1 Range. In other words, the two opponents do not knock each other back 1 Range each, for a total of 2 Ranges. If the direction matters (e.g., if one wishes to maneuver the other towards an Environmental Hazard or in a fight with multiple combatants), the

one who did more damage is considered to have Knocked Back his opponent. If this too is tied, each combatant can roll 1d6 and the higher result is the one who has Knocked Back his opponent. If one of the attacks used has the Increased Knockback Element, the Knock Back is 2 Ranges.

Finally, if two characters with simultaneous Initiative are allies and do not have simultaneous Initiative with any opponents, they can act in whatever order they choose.

#### Summary of Simultaneous Initiative Procedure

1. All characters with simultaneous Initiative declare actions in reverse order of their Control totals.
2. Characters who do not need to move before acting take their actions. These actions and their results are considered simultaneous with each other.
3. Characters that wish to move or move and then act may now act if they are still able to do so.

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### Example of Resolving Simultaneous Initiative

Jason has rolled Initiative 4 and Control 2. His opponent, Riff, has rolled Initiative 4 and Control 4. They are presently at Range 3. Their Initiative is simultaneous. They begin to resolve this by declaring (but not yet resolving) their actions in reverse order of Control. So Jason has to declare first. He declares, "I'm leaping in 2 Ranges and using a jumping Basic Move."

Riff now knows that Jason is moving toward him, but this has not yet been resolved, so he couldn't declare, "I attack at Range 1," and hit Jason because Jason isn't at Range 1 yet. Thus, if he declared, "I attack with Blazing Arc," the situation would be resolved by determining the results of the attacks first, and then applying the effects of movement. So Riff's attack would occur first and he would hit nothing, as Jason is still approaching from Range 3. Jason would then land at Range 1 and his attack would be resolved.

Riff could instead declare, "I'm moving forward one and attacking with my Blazing Arc." Now both combatants are moving, so movement is resolved first. Simultaneous movement adds the total Ranges of movement together, so since Jason was moving 2 towards Riff and Riff was moving 1 towards Jason, they close by 3 Ranges total. They move from Range 3 to Range 0. Then Jason's Basic Move and Riff's Blazing Arc would be resolved simultaneously.

If Riff declared that he was using his Ranged attack, Fiery Sun, that attack would be resolved before Jason jumped forward, as attacks are resolved before movement. If Jason were struck, he would suffer Hit Stun and may not be able to move at all (see Hit Stun). If the Ranged attack missed, Jason would jump in 2 Ranges and attack.

If Jason declared he was using his Ranged attack, Violent Spike, and then Riff declared he was using Blazing Sun, both attacks would be resolved simultaneously.

### Handling Initiative and Control for Multiple Characters

When handling Initiative and Control totals during a large fight scene (which is really any fight in which there is more than three or four Fighters involved), the Director needs to use a method to keep track of everything. One way is to have every character use specific colored dice for Initiative and Control. Once rolled, these dice are put aside or the results are recorded on a separate sheet on the table to keep track of who rolled what.

An easier variant of this (though it requires more work for the Director) is for the Director to record all Initiative and Control rolls on a special sheet listing each character, with each line on the sheet representing one turn. As characters act or lose their actions, their Initiative roll for the turn is crossed off the sheet. When all the Initiative numbers are crossed off, the turn ends and the next turn is recorded on the next line of the sheet. This could also be done on a large wipe board visible to all the players as well.

## On Your Turn

When a character's turn comes up in the Initiative order, the player has several choices of what to do. A character can:

1. Move
2. Attack
3. Move and then attack
4. Refocus
5. Power Up
6. Await Opening

Depending on circumstances from previous turns, a character may also use his action to stand up from being Knocked Down or to recover from being Stunned.

## Movement

Combat in Fight! does not use any sort of map or grid to determine positioning. Instead, all combat is based on the principle of Range Categories (Ranges). There are six Ranges, numbered from 0-5. Range 0 is grappling range, though normal combat can also occur at this range. Range 1 is standard hand-to-hand combat range. Range 2 is just outside normal combat range, though some attacks may still hit, as combatants jink in and out of range of one another. Range 3 is a short distance away, but one in which combatants can still quickly close with one another. Range 4 is the normal maximum range for Ranged Special Moves. Range 5 is effectively out of combat, while still maintaining the possibility of re-engaging the enemy. Most combat occurs between Ranges 0-4.

These Ranges do not directly correspond to actual distances. The distance between Range 0 and Range 1 is generally only a couple feet, while the

difference between Range 3 and Range 4 may be 20 feet or more. The Range system is an abstraction to facilitate the kind of combat typically found in fighting video games.

When a fight begins, it is up to the Director to decide how far apart combatants are at the beginning of combat. A typical fighting tournament would begin at Range 3, and this is also a good default distance for combat in other situations as well. If the dramatic narrative suggests that combat begins as soon as one opponent strikes another, combat may begin at Range 1, though the Director might instead declare that the combatants immediately jump back and into fighting stances at the beginning of hostilities, once again making the starting distance Range 3. Combatants could mutually decide on a starting range, or it could be determined randomly by rolling 1d6-1.

Attacks launched at Range 0 receive a +1 Accuracy bonus. Attacks without the Ranged or Reach Elements launched at Range 2 receive a -1 Accuracy penalty.

A combatant can move forward or backward 1 Range and still attack, or can move forward or back 2 Ranges without attacking. A combatant can jump forward 2 Ranges and attack or 3 Ranges forward or backward without attacking, but either of these options costs 1 FS. A combatant can only jump forward and attack if he is using a Basic Move or if he is using a Special Move with the version of the Mobile Element that allows movement of 2 Ranges before attacking (see Chapter 4).

If a combatant can jump forward 2 Ranges to attack with a Basic Move and land exactly at Range 0, and then chooses to spend an additional 1 FS, the

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combatant can do a Cross-Up attack. This earns a +2 bonus to Accuracy, which replaces the normal +1 Accuracy for attacking at Range 0.

If a combatant moves only 1 Range and does not attack, he receives a +1 on his Defense Totals for the turn.

Knock Back from an attack is 1 Range away from the attacker. Knock Back cannot push an opponent to Range 5, however. Knocking Back an opponent at Range 4 keeps the opponent at Range 4.

Facing is not important in combat. However, sometimes a character will want to move past an opponent specifically, either because of an Environmental Hazard, to make the best use of a particular Element of a Special Move, or to accomplish a narrative goal set by the Director (e.g., needing to run past an opponent to escape a room). A character can move forward through an opponent, moving down from Range 1 to Range 0 and then back up to Range 1 and beyond on the opposite "side" of the opponent.

While a grid is not required for combat, a simple page with six bands to denote Ranges 0-5 can be used as a visual aid. Markers are placed for the characters based on how many bands apart they are. Characters at Range 0 would share the same band. Characters at Range 2 would be in separate bands with an empty band between them. However, this visual effect, while very helpful in a combat involving only two characters, gets more complicated when there are more characters involved.

In the case of multiple combatants on each side, the same grid can be used, but instead of using Range to

determine the number of grid bands two characters are apart from one another, each character just occupies a specific band on the grid, labeled from 1-6. To calculate actual Range between combatants, simply count the bands between them (i.e., Range 5 if they are on opposite ends of the grid and Range 0 if they occupy the same band). The direction of movement is important in this case, as Knock Back after an attack occurs away from the direction of the attacker's last movement. If a combatant would be "knocked off" the edge of the grid, all the combatants can be shifted one or two bands to keep them all on the grid. The one exception to this shifting would be if two of the other combatants involved in the fight were already at Range 5 from one another. In this case, the limits of the grid have been defined by these characters' presence at the edges and thus no Knock Back would occur.

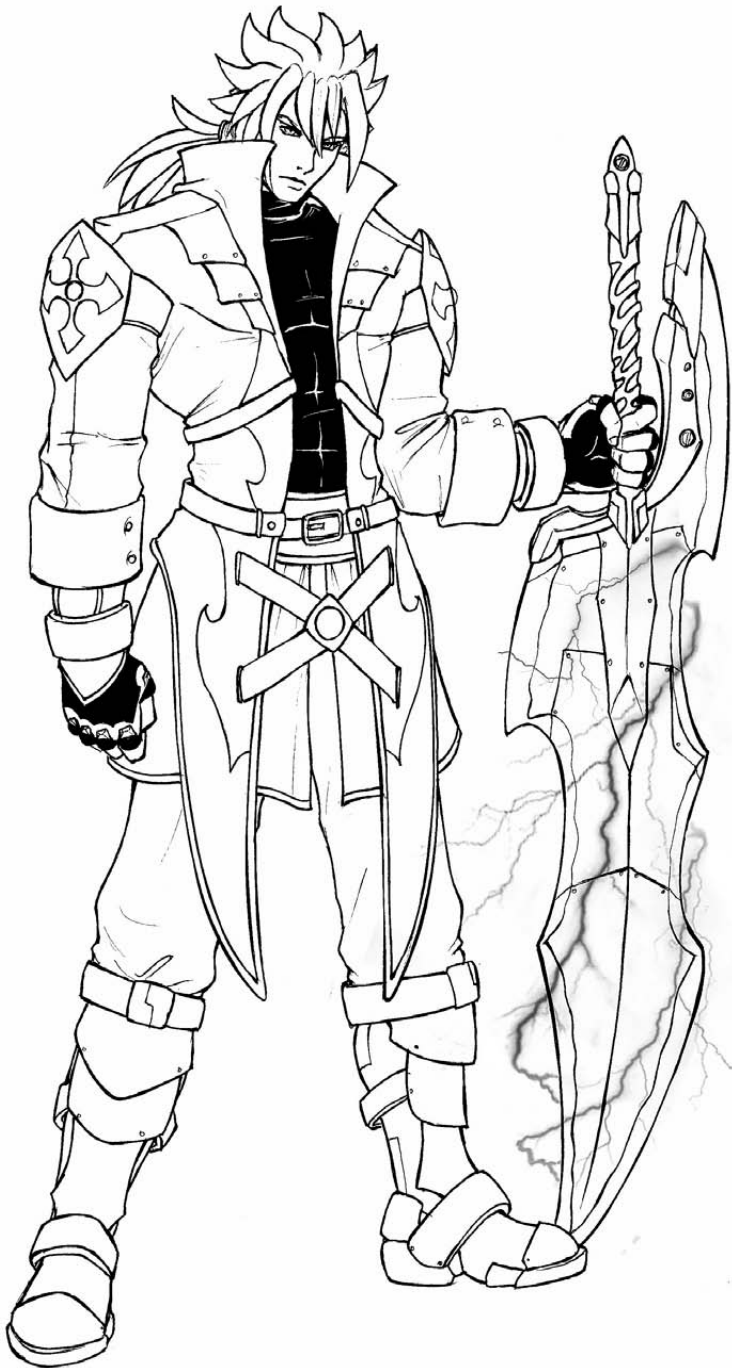
Even if a grid is not being used, the same principle can be used for battles with more than two combatants. Each character's location is noted by a number from 1 to 6, perhaps indicated by recording the numbers on a separate sheet or wipe board accessible to everyone at the table, or by using a large d6 with the location number facing up for all to see. Distances between any two combatants can be determined by subtracting the lower location number from the higher location number. If a combatant would be Knocked Back below 1 or above 6, all combatants simply shift their location number up or down a number to keep everyone "on the board."

Note that these rules do not take into account any form of lateral movement. Lateral movement is irrelevant in a one-on-one fight, as the principle of Range takes into account the direct distance between the two combatants. In a fight with more than two combatants, any number of characters can be located within a single band on the grid or at a

single numeric location, and they are all considered equidistant from one another. In most cases, this abstraction is sufficient. After all, Fighters in video fighting games are incredibly mobile and capable of leaping prodigious distances to get to their opponents. Under most circumstances, it should be fairly easy for any Fighter to catch up to any opponent still within the field of combat.

However, in a fight featuring multiple combatants on each side, if two opposing combatants wish to face off against one another apart from the other combatants, they can mutually decide to do so by declaring their movement for the turn to be "away from the fight." At that point, their combat continues to be resolved as a separate fight scene apart from the remaining combatants. Neither combat has any effect on the other, even though they are both taking place in the same general area. For simplicity's sake, and in keeping with the conventions of the genre, the Director should disallow any other combatants from pursuing the pair that has broken off from the original combat. However, if the Director does wish to allow it, another combatant would need to make two successful Maneuver Checks, one against each of the other combatants (even if one of them is an ally), in order to enter their fight. This is a special contested Tactics Skill check, rolled on 1d6, rather than 1d10.

Conversely, if there are multiple combatants on each side, the case may arise when a combatant wants to move into a position where a particular opponent





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cannot easily attack him. In this case, in place of movement, the character makes a Maneuver Check against the combatant he wishes to avoid. Both combatants make a contested Tactics Skill check on 1d6. If the character succeeds, the desired opponent is considered Checked. The Checked opponent cannot attack the character without first succeeding at a Maneuver Check in place of movement. If the opponent succeeds, the Checked condition is removed.

### Movement Summary

A character can move:

- 1 Range and gain a +1 on all Defense Totals.
- 1 Range and attack.
- 2 Ranges.
- 2 Ranges and attack with a Basic Move or a Special Move with the Mobile Element that allows 2 Ranges of movement before attacking. This costs 1 FS.
- 3 Ranges. This costs 1 FS.

## Resolving an Attack

### Control

The most common action of a character during a turn is to attack an opponent within range (perhaps preceded by movement). In order to attack, the attacker first declares a specific attack form. This may be a Basic Move, a Special Move, or, subject to the conditions described in Chapter 4, a Super Move. The attacker's choice of move is limited by the Control rolled for that turn. The character can only choose attacks that have a Level equal to or less

than the Control roll.

If the attacker does not roll high enough Control for a particular move or for the length of the Combo desired (see below), that move cannot be used or the Combo must be of shorter length. Basic Moves are considered to be L1 moves and are thus always available, regardless of Control rolled.

There is one exception to this limit. Some Super Moves may be higher than L12 and a high PL attacker may want to do a Combo that requires more than Control 12. However, the maximum Control rolled on a d12 is 12 (with potentially 3 more with the maximum Control Bonus of 3). If the attacker wishes to use a move or Combo that requires more than Control 12, he must first roll Control 12 (thus requiring both the ability to roll 1d12 for Control in the first place, as well as actually rolling a 12), and he then must spend 1 FS per additional Control needed/desired, up to a maximum equal to his Power Level, as usual. This means that the largest Control possible is 23 (12 Control rolled, plus 8 FS spent by a PL 8 character, plus 3 from a Control Bonus of 3).

To further clarify the specific role of the Control Bonus in this exceptional situation, if a character rolled 11 Control and had a Control Bonus of 2, his Control would be 13. He could use an L13 move or up to 13 levels of moves in a Combo without spending any FS. Likewise, if the same character rolled 12, his Control would be 14, and thus he would not need to spend FS up through L14 or 14 levels of a Combo. The above rule about spending FS applies to those characters who do not have a high enough Control Bonus to reach L13 or 14, as well as all characters trying to use Control of 15 or beyond.

If the Attacker has rolled Control higher than needed for his specific attack or Combo, he receives a +1

bonus to Accuracy.

## Rolling to Hit an Opponent

Before the roll to hit an opponent is made, the attacker determines any factors that affect the Accuracy of the attack. These typically include the Accuracy of the move in question, Range, and the Control of the attacker. In addition, if the attacker intends to act on Full Offense this turn, this must be declared before the Defense Total is calculated. A Fighter on Full Offense has a better chance to hit his opponent, but at great cost to his own defense on the same turn.

Next, the defender calculates his Defense Total. If the defender intends to act on Full Defense this turn, this must also be declared during the determination of the Defense Total. A character that has already taken any actions this turn (including movement) cannot act on Full Defense. Full Defense adds to both the character's Defense Total, as well as his Initiative or Control on the following turn.

The defender's Defense Total is equal to his Skill level in the applicable defense Skill (see Defending Against An Attack) plus his Defense Bonus (if applicable). In addition to this, the defender can spend FS to add to his Defense Total. Each 1 FS adds 1 to the Defense Total. The defender can spend FS up to his Power Level in this way.

A combatant on Full Defense adds a set bonus to his Defense Total based on his Power Level (see the Power Level Chart in Chapter 1). Full Defense can be used with the Defense or Evasion Skills, but not with the Tactics Skill. When using the Evasion Skill, the Full Defense bonus from the Power Level Chart is halved (round down). A combatant on Full Defense may take no actions at all, including movement,

though a successful use of Evasion with Full Defense still permits movement after the attack if desired (see Evasion below). Whether or not the combatant successfully defends, using Full Defense allows him to roll one die larger for either Initiative or Control on the following turn with no FS cost.

After the Defense Total is determined, the attacker rolls 1d6 + the Accuracy of the move being used + Accuracy Bonus (if applicable). The attacker can also spend FS on Accuracy. Each 1 FS adds 1 to Accuracy. The attacker can spend FS up to his Power Level.

A Combo is rolled as a single attack, using only the Accuracy of the first move in the Combo, modified by the total number of attacks in the Combo (see below).

A combatant on Full Offense may instead roll 1d10 for attacks. However, the character can choose no defensive options besides the standard use of the Defense Skill and even in this case, he only adds 1/2 (round down) of his Defense Skill to Defense Totals. Furthermore, the character's die size for either Initiative or Control (attacker's choice) is reduced by one on the following turn and he cannot spend FS to increase either. This latter effect is cumulative if the combatant stays on Full Offense for multiple turns. Thus, after several turns on Full Offense, a combatant may be reduced to Initiative 1, Control 1, or both, with no die rolls (see the description of die sizes at the beginning of this chapter).

If the attacker rolls equal to or higher than the opponent's Defense Total, the attack hits. Otherwise, it misses.

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### Rolling an Attack

Roll 1d6 + all applicable modifiers.

If the total equals or exceeds the opponent's Defense Total, the attack hits.

### Results of a Successful Attack

If the attack hits, the attacker rolls damage. This amount is subtracted from the opponent's Life Bar. Once Life Bar reaches zero, the opponent is defeated.

This usually means knocked out, but it may vary depending on the needs of the story. The opponent may instead be merely unable to continue fighting or he may be dead. This is decided by the Director, taking into account the intended effect of the character who has defeated his opponent.

In addition to damage, the opponent also suffers Hit Stun, reducing their Control and possibly causing him to lose his action for the turn. If the opponent

has already acted this turn, they do not suffer any effects of Hit Stun on the following turn. The attacker then calculates whether or not Stunning has occurred, and notes Knock Back and Knock Down (if applicable).

For convenience, it is often easiest to tally the character's Glory awards as he performs attacks in combat. Each Special Move that hits earns Glory equal to its level, though a particular Special Move earns Glory only once in a round of combat, no matter how often it is used. Basic Moves do not earn Glory, nor do attacks that miss. A Combo earns Glory for each move in the Combo as applicable and

then an additional 1 Glory for each move (including Basic Moves) in the Combo. For example, a Combo beginning with an L3 Special Move, followed by 4 Basic Moves, and concluding with an L2 Special Move would be worth 3 (for the L3 move) + 2 (for the L2 move) + 6 (for the total number of moves in the Combo) Glory, a total of 11 Glory. This example presumes that the two Special Moves had not been used earlier in the combat. If they both had, this Combo would still be worth 6 Glory (for the number of moves in the Combo).



After the character moves and/or attacks, play proceeds to the character with the next highest Initiative total who is still able to act.

## After Everyone Has Acted

After all characters have acted during the turn, there are two steps remaining before proceeding to the next turn.

The first step is the Time Roll. Under default conditions, the results of this roll are subtracted from a count of 99 at the beginning of the fight. If this counter reaches zero, the fight usually ends, with the winner being defined as the side that has the highest percentage of Life Bar remaining.

Any character may spend FS up to their Power Level on the Time Roll. Each FS spent adds or subtracts 1 from the Time Roll. The result of the Time Roll is always at least 1, regardless of FS spent. Opponents may cancel one another out as one spends FS to increase the Time Roll and another spends FS to decrease it. If necessary, the declaration of intent to spend FS on this occasion is conducted in reverse order of Power Level (i.e., lowest to highest). If these are tied, the combatants declare in reverse order of their Speed Basic Quality. If these also are tied, each combatant rolls 1d6 to break the tie or else just mutually agrees on who should declare first.

The Time Roll is 1d6. If there are more than two combatants active at the same time, the Time Roll is 1d8.

The second step is the narrative for the turn. The Director and the players collaborate to describe the action of the turn that is ending. The fighting video game genre is driven by visuals and so all attempts should be made to make the game's action come

alive in the imaginations of the participants.

This is also an appropriate time for additional role-playing between the participants. This can be trash talking, taunts, and threats, vows to murder or to bring to justice, or even the internal monologue of a Fighter, acted out for all to hear. Furthermore, many of the most important character defining moments and plot revelations will occur in the middle of a fight - it's the nature of the genre. So the Director and the players should make the most of this time to prevent combat from becoming a series of attack choices and die rolls.

## Combos

A Combo is a term used in fighting video games to describe a series of attacks that is generally unblockable if the first attack hits. Fighters can launch Combos as a special form of attack, exchanging Accuracy and Control for significantly greater damage.

A Combo can be as long as the combatant wishes, limited only by his Combo Skill level and his Control for the turn. A Combo cannot be longer than the character's Combo Skill level. The Control necessary for a Combo is equal to the total Levels of all the moves contained within it. This is thus 1 per Basic Move, but if one or more Special Moves are part of a Combo, there must be Control equal to each move's Level as well. For example, a 5-hit Combo opening with an L4 Special Move would require  $[4+(4 \times 1)] =$  Control 8.

A Combo can be made up of any combination of Basic Moves and Special Moves. However, any Special Move that is not either the first or last move

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of the Combo requires one extra Control to use. The one exception to this is for a Combo composed solely of three Special Moves (i.e., a 3-hit Combo made up of three Special Moves with no Basic Moves). Special Moves cannot be duplicated in a Combo.

No matter how many moves make up the Combo, the Combo is resolved as a single attack. A Combo suffers a  $-1$  Accuracy penalty for every full three moves in the Combo. Thus, a 2-hit Combo has no Accuracy penalty, a 3- to 5-hit Combo has  $-1$  Accuracy, a 6- to 8-hit Combo has  $-2$  Accuracy, etc. If the Combo has a Special Move anywhere other than as the opening move, there is an additional  $-1$  Accuracy.

The Accuracy of a Combo is based on the first move in the Combo; the Accuracy bonuses or penalties of any other move in the Combo are ignored. Likewise, the damage for a Combo is based on the 1st move in the Combo. If a Special Move is in the middle or end of the Combo, damage is also rolled for those moves, but they are reduced to half damage (round down). Each additional Basic Move in the Combo adds one to the final damage. A character's Damage Bonus is only added once to a Combo, not to each move in the Combo. Knock Back only occurs at the end of a Combo.

Any limitations that apply to movement are only based on the first move in the Combo. Movement occurs first, and then the Combo begins. Therefore, a Special Move that allowed no movement could follow a Special Move with the Mobile Element that began the Combo. Similarly, any restriction on Range is based after movement has concluded. For example, a Special Move that could only be used at Range 0 can still be a part of a Combo even if the

combatant began at Range 2, provided the first move of the Combo closed the Range to 0.

A Special Move that Knocks Down the opponent can only be used at the end of a Combo (unless it has the Bounce Element, the Juggle Element, or is a Super Move). A Special Move with the Throw Element can be used in a Combo, but it must begin at Range 0 and it must be the last move in the Combo. There is one exception to this: a Special Move with the Hurl Element can be followed by a Special Move with the Ranged Element. A Special Move with the Increased Knockback Element only does Increased Knock Back if it is the last move in a Combo.

### 100% Combos and Infinite Combos

Some fighting game characters possess the ability to do what is commonly called a 100% Combo. This is an attack that is capable of taking off 100% of the opponent's Life Bar in a single Combo. Likewise, some other fighting game characters are capable of pulling off an infinite Combo, which is a Combo that, once started, cannot ever be defended against by an opponent as long as the attacker does not make any mistakes (such a "feature" is often considered a flaw in competitive fighting games).

The Fight! rules cannot duplicate either an infinite Combo or even a 100% Combo. At Power Level 1, a character can theoretically pull off a 94% Combo against another Power Level 1 character. At Power Level 8, a character can pull off a 44% Combo against an opponent of equal power. Both of these situations would require very specific character builds and a lot of luck and/or timing. While this is not a perfectly accurate simulation of fighting games, it makes for a much more playable game. The average Combo in Fight! will probably do damage equal to about 20% of an opponent's Life Bar, which is enough to keep fights interesting.



If a Combo misses and the opponent uses a Defensive Response, he can choose any response based on any of the Elements in any of the Special Moves that made up the Combo.

### Generating Long Combos

It isn't especially difficult for a character to pull off 3- to 5-hit Combos on a fairly consistent basis with decent Control rolls. However, this is not always representative of expert levels of play. After all, while a 20-hit Combo is certainly possible in the rules as written, it generally requires a high Power Level, a specific sort of character build, and a decent amount of tactical planning and luck, as noted above.

However, the rules for Initiative and Hit Stun can be used as a means to narrate much longer Combos than are actually being used in the game. For example, Rei Oshiro hits his opponent with a 4-hit Combo. Because of Hit Stun, his opponent does not get a chance to respond. On the following turn, Rei once again gets Initiative and hits the same opponent with another 4-hit Combo. This happens yet again on the next turn. Finally, Rei loses Initiative on the 4th turn. For the purposes of the story, and for the bragging rights that go with it, it is perfectly acceptable to say that Rei hit his opponent with a 12-hit Combo (the total of his three 4-hit Combos). While the rules adjudicate Knock Back and Stunning for each individual Combo, there's nothing that prevents providing a more glorious description of the Fighter's awesome prowess.

## Defending Against An Attack

When a character is the target of an attack, he must choose what defensive option he is going to use to avoid being hit. The default method of defending oneself is the Defense Skill. This simulates the

character's attempt to block the opponent's attack. However, other options for avoiding an attack also exist. Instead of using the Defense Skill, a character can use the Evasion Skill, the Tactics Skill, or in some cases, even a combination of the Defense and Evasion Skills.

### Evasion

While the Defense Skill represents the active attempt to block the opponent's attack, the Evasion Skill represents the attempt to avoid the opponent's attack entirely. In fighting video games, this is specifically accomplished by crouching underneath attacks or by leaping above attacks and/or away from opponents.

Instead of using the Defense Skill, a combatant can try to Evade his opponent's attacks. In this case, Evasion is used instead of Defense for the Fighter's Defense Total calculation. A combatant who successfully Evades may choose one of two options: 1) the character may move 2 Ranges forward or backward (but not 1 Range), which costs 1 FS, or 2) the character may instead receive a +2 Accuracy on his next attack (either on this turn or the next, as appropriate). If the combatant successfully Evades again before getting the chance to use this Accuracy bonus, he must not choose to move in order to maintain the bonus. If the combatant is hit again before using the bonus, the bonus is lost.

A combatant may also choose to both block (with Defense Skill) and Evade. This usually represents a crouching block. In this case, the defender adds half (round down) of the lower skill to the higher skill when determining the character's Defense Total. This costs 1 FS, but the defender cannot move, and if the attacker misses, the defender does not receive

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a +2 Accuracy on his next attack. A character can do this on Full Defense as well. The Full Defense bonus is added to Defense, and then the combined Defense Total is calculated as normal. Attacks that have the Hard to Evade Element can apply the Accuracy bonus to a defender who is combining his Defense and Evasion Skills.

As a campaign option, combatants may also be able to do Aerial Blocks. This allows the combatant to move as a successful Evasion if the defense is successful, while getting the benefits of combining the Defense and Evasion Skills to determine his Defense Total (as described above). In this case, this costs an additional 1 FS for the movement (and therefore 2 FS total).

### Tactics

Several other additional defensive options exist utilizing the Tactics Skill and usually a Special Move with a particular Element. These options are collectively called Defensive Responses. One of the Defensive Responses included here (the Counter Response) still uses the Defense Skill rather than the Tactics Skill, while another (the Ranged Response) uses the Ki Skill; they are included here because they generally follow the same procedures as the other Tactics-based defensive options described in this section. A character does not need to have the Tactics Skill to be able to use the Counter Response or the Ranged Response. All that is necessary is a move with the appropriate Element and levels in the Defense Skill or the Ki Skill respectively.

A Defensive Response calculates the Defense Total the same as the use of the Defense or Evasion Skills, with the exception that the Tactics Skill is used instead. If the attack misses, then the defender gets

to take an action based on the Defensive Response chosen. If a character is eligible to use more than one Defensive Response against an attack, he can choose which one to use after successfully defending against the attack.

Most of the Defensive Responses described below allow the defender to interrupt the normal Initiative procedure and attack the attacker. In this case, the attacker may use the Defense Skill as usual, though his Defense Skill is considered halved (round down) when calculating the Defense Total. The attacker may not use any Defensive Response. The attacker may also not use the Evasion Skill, unless the original attack possessed the Aerial Element. In all cases, if this interrupting attack misses, the attacker's original attack still misses.

The defender may use this interrupting opportunity to launch a Combo, provided that the interrupting attack can be used as the opening of the Combo. This costs 2 FS and there is an additional -1 Accuracy on the attack.

In every case of an interrupting attack that is part of a Defensive Response, if the defender has not yet acted on this turn, the interrupting attack takes the place of the defender's normal opportunity to act at his place in the Initiative order. By using the Tactics Skill, a skilled combatant can thus violate the Initiative order and make attacks with an easier chance to hit. If the defender has already acted on this turn, he can still use these Responses, thereby possibly making more than one attack in a single turn. Against multiple opponents, there is no limit to how many Defensive Responses a character can use in a single turn.

The interrupting attack needs to be in range to hit in order to use the appropriate Defensive Response. For example, a normal Interrupt Special Move cannot be used against a Ranged attack from Range

4. Furthermore, the defender has to have rolled high enough Control to use the move used in the Response. This is also the case if the combatant has suffered from Hit Stun and has reduced Control. If Hit Stun causes the loss of the character's action, he cannot use any Defensive Response except the Jinking Response.

**Anti-Air/Juggle Response:**

If the attacker jumped 2 Ranges before attacking with a Basic Move, or used a Special Move with the Aerial Element, or simply jumped 3 Ranges toward the defender, and ends his movement at Range 0 or Range 1, a defender can interrupt with any move that has the Juggle or Anti-Air Element. If the attacker misses, the defender temporarily becomes the attacker until the Juggle or Anti-Air attack is resolved. Initiative then returns to normal.

**Basic Response:**

A defender can interrupt with a Basic Move. If the attacker misses, the defender temporarily becomes the attacker until the attack is resolved. Initiative then returns to



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normal.

**Counter Response:** If the defender successfully blocks an attack using the Defense Skill, he can interrupt the normal Initiative order with a Special Move that has the Counter Element. The current order is interrupted, and the defender temporarily becomes the attacker until the Counter attack is resolved. Initiative then returns to normal. Unlike almost all other Defensive Responses, the Counter Response is based on the Defense Skill, rather than the Tactics Skill. However, any game effect that prevents a character from using Tactics as a defensive option also prevents the use of the Counter Response.

**Evade Ranged Response:** If being attacked with a Special Move with the Ranged Element, a defender can interrupt with any Special Move that has the Evade Ranged Element. If the attacker misses, the defender temporarily becomes the attacker until the Evade Ranged Attack is resolved. Initiative then returns to normal.

**Interrupt Response:** A defender can interrupt with any Special Move that has the Interrupt Element. If the attacker misses, the defender temporarily becomes the attacker until the Interrupt attack is resolved. Initiative then returns to normal. The Interrupt Response is based on Tactics, while the Counter Response is based on the Defense Skill.

**Jinking Response:** Instead of using the Evasion Skill to evade an attack, the defender can use the Tactics Skill instead. The Accuracy bonus from the Hard to Evade Element applies to this attack, even though Tactics is used for the Defense Total rather than Evasion. If the attacker misses, the defender must move away one Range. This Defensive Response

has no effect against Ranged moves, unless the Jinking moves the defender out of the range of the attack (e.g., if the Ranged move also had the Short Range Liability).

**Priority Response:** A defender can interrupt with any Special Move that has the Priority Element. Contrary to all other Defensive Responses, this interruption occurs regardless if the attacker misses or not, but the defender can only use half (round down) of his Tactics Skill when determining his Defense Total. The defender temporarily becomes the attacker until the Priority Attack is resolved. However, in the case of a Priority Response, all effects of both attacks are suffered by both combatants (i.e., damage, Knock Back, Knock Down, and Stunning). In other words, the attacks are considered simultaneous, rather than the defender actually "interrupting" the attacker. Initiative then returns to normal.

**Ranged Response:** If being attacked with a Special Move with the Ranged Element, one can respond with a Special Move with the Ranged Element. This works differently than other Defensive Responses. In this case, the Ki Skill simply replaces the Defense Skill in the Defense Total calculation, rather than the Tactics Skill, as is the case with most other Defensive Responses. However, any game effect that prevents a character from using Tactics as a defensive option also prevents the use of the Ranged Response.

**Reversal Response:** If the defender does not have Initiative and is attacked just as he has stood up on the turn following being Knocked Down, he can interrupt with any move that has the Reversal Element. If the attacker misses, the defender temporarily becomes the attacker until the Reversal attack is resolved. However, if the Reversal attack misses, the defender suffers a two die size penalty

on Initiative on the following turn. Regardless of whether the Reversal attack hits or misses, Initiative then returns to normal for the current turn after it is resolved. See the description of the Element in Chapter 4 for more details about using the Reversal Element.

**Throw Response:** If the attacker attempts to attack at Range 0, a defender can interrupt with any Special Move that has the Throw Element. If the attacker misses, the defender temporarily becomes the attacker until the Throw is resolved. Initiative then returns to normal.

### Dashes and Back Dashes

Two very common campaign options in fighting games are the ability to Dash forward or to perform a Back Dash. One or both may be permissible in the campaign at the Director's discretion.

A Dash allows a combatant to move forward 2 Ranges and attack with a Basic Move for a cost of 2 FS. Unlike a jumping Basic, however, a Dash is not subject to the Anti-Air/Juggle Defensive Response. Because a character can only spend as much FS as his Power Level in any given instance, this means that a PL 1 character cannot use this option even if the campaign allows it.

In addition, if a combatant is at Range 2 or 1 from his opponent, and then chooses to advance 1 Range (to either Range 1 or 0), and spends 1 FS to perform a Dash, he receives a +1 Accuracy bonus. At Range 0, this stacks with the +1 Accuracy for attacking at Range 0.

A Back Dash is a modifier to the Jinking Defensive Response. If a combatant chooses in advance to use this response against an attack, he can spend 2 FS to perform a Back Dash. This provides a +4 bonus to the Defense Total. If successful, the combatant moves back 2 Ranges rather than 1. As noted above, because a character can only spend as much FS as his Power Level in any given instance, a PL 1 character cannot use this option even if the campaign allows it.

In addition, a combatant can use a Back Dash in conjunction with the Evasion Skill. For 1 FS, the combatant gains a +2 bonus to his Defense Total while using Evasion, but if the attack misses, the combatant must move away 2 Ranges.

## Effects of a Successful Attack

### Damage

The damage inflicted by a successful attack is determined by the move's damage, modified by two factors. A move's damage is based on what kind of move it is. A Basic Move has a base damage of 1d4.

A Special Move has a base damage of 1d6. A Super Move has a base damage of 1d8. A Special or Super Move with the Ranged Element instead determines base damage according to the character's Ki Skill (see the description of the Ranged Element in Chapter 4). This base damage may be modified by the Increased Damage Element or the Decreased



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### Damage Liability.

An attack's base damage is then modified by the attacker's Strength, increasing or decreasing a number of die sizes equal to the character's Strength Basic Quality. Strength does not modify an attack with the Ranged Element. The damage is then also modified by the defender's Stamina, decreasing or increasing a number of die sizes equal to the defender's Stamina Basic Quality. A positive Stamina decreases damage, while a negative Stamina increases damage. The character's Damage Bonus (if any) is also added to damage. Combos and certain other Elements may also affect damage.

The damage rolled is subtracted from the opponent's Life Bar. When Life Bar reaches 0, the character is defeated and no longer able to fight. This often means that the character has been knocked unconscious, but depending on the circumstances of the fight and the needs of the story, a defeated character may simply be too exhausted to continue fighting at the moment, or the character may be seriously injured and in need of hospitalization. In some very rare cases, the Director may even declare that the defeat of a character means his death (see Defeat, Death, and Healing).

### Why Random Damage Rolls?

Fight!'s source material is the world of fighting video games. In a video game, there is little or nothing in the mechanics of the world that is actually random, aside from the actions of the players of the game. So, then, why are there so many random elements in the combat system of Fight!?! In large part, this is to represent the dozens of minute conditions that may apply in a software program's adjudication of a situation in-game without requiring rules for such in the tabletop game that would require as much mechanical complexity as a program.

But even so, one might ask, why use random rolls for more easily controlled data, like the damage of attacks? In most fighting video games, very little (if anything, depending on the game) can modify the damage of an attack. Every time it hits, it has the same effect on an opponent's Life Bar. However, this doesn't translate as well to a role-playing game. There are several reasons for this. First and foremost, rolling dice is part of what makes a fight scene in a game fun for most people. Second, the random effect of damage compensates for several other mechanical elements in the program that would be less fun or too complicated to play out. Random damage accounts for such things as increased damage from counter hits, the fact that Fight!'s combat system does not account for "block damage," which is a common part of most fighting games, and the possibility that there are also other random Basic Move hits that occur between combatants that are simply not resolved (especially in a long Time Count for a turn). Simply put, standardized damage would be more accurate to the source material, but ultimately not as easy or as fun to play.

## Hit Stun

Any attack that does damage to a character who has not yet acted on the turn also inflicts Hit Stun on the combatant. This is to be distinguished from Stunning, which is a more serious effect of some attacks (see Stunning). Hit Stun temporarily stops the combatant, often preventing him from acting. If the combatant has already acted this turn, he does not suffer Hit Stun when struck.

The effect of Hit Stun is to reduce the Control of the combatant. His Control drops by four points or it is reduced to half (round down), whichever is lower. If this drops Control to zero or less, the combatant loses his action for the turn. If he has any Control remaining, he can still act, though he is limited to choosing attacks based on his new Control total and his movement is limited. Instead of an attack, he can still choose to Refocus or Power Up, but not Await Opening.

If the combatant who has suffered Hit Stun has Control remaining and wishes to move, it costs 1 FS, in addition to any other FS costs associated with movement. For example, if the combatant wanted to use a Special Move with the Mobile Element to move 2 Ranges, it would cost 2 FS – one for moving 2 Ranges and one for moving after suffering Hit Stun. In this example, a PL 1 character could not do this, as he can only spend FS up to his Power Level in any given instance.

If a combatant has Control remaining after suffering Hit Stun, he can also choose not to move or act at all. In this case, his Control roll increases by two die sizes on the following turn at no cost.

If a combatant is Knocked Down or Stunned by an attack, he does not suffer the effects of Hit Stun. He automatically loses his action if he has not yet acted,

regardless of his Control. See the relevant sections for additional details.

### Simplifying Hit Stun

The additional calculation to reduce Control after being struck might be confusing or slow down combat too much for some groups. As an easier way to adjudicate Hit Stun, the Director can simply declare that a combatant who suffers Hit Stun loses their action for the turn. This optional rule is especially appropriate for battles featuring multiple combatants.

## Knock Back

Any attack that does damage also knocks the opponent back 1 Range away from the attacker. A character will never be Knocked Back to Range 5. A character at Range 4 who is successfully attacked remains at Range 4.

Knock Back does not occur after each hit during a Combo. At the end of the Combo, the opponent is Knocked Back 1 Range.

A character who suffers damage from a Throw moves back 1 Range out of Range 0 to Range 1 away from the combatant who used the Throw attack, even though they were Knocked Down as a result of the attack. This does not apply if the Throw also has the Hurl Element. In this case, there is no Knock Back.

A character who was hit by a Special Move with the Increased Knockback Element or by a Combo that includes a Special Move with the Launcher Element is Knocked Back two Ranges instead of one.

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### Knock Down

A Fighter is Knocked Down when he is successfully attacked by an attack that includes the Knocks Down Element. After being Knocked Down, he must use his action for the turn to stand up instead of moving or attacking. The normal effects of Hit Stun do not apply in this case, and he can still stand even if he was using Total Defense. On the following turn, the Fighter reduces his die size for Initiative by one. The Total Defense bonus does not apply (if applicable).

If a Fighter who has been Knocked Down has already acted this turn, he must use his next action on the following turn to do so. In this case, there is no penalty to Initiative. A combatant who was using Full Defense has effectively already used his action for the turn and so must also use his action on the following turn to stand up. A character who has been Knocked Down and who also subsequently gets Initiative cannot hold and delay standing up; he stands up automatically when it is his turn to act. The Director can choose to change this rule as a campaign option.

At the same time, however, a character who has been Knocked Down cannot be attacked. An opponent with Initiative wishing to attack a



character who is still Knocked Down must hold and wait until his opponent stands before attacking again. This is the case even if the combatants have simultaneous Initiative. Special attacks and options to allow attacks against Knocked Down opponents will be included in future supplements.

If a character Knocks Down his opponent, he may

choose to move 1 Range towards or away from his opponent.

If a character is Knocked Down while holding his action, he loses this held action and must use his next action on the following turn to stand up. If two combatants are Knocked Down simultaneously, they each lose their next actions.

### Breakfalls and Tech Rolls

Two common campaign options that affect the rules for Knock Down are Breakfalls and Tech Rolls. One or both may be permissible in the campaign at the Director's discretion.

Both of these options presume that the defender failed to avoid the attack that caused the Knock Down effect. A character cannot just choose to Tech Roll as a reaction to an attack that missed or to one that hit but did not cause a Knock Down. The FS cost to perform either of these is 2. If a campaign is using both options, this cost must be paid twice in order to gain both effects. Because a character can only spend as much FS as his Power Level in any given instance, this means that a PL 1 character cannot use either of these options even if the campaign allowed them, and only a PL 4 or higher character could use both at once if both were allowed.

A Breakfall reduces the damage inflicted to 1/2 (round up). It also eliminates the loss of the defender's next action (whether in the current turn or in the next, as applicable) and the consequent die size penalty to Initiative. Essentially, the Knock Down does not occur.

A Tech Roll allows 2 Ranges of movement. This movement can occur in either direction, including through an opponent, but the movement must be 2 Ranges; the Fighter cannot choose to move only 1 Range. This movement still costs the defender's next action however, just like the effects of a normal Knock Down. This applies even if a Breakfall is also used at the same time.

### Stunning

Every character has a Stun Threshold. This number is equal to the character's Power Level + 4. If a character takes damage to his Life Bar greater than his Stun Threshold in a single turn (from any number of attacks), he is Stunned.

Damage from all Super Moves, any Special Moves with the Throw Element, and any Combo that has a Throw as the last move of the Combo do not add their damage when calculating whether the total

damage in a turn exceeds an opponent's Stun Threshold.

When a Fighter is Stunned, he loses his next two actions. He must use his action on the present turn to recover (Hit Stun does not apply in this case), as well as his action on the following turn. If he has already acted in the current turn, he must use his next two actions on the following two turns to recover. If the Fighter was using Total Defense when

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he was hit by the attack that Stunned him, he does not get the Initiative or Control bonus on the following turn and he must still use two full actions to recover.

Until the Stunned character can act, he cannot contribute FS to his Defense Total, he cannot use the Evasion or Tactics Skills to avoid attacks, and his Defense Skill is considered to be half (round down). Unlike being Knocked Down (see above), combatants can continue to attack the Stunned opponent. However, the Stunned character immediately recovers from being Stunned after suffering damage once and is also immune to being Stunned again until he recovers, regardless of how much damage he takes. However, if the character recovers from being Stunned by taking damage, he still loses his action for this turn, and on the following turn, the formerly Stunned character reduces his die size for Initiative by one.

If a character is Stunned while holding his action, he loses his held action and must still use his next two actions on the following turns to recover.

If a character is Knocked Down while he is Stunned, he still stands up as his next action, even if that action is also one of the two actions required to recover from being Stunned. In other words, the character stands up and begins recovering from being Stunned with a single action. His Initiative die is reduced by one die size on the following turn.

If two combatants are Stunned simultaneously, they each lose their next two actions. If a combatant recovers from being Stunned simultaneously with an attack against him, he gets his full Defense skill, but can still use no other defensive options and his Stun Threshold is considered re-set to zero (i.e., he can be Stunned again).

After a character has been Stunned, the accumulated damage towards his Stun Threshold is immediately re-set to zero. Once a character has been Stunned once during a full round of combat (or combat scene, at the Director's discretion), a character's Stun Threshold increases by 2. If the character should be Stunned again, the Stun Threshold increases by another 2 (i.e., +4, +6, etc.).

## Other Combat Actions

The majority of a character's actions in combat will be movement, attacking, and recovering from Knock Downs and Stunning. However, some other game rules permit certain characters to take other actions during combat. For example, a character with a Special Move that has the Prop Liability may take an action to pick up his Prop. The following three non-attack actions are available to all characters.

In order to use any of these three non-attack options, a combatant cannot use any defensive options during the turn besides the Defense Skill. None of these actions can be done during simultaneous Initiative, unless both combatants wish to use one of these actions.

**Refocus :** This non-attack action can only be done when at Range 2 or greater from any opponent. The character re-gains FS equal to  $1d4 + \text{half of his Power Level (round down)}$ . This cannot bring the character's Fighting Spirit above his starting total. This action also allows 1 Range of movement away from the character's opponents.

**Power Up:** This non-attack action adds  $1d6$  Super Energy to the character's Super Energy total. This action does not allow any movement. This action can only be performed by characters of Power Level



3 or greater.

**Await Opening:** This non-attack action can be done multiple times over successive turns. Each Await Opening action also allows 1 Range of movement away from the character's opponents. On the turn following one or more successful Await Opening actions, each successful Await Opening action increases the die size used for either Initiative or Control by a number of die sizes equal to the character's Power Level, up to the normal limit of 1d12. If this raises both Initiative and Control to 1d12 each, any extra die size increases remaining become +1 Accuracy each on the character's next attack. However, any successful hit against the combatant while he is Awaiting Opening before he actually takes any other action eliminates all accumulated benefits.

**Example:** Yoshiro is a Power Level 3 character with an Initiative of 1d6 and Control of 1d6. He decides to Await Opening and he is not hit during the turn. On the next turn, he can choose to Await Opening or to do something else. If he Awaits Opening again, his Initiative for the turn remains 1d6. If he decides to do something else, his Initiative and Control would increase a total of three die sizes. His Initiative could increase three die sizes, his Control could increase three die sizes, or he could increase each some combination of three die sizes. Yoshiro decides to continue to Await Opening and he still doesn't take any damage during the turn. On the third turn, once again, if he chooses to continue to Await Opening, his Initiative remains 1d6. Otherwise, he could add a total of six die sizes to Initiative and Control. This would automatically bring both die sizes to 1d12 each. If Yoshiro continued one more turn Awaiting Opening before attacking, he would also get a +3 Accuracy, as his Initiative and Control would already both be 1d12 and the extra die size increases would become bonuses to Accuracy instead.

## Environmental Hazards

The default rules for combat assume the combatants are fighting on a large, open, featureless plain. No matter how they move or how often Knock Back occurs, the combatants' position only matters in relation to one another. This is a perfectly workable way to run combat and it keeps things simple. Even if the scene in which the combat occurs is not so empty, such as a busy downtown street during rush hour, or a lab cluttered with expensive and dangerous equipment, the Director may deem that the environment has no effect on combat beyond the colorful narrative described at the end of the turn.

However, adding obstacles and especially hazards to the battlefield can add further levels of tactical depth to a fight. Furthermore, certain Special Moves are useful specifically for their ability to manipulate the positioning of the opponent. The following rules apply to tracking various Environmental Hazards in combat. This system is highly abstract, but it creates new options for movement and positioning while still eliminating the need for any sort of "game board" to run combat.

An Environmental Hazard is defined as any element of a fight scene that could directly affect the outcome of the combat. The two most common forms of Environmental Hazards, especially in a tournament combat setting, are walls and ring-outs. Other possibilities might include cliffs or roof edges, explosive devices, elevation changes, or deathtraps.

The position of all Environmental Hazards is tracked by their Distance away from the combatants. For

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example, the Director may declare that there are gigantic bonfires Distance 3 away from both combatants. It is up to the Director to decide whether or not a particular Hazard is equidistant from each combatant at the start of a fight. A character's distance away from an Environmental Hazard is recorded by the Director or the player, as they see fit. The Director should avoid putting in too many features that actually influence combat in a single combat sequence. As each must be tracked separately for each combatant, this can quickly become unwieldy. Remember that minor terrain features may be just a matter of description rather than having actual game effects on the combatants.

Ranges and Distances serve similar purposes in combat, but are not equivalent to one another. Range is only used to describe the space between combatants. Distance is only used to describe the space between a combatant and an Environmental Hazard. One can never be more than Distance 6 away from a Hazard without actually leaving the scene of the combat.

When characters are within proximity to one another, they also share their proximity to Environmental Hazards. If two characters are within Range 2 or less from one another, they are also automatically considered to be the same Distance, plus one, away from all Environmental Hazards in the battle. In every case, use the closest Distance between any particular Fighter and the Environmental Hazard in question for this calculation. If a character was already closer than this calculation determines, that character's original, closer Distance remains in effect. This calculation occurs at the end of the turn before the Time Roll is made, not after each character's individual movement. The Director should create a list of

every combatant and their Distance from every Environmental Hazard in the battle and update the list at the end of the turn based on the combatants' current positions.

**Example:** Asuka is Distance 2 away from a spiked pit. Cannon McCabe is Distance 1 away from a cliff edge. These two characters move into Range 2 with one another. At the end of the turn, their new Distances to the Environmental Hazards need to be determined. Regardless of their previous Distances, Cannon is now considered to be Distance 3 (Asuka's Distance of 2+1) from the spiked pit and Asuka is now considered Distance 2 (Cannon's Distance of 1+1) away from the cliff. If it had been the case that Asuka was already Distance 1 from the cliff, she would remain Distance 1 from the cliff at the end of the turn; she would not suddenly move to Distance 2, because the shortest Distance away from an Environmental Hazard is always used.

Neither a character's normal movement nor the effects of Knock Back against him ever bring him or his opponent closer to an Environmental Hazard unless they explicitly say they are moving towards or away from one. It is possible to use movement to move closer or further away from an Environmental Hazard while maintaining the same distance from an opponent. In this case, the movement is simply noted in the character's Distance from the Environmental Hazard, while his position in relation to other combatants does not change. The Distance moved is equal to the movement in Ranges. For example, a character jumping without an attack could move 3 Distances towards or away from an Environmental Hazard. A character can only move towards or away from a single Environmental Hazard during a turn.

If a character does wish to move towards or away from an Environmental Hazard and an opponent at

Range 2 or less wishes to prevent this, a Maneuver Check must be made. This is a contested Tactics Skill check using 1d6 rather than 1d10. The winner of this check succeeds in moving or preventing his opponent's movement, as appropriate. A character can also use a Maneuver Check to direct his Knock Back of an opponent towards an Environmental Hazard. The opponent is allowed a contested Skill check even if he is Knocked Down or Stunned, as the Maneuver Check represents movement on the part of both combatants for ideal positioning before the attack even hits.

### Effects of Environmental Hazards

An Environmental Hazard affects a character once he is Distance 0 away from it. The specific effects of this depend on the Hazard.

Many forms of Environmental Hazards simply do damage to a combatant and have no other effect. The standard damage is 1d6 + the highest PL of any of the combatants involved in the combat, though the Director can modify this damage as appropriate for his setting. After suffering damage, the character is Knocked Back 1 Distance away from the Environmental Hazard that caused the damage.

More specific effects of Environmental Hazards depend on the nature of the Hazard. The following examples all add a vertical dimension to combat. As a general rule applying to any condition that removes a character from combat, when the character re-joins combat, he is considered to be at a Range away from other combatants equal to the Distance those combatants are from the Environmental Hazard that took the character out of the fight.

**Example:** Cannon McCabe is battling Koichiro in a desolate mountainous region. Koichiro has just

knocked Cannon off a cliff with his Unleash the Storm ki attack. At the time of the attack, Koichiro was Distance 3 from the cliff. On the following turn, Koichiro doesn't move and Cannon leaps back up onto the cliff edge. At that point, Cannon is Distance 2 from the cliff (see below) and Range 3 away from Koichiro (the same Distance as Koichiro is from the cliff).

**Pits:** Falling into a Pit does damage to the character. The character is considered out of combat until he escapes from the Pit. A character can spend an action to leap out of a Pit, unless the Director declares the Pit too deep, in which case the character remains out of the fight. Once out of the Pit, the character is at Distance 2 from the Environmental Hazard.

**Elevation Changes:** An Elevation Change can be defined as either higher or lower than the surrounding terrain. When a character reaches Distance 0, they are assumed to be on the higher or lower elevation (as appropriate). This represents a change of no more than a few feet. A character fighting from a higher elevation does +1 damage to an opponent at a lower elevation. A character fighting from a lower elevation has a +2 bonus to Evade opponents at a higher elevation, but only if he chooses not to move with a successful Evasion. These two effects occur concurrently; a combatant who moves to a higher elevation gains the damage bonus, but a combatant targeting him gains the benefits of lower elevation.

**Major Elevation Changes:** A battle arena may have height differences in it that are much more significant, such as a cliff or rooftop. At Distance 0, a character either falls off to a lower Elevation Change or is backed against the wall of a higher

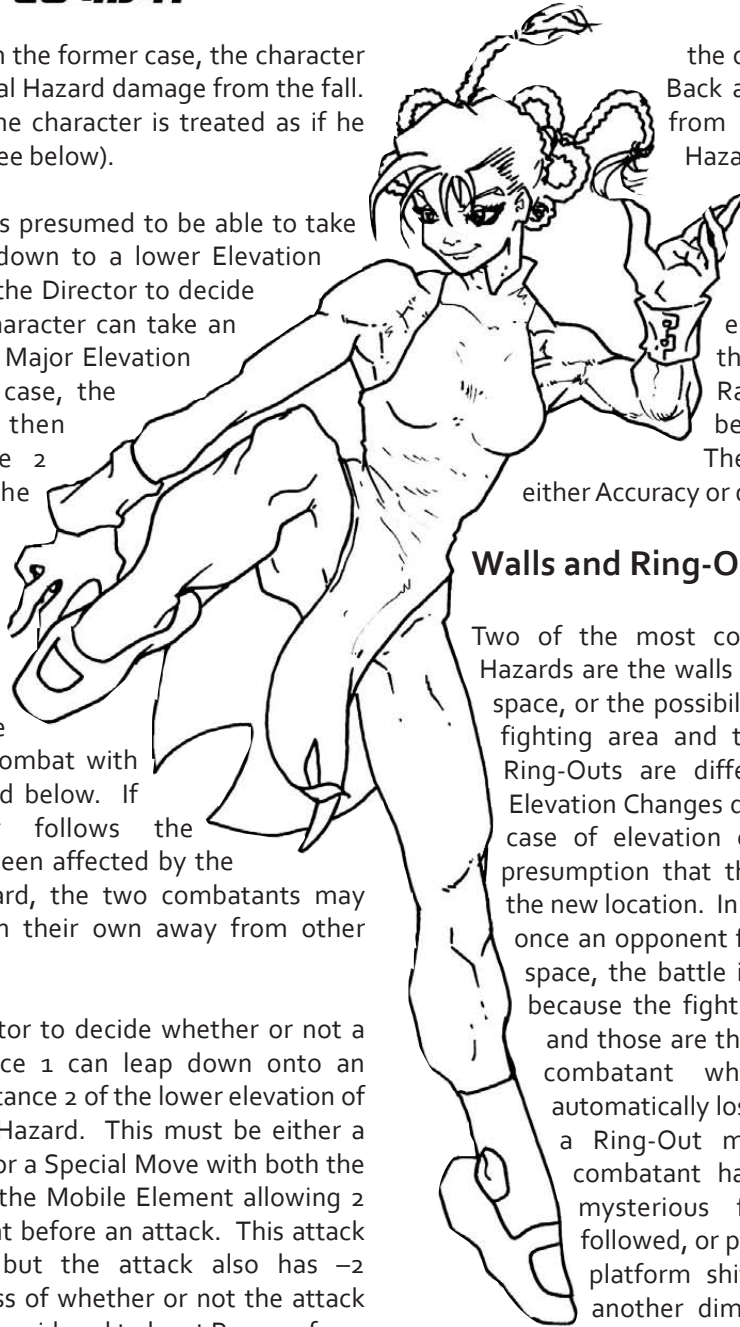
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Elevation Change. In the former case, the character suffers Environmental Hazard damage from the fall. In the latter case, the character is treated as if he was against a Wall (see below).

A character is always presumed to be able to take an action to jump down to a lower Elevation Change. It is up to the Director to decide whether or not a character can take an action to jump up a Major Elevation Change. In either case, the character is then considered Distance 2 away from the Environmental Hazard. Characters who have been affected by a Major Elevation Change Environmental Hazard are considered out of combat with the exceptions noted below. If another character follows the character who has been affected by the Environmental Hazard, the two combatants may continue combat on their own away from other combatants.

It is up to the Director to decide whether or not a character at Distance 1 can leap down onto an opponent within Distance 2 of the lower elevation of this Environmental Hazard. This must be either a leaping Basic Move or a Special Move with both the Aerial Element and the Mobile Element allowing 2 Ranges of movement before an attack. This attack does +1 damage, but the attack also has -2 Accuracy. Regardless of whether or not the attack hits, the attacker is considered to be at Range 1 from



the opponent before Knock Back and the same Distance from the Environmental Hazard as the defender. A

Special Move with the Ranged Element can attack an opponent who is either above or below the attacker, but the Range is considered to be one further away. There is no effect on either Accuracy or damage in this case.

### Walls and Ring-Outs

Two of the most common Environmental Hazards are the walls of an arena or fighting space, or the possibility of falling out of the fighting area and thus out of the fight. Ring-Outs are different than the Major Elevation Changes discussed above. In the case of elevation changes, there is the presumption that the battle continues in the new location. In the case of a Ring-Out, once an opponent falls out of the fighting space, the battle is over. This is usually because the fight is a tournament fight and those are the tournament rules – a combatant who leaves the ring automatically loses the fight. However, a Ring-Out might mean that the combatant has fallen miles to his mysterious fate, unable to be followed, or perhaps stepping off the platform shifts the combatant to another dimension. The Director might just use rules for Ring-Outs as

a simplified form of elevation change, noting that

once a combatant has fallen a significant distance, it is impractical for the story to continue the fight.

Walls and Ring-Outs are set up like any other Environmental Hazard: they are assumed to be a certain Distance away from the combatants at the beginning of the fight. However, because they mark specific boundaries of the field of combat, the effects of movement in regard to them are different than other Environmental Hazards.

Walls and Ring-Outs are an exception to the above rule that re-calculates the Distance to an Environmental Hazard based on the proximity of combatants to one another at the end of the turn. Walls and Ring-Outs always remain at the same Distance from any given character unless movement or Knock Back specifically changes this, according to the following rules.

If the environment features Walls or Ring-outs, Knock Back always moves the opponent 1 Distance towards this feature unless the attacker specifically uses a Maneuver Check to prevent it or if neither combatant wishes to move towards the Wall or Ring-Out. This is in addition to the normal Knock Back of 1 Range away from the opponent. If both options exist (e.g., an arena with two walled sides and two open sides), Knock Back does not move one towards either feature without a Maneuver Check.

If a combatant moves through an opponent (i.e., from Range 1 to Range 0 back to Range 1 again on the other side of the opponent), he can choose to exchange his Distance from a Wall or Ring-Out with his opponent's.

**Example:** Asuka is Distance 3 from a Ring-Out. Duke Diesel is only Distance 1. The two characters are at Range 1. Despite this close Range, Asuka is not considered to be Distance 2 from a Ring-Out

because Walls and Ring-Outs are exempt from the proximity rule for Environmental Hazards (see above). Duke is thus much closer to a Ring-Out. Therefore, Duke chooses to move towards his opponent by jumping 3 Ranges. This makes the new Range 2 (forward to Range 0, through the opponent to Range 1 on the other side, and then onward to Range 2). As Duke has moved through his opponent, he can choose to switch Distances with his opponent regarding the Ring-Out Environmental Hazard, which he wishes to do. Now Asuka is Distance 1 from a Ring-Out, while Duke is now Distance 3.

### Effects of Walls and Ring-Outs

**Walls:** A character at Distance 0 from a Wall is against the Wall. Opponents at Range 0 or Range 1 receive +1 Accuracy on all attacks. A Special Move with the Juggle Element does an additional +2 damage to a character against a Wall. Knock Back has no effect against a combatant at Distance 0 from a Wall; his Range away from his opponents stays the same after being hit. Some campaigns may use the option that Knocking Back an opponent into a Wall also causes a Knock Down. Instead of or in addition to Knock Down, Knocking Back an opponent into a Wall may also cause damage (if the Walls are electrified, for example).

In many 2-D fighting games, there are "walls" on either side of the screen, even though the background does not show any walls. Getting an opponent into the corner of the screen is often a sound tactic for victory. The Director can set up these arbitrary walls in a normal, non-walled fighting arena if he desires. The rules are the same as for normal Walls.



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**Ring-Outs:** A character at Distance 0 from the edge of an arena incurs a Ring-Out. As noted above, the specific effects of this vary with the nature of the Ring-Out. For example, the character may fall a few feet off the raised floor of the official tournament arena, or he may fall off a 1000-foot cliff. In most cases where Ring-Outs are an Environmental Hazard, suffering a Ring-Out means losing the tournament fight, regardless of how much Life Bar the character has remaining.

**Corners:** In addition to Walls, a separate Environmental Hazard can be defined as a Corner. Any movement or Knock Back towards a Wall can also simultaneously be towards or away from a Corner. Unlike a Wall, however, a Maneuver Check is necessary to Knock Back an opponent towards a Corner. If a character is at Distance 0 from both a Wall and a Corner at the same time, attacks against the character receive an additional +1 Accuracy over the normal +1 Accuracy for fighting against a Wall. The same Knock Back rules for Walls also apply. Furthermore, a character in a Corner has a -2 on any Maneuver Check to move away from the Corner. A character that is at Distance 0 from a Corner but not a Wall suffers no particular effects; Corners only modify the effects of Walls.

**Danger Zones:** As a variant on Ring-Outs, fighting arenas may have an explosive, electrical, or magical border to them. This replaces the normal effects of a Ring-Out. Once at Distance 0, if a character suffers a Knock Down in this area, he suffers damage from the Environmental Hazard. The character then stays at Distance 0. Unlike normal Environmental Hazards, the character is not Knocked Back away from the Danger Zone by the Hazard's damage. The character must move

away from the Danger Zone to avoid its effects. As a variant, an entire arena could be a Danger Zone, causing additional damage every time a character suffers a Knock Down.

Movement and Knock Back are considered differently if the Danger Zone is a ring around the normal arena. If a combatant is at Distance 0 from a Danger Zone and is then Knocked Back, his distance is then recorded as being away from the main arena, as if the normal arena were an Environmental Hazard. Furthermore, anyone wishing to close with the combatant must willingly move towards the Danger Zone and, once at Distance 0 from the Danger Zone, must also measure Distance away from the main arena. A further complication could be added by including a Wall at the edge of the Danger Zone, requiring the Director to keep track of Distance from both the arena proper and the Walls for characters stuck in the Danger Zone.

**Example:** Miriya is at Distance 0 from the Danger Zone. Akiko closes with her to Range 0 and kicks her back 2 Ranges and 2 Distances with an attack with the Increased Knock Back Element. Miriya's player now records the fact that she is Distance 2 from the safe arena floor. She continues to suffer the effects of the Danger Zone if she is Knocked Down. However, if Akiko wishes to close from Range 2, her movement also automatically brings her closer in Distance to the Danger Zone Environmental Hazard. So she closes to Range 0 again, which automatically also moves her 2 Distances closer to the Danger Zone. This situation will continue until both of them are back in the main arena once again.

### Simplified Walls and Ring-Outs

If a grid is being used to determine the parameters of an arena (i.e., a grid with six bands on which all of the combatants are located), the grid can also be used to define the location of Walls or Ring-Outs. Instead of tracking Distances for individual combatants, the Wall or Ring-Out is simply located at either edge of the grid. Thus, if an opponent is Knocked Back off either edge, instead of shifting all the combatants to keep everyone on the grid, the character that has been Knocked Back is considered to be against the Wall or has suffered a Ring-Out. It should be noted, however, that hitting Walls and suffering Ring-Outs will be extremely common using this method.

Bar recovers in Fight! The default presumption is that characters have full Life Bars at the beginning of each fight and at the beginning of each round of a multi-round fight as well. This keeps things simple and is certainly faithful to the video game source material, in which each character begins a new round with a full Life Bar, no matter how badly one was beaten in the round before. After all, the characters are supposed to be larger than life anyway.

One will also note that there is absolutely no possibility of death in the rules as written. A "defeat" defined as death should only occur when it benefits the story and the campaign as a whole. It should be very rare that an NPC Fighter dies definitively. Player character death should never occur, unless it has been mutually agreed on by both the Director and the player for the sake of the campaign as a whole. On the other hand, depending on the seriousness of the campaign, innocents and non-Fighter NPCs can be liberally maimed, hospitalized, and killed as necessary to keep the drama level melodramatically high.

## Defeat, Death, and Healing

As noted above in the section on damage, a character who is reduced to 0 Life Bar has been defeated. While this normally means the character is unconscious, it is up to the Director to decide exactly what "defeated" means. In many cases, a player character will simply be too exhausted to continue fighting when they are defeated. If they are knocked unconscious, they will regain consciousness when it is dramatically appropriate for the story. On the other hand, if an important NPC friend is defeated in combat, the Director may decide that he is laid up in the hospital, struggling to recover from a broken back. This can serve to motivate the heroes to seek revenge on their friend's behalf. So the definition of "defeat" depends on the needs of the story.

There are no formal rules for the rate at which Life

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### Optional Rules for Slower Recovery

For some players, the default rule may not be realistic enough. Furthermore, fast and full healing eliminates the possibility of one common dramatic device in martial arts storytelling: "I'm still reeling from that last encounter; how will I survive this one?" If desired, the Director can use the following rules for recovering Life Bar between fights.

After a fight (either a round of combat or as defined by the Director), a character recovers Life Bar and Fighting Spirit equal to his Stamina + his Defense Bonus + his Power Level (minimum 1). If the character gets eight hours of rest of at least moderate quality, he will recover all of his Fighting Spirit and his Life Bar will recover an additional number of points equal to his Power Level. Fighting Spirit can also be recovered with Serene Meditation. Each hour of meditation will recover Fighting Spirit equal to the Skill check, divided by 4 (round down). Of course, after an hour or two, the Director should feel free to interrupt the character's meditations with gratuitous combat!

The purpose of these rules is to increase the tension of the story. They are best used when the Director has a well-balanced series of encounters he wishes the heroes to fight through and he wants to encourage smarter, more conservative combat. On the other hand, if the Director has one or more encounters planned that are meant to really tax the limits of the heroes, they should be allowed full recovery after each fight.

### Team Combat

The fundamental structure of fighting video games is based on one-on-one combat. On the other hand, the most common structure of a tabletop role-playing game involves a number of characters allied with one another, acting as a team. This can be difficult when it comes to combat in Fight! It is usually not much fun for other players to wait around for their chance to engage in a one-on-one combat during a tournament, even if the Director makes an effort to continue the story with "backstage" events involving the other PCs while one of them is in the ring.

On the other hand, combat scenes involving multiple combatants on each side have their own set of difficulties. They tend to be more complicated and a little longer to resolve. They sometimes fail to highlight a character's particular combat tricks and tactics, designed for one-on-one combat. And perhaps most significantly, they don't correspond to the traditional pattern of the genre that inspired this role-playing game in the first place.

This section of the combat rules provides a series of alternatives that allow more than one player character to be involved in combat at the same time, without necessarily resorting to the full mass melee of team-on-team combat. These patterns all conveniently conform to patterns found in fighting video games as well.

There are two basic formations for team combat found in traditional fighting video games. Either of these can be used as an alternative to whole teams of characters fighting at the same time. The two formations are an alternative method of team combat and tag team combat.

Even though these formations are usually intended

for tournament combat, there is nothing to restrict the Director from coming up with reasons why these formats are used in non-tournament combat. One of the easiest ways to justify these forms of team combat outside of a formal arena is the conventions of the martial arts genre itself: martial artists often choose the glory of one-on-one combat, and their allies often support this choice, even when their friend is being badly beaten. Only when their friend actually calls for their support do they enter the battle.

The first formation is simply the use of two or three person teams. In this case, combat is conducted like normal one-on-one combat. The winner of a round stays to fight the next team member on the opposing team, but in between rounds, he regains Life Bar equal to his Power Level + [Time Remaining/10] before facing the next fighter. In this arrangement, the team with fighters remaining wins the match.

The second formation is two or three person tag teams. Full rules for tag teams are presented in the next section.

### Tag Team Combat

A Tag Team combat is a battle in which only one team member is fighting at any time, but a combatant can immediately call on his partner to jump in and take his place while he recovers on the sidelines. In future supplements, there will be additional options to allow both partners to be involved at once, although only in certain circumstances.

Tag Team fights allow an additional non-attack action: Switching Teammates. By using this action in place of movement or an attack, teammates can instantly switch places in the arena. The teammate

enters combat in the exact same position, both in terms of Range from opponents and Distance from any Environmental Hazards. The new teammate also immediately rolls Initiative and Control and enters the turn sequence (though they cannot spend FS to modify these rolls). If the entering character rolled a higher Initiative than any Fighters remaining who have not yet acted, the entering character acts immediately. Once the switch occurs, Initiative continues as normal.

The Switch action can also be used at the end of a Combo. This counts as an L2 Special Move for determining the Control cost and Accuracy penalty of the Combo. If the Combo misses, however, the switch still occurs. If the Combo hits, however, and the new character gains Initiative and is able to act immediately and then chooses to Combo, the new Combo gains a +2 Accuracy bonus. The Switch action can be put at the end of a Combo as often as desired in a single turn, provided each subsequent Combo hits. Thus, it is possible to string together a number of Combos with Switches in them in a single turn, as the two teammates take turns attacking the opponent.

### Example of Combat

Rei Oshiro, scion to a family tradition sworn to defend a particular set of mystic artifacts from falling into the hands of those who would use them for selfish ends, has confronted Dr. Jason Battle, occult-trained relic hunter in an ancient underground city. The ruins are the resting place of an enormous Demon Stone, capable of transforming the world if properly activated and focused. Battle wants the stone to fulfill his goals, while Oshiro plans to guard the stone's resting place. Both Rei and Battle are Power Level 3.

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Director: This underground cavern is brimming with ambient ki energy. You can feel that your opposing spirits are strong enough to de-stabilize the entire ruins! We'll start at Range 3. The Time Count will be set at 99.

Rei: What happens at zero?

Director: Bad things. De-stabilizing things. Maybe "crushed under mountains of rock" kinds of things. Okay, time for Initiative. Dr. Battle will be spending 1 FS to add to his Initiative.

Rei: I have 1d6 for Initiative and 1d8 for Control and a +1 Control Bonus.

Director: Good! Battle has a d10 for Initiative, but since he's using a point of Fighting Spirit, he'll have a d12 instead. He has 1d6 for Control. Let's roll it.

Rei: 5 for Initiative and 8 for Control.

Director: A 1 for Initiative! Crap! And... 5 for Control. Rei, you go first then.

Rei: Okay, I have 8 Control to work with. Not bad. I'm definitely going to begin with a Combo. I'll start with my Demon Hunter Kick. It's L3. Then I'll add four more Basic Moves for a 5-hit Combo. That's 7 of my 8 Control.

Director: Not spending that last point?

Rei: Nope.

Director: Why not?

Rei: I want the Accuracy bonus. Oh, I need to move first. I forgot we were at Range 3. The Demon

Hunter Kick is Mobile, so I spend 1 FS to move 2 Ranges to Range 1.

Director: Okay. Battle chooses to Evade. He has a Defense Bonus of 1 and a Skill level of 2, so that's 3. I'll put two Fighting Spirit into it because he's ready for the attack. That's a Defense Total 5. So you need to roll a 5 or better.

Rei: Okay, cool. My Accuracy for this 5-hit Combo is 1 for the kick, 1 for having more Control than I needed, and 1 for my own Accuracy bonus. So, +3.

Director: That's a difficult Combo though; a 5-hit Combo gets you a -1.

Rei: Okay, so +2. I'll spend two Fighting Spirit for a total of +4. I guess I don't need to roll. Pow! "This ends here, Jason! We determine who's the best right now!" My damage is 1d6+1 for the Demon Hunter Kick, but my Strength increases it to 1d8+1. What about Battle's Stamina?

Director: Actually, it's a -1, so your damage increases to 1d10+1.

Rei: Awesome! I also get +4 for the 4 Basic Moves I stuck on, so 1d10+5!

Director: Looks right - roll it!

Rei: A 5! 10 points damage!

Director: Wow! Battle is down to 40 Life Bar already. He gets Knocked Back to Range 2. He's not Knocked Down, is he?

Rei: No, the Demon Hunter Kick doesn't Knock Down.

Director: Well, that's something. But that's also more damage than Battle's Stun Threshold, so he's Stunned. This is not going well for the good doctor! This is the



first hit of the battle, so Rei, you get 3 Fighting Spirit back, the same as your Power Level. Battle has to use his turn to begin recovering from being Stunned. That's it. So that's the turn - Rei leapt forward toward Battle, ambient ki



trailing behind him as he flew through the air. The first kick landed, then he twisted his hips to land another kick while still in the air, and as he came to land on his feet followed up with flurry of punches. All the blows landed, sending the relic hunter reeling back across the pulsing rocks of the ruins.

Rei: I get Glory, right?

Director: Yeah, 8 Glory this turn: 3 for using a Level three move (the Demon Hunter Kick) and 5 more for hitting with a 5-hit Combo. You also get 3 Super Energy (1 for the turn, 1 for the Special Move, and 1 for the successful Combo). Battle gets 2 Super Energy (1 for the turn and 1 for suffering Life Bar damage).

Rei: How long was that? I'm worried about these ruins.

Director: Not long at all. A 3. The Time Count drops from 99 to 96. Next turn!

Rei: I'm totally pressing this advantage! I'm spending 1 FS on both Initiative and Control. That gives me 1d8 and 1d10.

Director: Battle spends Fighting Spirit on Initiative too, keeping his 1d12. Let's roll.

Rei: Crap! Initiative 2, Control 7.

Director: Initiative 9! I rolled Control 4, but that doesn't really matter this turn. It looks like Dr. Battle catches a break through a momentary lapse in Rei's concentration. Time to get back into the fight! But I have to use this action to recover from being Stunned too. At least Battle will have the benefit of his full defensive capabilities for the remainder of the turn.

Rei: I'm still bummed that I'm not going to be able to annihilate this guy quickly. Oh, well. You know what? I'm going for the same Combo I had planned anyway. I'm starting with the Airwalk Fist and then I'm adding three more Basic Moves. That's 7 Control, just what I rolled.

Director: OK, I should choose to go on Total Defense at this point...but where's the guts in that? I'm going to use Tactics for defense. With my Defense

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Bonus and another 3 FS, Battle's Defense Total is 6.

Rei: OK, let me see if I can figure out my Accuracy for this. The Airwalk Fist has no mod, and I have my +1 Accuracy Bonus. I get -1 for attempting a 5-hit Combo, right? So that's a +0 total.

Director: Nope. You never moved and you're still at Range 2.

Rei: I can't move when using the Airwalk Fist. Can I attack at this Range?

Director: Yes, but attacking at Range 2 has another -1 Accuracy, so you have a -1 to hit.

Rei: OK. I'll spend 3 FS on Accuracy. So I get a total +2. [Rolls] A 3. 5 total - a miss.

Director: Had Battle just used Defense, your attack simply would have missed. But he used Tactics, which means I get to choose a Defensive Response to use on Rei. Right now, I can only use the Basic Response or Jinking. I'm going to use the Basic Response and see if I can't get a simple jab to strike home.

Rei: OK, how do I figure my Defense Total against this? Is it the same as a normal attack?

Director: No. Because you're defending against a Defensive Response, you only get to use the Defense Skill, and your skill level is halved.

Rei: I have a 3 Defense. Do I round up or down?

Director: Down, my soon-to-be-struck opponent. So that's a 1.

Rei: Yikes. I'll spend 2 FS on defense. My Defense

Total is 3.

Director: OK. A Basic Move has +0 Accuracy, but I get a +1 because I have more Control than I need for the attack. Hey! It looks like my Control mattered after all!

Rei: Yeah, but you're attacking at Range 2 too. Remember?

Director: Yes, yes. OK, so that's a -1. Right now, I have a +0 Accuracy, and Battle spends 2 FS, so he has a +2. So I don't need to roll to hit.

Rei: So I suffer the humiliation of both missing and getting hit in response?

Director: Yup. The damage is only 1d4 for a Basic Move, but Battle has a +1 Damage Bonus. His Strength and your Stamina are both 0, so there's no modifier for that. I guess that's it. [Rolls] Four points of damage.

Rei: My Life Bar drops to 46. Knock Back?

Director: Yes, so we are now at Range 3. No Knock Down, no Stunning. Shaking the stars out of his eyes, Battle's vision clears just in time to see Rei's body tensing up for a powerful uppercut. Acting on instinct honed from hundreds of precarious situations in his long career, Dr. Battle throws a quick kick into Rei's side. Rei tumbles to the ground and rolls back to his feet, ready to re-engage. "You're not ready to take me on, Oshiro! I've learned techniques you couldn't even imagine!" No one earns Glory this turn - you missed and Battle only used a Basic Move. But you do get 3 more Super Energy. Battle gets only one more.

Rei: Time Roll?

Director: Wow! Only a 1. Busy turn! Down to 95.

Ready for next turn?

Rei: Let's do this. We're back at Range 3, just like we started. I'm not spending any Fighting Spirit on Initiative or Control.

Director: OK, neither am I. Let's roll.

Rei: Initiative 4, Control 2. Great.

Director: Initiative 5, Control 1. Not much better. Battle has Initiative. I'm going to advance 1 Range and stop. We're now at Range 2.

Rei: Why did you do that?

Director: Well, really, it's none of your business, but...we both rolled lousy Control, so probably not much is going to happen this turn, so I'm going to set up for next turn. Plus I get a +1 to my Defense Totals this turn for moving 1 Range and not attacking.

Rei: We'll see how this works out. I'm also moving forward 1 Range to Range 1 and attacking with a Basic Move. I have more Control than I need, so I get a +1 Accuracy.

Director: Good. Battle is going to use his Evasion Skill. He has a Skill level of 2, plus his Defense Bonus, and he once again is going to spend 3 FS on defense. Defense Total of 7.

Rei: 7? Wow. +1 Accuracy for Control and +1 for my Accuracy Bonus, and...3 more FS. +5 should do it. [Rolls] Crap! Another 1! I missed!

Director: The ki energy in this place must be aligned against you. Battle's Evasion is successful.

Rei: So what does that mean?

Director: A successful Evasion means either he can move out of the way or take an Accuracy bonus on his next attack. I'll be doing the latter. So not much really happened this turn. Battle cautiously moved forward, sizing you up...

Rei: ...and then I stepped forward to throw a strong punch...

Director: ...and Battle ducked underneath it. The adventurer has a devious smirk on his face. No Glory this turn either. Rei gets 1 Super Energy, as does Battle. Time Count...4! I guess there was a lot of cautiously moving in and out of range before we had that dull exchange. 91 left on the Time Count. Let's get a more exciting turn going!

Rei: OK. We're in range for my best Combos now! I'm going to spend 1 FS on Initiative and 2 FS on Control. That'll be 1d8 and 1d12.

Director: Battle spends 1 FS on each as well. 1d12 and 1d8 for me. Roll them.

Rei: Initiative 8 and Control 10! Yes! That makes up for last turn.

Director: No, it doesn't, I'm afraid: Initiative 9, Control 4. It's Battle's move first.

Rei: This guy is annoyingly fast.

Director: Yeah, but you've already seen that he can't take a punch. He's going to move in 1 Range to Range 0. And he's going to do a Throw. That costs him 1 FS.

Rei: Are Throws unblockable like they are in fighting

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games?

Director: No, but they do get a bonus to Accuracy. How are you going to defend yourself?

Rei: I'm just going to use Defense; it's my best Skill. So that's 3. I'll spend 3 more FS to give me a 6 Defense Total. That's the best I can do.

Director: You could skip your action for the turn and go on Full Defense. It will add 2 more to your Defense Total and give you an Initiative bonus next turn.

Rei: That sounds good, I guess. Let's try that. Defense Total 8. Rei instinctively reacts to Battle's lunge forward and gets ready to respond!

Director: Alright. Battle is using his Heart Breaker. It has an Accuracy bonus of +1, I get +1 for being at Range 0, and I get a +2 bonus for successfully Evading last turn. I will spend another 1 FS on Accuracy, giving me a +5 against your 8. [Rolls] 5! That hits.

Rei: Today is clearly not a good day to be the hero.

Director: Battle whispers in Oshiro's ear, "You were going to defeat me, Oshiro? How were you going to do that? A family legacy is not the same thing as technique and experience. You don't stand a chance!" The damage for the Heart Breaker is 1d8, which isn't modified by your Stamina. Battle does have a +1 Damage Bonus, so 1d8+1. [Rolls] 7 – so that's 8 points off your Life Bar.

Rei: OK. I'm down to 38 now. Crap! 8 points is higher than my Stun Threshold! I'm Stunned!

Director: Actually, you're not. Damage from Throws is not applied against Stun Threshold.

Rei: Am I Knocked Back?

Director: Normally, yes, a Throw would knock you back to Range 1. But this move has the Hurl Element. Instead of Knock Back, you get hurled away 2 Ranges to Range 2. Also, all Throws Knock Down the opponent.

Rei: So I lose my action standing up, right?

Director: That's right, you would. Except you chose to go on Total Defense, which counts as your action for the turn. So you will have to spend your action next turn to stand up. OK, so Battle closed in with Rei for a grapple and then threw him away 15 feet onto some jagged rocks.

Rei: Ouch. Oshiro groans in pain and frustration. Mostly frustration.

Director: Battle gets 3 Glory for using his Level three Throw. And you get 2 more Super Energy, 1 for the turn and 1 for suffering Life Bar damage. Battle gets 2 for the turn and for the Special Move. Hey, how much Super Energy do you have now?

Rei: Nine. One point away from being able to do a Super Move...

Director: Let's see if you can make that happen. Time roll 2; we're down to 89 and we're at Range 2. You'll have to spend the next turn standing up. Let's go!

And the battle continues.

## Thug Thrashing

The Thug Thrashing sub-system of combat should be used anytime in which Fighter-level combatants engage non-Fighter-level combatants. Thus, despite the name of the sub-system, these rules are used when player characters are fighting thugs, security forces, military personnel, law enforcement, or even normal, non-combat-trained opponents. "Thug" is the term used to represent all non-Fighter-level opponents in combat. Fighters and Thugs are generally in entirely different leagues when it comes to combat ability. A competent Fighter, especially one trained to fight multiple opponents, can often handle dozens of foes at the same time.

A number of Thugs are grouped together as a single opponent. Up to 10 Thugs can constitute a single Thug group. It should be noted that, as each group is run as a separate character, a huge number of Thugs can be difficult for the Director, unless each player character is facing a group of Thugs and each

pair of a Fighter and a Thug group is run as a separate duel. The guidelines for running combats with more than two combatants can also be used to simplify large Thug fights. In the case of huge battles, it fits the martial arts genre to have the characters face a limited number of Thug groups at once, but have more Thug groups waiting to take their place in combat; as one group is defeated, another runs up to join the fight.

In exceptional situations, a "Thug group" may possess a single member. This would be the case if the remainder of the group had been incapacitated in combat, but a "group" may also be constructed with just one member. For example, a single Thug 5 could provide a challenge for a single PL 1 Fighter. Thug Levels (see below) cannot be combined into a single group. Therefore, if a single Thug 3 was leading five Thug 2s, they would need to be divided into two Thug groups: one containing the single Thug 3 and the other with the five Thug 2s, even though combined they are less than 10 Thugs.

### Thug Attributes

Thug Level	Normal	Thug 1	Thug 2	Thug 3	Thug 4	Thug 5
Initiative	1d4	1d4	1d6	1d6	1d8	1d10
Accurancy	-1	0	+1	+2	+3	+4
Damage	1	1d4	1d6	1d8	1d10	1d12
Defense	2	3	4	5	6	7
Life Save	1	2	3	4	5	6
Thug Qualities	0	0	1	2	3	4



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The combat competency of a Thug is determined by its Thug Level, a rating from 1 to 5, with an additional category to represent "Normals." Normals are people without combat training whatsoever. The increasing level of Thug (i.e., Thug 1 through Thug 5) represents increasing levels of competency. Rowdy barroom brawlers or athletic people without formal combat training may be Thug 1. Common criminals, security forces, and law enforcement would typically be Thug 2. Levels 3 through 5 can be used for differing levels of hardened criminals, soldiers, elite fighters, and assassins, culminating in Thug 5, the best of the best, who can challenge low-level Fighter characters on their own.

The Thug attributes are not particularly evocative on their own. Every Thug 2 might possess the same attributes, whether he is a police officer, a soldier, or a faceless martial arts mook. In order to distinguish one group of Thugs from another, especially of differing descriptions, the attributes of Thugs can be modified by increasing one attribute to the next higher level, while decreasing another one to the next lower level. For example, a Thug 2 might do 1d8 damage but only have Defense 3. Normals should not be modified in this way, as they really are not intended to be viable opponents for Fighters anyway. Thug 5s who increase Damage by any means add +1 damage to their 1d12.

In addition to the above modifications, each Thug group that is composed of Thug 2 or higher can be given Qualities and Weaknesses like a regular character. Weaknesses earn extra Qualities as usual. If a Quality relates to a skill check and that roll is relevant, assume the Thug's skill level is equal to Defense. (Also see Thug Qualities and Thugs and Skills below.) These Qualities and Weaknesses apply to every Thug in the group, not to individual Thugs.

Initiative functions in combat as usual. Accuracy is

the bonus the Thugs receive on all attack rolls. Defense is the only defensive option the Thug may use in combat and they cannot modify this number in any way.

Damage is the default damage for all of the Thugs' attacks, modified by the target's Stamina as usual. This attack is not a Ranged attack. It might be the Thugs' unarmed attacks or their attacks with some handheld weapon; the details of this are up to the Director, but different weapons have no specific mechanical effect on combat.

Life Save is used instead of Life Bar for Thugs. When a Thug is hit in combat, the Director rolls 1d10. If the roll is equal to or less than the Thug's Life Save, the Thug remains in combat. Otherwise, he is removed from combat (knocked out or killed, as per the Director's discretion, the character's intentions, and the needs of the story). High Strength subtracts from Life Save (e.g., a Fighter with Strength 2 would reduce Thugs' Life Saves by 2), and low Strength adds to Life Save. Each die size of damage done above 1d4 also subtracts 1 from Life Save, though a +1 damage does not affect it. If a Special Move Element would add damage for any reason (such as the Juggle Element or the Power Up Element), this also subtracts one from the Thug's Life Save.

A Combo that hits a Thug ignores the damage from any particular move in the Combo, but subtracts one from the Life Save for every full 2 hits in the Combo. For example, a 4-hit Combo would subtract two from the Thug group's Life Save.

In the case of a Combo, instead of subtracting from Life Save, the penalty can instead be used to force another Thug in the same group to also make a Life Save, albeit without modification. In this way, a

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Combo can potentially hit multiple targets at once. These two effects, subtracting from Life Save and hitting multiple targets, cannot be combined in the same Combo.

**Example:** Rei is fighting Thugs with Life Saves of 2. He hits one with a massive 8-hit Combo. This would normally reduce the Thug's Life Save to 0 (no modifier for the damage because the attack was a Combo, but -4 for an 8-hit Combo). The targeted Thug would be automatically defeated. However, Rei could have instead forced four Thugs to all make Life Saves of 2 instead of reducing 1 individual Thugs Life Save to zero.

### Balancing Thugs Against Fighters

Thug groups can have tremendous flexibility in their variable attributes and Qualities. As such, it is difficult to say how dangerous a particular Thug group might be against a Fighter. This becomes important when the Director is trying to plan scenes involving Thug Thrashing combat.

While no specific mathematical formula exists, the Director can gauge how an encounter might go by comparing several factors. Each Thug group may hit a player character roughly every other turn (this is not necessarily statistically accurate, but it works as a rough calculation). Their average damage can then be compared to the combined Life Bars of the player characters. This gives a rough time frame of how many turns the player characters can stand against the Thugs.

Again, as an abstraction, it can also be assumed that the player characters will likely defeat one Thug every turn or one Thug per level of Thug Thrashing Skill every turn. By comparing these numbers to the number of turns the Thugs will likely need to defeat the player characters, an approximate number of Thugs needed to challenge the group can be determined.

It should be noted that these numbers will often be very large. A high Power Level group of Fighters, all with moderate levels of the Thug Thrashing Skill, can successfully defeat a huge number of opponents before being worn down. These numbers may not always be plausible from the point of view of the Director's story. This is not necessarily a problem: Thug Thrashing fights are sometimes just an excuse for a quick action sequence to remind the players how powerful their characters really are.

### Thug Qualities

The following list contains the Qualities that are available to Thugs. Keep in mind that, while all of these are available, many of them might make extremely unusual Thugs! Other Qualities from the standard list may be used, but most will have no appreciable effect on a Thug group, in or out of

combat. If a Thug group possesses a specific Quality, especially one with no effect on combat, the Quality should be worked into the Thugs' role in the story in a noticeable way. For example, if the main villain maintains sexy, suggestively dressed bodyguards, the player characters should probably have an opportunity to encounter them in a social setting before meeting them in combat.





Attractive	Gun Expert	Sharp Dressed
Beautiful	Intelligent	Short
Big	Intimidating	Suggestive Attire
Bishounen	Light	Tall
Buxom	Luck	Technique
Charming	Magic	Tomboy
Cute	Pet	
Dashing	Power	
Driven	Powerful Item	
Gadgeteering	Psychic	
Genius	Sexy	

The next list contains the Weaknesses that are available to Thugs. The Director may use other Weaknesses from the standard list, but the effects of others would need to be significantly increased to make them readily noticeable in game. Weaknesses should affect the Thugs in the same way that they have to affect the player characters; a Weakness that isn't a Weakness should not be allowed. If the crime lord's personal assistants are thick and ugly, the player characters should be given an opportunity to exploit these Weaknesses in some way out of combat.

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Code  
Dull Personality  
Honorable  
Noteworthy Appearance  
Style Weakness  
Thick  
Ugly  
Unattractive  
Unintelligent  
Unluck

The following Special Move Elements can be purchased as Qualities for Thugs. Each of these costs a number of Qualities equal to the number of Elements it would normally cost. Possessing one of these Qualities allows the Thug group

to use this Element in combat. All of their attacks are considered to possess this Element at all times. The Director can choose elements not listed here, but care must be taken, as they may drastically alter the way combat works.

Aerial Element  
Always Does Damage Element  
Area Effect Element  
Bounce Element  
Critical Hit Element  
Fast Recovery Element  
Hard to Evade Element  
Harry Element  
Hits Low Element  
Increased Knockback Element  
Increased Stun Element  
Knocks Down Element  
Knockback Advance Element  
Mobile Element  
Position Shift Element  
Priority Element  
Ranged Element  
Teleportation Element  
Temporary Invulnerability Element  
Throw Element  
Unblockable Element

There are also a few unique Qualities available for Thug groups.

**Competent Villain:** This Quality allows a Thug group of one (or, more rarely, more than one, such as twins or specially trained teammates) to ignore the multiple actions normally offered by opponents using the Thug Thrashing skill.

**Dangerous:** This Quality allows the Thug group to increase one of their attributes to the next higher Thug Level. This is in addition to the default modification of adding to one attribute by subtracting from another. This Quality may be taken more than once. Thug 5s may not take this Quality.

**Dramatic Villain:** This Quality allows a Thug group of one (or, more rarely, more than one, such as twins, specially trained teammates, or mind-linked monsters) to gain an Action Point each turn when using the Dramatic Combat sub-system (see below).

**Gun:** This Quality can only be taken if the Thug group also has the Ranged Element as a Quality. See the special rules for the Gun Quality below.

**Hit Stun:** When a Thug group with this Quality hits a Fighter, the Fighter is affected by Hit Stun, just as if he had been struck by another Fighter. This Quality counts as two Qualities.

**Powerful Weapon:** This increases the Damage of the Thug group by one die size, or adds +1 to 1d12 damage. This represents masterwork swords, chainsaws, extraordinary skill with weapons, or the like. If applied to ranged weapons or guns, it could represent assault rifles, high-powered sniper rifles, poisoned shuriken, or the like. This Quality may be taken more than once to represent truly awesome weapons or multiple powerful weapons.

**Robust:** This Quality allows a Thug group to always maintain a minimum Life Save of 1, no matter how powerful the attack or how long the Combo used against them. This Quality counts as two Qualities.

**Skilled:** The Thug group possesses a number of non-combat skills. The number of skills is equal to the group's Thug rank (1 through 5). Each of these skills is at a skill level equal to the Thug group's Defense or 4, whichever is higher. This Quality can be used to create acrobatic ninja or perceptive security guards, for example.

There is also one unique Weakness available for Thug groups.

**Reduced Attributes:** For each one point or one die size reduction in a Thug attribute, the group may choose an additional Quality. This is in addition to the default modification of subtracting from one attribute to add to another. This Weakness can be taken any number of times, but no attribute may be reduced below 1 (in the case of Initiative and Damage) or 0 (in the case of Defense and Life Save) or -2 (in the case of Accuracy).

## Procedure for Fighting Thugs

The rules in the following sections mark changes and specific cases as they apply to Thugs in combat. If no specific changes are noted here, combat against Thugs is the same as the normal rules for combat.

Thugs do not have any Fighting Spirit. They cannot use Fighting Spirit in combat, but they are assumed to have it if they need it (e.g., if the Thug group has the Throw Element, they can still move 1 Range and attack, even though they do not have 1 FS to spend).

## Thug Initiative and Control

Characters fighting Thugs roll Initiative and Control as usual. Thugs roll Initiative as a group. Each group rolls its own Initiative. Thugs do not need to roll Control.

The character with the highest Initiative total acts first. Thugs never hold their Initiative.

Characters and Thug groups with simultaneous Initiative act simultaneously. Thugs are unaffected by the normal rules for simultaneous initiative which prioritize attacks over movement; Thug groups move simultaneously and attack simultaneously.

**Example:** Koichiro and his Thug group opponent both roll a 4 Initiative. Koichiro wants to attack and does not need to move; the Thug group needs to close with him before attacking. Normally, Koichiro's attack would have priority over his opponent's movement. But in this case, the Thugs' movement and attack are both considered simultaneous with Koichiro's attack.

## Thug Movement

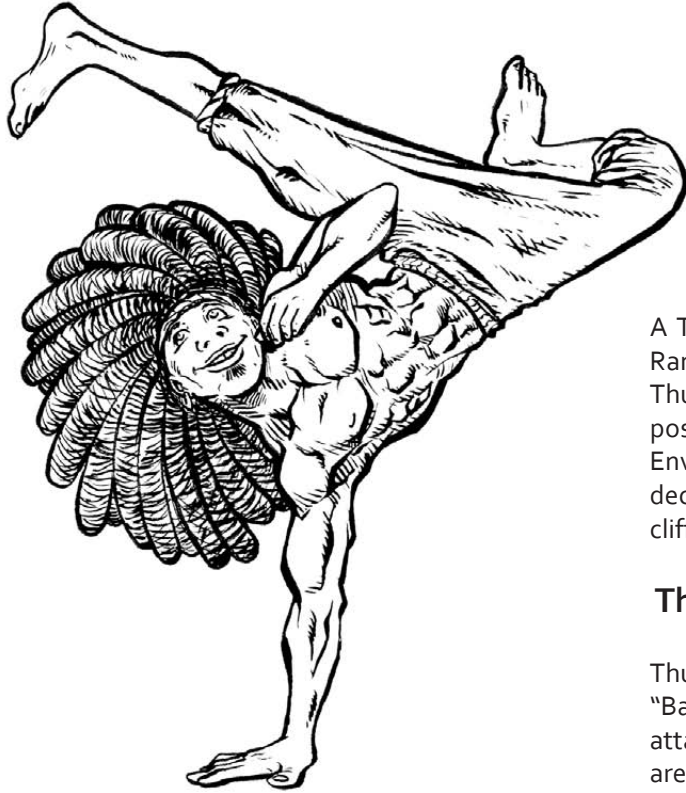
A Thug group is considered to be a single combatant. For example, even though a Thug group may represent 10 soldiers, those soldiers move and act as a single character. Thus, the Range between the Thug group and the other combatants in the combat is calculated as normal.

Different combatants may be at different Ranges from a Thug group, as in normal combat. However, unlike normal combat, Thug groups maintain their own Ranges even when multiple combatants are



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fighting the same group. For example, two Fighters might be at different Ranges from the same Thug group. Even though one of them might Knock Back the Thug group (such as with the Increased Knock Back Element), this does not change the Range between the other Fighter and the Thug group. This is because there are several people in a Thug group; however, for simplicity, this abstraction remains even when the Thug group is reduced to only one Thug.

Having a single Thug group be at different Ranges from multiple opponents becomes more complicated if the Director is using a grid to adjudicate position and movement because there

are opposing Fighters in the combat as well. In this case, it is easiest to consider the Thug group as a single combatant and to move them as a single combatant. This may mean that 10 people are occupying a single band on the grid, but it makes combat easier to run. Because Thug groups contain multiple opponents, one cannot Check a Thug group.

A Thug group can move 1 Range and attack or 2 Ranges without attacking. Generally speaking, a Thug group will move to engage an opponent if possible. Thug groups can be affected by Environmental Hazards. It's up to the Director to decide whether Thug groups can leap up or down cliffs or out of pits.

### Thug Attacks and Defenses

Thugs have only one attack form, essentially a "Basic Move." One Thug from each Thug group will attack each opponent within Range, provided there are enough Thugs in the group. If not enough Thugs remain in the group to attack all available targets, the Director chooses who gets attacked. Despite the fact that Thug groups usually represent several people, any number of Thug groups can target the same character.

When Thugs attack, they roll 1d6 + their Accuracy attribute. Thugs cannot use Full Offense.

Thug damage does count against a Fighter's Stun Threshold, but it does not do Knock Back and it does not do Hit Stun or Knock Down an opponent unless the Thug group possesses the Hit Stun Quality or Knocks Down Quality. If the Thug group possesses the Increased Knockback Quality, they knock opponents back 1 Range.

Thugs defend using their Defense attribute alone.

No other defensive options are available to them. Thugs cannot use Full Defense.

## Defending Against Thugs

A character can use the Defense or Evasion Skills to defend against Thugs as usual. A combatant who successfully Evades instead of using Defense may choose to move 2 Ranges, which costs 1 FS, or may instead receive a +2 Accuracy on his next attack, on this or the following turn, as usual. He may also choose to combine Defense and Evasion as usual. In addition to the normal options, a Fighter may use the Agility Skill in place of the Evasion Skill to Evade or combine the Agility Skill with the Defense Skill in the same manner as the Evasion Skill.

Defensive Responses can also be used against Thugs; however, as many of them are based on a response to specific kinds of Special Moves, many will rarely be used.

When facing Thugs with the Ranged Quality, characters can use the Agility Skill as an additional defensive option. When hit by a Ranged attack, a character can make an Agility skill check. The DL for this check is 4 + the amount of damage done by the hit. If the check is successful, the character dodged the shot and takes no damage. The size of the Thug group has no effect on the difficulty of this roll. While this is not at all realistic, it represents the conventions of the genre as seen in anime. A character may also use his action to go "Full Agility."



In this case, the character cannot attack, may still move 1 Range, and may add his Total Defense bonus to his Agility Skill for avoiding Ranged attacks.

If a character successfully uses Agility to avoid a Ranged attack, and the Thug group that used the attack is within Range 2 or less with the character, and there are at least 2 Thugs remaining in the Thug group that attacked, the character can automatically incapacitate one Thug from the group at the end of the turn. Even at close range, Thugs are often more zealous than they are accurate! Doing this also earns 1 Glory. This Glory is divided by 3 at the end of combat as usual.

In any case in which a character can use the Agility Skill, he may instead substitute the Acrobatics Skill. However, the character's effective skill level is considered halved (round down).

## Damage Effects Against Thugs

A group of Thugs does not suffer Hit Stun when struck. Thus, as long as any Thugs remain in a Thug group, they will get to act on their turn. Initiative simply determines at what point during the turn the Thug group takes its action.

Damage against Thugs is determined according to the Thug group's Life Save (see above). A

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failed Life Save removes one Thug from the group. As long as one Thug remains, the "group" continues to exist.

Thug groups do not normally suffer Knock Back, though an attack with the Increased Knockback or Hurl Elements will Knock Back a Thug group 1 Range. A Thug group can be attacked by a Combo. The effects of a Combo are described above in the description of Life Saves.

When a Thug group suffers a Knock Down, the effects are special. If the particular Thug hit in the Thug group succeeded on his Life Save, a Knock Down forces a second Life Save (i.e., a second chance to take the Thug out of combat). If the particular Thug hit in the Thug group failed his Life Save, the rest of the Thug group is Knocked Back 1 Range. Thug groups are never actually Knocked Down. Using a Throw Special Move with the Sustained Hold Element against a Thug group completely ignores the 2nd turn of the Sustained Hold; the Element has no effect.

### End of the Turn in Thug Thrashing Combat

When tallying Glory in a fight against Thugs, the Director should total the Glory earned for the whole combat and then divide by three (round up). This is the actual Glory earned.

Fighters do accumulate Super Energy when fighting Thugs, but the total gained is 1 less per turn than usual. This may result in a gain of zero Super Energy for the turn.

Before the turn ends, one roll is made on the Thug Event Chart for each Thug group (see below).

The time roll in any combat involving Thugs is 1d8.

### Thug Events

At the end of the turn, one roll is made on the following chart for each Thug group. The effects only affect the Thug group that rolled the event. The effects begin at the beginning of the next turn and last for one full turn.

The roll for the chart is 1d4 + the number of Thugs remaining in the group at the end of the turn + the level of the Thugs (i.e., Thug 1 adds 1, etc. Normals add 0).

Any even total on the roll is "no event." In this case, the time roll is rolled and the next turn begins with no effects.

The events on the chart are described primarily in mechanical terms. It is up to the Director and the players to make these into interesting and entertaining descriptions.

Use of Thug Events is recommended but optional; it is intended to make Thugs a more unpredictable opponent and to provide variation to extended confrontations against large numbers of Thugs.

### Thug Event Chart

**3: Rout:** One Thug is automatically defeated for no Glory, but that Thug is assumed to have successfully escaped from combat. This may cause later complications for the Fighters, depending on the circumstances.

**5: Plenty of Room:** Because of space opening up for greater movement or because of fear of imminent defeat, this Thug group rolls one die size larger for Initiative next turn.

**7: Exhausting Combat:** The strain of fighting so

many opponents at once takes its toll on the Fighters. All Fighters within Range 2 of this Thug group lose FS equal to the Thug's normal damage. If the Fighter has no FS remaining, the Thug group gets a free attack on the Fighter at the end of the present turn instead.

**9: Lucky Strike:** Because of luck, skill, or dirty fighting, this Thug group receives +2 Accuracy on all attacks on the following turn.

**11: Defensive Advantage:** Because of environmental factors, teamwork, or cover, this Thug group's Defense is doubled on the following turn.

**13: Relentless Foes:** Through force of will, performance-enhancing combat drugs, or concealed armor, this Thug group proves to be remarkably durable. Their Life Save is doubled on the following turn.

**15: Adrenaline Surge:** Through rage, sound tactics, or brute strength and luck, this Thug group rolls one die size larger for Damage on the following turn.

**17: Endless Numbers:** Because of sudden reinforcements or the recovery of previously defeated Thugs, opponents within Range 2 of this Thug group may not use the Thug Thrashing Skill on the following turn.

**19: Blitz:** Through excellent training, coordinating, positioning, or tactics, each Thug group gets an immediate free attack against any opponents in range. The opponents' defensive Skills are halved against this attack.

additional benefits against Thugs. Characters fighting Thugs act once as normal on their turn in the Initiative order. However, a character with the Thug Thrashing Skill can act one additional time for each point of Thug Thrashing Skill. These extra actions are full opportunities to act: the character can move, attack, move and attack, refocus, recover from being Stunned, etc.

If the character is fighting both a Thug group and Fighter-level opponents within Range 2 or less, the character can still use his Thug Thrashing actions to attack a Thug group, but may not use them for any other action, including movement.

The first action of the turn uses the character's rolled Control total. All of the remaining actions use half the Control roll (round down). If this results in Control 0, the character does not get extra actions. If the character suffered Hit Stun earlier in the turn, Thug Thrashing is based on half of the lowered Control total (round down).

In the case of simultaneous Initiative, a character still gets his full complement of Thug Thrashing actions; he is simply attacking multiple opponents at the same time.

A character can use one of his Thug Thrashing actions to go Full Defense, yet still use his remaining actions to act. If he is facing a Fighter-level opponent at the same time, this version of Full Defense does not apply against the Fighter-level opponent; only if the character does no attacks and is on Full Defense does the bonus apply against Fighters.

A character could even use Full Offense and Full

## Thug Thrashing

Characters with the Thug Thrashing Skill get

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Defense at the same time, allowing the accuracy of Full Offense while maintaining higher defenses than usual, at a cost of one Thug Thrashing action.

### Special Actions Useable Against Thugs

Talented, trained, and tactically minded Fighters can use their skills in unusual ways when fighting lesser opponents. Thus, Fighters have a few special options when fighting Thugs.

Story Points can be used against Thugs. By using an action for the turn and spending a Story Point, a character can initiate a Stunt Sequence. By doing so, the character earns points equal to his Power Level plus his Thug Thrashing Skill. These points are then used to automatically defeat Thugs. It costs points equal to a Thug's Thug level to remove a Thug from the Thug group (Normals each count as  $\frac{1}{2}$  for this purpose). For example, a PL 4 character with Thug Thrashing 2 initiates a Stunt Sequence. He has 6 points. As he is fighting Thug 2s, he can eliminate three of them. Excess points are lost. A Stunt Sequence earns Glory equal to the points spent (not counting lost excess). This Glory is divided by 3 as usual at the end of combat.

The Director can always declare that a Stunt Sequence is not possible. Furthermore, the player spending the Story Point must describe the amazing actions his character is taking, the improvised weapons he has just employed, or the extraordinary circumstances that have just occurred that have eliminated the opponents. If the Director does not approve, he can return the Story Point and the player must choose a different action.

If the Director and circumstances in the story allow it, Fighters may use conventional melee weapons to

face Thugs. Differences between melee weapons are unimportant for this purpose –the characters may use swords, clubs, polearms, or any of dozens of other weapons. In combat, the character attacks with a Basic Move. However, he receives a +1 Accuracy (to represent the weapon's longer reach) and the attack does +1 die size of damage (which means a –1 Life Save against Thugs). Unlike normal Basic Moves, every attack with a weapon is worth 1 Glory (not just the first attack with a weapon, as with Special Moves). Combos with weapons are still worth Glory equal to the number of moves in the Combo; additional Glory is not scored for using a weapon also. This Glory is divided by 3 as usual at the end of combat.

If the Director desires, these rules for melee weapons can also be used in regular combat between Fighters. They should only be used when both Fighters do not normally use weapons.

### Thugs and Skills

Thugs and/or Thug groups may occasionally need to make skill checks. For example, a skill check might be necessary to determine whether or not a pair of security guards could spot an intruding cat burglar. Another example might be a Normal who is contacted as an authority on ancient relics. The two situations are handled differently.

A Thug group is assumed to have any non-combat skills the Director deems essential for the group to serve its purpose. In the above example, it is reasonable to assume that security guards would have the Perception Skill. In this case, the Thug group's skill level is equal to  $\frac{1}{2}$  their base Defense value (round up). A Thug group makes a skill check as a group, unless the results for a specific Thug are necessary. The above security guards would make a single roll, whether it was two guards or ten. A Thug



group may also take the Skilled Quality, which gives them a number of Skills at a higher skill level.

Normals are people who have plenty of mundane skills, as they have no real fighting ability. Generally, the skill level of a Normal should be used as a plot device. If the characters seek a scholar, they should eventually find one who knows what they need to know. If they bring a car to a mechanic, it can be reasonably assumed that the mechanic can fix the car. However, if specific skill levels must be known, assume that a Normal possesses 6 Non-Combat Skills at level 6, and 3 more Skills at level 3.

## Guns

Guns are superior in many respects to all other ranged weapons, but the default portrayal of them in these rules is far from accurate –it is more suited to the dynamic actions of larger-than-life heroes. Guns are basically just a better version of a Ranged attack. There are no rules for called shots, automatic fire, or reloading, as elements such as these are out of place in the fighting game genre.

Thugs can be armed with guns if they have both the Ranged and Gun Qualities. Guns differ from other Ranged weapons in two ways: 1) Guns increase a Thug group's damage by one die; 2) Guns can hit targets "beyond" Range 5. This means that Thugs with guns can shoot at targets before combat is formally engaged. How long it takes characters to engage opponents is up to the Director, but generally should not take long.

Just as Fighters may be armed with melee weapons in some circumstances, they may also be armed with guns. If a character has a gun as a normal part of his Special Moves, this should just be built using the normal rules for Special Moves. It will not correspond perfectly with these rules, but it will be

balanced with other characters. A character who does not usually use a gun may have a narrative reason to use one against Thugs. They function similarly to melee weapons (see above): When used, they function as Basic Moves, have a +1 Accuracy, do +2 dice sizes of damage (i.e., -2 Life Save), and have the Ranged and Gun Elements. The Director should never allow guns in combat against other Fighters.

Characters can use the Agility Skill to avoid gunshots, just as they can avoid any other Ranged attack.

### More Dangerous Guns

The default rules for guns are appropriate for most campaigns. Here are a few campaign options in case a greater sense of gun realism is desired.

The easiest thing to do is to increase the damage of a gun based on its type. Handguns may add a single die, but assault rifles may add two or three die sizes. This eliminates the need for the Powerful Weapon Quality. A weapon like a grenade launcher may also be presumed to have the Explosive Quality for free. In narrative terms, a character defeated by gun-wielding opponents should be seriously wounded and may not recover immediately.

If even more lethality is desired, the Director may add additional damage as above, and then allow gun attacks to roll damage twice. Furthermore, anyone hit by a gun is automatically Stunned and anyone defeated by gun-wielding opponents is at least seriously wounded, if not dead. Unfortunately, this takes some of the emphasis away from hand-to-hand combat in a game focused on martial artists.

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### Example of Thug Thrashing

Grace Tanaka: 1/2 American, 1/2 Japanese. Ex-nun turned ninja. Her quest for justice has taken her to the bowels of Independence City, a crime-ridden dark metropolis ruled from the shadows by the infamous crime boss, Marcus Buchanan, also known as the murderous Black Tiger.

Grace has been following leads that have led her to a bad bar in a bad part of a bad town. After getting nowhere with the patrons, she turns to leave, only to be surrounded by a gang belonging to one of Tiger's sub-lieutenants. A huge, tattooed brute steps in her way. "Cute little girl – you're a long way from home." He cracks his knuckles and laughs. With a steely glare back at him, she responds, "And you're a short way from Hell!" And combat is joined!

Director: Nice line to get this fight started! This fight is taking place inside the dive bar. If it looks like it would be in a biker bar in a bad movie, it's probably here. Even though it's crowded and cluttered, I will not be using any of the rules for Environmental Hazards. Just use the scenario in your descriptions as you see fit. I'll keep track of the time with a Time Roll, but we'll just count it up from zero rather than having a formal Timer count down from 99. You will begin at Range 3 from your opponents.

Grace: How many thugs are there?

Director: Seven. Six thugs plus the leader.

Grace: I hope they're not too strong. I'm only Power Level 1. So, since there are seven of them, that's one Thug group of seven?

Director: Actually, no. Only Thugs of the same

rating can be in the same Thug group. So there is actually a Thug group of six thugs and a second Thug group of one thug, the leader. He counts as his own group even though he's alone.

Grace: So what kind of Thugs are in each group?

Director: Well, that you'll have to find out the hard way. OK. Time for Initiative.

Grace: I'm spending 1 FS on Initiative, increasing me to 1d10. My Control is 1d6.

Director: OK. The thugs have 1d4 and the leader has 1d6 for Initiative. Roll!

Grace: An 8! Guess that means I'm going first! And Control of...3.

Director: Great! The gang rolled a 2 and the leader rolled a 5.

Grace: What were their Control totals?

Director: Thugs don't roll Control because they can only use Basic Moves and they can't do Combos. It's one less thing I need to worry about when running them!

Grace: Well, let me try to simplify things even more for you. Let's get rid of these rank-and-file thugs first. I step forward 1 Range to Range 2 and use my Spinning Sweep on them. It's Level 3, so I have enough Control. It has Accuracy +0, but I'll get a -1 for the Range. How do the Thugs defend themselves? Do they have all the options I do?

Director: No, Thug groups have a static number for Defense. They have no Evasion, no Tactics, and they have no Fighting Spirit. More not to worry about. Their Defense is a 3.

Grace: OK. I won't spend any FS. [Rolls] A 4! Hits! My damage is 1d6+1, and this move Knocks Down.

Director: OK. Thugs also don't have Life Bar. When you hit them, they are either still standing and unaffected by the specific amount of damage you did, or they're out of the fight. This is determined by a Life Save: a number or less on a d10 to stay standing. For these guys, only Thug 1s, their Life Save is 2. So I have to roll a 1 or 2 on 1d10 for him to stay in the fight. However, if you do a higher-damage attack, the Thugs' Life Save drops even further. Every die size above 1d4 subtracts 1 from the Thugs' Life Save. Because your attack is 1d6+1, their Life Save drops to a 1.

Grace: Does the extra +1 of the 1d6+1 matter?

Director: No; only the die size. So, a Life Save of 1. [Rolls] A 3. One down!

Grace: That's it? One down already?

Director: That's it!

Grace: So, normally, they'd suffer Hit Stun, and they would be Knocked Back 1 Range and Knocked Down. How does this work?

Director: OK, first, Thug groups do not suffer Hit Stun. It's one of the few things they have going for them against Fighters. They are also not Knocked Back by regular attacks. So you are still at Range 2. Knocking Down a Thug group is special. Rather than Knocking Down the whole group, the effects depend on whether you took out your opponent or not. If you didn't, they have to make a second Life Save as they hit the ground. If you did take out a Thug, then the rest of the group is Knocked Back 1 Range.

Grace: I knocked one over and the rest stumbled out of the way of the falling body?

Director: Sure! So, even though I said there was no Knock Back, the Knock Down effect pushes them back to Range 3 again. Now, before the Thugs get to go, you have Thug Thrashing Skill, right?

Grace: Yeah, Thug Thrashing 2.

Director: Cool! For every rank you have in Thug Thrashing Skill, you get an extra full turn's worth of actions. You can move, attack, even go on Full Defense while you're still attacking! The only difference is that your Control roll is considered halved, round down.

Grace: So I get two more actions, but only at Control 1 each?

Director: That's right! Go for it!

Grace: OK. I'll do a Jumping Basic Move. I close 2 Ranges for 1 FS, land at Range 1, and throw a kick into one of the Thugs. No modifiers for Accuracy at all.

Director: Remember, their Defense hasn't changed; still a 3.

Grace: Right. [Rolls] Another 3, another hit!

Director: As your Basic Moves only do 1d4 damage, the Thug gets his full Life Save: a 2. [Rolls] A 3. Nice try, guy! Two down! No Knock Back either, so you stay at Range 1. Next?

Grace: I whirl around and backhand another guy. All the same numbers apply, right?

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Director: Yes. Go ahead and roll.

Grace: Another 3, and another hit.

Director: He rolls a 4 on his Life Save and he goes down too. Still at Range 1. Unfortunately for you, it's their turn.

Grace: What about the leader? Is he at Range 1 too?

Director: Nope. He's still back at Range 3. I track their distances from you separately. Their distances from each other is irrelevant. If you had an ally in this fight, things get a little trickier, but we could have put it all out on a very simple pattern on a piece of paper and everything would work smoothly. But we don't need to worry about that. Anyway, the leader goes next. He advances two Ranges to Range 1. That's all he gets to do. The rest of the Thugs get a single attack on you. How do you want to defend?

Grace: I will use Evasion. I have Evasion 2 and I will spend 1 FS on my defense. Defense Total 3.

Director: OK. Like Defense, Thugs' Accuracy is standard and never changes except for Range, and even then, they usually choose to close instead of attack. These guys have an Accuracy of +0. [Rolls] A 4. They hit! Damage is also, you guessed it, standard for all of them. Their damage is 1d4. [Rolls again]. A hefty 4 points of damage!

Grace: Nice hit. I'm down to 26 Life Bar.

Director: Thug groups do not do Knock Back with their attacks, so you are still at Range 1. That looks like the end of actions.

Grace: Yup.

Director: OK, so Grace stepped forward, dropped down, and swept the legs out from under one of the toughs. As he tumbled back into his friends, she bounced up and placed a high kick firmly in one of their faces, toppling that guy over a table, while one of her fists whirled and slammed hard into another guy's temple. He stumbled back into the jukebox, which breaks on impact. Meanwhile, the leader moved up behind Grace. As she noted his approach from the corner of her eye, one of the other guys smashed her hard across the jaw!

Grace: Sounds good to me!

Director: OK. You get 3 Glory for the Special Move. Check the time, which is 1d8 for a Thug fight... [Rolls] 4. So all that happened in about 4 seconds or so. One last end-of-turn task: a roll on the Thug Event chart for each active Thug group. [Rolls twice] An 8 for the thugs; all even results are no effect. The leader, however, rolled a 7: Exhausting Combat. He rolls his normal damage and applies it straight to your Fighting Spirit. [Rolls]. Six.

Grace: Wow. I'm down to 2 FS already.

Director: Despite her control of the battlefield, evidently Grace is a little unsure of herself now that she's surrounded.

Grace: The experience is bringing up memories of the men who attacked her convent back in my past.

Director: That's awesome! Love it! Next turn...

Grace: OK, to summarize: there are 3 thugs left and their boss, right?

Director: That's right. Time to roll Initiative.

Grace: I can't afford to spend any FS, so I'll be using my normal rolls. Uh oh. Initiative 3 and Control 4.

Director: The thugs get a 4 and the boss gets a 1. The Thug group goes first. Since they are at Range 2, they advance 1 Range and attack. How will you defend?

Grace: I'm still using Evasion and I'm going to have to rely on my skill alone. Have to save those last points of Fighting Spirit for when I really need them! So my Defense Total is just a 2.

Director: OK. [Rolls] A 3. They took advantage of your obvious distraction and hit you again. Damage is... [Rolls] Another 4 points!

Grace: Ouch! 22 Life Bar remaining. Time to put an end to this. It's my turn and I'm still at Range 1, right?

Director: That's right.

Grace: OK. For my first action, I'll use my Rapid Spear Hand. It has Accuracy +1, and I get another +1 for having more Control than I need.

Director: The Thug group's Defense remains 3; remember, it doesn't change.

Grace: Right. So I don't need to roll to hit with a +2 Accuracy. This attack does 1d6+1, so that's -1 Life Save, right?

Director: Yup. 2-1 is one. [Rolls] 5. Thug number 4 goes down. Second action?

Grace: Well, half my rolled Control is 2. Can I do a Combo on Thugs?

Director: Yes, but you ignore the damage of the individual moves in the Combo.

Grace: Oh. So why do it?

Director: Three reasons. First, it's worth more Glory. Second, a Combo, even of all Basic Moves, also subtracts from the Thug's Life Save, depending on how many hits are in the Combo. I suppose that reason doesn't matter much against these guys. Third, with a long Combo, you can attack more than one opponent at the same time.

Grace: I'll do it. I only have Control 2, so a 2-hit Combo of Basic Moves. Accuracy +0 against Defense 3. [Rolls] A 4. Another hit. Damage is 1d4+1.

Director: Right. Normally, 1d4 wouldn't subtract from their Life Save, but a 2-hit Combo still subtracts 1. [Rolls] A 4. So, another one down.

Grace: Hey, this is getting easy! I'll do the exact same thing on the last guy. [Rolls] 5! And that should take care of the Thug group, right?

Director: [Rolls] A 5. Yup, that's it. It's just and the leader now, and it's his turn. He attacks with a +2 Accuracy. How will you defend?

Grace: +2? Wow. I'll combine Defense and Evasion; I have 2 in each. I add 1/2 of the lower Skill to the higher, so that's 3, right? And since that's still not enough, I'll spend one of my last FS to defend. Defense Total 4.

Director: [Rolls] A 1! Not good enough! That's the end of the turn. He still gets to roll on the Thug Event chart. A 5: Plenty of Room. Well, that certainly makes sense after this turn! His Initiative gets increased by one die size next turn.



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Grace: Bring it on!

Director: You get a total of 7 Glory this turn: 3 for the Special Move and 2 for each of the 2-hit Combos.

Grace: 9, actually: the Rapid Spear Hand has the Increased Glory Element, so that's plus two.

Director: Right. Time check. [Rolls] 4. The fight has lasted about 7 seconds. While Grace hesitated, the remaining toughs closed on her. One of them threw a kick into her side.

Grace: Yeah, but that was just what I needed to shake off the distraction. My hand shot out like a blur, driving dozens of spear hands into his face. I followed that with a knife hand and a jab to the next guy, and then a cartwheel kick on the last guy over the bar. Tables and chairs went flying.

Director: And then the boss moved into the space cleared out by you and threw a fast fist, trying to catch you off guard, but you dropped into a split and the blow whiffed harmlessly above your head.

Grace: So let's get to the next turn already!

Director: OK. It's down to you and the boss, and he's using the space cleared out by the brawl. He's flexing and throwing a few punches into the air. His Initiative increases to 1d8 this turn.

Grace: I'm still not increasing my Initiative.

Director: Then let's roll it. [Rolls] 7!

Grace: Ha! 8! I go first!

Director: What was your Control?

Grace: Oops. Forgot to roll that. [Rolls] 3.

Director: You are at Range 1.

Grace: Perfect. I'm attacking with my Leaping Elbow Strike. No Accuracy modifier. What's this guy's Defense?

Director: He has a 5.

Grace: Oh! In that case, I guess I'll use my last point of Fighting Spirit for a +1 Accuracy. [Rolls] A 4. Hit! That worked out well. This attack does 1d8 damage normally.

Director: So that's 2 die sizes above 1d4, which means -2 Life Save for him. His Life Save is normally a 4, so it's reduced to a 2. Here goes nothing! [Rolls] 5. Despite his desperate attempt at intimidation, he's felled in one blow!

Grace: Even if that hadn't taken him out, I still would have had two more chances to attack him with Basic Moves.

Director: True. Let's check the time... [Rolls] A 4. A total of about 11 seconds. You get 3 more Glory for the Special Move. What's that make your total?

Grace: 15.

Director: Impressive. However, all Thug fights are only worth 1/3 Glory, so you end up with 5. Now that the men are sprawled all over the trashed bar, a mysterious figure who you hadn't seen before steps out of a room in the back. "Ms. Tanaka, I think we should talk..."

## Dramatic Combat

The Dramatic sub-system of combat changes the dynamics of normal combat to include cinematic effects. It alters the light "simulation" aspects of the normal combat system in favor of dramatic actions more in line with the combat action seen in manga and anime. This sub-system may be used as a replacement for the normal combat system or for fights in which the excitement of the story demands a higher level of drama. It allows characters to bring more of their Non-Combat Skills into play, which favors some characters.

The Dramatic Combat system relies more on Basic Moves than on Special Moves. As such, during the narrative at the end of the turn, all the action should be described in exceptionally vivid detail. Over-the-top martial arts action is good, but even better is any scene typical of combat as seen in anime films. In fact, as an optional rule, the Director can evaluate the descriptions offered and award bonuses or penalties to Accuracy for the next turn. These should be between -2 and +2.

Combatants using the Dramatic Combat sub-system have only half as much Life Bar as usual. However, characters also have several opportunities to regain Fighting Spirit and Life Bar during a fight. As such, combat may become a longer process, depending on the characters involved. There are also many additional options to choose from in combat. These considerations should be kept in mind when deciding whether or not to use the sub-system.

The Thug Thrashing sub-system and the Dramatic Combat sub-system can be used together. Thugs do not get an Action Point each turn (unless they have the Dramatic Villain Quality), but can earn Action Points through other actions (such as hitting for maximum damage - see below). One particular use

of these two sub-systems in conjunction with one another is to create a moderately powerful opponent who is not quite Fighter-level, perhaps as the climax of a plot arc. The Director can create such a character as a Thug 5 with appropriate Skills and the Dramatic Villain Quality. Various kinds of dangerous animals or monsters can be created in the same way.

### Initiative Procedure for Dramatic Combat

In general, Dramatic Combat follows the same procedure as the normal combat system. Exceptions are noted here.

Every Fighter receives one Action Point at the beginning of the turn when Initiative is determined. This can be used during the turn or saved from turn to turn. Almost all of the special options in the Dramatic Combat system require an Action Point to use. A Story Point can also be used for anything requiring an Action Point. If the Director wants a truly epic battle, he can allow all combatants to gain two Action Points per turn, have full Life Bar, and automatically heal one Life Bar at the end of the turn.

Because Special Moves are much less common in this sub-system, rolls for Control are not made each turn. However, a character with a higher Speed Basic Quality may use his die size increase for either Initiative or Control when making Initiative rolls in this sub-system. For example, a Speed 1 character specializing in Control would roll 1d8 in Dramatic combat for Initiative, not 1d6 as usual. Likewise, a Control Bonus is added to Initiative in this system.

After Initiative is rolled, but before anyone takes any actions, a character can spend an Action Point to re-

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roll his Initiative. However, the new roll is kept, regardless of whether or not it is better. Multiple Action Points can be spent sequentially in this manner. If necessary, characters declare their intention to re-roll Initiative in reverse order of Power Level (i.e., lowest to highest). If these are tied, characters declare in reverse order of Speed. If these are tied, characters roll 1d6 to break the tie or mutually agree on who should declare first.

In the case of simultaneous Initiative, an additional condition applies. If two opponents roll the same Initiative and are within Ranges 0-2 at the beginning of the turn, their normal turns are replaced by a Flourish (see below). Unlike a normal Flourish, this does not cost either character an Action Point.

If a character hits his opponent and is not hit by anyone else during the turn, he can spend an Action Point at the beginning of his next turn to increase his Initiative roll by one die size. This costs no FS and also earns 1 Glory.

### Movement, Attacks, and Defenses in Dramatic Combat

Movement is unchanged in the Dramatic Combat sub-system, except that characters cannot always move to Range 5 (see Leaving Combat, below). Furthermore, Environmental Hazards should not be used. Instead, such elements of the battlefield should simply be used creatively in the narrative description of the fight.

With some exceptions (noted below), all attacks in this sub-system are Basic Moves. Combos are not used.

When using a Basic Move, the attacker can use an Action Point to either gain +2 Accuracy or +1 die size of damage. This can be applied to every Basic Move used. In descriptive terms, attacks that get a bonus to Accuracy can simulate the anime trope of showing dozens of hits from every angle. Attacks that get a bonus to damage are usually just powerful blows. However, it might also represent the anime trope of a "repeat scene" in which the attack hits with such force that the same blow is repeated as a moving anime still shot three or four times.

If the very first attack launched by a character during a combat hits, and it does maximum damage, and it does damage at least equal to the opponent's Power Level, the Director can rule that the opponent is immediately Knocked Out, regardless of Life Bar. On the other hand, after the first attack, if a character hits an opponent for maximum damage, the character receives an additional Action Point.

In addition to the normal defensive options available to Fighters, a combatant can use the Ki Skill in place of Defense or the Acrobatics Skill in place of Evasion. Each of these options costs an Action Point. However, the Ki Skill cannot be used for defense on the same turn that a move with the Ranged Element has been or would be used.

Because Special Moves are less common in the Dramatic Combat sub-system, most defensive options based on Tactics are going to be rare (excepting the Basic Response and Jinking Response). However, when a Special Move is used in Dramatic Combat, all normal defensive options are available. If the defender must use a Special Move in order to use a specific defensive response, all normal rules for using Special Moves in Dramatic Combat apply (see below).

If a combatant is hit by an attack, he suffers Hit Stun. In this case, if the Fighter has not yet acted this turn, he loses his action entirely, unless he spends an Action Point to act with a penalty to Accuracy and skill checks (see Ignore Hit Stun).

## Action Point Options

Action Point Options are what specifically distinguish the Dramatic Combat sub-system from the regular combat system. There are options to change Initiative, movement, attacks, and defenses, as well as opportunities to recover Life Bar and perform distinctive dramatic or supernatural actions. Each of these options requires one Action Point to use. If it says the action takes the place of an attack, the character can also move normally on the same turn.

All of the available options are described in the following sections, each pertaining to a specific aspect of the combat system. They are listed alphabetically. Many require a skill check, often based on a Non-Combat Skill. This means that some character concepts and/or campaign styles may fight drastically differently when using this sub-system.

## Initiative Option

**Fast Reflexes:** After Initiative has been determined, a character can spend an Action Point and roll this Skill against all opponents who also have this Skill. If the character rolls higher than all his opponents, or if none of them have this Skill, the character automatically gets the highest Initiative for the turn. Multiple characters can attempt to use this Skill on the same turn. In this case, every character spends an Action Point and the highest roll gets Initiative for the turn.

## Movement Options

**Athletics:** A character can spend an Action Point and roll this Skill instead of an attack. For every full 4 points rolled on the skill check, the combatant may move one Range. This is in addition to normal movement. Alternatively, instead of extra movement, every full 3 points rolled can be used as a +1 Accuracy bonus on the following turn due to a better tactical position on the battlefield. This bonus remains even if the character is hit before using it. This skill can incorporate environmental effects as a way to describe the bonuses brought about by the skill check.

**Leaving Combat:** To get away from combat, the character must simply move to Range 5. If no opponent objects to the character's escape, the character gets away. However, if the escape is opposed, the escaping character must spend an Action Point. Then, he and anyone trying to stop him must roll contested Athletics skill checks. If the escaping character beats all of his opponents' skill checks, he moves to Range 5. Otherwise, he remains at Range 4. Note that this is a change from the movement rules in the normal combat system, which normally allow anyone to move out to Range 5 with no restrictions whatsoever. Once away from combat, a lone combatant can use Draw Ki, Realize Potential, or Reaffirm Purpose to restore FS or earn Action Points to heal damage without meeting the normal conditions required by those options. Alternately, the character can flee the scene entirely.

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### Attack Options

**Climactic Super Move:** This move can only be used when a combatant has less than 10% (round up) of his Life Bar remaining, and all of his opponents must have 50% or more of their Life Bar left. It can also only be used once per combat. It does not cost FS or Super Energy, but a character with Super Energy accumulated must spend 10 (or all of it, if he has less than 10) to use this option.

The specific visual details of a Climactic Super Move can be modified each time it is used. A character may have either a Close or Ranged Climactic Super Move (chosen when the character first acquires the Skill). At Power Level 5, the character obtains the other form of Climactic Super Move (either Close or Ranged). A Close Climactic Super Move allows 2 Ranges of movement, or 3 Ranges at a cost of 1 FS. It receives the normal bonus or penalty for attacking at Ranges 0-2. A Ranged Climactic Super Move does not allow any movement, but can be used at any Range. In either case, the attack has a -2 Accuracy penalty.

The character announces his intention to use this move before Initiative is rolled and spends an Action Point. The character is considered to be on Full Defense until the move goes off. If the character is

Percentage of Target's Life Bar Remaining	DL
50%	4
60%	8
70%	12
100%	16

reduced to zero Life Bar before his turn, the move will not go off, but it does still occur even if the character suffers Hit Stun, is Knocked Down or is Stunned. The damage of a Climactic Super Move is based on a skill check. The DL is based on the percentage of Life Bar remaining in the opponent (round up).

A successful roll will immediately reduce the target's Life Bar to zero and earns 10 Glory for the attacker. An unsuccessful roll will do 10% of the opponent's full Life Bar as damage (round up) and earn 5 Glory.

**Debilitating Injury:** This attack costs an Action Point. It is made as a normal Basic Move with a penalty to Accuracy equal to the target's Power Level (minimum -4). If successful, the attack does no Life Bar damage. The attacker can choose one of two game effects: 1) The opponent loses all accumulated Action Points, or 2) the opponent loses the use of one non-combat Skill for the remainder of the combat. The attacker can target whatever non-combat Skill he wishes. If the opponent does not have the chosen Skill, the attack has no effect. If successful, such an injury must be carefully defined in narrative terms.

**Final Blow:** With this option, a combatant attempts to finish off his opponent in a single attack. The attacker spends an Action Point and rolls an attack as normal, with a -4 Accuracy. This can be a Basic Move or a Special Move. If the attack would hit against the opponent's unmodified Defense skill, roll damage as normal. If the damage rolled would be sufficient to defeat the opponent, the defender gets no opportunity for a defensive option and is instantly defeated. If that is not the case, then no damage is done. A character can be the target of a Final Blow only once per fight. A successful Final Blow is worth 3 Glory.





**Flourish:** In descriptive terms, a Flourish is seen in anime as a set of frames in a battle when both fighters launch a series of Basic Moves at each other rapidly, with nothing distinctive about any particular blow.

This dramatic action occurs in one of two ways.

First, if two characters have simultaneous Initiative, and the two Fighters are within Range 0-2 of one another at the beginning of the turn, a Flourish occurs. Otherwise, as an action, a character can ask an opponent to engage in a Flourish. In this latter

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case, the one extending the invitation spends an Action Point and also increases their Initiative die by one size on the following turn, whether the opponent accepts or not. If accepted, the Flourish is resolved on the same turn as the invitation. To resolve the Flourish, each fighter rolls a single unmodified d10. The combatant who rolls higher does a straight unmodified d10 of damage to his opponent and does 1 Range of Knock Back. This special form of attack cannot be defended against in any way. If the roll is a tie, the Flourish has no effect.

**Freeze Frame Attack:** This special attack form also represents a trope seen in anime combat scenes. The visual effect is a “freeze frame” in which a fist, knee, or foot stays in contact with the opponent, usually while the opponent’s eyes bug out and he spews blood or teeth. This attack is made as a normal Basic Move. If it hits and does at least 4 points of damage, the attacker spends an Action Point and sacrifices 1 point of damage to generate the Freeze Frame effect. This earns the attacker 2 Glory. This attack option does not need to be declared beforehand.

**Knocking an Opponent out of Combat:** With a successful attack, a character may spend an Action Point to do less damage, but more Knock Back. Each 2 points of damage sacrificed increases the Knock Back by one Range. This can knock the opponent beyond Range 5 and out of combat. This opponent may then either choose to rest (see “Leaving Combat,” above), escape the scene entirely, or else must spend the next turn doing nothing but returning to combat (appearing at Range 5 from his former position). The attacker may effectively drive the opponent “further” away than Range 5. For each additional Range beyond 5, the opponent must spend one full turn running back to

the combat. This attack option does not need to be declared beforehand.

**Property Damage:** A character can spend an Action Point and use this skill in place of a normal attack. It can be used against an opponent at any range. The opponent defends as normal with either Defense or Evasion, but as thrown objects and debris can rarely hit a competent Fighter, the opponent receives a +1 to his Defense Total. Tactics cannot be used to defend against this attack. Damage is calculated as a Special Move with the Ranged Element, with Property Damage in place of the Ki Skill, and then modified by the attacker’s Strength and the defender’s Stamina. If the Property Damage attack hits, the attacker earns an Action Point.

**Pulling Punches:** Circumstances in a story might make a character wish to pull his punches against his opponent. Often this is the result of a friend being mind-controlled or two friends being forced to fight one another. There are two ways to pull punches. The first is simply to spend an Action Point before damage is rolled to do 1/2 damage (round down) with an attack. However, if maximum damage is rolled, the full amount of damage rolled is inflicted instead.

The second use of pulling punches is to specifically break someone free from mind control. In this case, an Action Point is spent when a normal attack hits. The successful attack only does one point of damage, but the full rolled damage is tallied separately. As soon as this tally reaches enough damage to “defeat” the mind-controlled character, he recovers (at least for this fight). The downside of this method is that the mind-controlled Fighter gets a +1 Accuracy on all attacks and a +1 Defense Total against all attacks when fighting any character that is using this method to free the character from mind control until a) he is knocked free of mind control, b) he defeats all the characters pulling punches, or c)

the opponents stop pulling punches. If a character is freed from mind control in this manner, that character is also immune to mind-manipulating magic for the remainder of that combat.

**Special Moves:** A character can spend an Action Point to attack with a Special Move instead of a Basic Move. Each Special Move of a character can normally be used only once per combat scene. However, all Special Moves receive an additional +2 Accuracy. If the move also has a signature call-tag that is shouted when the move is used (it is up to the Director's discretion that a call-tag has always been a "signature"), the bonus is instead +3. In addition, the damage of all Special Moves is increased one die size.

When using a Special Move, if the attack fails to defeat an opponent, the Fighter does not receive an Action Point at the beginning of the following turn. In subsequent turns, a character may use a specific Special Move again at a cost in Action Points equal to twice the Special Move's level (e.g., an L3 Special Move would cost six Action Points to use a second time in the same combat).

These rules also apply to the use of Super Moves in the Dramatic Combat sub-system. Super Moves still require Super Energy to use in addition to an Action Point, and their use is still governed by the normal rules for Super Moves regarding Invincibility and Initiative.

**Surprise Attack:** If a character has an opportunity to attack from surprise at the beginning of a fight (Director's discretion), he can spend an Action Point to do double damage with his first attack. It is appropriate to allow contested skill checks between Danger Sense and Stealth before giving this benefit.

**Team-Up:** Two (and only two) combatants can team-up for their attack. Each pays an Action Point

and the attack occurs at the lower Initiative of the two attackers. The defender can choose only a single defensive option, but the attackers each get a chance to attack against the same Defense Total. If either attacker hits, both attacks hit. On the following turn, each of the team-up partners does not get an Action Point. Furthermore, attacks cannot be combined two turns in a row. The Director can also rule that attacks cannot be combined for any reason.

## Defense Options

**Endure Great Hardship:** If a character is either 1) below 50% Life Bar and all of his opponents have over 50% of their Life Bar remaining, or 2) below 25% Life Bar regardless of the Life Bar of his opponents, the Endure Great Hardship Skill can be used by spending an Action Point at the beginning of the turn when Initiative is rolled. During the turn, this Skill is used in place of the Defense Skill. However, there are two changes: 1) the combatant receives the bonus for being on Full Defense, even though he may still attack, and 2) all damage done to the combatant from any successful hit is halved (round down). If the character is using the Skill on the turn in which he is finally defeated, an Endure Great Hardship skill check at DL 12 will immediately restore the character to 1 Life Bar. This can re-occur indefinitely.

Though this Skill does not need FS to operate, a character using this Skill who still has unspent FS will lose 1 FS each turn this Skill is used. The character must spend an Action Point every turn to continue to receive these benefits.

**Full Defense:** A fighter on Full Defense earns an additional Action Point at the end of any turn in

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which no attack hits the character. This Action Point can only be used for recovery options (see below). Full Defense does not cost an Action Point to use.

**Ignore Hit Stun:** In the Dramatic Combat subsystem, Hit Stun always forces the defender to lose his action for the turn if he has not already acted. By spending an Action Point, the target can ignore the effect of Hit Stun and still act on his turn, but with -2 Accuracy on any attack and -2 on any skill check.

**Ki Face Off:** If a character attacks an opponent with a Special Move with the Ranged Element, the defender can choose instead to defend with the Ki Skill and spend an Action Point to declare a Ki Face Off. In this case, the characters are simply projecting massive waves of ki force at one another.

A Ki Face Off is a special defensive option that replaces a normal attack roll. Instead, the attacker simply rolls damage as if he had hit his opponent. The defender rolls damage based solely on his Ki skill, as if he were calculating damage for a Special Move with the Ranged Element (see the Ranged Element in Chapter 4). The fighter who does more damage receives an Initiative bonus on the following turn equal to the differences in damage.

On the next turn, whichever of the two fighters wins Initiative against the other wins the Ki Face Off. This does 1d12 damage, with a minimum equal to the character's Ki Skill, and 2 Ranges of Knock Back. On the turn when the Ki Face Off begins, either character can be attacked by a 3rd party with a +1 Accuracy, but their effective defense skills are also increased by an amount equal to their Ki Skill. If any damage is done by a character outside the Face Off, the Ki Face Off ends immediately with no further effect.

**Taking a Hit for Someone Else:** After a character has been successfully attacked, another character at the same Range or less from the attacker can spend an Action Point and volunteer to take the hit. In order to do this, the intervening character must succeed at an Athletics skill check with a DL equal to the die roll of the successful attack. If successful, the intervening character takes the original damage. If unsuccessful, the intervening character can choose to either not take the hit, or he can still take the hit but instead suffer double damage. If the attempt to intervene is successful, the intervening character earns one Glory.

### Recovery Options

**Draw Ki:** This Skill can only be used after the Sense Ki Skill has been used on a previous turn. It is used in place of a normal attack. The combatant spends an Action Point and rolls a skill check. The number rolled is the number of FS gained by the combatant. The maximum amount obtainable in a single roll is equal to the combatant's PL x 2 or the previous result of the Sense Ki skill check, whichever is lower. Characters can gain FS above their normal starting total with this Skill. The combatant only needs to use the Sense Ki Skill once in a fight to Draw Ki several times over several turns.

**Friendship Morale Boost:** If a character has a comrade or teammate with whom he has a close relationship (subject to the Director's judgment) who suddenly appears during a fight, or who reappears in a fight after being gone for 5 or more turns, the fighting hero (not the arriving comrade) may spend up to twice the normal number of Action Points to heal Life Bar on the following turn (see below). This Boost itself has no Action Point cost.

**Healing Life Bar:** This option can be done on the same turn in which the character also performs another action, but the character must have suffered damage on the turn and also failed to do damage to any opponent. At the end of the turn, the character can spend one or more Action Points to heal Life Bar. The amount healed is equal to the amount of Action Points spent squared. The limit on Action Points that can be spent at once is equal to one's Power Level. This can be done multiple times in a single combat.

**Reaffirm Purpose:** This Skill is used in place of a normal attack. It may only be used if the Director agrees that it is appropriate, based on the "purpose" defined for the character (see the Skill description in Chapter 2). It can only be used on a turn following one in which the character suffered damage without doing damage to any opponent. The combatant spends an Action Point and rolls a skill check. The number rolled is the number of FS gained by the combatant. The maximum amount obtainable in a single roll is equal to the combatant's PL x 4. Characters cannot gain FS above their normal starting total. Alternatively, every 3 full points rolled earns an Action Point, which can only be used to heal the character. If the Director feels the situation applies particularly well to the character's purpose, he may give a bonus on the skill check.

**Realize Potential:** This Skill is used in place of a normal attack. It may only be used if one of the following conditions apply from the previous turn: 1) the character has just stood up from being Knocked Down, 2) the character has just recovered from being Stunned, 3) an opponent has hit the character for maximum damage, or 4) the character had an attack die roll of 1 that also managed to hit the opponent.

The combatant spends an Action Point and rolls a skill check. The number rolled is the number of FS

gained by the combatant. The maximum amount obtainable in a single roll is equal to the combatant's PL x 3. Characters cannot gain FS above their normal total. Alternatively, every 4 full points rolled earns an Action Point, which can only be used to heal the character. If the Director agrees that it enhances the fight and/or story in some way, a player might suggest a story-based opportunity that has arisen during the fight to roll a Realize Potential skill check without the normal conditions applying.

**Stand Off:** At the end of any turn in which two opponents are within Ranges 0-2 and neither character damaged the other, either character can request a Stand Off. If both consent, they each spend an Action Point and the Stand Off occurs on the following turn. During that turn, neither character takes any action, as they catch their breath and prepare to attack again. The result of this is that each character either heals 1d6+PL Life Bar at the end of the turn or the character may make a modified Stance Evaluation check against the opponent (see below) during the turn. Anyone who attacks one of the characters involved in the Stand Off receives a +2 Accuracy bonus. The fighter in the Stand Off heals nothing if he suffers damage during the same turn. More than two opponents can Stand Off at once, provided all unanimously agree to it.

## Special Options

**Gadgeteering/Magic/Psychic:** A character who possesses one of these Skills can spend an Action Point and make a skill check against DL 8. If successful, the character can replace his skill level with any secondary Skill with his skill level in the primary Skill. This skill check does not count as the character's action for the turn.



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**Example:** Asuka has Magic 6 and Property Damage 3. On her turn, she wants to use Property Damage, but wants more punch than her skill level can deliver. She spends an Action Point to make a Magic skill check and rolls a 9. As a result, for this turn, she can consider her Property Damage Skill to be 6 instead of 3, matching her Magic skill level.

**Ki Yelling:** For (melo)dramatic effect, characters in anime based on fighting games (and shounen anime in general) often have long bouts of yelling before their most impressive ki attacks. The player is welcome to role-play this out if he wishes. The character must spend an Action Point and then spends one full turn yelling, without moving or taking any other action. He receives a +1 bonus on all of his Defense Totals for the turn, but if the character is hit by any attack during the turn, the yell is cut off and has no effect. If the yell is successful, for the following turn only, the character's levels in any one of the following Skills is effectively doubled (which can bring its effective level above 10): Ki (which increases the damage of Special Moves with the Ranged Element), Draw Ki, Property Damage, or Climactic Super Move.

**Mind-Manipulating Magic:** These rules are only applicable if the Director and a character's concept allow for them. Such a character also needs the Magic, Psychic, or Gadgeteering Skill. The character spends an Action Point and then a contested skill check is made in place of a normal attack between the relevant skill for the attacker (i.e., Magic, Psychic, or Gadgeteering) and either a straight d10 or a Grim Determination skill check for the defender, modified by any Qualities related to one's intellectual prowess or willpower (Director's discretion).

If the mind-manipulation is successful, the manipulator can choose one of the following options: 1) Force the opponent to do nothing for a full turn (the character defends as if he were Stunned); 2) Dictate the opponent's action (within reason) on the following turn, or 3) Take the opponent out of combat altogether. This last option must be carefully defined in story terms – its use presumes that the target is no longer physically present on the scene. This might be because the target is forced to run away, or is sent to another dimension, or is physically transported far from the scene. The narrative effect in this case may not be explicitly "mind-manipulating" magic, though the mechanics are the same.

**Power:** This Skill may be used in combat if the Director permits it. A character's skill level in the Power Skill can be used in place of another appropriate Skill, depending on the definition of the character's Power Quality. For example, a character who could fly might use the Power Skill in place of the Athletics Skill to move around the battleground.

**Presence:** This Skill may be rolled instead of an attack. This option can only be used once per combat. The character spends an Action Point and makes a skill check. For each full 4 points rolled, the character obtains an Action Point. Applicable bonuses to interaction skill checks apply to this roll as well. This option represents the character posing off and impressing, stunning, or intimidating his opponents with his very presence.

**Pushing It:** If a character wishes to push the limits of his abilities, he can declare that he is pushing himself before rolling his action. This costs one Action Point and allows the character to receive a +4 bonus to an attack roll, a damage roll, or a Defense Total for one turn. In addition to the Action Point cost, however, the character also suffers 1d6 Life Bar

damage that cannot be recovered in any way on the turn of the push. Defeating an opponent with an action while pushing it is worth one Glory.

**Sense Ki:** This Skill is used in place of an attack. It must be used before the Draw Ki Skill can be used in combat (see above). The combatant spends an Action Point and rolls a Sense Ki skill check. The number rolled on the check becomes the highest roll possible on any subsequent Draw Ki skill check during the fight. A character can try this option again on another turn in an attempt to roll a higher total, but the new total applies whether it is higher or lower.

**Spirit Combat:** In place of a normal attack, a properly trained character can bring another character with him to fight on a spiritual or mystical plane. In order to do this, the character must spend an Action Point, be within Range 4 or less, and possess one or more of the following Skills at the listed skill levels: Meditation 10, Zen State 9+, Spirituality 8+, Psychic 7+, or Magic 6+. The character makes a contested skill check against the opponent, each character choosing one of these five Skills. The defender can instead use Grim Determination in his defense also. However, the defender does not need to have any of these Skills in order to defend himself. If he lacks all of these Skills, his skill check is an unmodified d10 only. The defender can also choose not to resist and willingly enter Spirit Combat.

Once engaged in Spirit Combat, no other combatant can affect the characters. They move and interact with one another on their own separate battlefield. Combatants engaged in Spirit Combat may also use the additional Action Point options described under Spiritual Combat below. Those characters drawn into such a fight who are not able to fight spiritual beings (as defined below) can still fight in Spirit Combat, but all attacks suffer  $-2$  Accuracy and all

Defense Totals are also  $-2$ . To escape such a situation, a character must use the Zen State Skill as Athletics (see below). Successfully escaping brings the character back to the corporeal world in the same location as his place in the spiritual world.

**Stance Evaluation:** This Skill may be rolled in place of a normal attack. The character spends an Action Point and rolls a skill check targeting a specific opponent. For every full 4 points rolled on the skill check, the next attack that the character makes against his chosen opponent receives a  $+1$  Accuracy and  $+1$  damage. If Stance Evaluation is used during a Stand Off, the bonus is calculated for every full 2 points rolled, rather than 4.

## Spiritual Combat

As noted above, various demons, manifested spirits, and monsters of all kinds can be created by modifying a high level Thug and giving it the Dramatic Villain Quality so that it can make use of Action Points in the Dramatic Combat sub-system. This sub-system can also be used for fighting spirits and other incorporeal supernatural beings.

Unlike normal opponents, however, if the creature in question is purely spiritual or incorporeal, a character must possess at least one of the following skills or Qualities in order to fight back effectively: Magic, Psychic, an appropriate Power, 4 or more levels of the Meditation Skill, Zen State Skill 3 or more, or Spirituality Skill 2 or more. Combat is then conducted as usual. If a combatant lacks any of these traits, he can still be harmed by spiritual beings, but all attacks against them are at  $-2$  Accuracy and their Life Saves are  $+2$  (i.e., they are harder to defeat).

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In Spiritual Combat, a few additional options are available. Like all options in the Dramatic Combat sub-system, each of the following requires the use of an Action Point.

**Call Forth Wisdom:** This Skill can be used as the Property Damage Skill to attack a spirit with riddles or ancient formulas and prayers.

**Meditation:** This Skill can be used in the same manner as the Draw Ki Skill, but only if the combatant is considered to be away from combat.

**Spirituality:** For the cost of an Action Point, this Skill can be used in place of the Defense Skill to defend against attacks.

**Zen State:** This Skill can be used in place of the Athletics Skill to either escape from combat or to pursue someone trying to escape combat.

### Example of Dramatic Combat

After the confrontation in the underground city proved inconclusive, Rei Oshiro ran into his nemesis Dr. Battle again, this time on the streets of Tokyo. The Director decided that this fight would best be resolved with the Dramatic Combat sub-system. Both Fighters are still Power Level 3.

Rei: "I can't believe you escaped that cave-in, Battle! When are you going to realize that you have no chance to defeat me?"

Director: "And yet," he responds, "you have yet to defeat me either." Let's roll Initiative. Remember that there is no Control roll in Dramatic Combat.

Rei: But my Speed gives me a bonus on Control!

Director: In Dramatic Combat, that bonus is applied to Initiative instead. The same applies for your Control Bonus also.

Rei: OK. So I have 1d8+1.

Director: And I still have 1d10. [Rolls] A 7.

Rei: An 8! I get to go first! What Range are we?

Director: Let's still use the usual Range of 3 for the start of combat. Remember that you get an Action Point at the start of the turn.

Rei: I know! Well, I remember that Battle has ranged attacks, so I'm going to back up to Range 4 and then spend my Action Point to use Property Damage. I'm going to leap up in the air and kick the contents off the back of a passing truck at him.

Director: Alright! Battle will defend with Evasion. He has a +1 Defense Bonus and he gets a +1 Defense Total against the Property Damage Skill. I'll spend 2 FS for a Defense Total of 6.

Rei: I have a +1 Accuracy Bonus and I'll spend 3 FS for a total of +4. [Rolls] A 3 – a hit! Unfortunately, my Property Damage is only 2, so that does 1d4.

Director: But it's modified by your Strength and his Stamina, so it's 1d8. Roll it.

Rei: Six! Not enough to Stun him, but a solid hit.

Director: OK. Battle is down to 19 Life Bar.

Rei: 19? Why so low?

Director: Characters only have 1/2 Life Bar in the Dramatic Combat system. Battle would normally be Knocked Back, but he's already at Range 4. You gain

an extra Action Point for hitting with a Property Damage attack.

Rei: Is Battle affected by Hit Stun in this system?

Director: Yes, he loses his action entirely unless he spends an Action Point, which he's not going to do, so that's the end of the turn. No Glory earned. Rei gets 1 Super Energy, while Battle gets 2. Time check. [Rolls] 4. Time Count is down to 95.

Rei: Time to press the advantage!

Director: OK. Let's roll Initiative. We each gain an Action Point, so we both have two at the moment.

Rei: Right. I rolled a 5.

Director: An 8. I'll go first. Since we're still at Range 4, I'll move 1 Range to Range 3 and then I'm going to spend an Action Point to use the Athletics Skill. [Rolls] An 8 total! I can freely move 1 Range for every 4 points I rolled, so I'm going to use this to close to Range 1. Range 4 to Range 1 in a single turn with no FS spent! Battle jumps back against a nearby building, bounds into the air, and bounces off two more walls before landing right in front of Rei.

Rei: I want to save my Action Point, so I'm just going to attack with a Basic Move. My Accuracy is +1.

Director: Battle will again use Evasion and spend 3 FS. Defense Total 6.

Rei: I'll spend 2 FS to give me a +3 Accuracy. [Rolls] A 1. Miss!

Director: And that's the end of the turn again. We are presently at Range 1. Still no Glory earned. We each earn 1 more Super Energy. Time roll... [Rolls] 5. Time Count down to 90. Let's move on.

Rei: We each get another Action Point, right? I'm at 3 now.

Director: And I'm at 2. Let's roll Initiative.

Rei: A 9!

Director: Me, too!

Rei: So are we considered to have simultaneous Initiative?

Director: Not in the Dramatic system. In the case of tied Initiative, if the two Fighters are Range 0-2, they both automatically use their turn to engage in a Flourish at no Action Point cost.

Rei: So we just close in and throw lots of rapid punches and kicks at one another, hoping to connect?

Director: That's right. So to resolve a Flourish, we each roll an unmodified d10. Whoever wins does an automatic d10 damage to his opponent.

Rei: OK. [Rolls] A 4.

Director: I rolled a 7. So for damage... [Rolls] 6 points.

Rei: And there's no defense against that?

Director: Nope.

Rei: Alright. I'm down to 19 Life Bar too now.

Director: And that's the end of the turn. After a furious flurry of brutal attacks, Battle manages to

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land a punch right across Rei's jaw. The Flourish knocks you back to Range 2. No Glory earned. You get 2 Super Energy, while Battle gets 1. Time roll is a 4. Time Count is at 86. "Did you feel that, Oshiro? I'm just getting started with you!"

Rei: Initiative: I roll a 5.

Director: And our hero continues to have his usual luck against the doctor: I rolled a 7.

Rei: How many Action Points do you have?

Director: I have 3 now, and you have 4. But Battle is going to spend one and use a Special Move: his Mystic Shot.

Rei: So how do Special Moves work again?

Director: They get a +2 Accuracy and +1 die size increase on damage, but they can only be used once without spending a lot of Action Points, and if I don't defeat you with this attack, I don't get an Action Point next turn. But I can live with that! So, I will have a +2 Accuracy with this attack.

Rei: I will use Defense. I'll also spend 3 FS to give me a Defense Total 6.

Director: OK. Well, for 3 FS I can give myself a +5 Accuracy and automatically hit. I'll do that. Damage is normally 1d6+1, so it's now 1d8+1. [Rolls] 6 more points! Can't seem to Stun you! You're also Knocked Back to Range 3.

Rei: I'm down to 13 Life Bar and I lose my action because of Hit Stun. I'm not spending an Action Point to act. End of the turn?

Director: Looks that way. Dr. Battle followed up his punch attack with a glowing ball of blue ki energy.

Rei: Yes, but before we round up the turn, I'm spending Action Points to heal.

Director: OK! How many? You can spend up to your Power Level.

Rei: Three it is, then. So I heal 9 Life Bar, bringing me back up to 22. "You think you've got me where you want me, Battle? I've been playing with you this whole time!" I grin at him as I get ready to lunge.

Director: Great! You get 2 more Super Energy, as does Battle for using a Special Move. Battle also earns 3 Glory. Time count... [Rolls] another 5. Down to 81. Let's see you deliver on your threat...





# 6

## ***THE WORLDS OF FIGHT***

### **6. The Worlds of Fight!**

The previous chapters have described how to create a Fighter, how to use his Skills and Qualities in various situations, and most especially how to use his Special Moves to defeat his opponents in glorious combat. But in a role-playing game, the question remains: what does one actually do with these characters? This question perhaps looms even larger in the fighting game genre. This chapter aims to answer this question by providing further guidelines for conceptualizing and role-playing characters, how to set up a campaign, how to run stories within the campaign, and finally, how to bring it to an exciting conclusion.

As noted in the Introduction, the definition of the fighting game genre actually cuts across the lines of several other, more common genres in adventure role-playing games. The majority of fighting games are set in the modern or near-future era, often with many supernatural elements thrown in. Some stories are similar to the mission-based approach found in the espionage genre, while others involve themes drawn from the gritty competition between the street and the corporation found in the cyberpunk genre. Some fighting games have elements of traditional fantasy games, with swordplay, quests, and horrific monsters. All of these similarities can be useful for gaining a better understanding of the fighting game genre, but the genre itself remains distinctive. These distinctions (several of which are described in the Introduction) should be highlighted in the campaign.

Because of the shared fan base between fighting video games and anime, one might assume that many of the traditional tropes of anime and manga

storytelling apply to the fighting game genre. This is not absolutely true. A lot of anime and manga storytelling focuses heavily on the complex web of relationships between the main characters of the story, especially in regard to familial and romantic relationships. These relationships often have explicitly comedic elements to them as well.

Generally, this relational focus is not found in the fighting game genre. Many of the main characters (the Fighters of the campaign) seem lacking in many important interpersonal relationships. Some even seem incapable of really relating to “normal” people at all. This can pose a challenge for players and Directors. Fortunately, this is not universally true. Some characters have melodramatic relationships with other Fighters or with family members or other loved ones that exist as important components in the character’s self-defining reason for fighting. This is rich material for both role-playing and for story hooks. Furthermore, almost every fighting game, even the most serious in tone, seem to have room for one or more explicitly comedic characters who are on the quest for the tastiest meat bun, or to become the greatest waitress, or who actually aspire to fighting greatness but who are only involved with the main characters by chance and coincidence. Normally, these characters are NPCs, but there’s nothing to prevent a player from choosing one of these roles.

Just as the fighting game genre only bears some similarities with manga and anime, it also only bears some similarities with the genre of martial arts film. While many story conventions work in both genres, the characters are often quite different. While both sorts of stories feature the exploits of martial artists capable of feats impossible in the real world, the characters in a fighting game often possess powers and appearances that don’t translate well into live action. This is one of the reasons live-action

adaptations of fighting video games are often underwhelming.

Despite all of these considerations, one specific genre deserves special mention. Regardless of whether a fighting game is set in the past, present, or the future, the genre with which it shares the most in common is undoubtedly that of comic book superheroes. Garishly costumed heroes and villains fight unconventional battles with extraordinary powers, often with intensely personal motivations. Secrets are kept, rivalries are established, and the fate of the world often hangs in the balance. There is much inspirational material for a Fight! game in the exploits of traditional superpowered comic book characters.

These unique characteristics of the fighting game genre should be kept in mind as one conceptualizes characters, stories, and campaigns.

## Designing Characters for the Campaign

Because there are only a limited number of Fighters in the campaign, every one of them, whether PC or NPC, needs due consideration. Each of them should be distinctive, with interesting characteristics that benefit the campaign. Thus, when beginning a new campaign, both the players and the Director should keep in mind the intended tone and power level. As these can vary widely, they can have a significant effect on the kinds of characters the Director and the players should create.

Whatever the style and tone of the game, however, there are a number of common archetypes found in fighting games, which can be understood in two different ways.

The first way is to consider the nature of the character as a Fighter. Fans of fighting video games

will make distinctions between, for example, all-around characters, weak, fast characters, strong, slow characters, and characters with great offensive ability but poor defensive ability. These kinds of archetypes can be easily represented by the choice of Basic Qualities. For example, the strong, slow character would have Strength 2, but Speed -1. The fast character would conversely be Strength or Stamina -1, but Speed 2.

The other form of character archetype describes the character's appearance, personality, motivation, or some combination of all three. Here are 20 common examples, presented in alphabetical order, which can provide inspiration for both PC and NPC Fighters. It should be noted that some of these types overlap and a particular character may fit one, several, or none of these archetypes.

**Androgynous Male:** An unusual archetype, some male characters in fighting video games are so young and/or effeminate in appearance and demeanor that players confuse them for female characters. In some cases, the characters even dress in women's clothing. More often than not, such characters are villains, but heroic examples do exist.

**Big Fighter:** Every fighting game has at least one Fighter with the Big Quality and often the Tall Quality as well. Such characters are usually slow grappling characters. Many are professional wrestlers who are fighting to prove that their martial art is not fake. Many are from "foreign lands" (however that may be defined in the campaign) and many possess boisterous, jovial personalities that quickly turn to barbaric rage when angry.

**Boss:** Every Fight! campaign needs a Boss character.

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This is the main villain of the whole campaign, who may be either a constant presence or an evil mastermind working behind the scenes until the end of the campaign. A consideration of common master plans for the Boss can be found in the section below on plot arcs in Constructing a Campaign. The Boss is often more powerful than any other Fighter, and often uses cheap moves and tactics in combat. Some Bosses also have devious lieutenants called Sub-Bosses.

**Cocky Fighter:** These characters are loud, overconfident, and often reckless. More often than not, they also have the skills to back up their bravado. They are often natural talents who reach martial arts excellence through raw talent and instinct, and may chafe at the tedium of traditional training.

**Cute Girl:** Fighting games have a number of common archetypes specifically for female characters. Perhaps the most popular is the Cute Girl character. The rest of the details of the character - her background, motivation, and fighting style for instance - are all secondary details to the fact that she's a cute girl with a sweet demeanor. These characters are often young (under 18) and possessed of extraordinary self-confidence.

**Dedicated Martial Artist:** This archetype might seem unusual in a game in which every major character is an extraordinary martial artist! However, these characters are dedicated to a particular style of martial arts or perhaps just to excellence in the martial arts as an end in itself above all other concerns. Sometimes they consider themselves to be ambassadors of their style, eager to show the world that it is superior to all other forms. Other times, they seek nothing more than to

fight against opponents of as many other styles as possible to realize their full potential as a warrior.

**Evil Female:** Another specifically female archetype is the evil female. These characters are sometimes employees of the Boss character, as assassins, bodyguards, lovers, or some combination thereof. They are often curvy and alluring and are not above using their wiles to taunt and humiliate men. They tend to have distinctly unpleasant personalities: merciless, cruel, and violent.

**Evil Fighter:** The Evil Fighter archetype usually applies specifically to male characters (see previous entry). In many cases, evil characters work for the Boss character in some capacity, but this is not necessarily the case. Some evil Fighters have their own goals apart from or even in opposition to the Boss character. Many evil characters are motivated by greed or vengeance. While they may be violent, they are usually not violent simply for its own sake (see the Psychotic Fighter, below).

**Goof Off:** These characters are often associated with the Hero character. They are generally good characters, willing to fight the good fight, support the Hero in his actions, and help in saving the day. But they are often easily distracted or not fully aware of their own limitations. Sometimes, despite being great Fighters, they just don't care about what's going on around them. They are often comedic characters, but they do not need to be foolish. Instead of being the target of the joke, some Goof Off characters are just the light-hearted companions of the Hero, willing to crack a joke because the Hero is too focused to ever laugh.

**Hero:** The Hero character is almost as necessary as the Boss character in a fighting game campaign. Whatever the Hero's personal reason for fighting, his actions directly interfere with the plans of the

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**Boss.** The Hero usually has a handsome face and a noble personality, with charisma that draws other good guys to want to follow or at least aid him. He may be taciturn or jovial, but he is always serious about the task at hand. Ideally, one or more of the player characters in the campaign possesses this archetype.

**Heroine:** Much like the case with the Evil Female and the Evil Fighter, the Heroine is similar to, yet distinct from, the Hero. The Heroine will be aligned with the Hero but may not be one of his companions. Instead, the Heroine may have her own quest and simply cross paths with the Hero along the way. Like the Hero, she has a virtuous personality and a commitment to fight evil. She is usually attractive and a very powerful Fighter.

**Ladies Man:** This archetype applies to a male Fighter who is obsessed with his looks or at least knows just how attractive he is and takes advantage of it. He is always surrounded by beautiful women, dressed in cutting edge fashions, and usually has a cocky attitude. It is interesting to note that many examples of Ladies Man characters in fighting games are surprisingly feminine in their appearance and fashions. The evil version of this archetype may embrace a haughty narcissistic attitude towards all those he deems less attractive than himself.

**Military Fighter:** Elite soldiers who just happen to also be extraordinary martial artists are another common archetype. These soldiers are usually the epitome of military discipline in their appearance, behavior, and attitude towards others, yet they often have circumstances in their lives that make them remarkably flexible when it comes to adventuring on their own or ignoring normal chains of command. More often than not, these Fighters are American (or at least Western). Most are male, but female Military Fighters also exist in the source

material.

**Ninja:** Ninja are found both in historical campaigns and in modern ones. Some are stereotypical ninja, maintaining their anonymity behind masks and using traditional ninja gear and tricks. Others are more modern with little to specifically distinguish them as ninja except for their extraordinary speed and their ability to disappear, teleport, and/or turn invisible, the hallmarks of the Ninja's fighting style. Ninja usually also have additional complications in the form of their relationship with their clan, either because they are duty-bound to serve it or they are on the run and hunted by it or they are at war with rival clans to determine whose ninjutsu is the strongest.

**Non-Human Fighter:** Fighting games often have at least one character who is not exactly human. Some games have entire rosters of Non-Human Fighters. These characters may be genetic experiments, evolutionary throwbacks, creations of superscience, cyborgs, robots, demons, ghosts, other forms of supernatural monsters, mutants, sentient animals, or any other being with mysterious powers and origins. Their Special Moves often demonstrate their unique abilities and their back-stories are often filled with dangerous hunters and shadowy conspiracies.

**Old Man:** This archetype is often the mentor or sensei of one or more of the other Fighters in the campaign. Despite his age, he remains a dangerous Fighter, often with access to special techniques not shared with his students. The personality of the Old Man often varies drastically, from the wise old master who dispenses wisdom to his students, to the dirty old man who leers at cute girls, drinks and eats to excess, and acts like a buffoon. The same



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Old Man may possess both of these personalities at different times. Physically, the Old Man is often bald and almost always possesses the Short Quality.

**Psychotic Fighter:** Some Fighters have sociopathic personalities with cold demeanors or wild-eyed stares and malevolent grins. Such Fighters enjoy terrorizing and brutalizing their opponents, and often use cruel attacks designed to maim and humiliate the opponent. While such characters are usually evil, they often do not serve the Boss directly, instead content to pursue their own twisted agendas. This archetype also applies to human Fighters that are either deformed or twisted in mind and body and fight with unusual and disturbing fighting styles.

**Rich and/or Famous Fighter:** Some Fighters come from backgrounds of affluence and take up the study of martial arts out of boredom, yet they either become masters in their own right or seek to challenge excellent Fighters in pursuit of new thrills. They are often stuffy in demeanor and haughty towards those they consider beneath them. Similar to the Rich Fighter is the Famous Fighter who is trying to prove himself against other Fighters to demonstrate that he is not a fake. Some Famous Fighters know they are competent martial artists, yet circumstances draw them out of their comfortable lives and into the events of the campaign.

**Rival:** The Rival archetype is usually set in opposition to the Hero, but he can really be connected to any character. The Rival is either another Fighter's life-long friend or else his worst enemy from childhood. At every reasonable opportunity, the Rival seeks to demonstrate that he is the better Fighter. In friendly rivalries, this will

often be light-hearted competition enjoyed by both Fighters; in darker rivalries, there will be a series of fights to the death, only to be interrupted by circumstances that leave the rivals to fight again another day.

**Student:** Many Fighters are actually students in high school. The schoolgirl is an especially common archetype. In fact, an entire campaign could be constructed around the rivalries in a particular high school or series of schools. Despite their age and inexperience, these characters are just as competent as the rest of the Fighters in the campaign, often because they are prodigies or they're utterly obsessed with training in the martial arts.

## Constructing a Campaign

### The Basics

While fighting game stories are fundamentally about providing excuses for skilled martial artists to fight one another, the campaign settings for these stories are quite diverse. This section describes the basic factors to consider when setting up a Fight! campaign. The Director needs to decide where and when the campaign takes place; the power level of the Fighters in the setting; whether or not the setting corresponds to the real world and if so, how closely; what the stakes are in the campaign; what the tone of the campaign will be; and finally, the visual feel of the campaign. Some ideas are provided here to help Directors think about each of these factors.

**Place:** Some campaigns may involve the events surrounding a single tournament or in a single city, while others have a much wider geographical scope. Some campaigns may take place in Japan, while others occur primarily in another country.

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Oftentimes, the tournament that serves as the focus of the campaign occurs all over the world. For truly epic games, the tournament may take place across multiple planets or even multiple dimensions.

**Power:** The default rules of Fight! presume that a Fighter is an extraordinarily more competent combatant than just about anyone else besides another Fighter. Still, how that translates into narrative terms is up to the Director. What is the actual power level of the Fighters in comparison to the rest of the world? In some campaigns, the characters are nothing more than fantastic martial artists competing against one another, who should still be afraid of tanks and automatic weapons. At the other extreme, the characters in some campaigns may be super-beings, capable of demolishing buildings, or even cities (though the default rules don't really represent this style of play very well). The presumption of most fighting games is somewhere in the middle; there should be little that Fighters are afraid of when it comes to mundane soldiers and technology.

If desired, the power level of the campaign can be further defined by requiring characters to have certain Skills, such as Property Damage, at specified minimum levels as they advance in Power Level. Likewise, the Director can decide the DL of skill checks to reflect the desired power level of the campaign. For example, in a realistic campaign, the DL of a Property Damage skill check to break down a steel door might be 12. In a high-powered campaign, DL 12 might be the difficulty level to destroy a skyscraper.

**Reality:** Most fighting games take place in the modern world or the near future. However, very few of them pay much attention to the actual geopolitical structure of the real world. In many cases, important people, places, and historical

events have changed in either small or drastic ways. Perhaps cities have been destroyed, or islands have risen from the sea, or whole continents may have sunk. The campaign world may have continents and nations that are entirely made up. New worldwide organizations, often criminal and/or corporate in nature, often dominate the world's military, economic, and/or political scene.

Two other components related to the question of campaign reality are the technology level of the world and the role of the supernatural. The default presumptions of the genre are that both technology beyond current real world examples exists and that the supernatural (broadly understood) is real and active in the world. The Director needs to decide how much either of these components impacts the normal people in the world.

**Scope:** This is the stakes involved in the events of the campaign. Scope could be phrased another way as: how much of the world will be affected if the heroes fail and in what way? The ramifications of the heroes' failure might be very local, such as a crime lord continuing to dominate the underworld of the city. Other times, the stakes might be much higher, such as demons rising up and infesting the world. The scope of the campaign helps to establish how the players will react to certain situations, as well as how the Director should prioritize certain plot elements (so the heroes can learn what the stakes are).

**Time:** This refers to when the campaign take place. As noted already, most fighting games take place in the present or the near future. But many other possibilities exist. Perhaps the campaign is set in a near-future cyberpunk setting, a distant star-spanning future, or even in a barbaric post-

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apocalyptic world. Several fighting games are instead set in the past, such as the Sengoku and Edo eras of Japanese history. Even if the story does not occur on a recognizable Earth, some thought should be given as to the equivalent time period of the campaign setting.

**Tone:** As noted in the Introduction, the storylines of most fighting games are taken very seriously, with humor being relegated to the secondary stories of certain characters. Some games are even depressingly dark. However, there are a few that are much more light-hearted, even bordering on silly. The default presumption of the genre and of these rules is a melodramatically serious setting. Regardless of what the Director chooses, the tone of the campaign will have a serious effect on the character concepts of both PCs and NPCs, as well as the kinds of scenes the Director will prepare for his stories. Once the tone is established, the Director should make sure he maintains it. Failing to do so creates difficult situations for the players to role-play, as well as damaging the consistency of the campaign's storyline.

**Visuals:** This component of campaign design refers to the intended visual style of the campaign. A simple way to understand this would be to answer the following question: when the Director and the players imagine the characters, what do the characters look like? Based on fighting video games, characters are most easily imagined as either conforming to the artistic conventions of manga and anime (in 2-D fighting games) or else according to semi-realistic CGI designs (typically in 3-D fighting games). Sometimes the same character may be rendered both ways when a traditionally 2-D video game gets re-vamped into a new 3-D iteration. It is sometimes unusual, even jarring, for fans when their

favorite traditionally drawn characters get translated into a more realistic CGI medium. Despite this, however, the visual sense intended by the rules of Fight! encompasses both of these approaches.

But these are not the only two choices, even if they are the dominant ones by far. Perhaps the players would rather imagine the characters as real people, maybe even going so far as to find photos of people on whom to base their appearance. Whatever the Director and players decide, the visual sense of the characters (and thus the game world as a whole) will impact the way that the players think about and role-play their characters. Indirectly, the visual sense of the game tends to relate to the sense of realism present in the game as a whole, and is thus a relevant consideration for the campaign.

### Group Size

Another basic consideration for the Director is to decide how many players to include in his game. Role-playing games are group endeavors, but the size of the group often depends on the skill and style of the Director, the dynamics of the players, and especially the nature of the game itself. For example, a fantasy game about the exploits of mighty heroes traveling around the world battling giants and dragons and accumulating power can easily admit a larger group size than a modern game focused on the intimate relationships of a small group of companions hunting demonic monsters in their hometown.

Fight! is not primarily a game of deep introspection, or even of intimate interpersonal relationships (though both of these can be a part of a campaign with no problem). Still, the complexity of characters' Special Moves and the tactical detail of the combat system suggests a preference for

smaller playing groups. A group comprised of the Director and 2-4 players is probably ideal, and for those who are interested in the experience, the genre even works well with a single player. The distinctive motivations and personalities of Fighters often militate against banding together in large groups, so these smaller group sizes make more sense in the fighting game genre.

This is not to say that a larger group is not possible. If the Director is comfortable working with a group of six fighters, then there is nothing wrong with that. However, significant attention should be given to the rationale for the group's existence. Based on the individual character concepts, there needs to be a reason why so many of the world's greatest Fighters are traveling, working, and fighting together. They may be from the same family or martial arts school, they may be part of the same military unit or law enforcement organization, or they may even share the same destiny. But there should definitely be a strong reason for them to remain together through the events of the campaign.

An advantage to a small group size is that it is easier for the Director to keep all the players involved in the game. If the campaign is using tag teams or team combat, it is easy to make sure everyone is involved in combat, which is often the most time-consuming part of play. But outside of combat, a smaller group size means that even if the player characters split up to handle different tasks, no one is kept out of play for very long. Again, the personalities and motivations of Fighters often lead them to want to act alone, so when this occurs, a small group size will not alienate any one player for long. The Director needs to be cognizant of this when setting up and running the game.

## The Tournament

The Tournament is the fundamental building block of the campaign setting. While it is not strictly necessary, the premise of almost every fighting video game is that some person or group has organized a deadly tournament and invited the very best Fighters in the world to participate. As such, the Director should give serious thought to the nature of the tournament.

This premise is useful to the Director and the players. For the Director, it provides a framework for the stories of the campaign. Inevitably, the tournament is never as straightforward as it purports to be: the organizers have sinister motives, the prize is not what it seems, the fights attract the attention of malevolent entities who invade the proceedings, or something similar. Any complication like this becomes useful story fodder. And this is not just true for the later stages of the campaign either. By giving some thought to these complications, signs and portents can be placed in the campaign early on or even in the backgrounds of the player characters.

The tournament is also a convenient excuse for combat. While this may seem self-evident, it is important to remember that in the fighting game genre, the most important plot revelations and moments of personal development, realized potential, and shocking personal discovery should all occur during combat. Thus, the campaign's plot twists and turns need a forum for discovery, and tournament combat is an easy way to provide that forum.

It should be noted that the term "Tournament" is used here in a much larger sense than just a fighting

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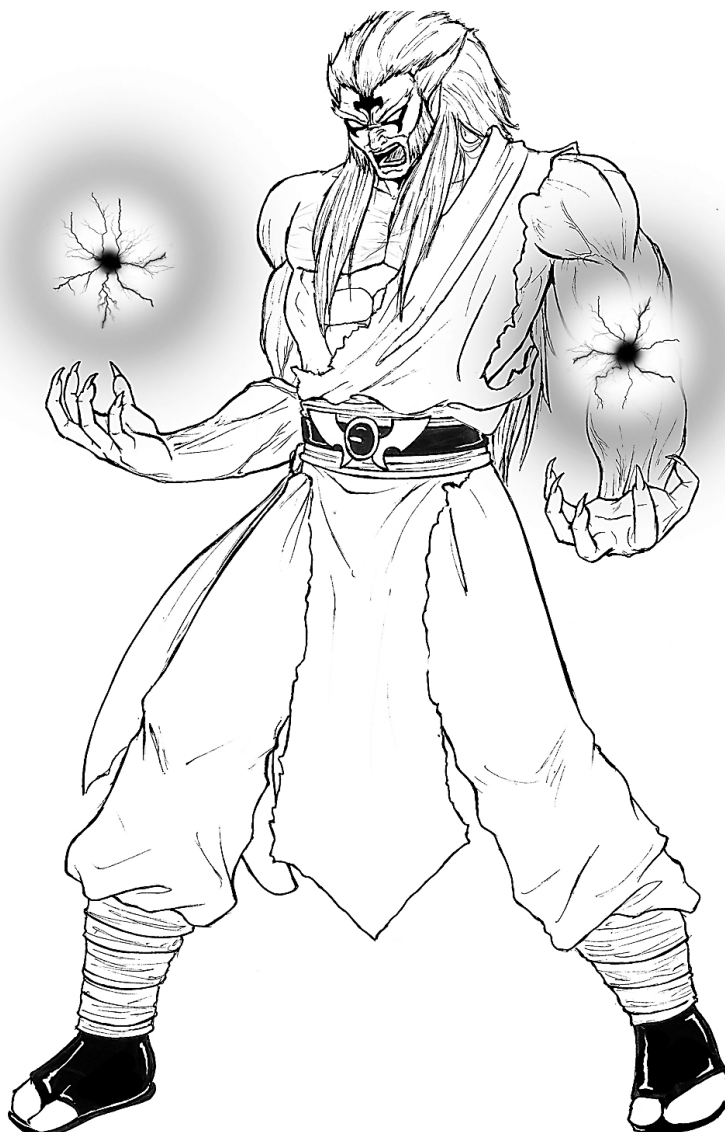
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competition. While a campaign can easily occur over the events of a single tournament occurring in a single location, perhaps even beginning and ending over a matter of mere days, the implied meaning of this term is something longer-lasting that occurs over a wide area, perhaps even the whole world.

Likewise, a tournament may have very specific rules and traditions. Some tournaments may be huge, public events, televised for the world to see. The Fighters might be celebrities, drawing huge crowds, with fan clubs, endorsement deals, and all the perks and hazards of fame. Little do the crowds know, however, the secrets that are kept by the organizers and participants until it is too late.

On the other hand, the tournament might be a secret affair, its location passed on through covert couriers, taking place in abandoned buildings, back alleys, parking garages, and underground fighting clubs. The crowds are still there, but they are smaller, and usually in the mood for bloody entertainment, not a professional sports spectacle.

But the tournament need not be so formal as to have specific locations delineated for battle. In



fact, there may not be anything like specific brackets, or judges, or codified rules of engagement. The tournament might simply involve great Fighters encountering one another in random places, doing battle, and yet discovering that somehow their exploits are known, perhaps even recorded in some way.



The details of the tournament thus admit of a wide degree of variation. However, the role of the tournament in the campaign can help to define the tone of the game and fuel lots of character motivations for the players and story ideas for the Director.

All this being said, despite the value of the tournament, the campaign does not need one as an organizing premise. If the Director and players would rather play a more freeform story, or one that is organized around some other plot element than a tournament, there is nothing preventing someone from doing so. If the Director so desires, he can even eliminate rules that remind the players too much of tournament combat such as ring-outs and time counts. The greatest advantage of this setup is the flexibility in stories, as there is no overarching campaign tournament to worry about. However, there is a potential problem in the nature of Power Level 8.

Normally, Power Level 8 means that the characters have reached the fullness of their potential in this particular story arc (i.e., the campaign). It is a sign that events are drawing to a close and that the Boss will soon appear. Without a tournament providing structure, though, when does the Boss appear? Is there even a Boss in the campaign? Do the heroes continue to adventure normally at PL 8 and are now just at the peak of their power? These questions need to be answered, but if so desired, this method can create a more traditional adventure role-playing experience.

### **Common Plot Elements of Fighting Game Campaign Stories**

The tournament is the fundamental organizing premise for a fighting game. However, there are other common plot elements found in fighting games. This

section describes 15 such elements to provide additional inspiration for the Director. Many of these overlap with one another. The ubiquity of these elements means that they can be used to provide a strong "fighting game feel" to the campaign.

**Cataclysms:** The settings of many fighting games occur during or shortly after a cataclysm of some kind. This might be a world war, an economic collapse, or a natural disaster. Sometimes powerful supernatural forces are responsible for the cataclysm, changing the way people understand and live in the world around them. Regardless of the nature of the cataclysm, as a result, chaos and unrest often dominate the backdrop of the setting.

**Fictional Geography:** Whether the story takes place ostensibly in the real world or in another world, many fighting games feature fictional geography. This may be as simple as featuring a fictional metropolis as the setting for a story of crime and urban decay or as elaborate as a whole new world or series of worlds, complete with unique histories, cultures, and governments. Sometimes new geography is the result of a cataclysm.

**Fighters as Power Source:** This plot element is extremely common in fighting game stories. Through various means, the "essence" of extraordinary fighters is collected, usually to be used for some nefarious purpose. The essence in question might be knowledge of the Fighters' techniques, their ki, their fighting spirit, their blood, or some other concept. The means of acquisition vary from videotaping the Fighters in action, to implanted nanomachines, to monitoring

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by robotic drones. Sometimes the acquisition of a Fighter's essence only comes about after the Fighter has been captured, in which case the process is always painful and often lethal. Once the essence is acquired, it might be used to power some weapon of mass destruction, to empower a bioengineered being to be the greatest Fighter in the world, to program an army of cyborgs or super-soldiers, to create clones of the Fighters to rule the world, or to provide the energy needed for some reality-altering supernatural ritual or summoning. This is without question one of the most common tropes of the genre – the fighting spirit of a Fighter is one of the greatest powers in the world in fighting games.

**Future Dystopia:** Many fighting games occur in the near future. However, these visions of the future are rarely positive. Instead, some war, political maneuvering, or economic manipulation on the part of an evil megacorporation have created a dark future that shares some of the cultural aesthetics of the cyberpunk genre. In these worlds, governments and corporations hold all the power in monolithic structures, while the common people have to struggle to survive. Sometimes the powers that be hold exclusive access to a resource necessary for society to function, such as a new energy source. In fighting games set before the year 2000, settings often possessed millennial angst as a factor. A similar anxiety can be provoked around the year 2012 and its associated predictions of the end of the world. Regardless of the details, this dystopia colors the setting and the motivations of the characters.

**Huge Crime Syndicates:** Criminal masterminds are commonplace in fighting games and many times serve as the Boss of the story. Sometimes the scope of the game is small, and the crime lord may rule over the underworld of a single city. Sometimes, the masterminds are terrorists capable of threatening

the whole world through drugs, weapons, and stranger threats. Whether the scope is large or small, these figures tend to hold power beyond what might normally be expected for their position. A crime lord of a city not only runs crime in the city; his influence affects the entire life of the city, putting him in position to be the shadow ruler of the whole town. A worldwide terrorist organization is not merely a threat to be addressed by world powers (and extraordinary martial artists), but a power equivalent to or even greater than the military, political, and economic power of some nations. Because of this huge sphere of influence, attempts to curtail the syndicate's criminal activities always fail...at least until the player characters get involved.

**Mad Scientists:** With all of the high-end gadgets, weird fusions of supernatural power and modern technology, and scientific processes to capture and manage the essence of fighting spirit, it makes sense that mad scientists are also commonplace in the fighting game genre. While rarely the Boss, the work of a mad scientist is often the reason for the Boss's power or plans. He may also be responsible for creating one or more villainous Fighters, perhaps the prototypes of the evil army the Boss is trying to create. On the other hand, sometimes the mad scientist is a good guy, perhaps responsible for the creation of one or more of the player character Fighters in the campaign. In fact, the mad scientist might be a rogue operative formerly in the Boss' employ. In rare cases, the scientist will create new gadgets and weapons for himself and become one of the Fighters.

**Magic Weapons and Techniques:** In some fighting games, every one of the Fighters uses a weapon. In some cases, these are not regular weapons but rather magical or cursed weapons with histories and stories of their own. The weapons themselves become secondary characters in the campaign, as

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they too possess relationships with the other weapons. Through the hand of fate, the wielders of these weapons are drawn into conflict with one another. Similar to the idea of unique magic weapons is the trope of related schools of martial arts or special techniques. While this trope is more common in live-action wuxia films, it has its place in fighting games as well. Sometimes two schools share a common origin, but have become divided into good and evil martial arts. Perhaps a specific technique defines mastery of a style, but learning that technique could possibly transform the very nature of the Fighter who learns it.

**Multiple Dimensions:** Some fighting games have a truly epic scope that involves wars occurring across multiple dimensions. The Fighters may come into contact with powerful beings, even gods, in their quests. Sometimes the context is a particular relationship between dimensions, whether those dimensions are at war or are in some sort of necessary relationship with one another. In other cases, a story may be based across multiple timelines, perhaps telling two parts of the same story occurring at different points in history at the same time. Campaigns set across multiple dimensions or timelines allow for great variety in settings and themes and are also well suited to high power levels and deliberately confusing plotlines.

**Mysterious Organizations:** The sponsors of tournaments in fighting games are often shrouded in mystery. The reason for secrecy is often well founded: most of these organizations have nefarious motives for setting up the tournament in the first place. These organizations are invariably huge and powerful, yet somehow their existence or at least the scope of their power remains hidden from the general public. This makes them

convenient plot devices for the Director to use to explain any number of disparate plot points.

**Public Tournaments:** Despite the place of martial arts tournaments in popular culture in the real world, many tournaments in fighting games are much larger affairs. These tournaments are instead huge televised competitions broadcast worldwide, with audiences larger than any other sporting event in the world, including events like the Olympics or the World Cup. Many of the Fighters are well-known celebrities with fan clubs who follow them around the world, while mysterious new Fighters become cause for buzz and speculation.

**Summoning God-Like Beings:** The end game of many Boss characters is to summon some powerful god-like being, usually one of unrelenting evil. These summoning rituals are lengthy affairs and need to be powered by extraordinary energies and/or sacrifice. The consequences of a successful summoning are always a radically transformed world. Oftentimes, the summoner believes he has the favor of the god-like being, or even that he will be able to control it for his own purposes. More often than not, he is wrong and ends up one of the first victims of the being's manifestation before the heroes shut down the ritual.

**Tournament as Cover for Evil:** As has already been referenced in several other descriptions in this section, the campaign tournament is rarely innocent. Without uncovering the mystery behind the tournament, the finalists, no matter what their personal motives might be, will end up being complicit in some great evil. This is such a common trope that it is perfectly reasonable for the player characters to automatically be suspicious of the backers of the tournament. However, their personal motivations for getting involved should trump their suspicions and draw them into the action anyway.



**Underground Tournaments:** While some tournaments are huge televised events, not all of them are. The opposite extreme is also common: tournaments that are small-scale affairs, conducted in out of the way places, found only by those who are supposed to find them. In these scenarios, the tournament is often a little darker, a little more brutal, and the malice of the event and its organizers a little closer to the surface. Despite the tournament's secrecy, the fights still have diehard fans thirsting for violence and despite what appears to be a small scale, the ramifications of the tournament organizers' plans are often still significant for the city or the world.

**Worldwide Chaos:** In many campaign scenarios, the world is in chaos. There might be rampant world wars, natural disasters or supernatural cataclysms, rampant crime and terrorism, or economic imperialism. This may be the case even if the scope of the campaign is contained to a single city. The advantage of this trope is that it provides excuses to have an infinite supply of malcontents to oppose the player characters.

**Worldwide Corporations:** Massive worldwide corporations are commonplace in fighting game scenarios and often serve as the organizers of the tournament. In other cases, their research or investigations might set events in motion that bring about the campaign setting. Sometimes different corporations are at war with one another and use the Fighters as their weapons. In all these cases, the corporations often possess even more power than the world's governments. In some scenarios, corporations may replace governments entirely.

## Creating NPC Fighters

It is the responsibility of the Director to decide how many Fighters exist in the campaign setting for,

aside from the player characters, he is responsible for conceptualizing and developing all of these other characters, including their very necessary motivations for being involved in the events of the campaign. While a few might be lesser characters whose motivations are less than epic, often used for comedic effect, the majority of the Fighters should exist in a complex web of relationships and intertwined destinies, ensuring that all of them will cross paths over the duration of the campaign.

The number of Fighters in the campaign heavily defines the feel of the campaign. If there are only 10 or 12 such characters, the fighting world feels intimate, as characters are likely to face off against one another multiple times during the course of the game. This may not be desirable in all campaigns. In fact, early fighting games had such small rosters simply because of hardware limitations.

Contemporary fighting games now seem a little limited to players if there are less than 20-25 characters, and the biggest games boast rosters over 50. These much higher numbers are often more conducive to a campaign, for they create greater variety among the opponents the player characters will face. This is even more necessary if the player characters are fighting as a team against other teams – each non-player character team needs two, three, or more members. Thus, even 8-10 teams in a campaign might necessitate creating 20-30 characters. This can be a huge workload for the Director, especially if he wants the Fighters to be at least moderately interesting in their own right.

One easy way for the Director to manage this is to simply not create all the Fighters until they are needed. In this way, the Fighters or teams that the



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player characters face at PL 1 can be created immediately, but once they are encountered and defeated, they may never be used in play again. As the characters advance in Power Levels and in the plot, the Director can create character sheets for new Fighters only as he needs them. Prior to their appearance in a story, they remain only names and concepts, or they may appear in a scene, but for whatever reason, combat does not occur.

The occasional exception can be made to this pattern: an old team can be brought back just to have the more experienced player characters trounce them soundly (often for comedic purposes) or a higher Power Level Fighter can be created in advance to thrash the low-level player characters, as a foreshadowing of things to come. In this latter case, the character already has a sheet prepared for when the player characters deliver their comeuppance.

### **Choosing Campaign Options**

The Director also needs to decide what campaign options he wants to include in his game. These options take three forms: optional rules, character requirements, and house rules.

There are several optional rules described in the core rules. Some examples include the ability of characters to do Aerial Blocks or Tech Rolls. The choice of a set of optional rules to use (or the choice to use none of them at all) helps define the feel of the game as well as the metagame parameters of the fighting game being “played” during the campaign. If the Director wants to emulate the feel of a favorite video game, he can choose options that duplicate the play of the game. The core rules

contain only a few options; additional supplements will contain many more.

The Director can also create a specific style for his campaign setting by requiring or restricting certain choices when players make their characters. For example, the Director may decide that the campaign will be about armed fighters rather than unarmed fighters and require all players to work a weapon into the visual descriptions of the character and his Special Moves. Building on this example, in a campaign about the relationships between ten ancient and powerful weapons, coincidentally wielded by the Fighters, the Director could require all characters to take the Powerful Item Quality. As a more drastic example, in a campaign based around brutal, dirty, thoroughly underground pit fighting, he could rule that no character could have Fame, Wealth, or even positive Appearance Qualities!

Finally, the Director may come up with his own House Rules to better generate the feel of the game he wishes to run. For example, he might want Super Moves to have a more epic feel in the game and decide that they always do double damage or that they may be constructed with twice as many Elements as usual. The important thing to moderate such rules is to make sure that they are applied equally to all Fighters. Even with that precaution, some ideas may end up making some game elements too powerful or other ones useless.

### **Example Story Arcs and Campaign Seeds**

Here are some examples of common story arcs found in fighting games and a campaign seed for each through which a Director could fully develop a setting of his own.

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**World Tournament – Sci-Fi/Crime:** The classic archetype of the fighting game campaign is a massive worldwide tournament. In this version of the archetype, the organizers of the tournament are conducting some form of advanced scientific or fringe research revolving around the events of the competition. Additionally or alternatively, the organization behind all of the fighting is some form of worldwide terrorist group planning to hold the world ransom once their project has come to fruition.

**Campaign Seed: The Fist of God:** Ghalib Mustafa is the absolute authority behind the Hashim Corporation. He is also a fanatical follower of an obscure militant Islamic sect known as the Fist of God. For his contribution to the sect's worldwide cause, Ghalib used his extensive resources to organize a fighting tournament for the world's greatest fighters. During the proceedings, he plans to use his security forces to kidnap the most promising combatants, distill the contents of their minds, and use it to construct the architecture that will go into programming his army of super-soldiers to march on the world.

**World Tournament – Mystical:** This is another classic model for a fighting game storyline, again based on a worldwide tournament. Similarly, the organizers of the tournament have a nefarious plot in mind. Unlike the above example, however, the plot does not involve some weapon or high-tech gambit, but rather a supernatural threat. This may be a summoning ritual to bring an evil god to Earth, the resurrection of an ancient necromancer, or the transformation of the Boss into a superpowered entity.

**Campaign Seed: Rage of the Nine Seals:** In the 16th century, a group of lords banded together their military and mystical resources to oppose the dread

necromancer Gashadokuro. They were ultimately successful and sealed his essence behind nine seals scattered throughout the countryside. Now, 500 years later, a secret clan of occultists wants to raise Gashadokuro to wreak havoc in the modern world. In order to acquire the ki energy they need to open the seals, they hold a tournament. Through the battles of the tournament, the clan will harvest the fighting spirit of the combatants and use it to break open the seals.

**Urban Crime:** In this model, the campaign occurs in a single major city. The Boss is the power behind all criminal activity in the city, and his authority usually extends to the legitimate political power in the city as well. The Fighters in the story either work for the Boss or have an issue with him; the player characters usually have personal reasons to oppose him directly. In this scenario, if the Boss wins, it usually doesn't mean the end of the world –but it usually means something very bad personally for the player characters and/or their loved ones.

**Campaign Seed: Brutal Saints:** Independence City is a huge metropolis, home to millions of people. Little do they know that they are ultimately ruled by Marcus Buchanan, the infamous Black Tiger, ruler of Independence City's underworld. Buchanan maintains his iron grip on the city with the help of his five lieutenants, awesome fighters in their own right. Many people have reason to hate Buchanan, but few have the power to do anything about it. Those that do take to the streets, intent on stopping the Black Tiger's reign of terror. They are the Brutal Saints.

**Horror/Fantasy:** Some campaigns have a horror or fantasy motif. The world may be a fantastic world or

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a version of the modern world after some supernatural apocalypse. In any case, “normal” people live among monsters, both intelligent and bestial. The populace may accept the existence of monsters as a matter of course, or they may hide behind closed doors at night, fearful for their lives. The Fighters might be heroes fighting against the monsters, or they may be monsters themselves.

**Campaign Seed: Nighltreign:** In the year 2012, dimensional gates opened up all over the earth. Through these portals, hordes of demons and monsters invaded, and powerful magical forces plunged the world into endless darkness. Now the remnant of humanity lives in perpetual fear of the world beyond the firelight, only dimly aware of the beasts that rule the night. However, there is hope: some humans fight against the reign of darkness, driven to stop the power of the Nighltreign once and for all, even using the weapons and powers of the enemy against them.

**Historical – Japanese:** Many fighting games occur in Japan’s historical past, especially during the Sengoku and Edo eras. The Director need not worry about historical accuracy, however, for rarely do these games cleave too closely to the actual facts regarding the period. The characters and stories often possess fantastic and supernatural elements. Likewise, they often involve characters from other cultures outside of historically insular Japan. Sometimes the settings involve anachronistic technology such as steampunk mecha, missiles, and jet packs. The plot can pay tribute to the turbulent politics of the era or the setting can be little more than color for a more traditional fantasy storyline.

**Campaign Seed: Ruthless Blood:** During the Period of the Warring States, six clans of ninja went to war

among themselves in the mountains. One of their own had given themselves over to dark powers and attempted to wrest control over all the families. While the other clans banded together to oppose these dark powers, their own interclan politics refused to take a backseat. The result: war between five clans, sometimes bloody and overt, sometimes political and subtle, all the while maintaining their contracts with the warring states and avoiding the bloody machinations of their sinister fallen brothers.

**Historical – Other:** While practically nonexistent in the source material, a fighting game might take place in an alternate version of some other historical setting. The Director could set the campaign in ancient China (the setting of traditional wuxia stories), another Asian country in order to draw on new history and new myths, or even further west: the campaign could take place in an alternate version of medieval Europe, where orders of knights compete in the same way as do different schools of martial arts in traditional Asian stories, or in the tribal and religious warfare of Africa or Central America.

**Campaign Seed: Avignon:** It is the 14<sup>th</sup> century in Europe: a time of political and religious struggle and strife. The Roman Catholic Church has undergone a schism and holy orders of knights supporting both sides have gone to war. However, in this alternate version of history, knights are master swordsmen, trained in unique fighting arts learned at the hands of great teachers, and theological debates are resolved by hand-to-hand combat. The power of faith and magic is also alive in the world, leading knights to seek out the company of monks and sorcerers to help them fight for their cause.

**Futuristic:** Some fighting games take place far in the future, amidst the trappings of traditional science fiction stories. Alien races may have their

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own unique forms of martial arts combat. New cultures may have codes of honor reminiscent of the traditional codes of honor found in martial arts stories. Ancient armaments might be upgraded to laser swords and powered armor. Tournaments might be interstellar affairs across dozens of worlds. Other futuristic fighting games still take place on Earth and may involve massive megacorporations as the organizers of the tournament or as sponsors for the Fighters themselves.

**Campaign Seed: Vore's Wrath:** In the far future, the Empire of the Vore, a violent and debauched race, extends across several galaxies. In order to entertain the decadent masses, the Vore capture the best warriors from all of the worlds under their command and make them fight in merciless displays of gladiatorial combat. However, some of the gladiators have seen the possibility of escaping their plight, and of freeing a million planets from the Vore's tyranny. If these great warriors could find a way to work together, they might also find a way to put an end to the Empire forever.

### Writing Stories and Running the Game

Once the campaign and the player characters have been designed, the game can begin. However, aside from tournaments and duels in the streets, there may be some question as to what these characters do, i.e., what kinds of stories does a group tell with the Fight! rules? This section addresses that question as well as common conventions of the genre to include in stories that have not been covered elsewhere and some thoughts to keep in mind when deciding which combat rules to use to resolve a fight scene.

When designing stories for the player characters, the Director should constantly refer back to two important foundations: the personal stories of the

player characters and the overarching plot of the Boss in the campaign. The more often he can involve either of these elements, or especially have these two elements intersect, the easier it will be to come up with stories. In fact, it's somewhat difficult to imagine a "generic" Fight! story, as the stories resonate more strongly the more they are connected to specific characters and/or a specific plotline.

The nature of the player characters may provide a ready source for story hooks, or it may prove to be a great detriment. For example, if the players have all decided to make elite members of a government covert ops team working undercover to find out the truth behind the tournament, then there is a ready source of motivation, a connection to the campaign plot, and a narrative structure to move the characters in the right direction in the form of their superiors.

As a counterpoint, the players may have created the last surviving students of a destroyed martial arts school who have decided to wander the earth seeking their destiny. This is an interesting enough story for character background, but unless the Director wants to set them on the path of destiny right away, there's not much that immediately suggests itself as a story hook.

Even when not readily apparent, the characters' backgrounds will often remain the best source of stories. The specific reason that the character fights (and every character should definitely have one) can suggest possible conflicts in which to involve the character. For example, if the character fights to live up to the legacy of his heroic brother who was murdered, the Fighter can encounter people who knew his brother. Some of these people may be old

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friends who now need the character's assistance. Others will be old enemies that are only too happy to take out their former nemesis' sibling.

Once sources of conflict are identified, then specific plots can be designed around those conflicts. Most of the standard modes of adventure storytelling work just fine for Fight! characters. Particular inspiration can be found in four broad categories: the stories found in many shounen manga and anime, wuxia cinema, modern action films, and the comic book adventures of traditional superheroes. The fighting game genre draws inspiration from all of these in varying ways. Thus, if a plotline sounds like it would fit in one of these categories, it will probably work in a Fight! story as well.

### **Example Plotlines**

Here are some examples of the kinds of plots that can form the basis of a Fight! adventure. This is not intended to be an exhaustive list; these are just a few ideas to demonstrate how varied the plots of stories in the fighting game genre can be.

- The characters go on a quest to locate a lost item.
- The characters seek revenge against a person or group for a wrong done to them or to loved ones.
- The characters invade an enemy encampment to free captured allies.
- The characters aid a total stranger who knows of their prowess and seeks out their aid.
- The characters journey to a distant land or dimension to seek the aid of a great power or the answer to a difficult question.
- The characters defend a town from attack.
- The characters go undercover to investigate a suspicious organization.
- The characters try to prevent a terrorist attack before innocent people are killed.

Fighting holds a special place in these stories, no matter what the motivation of the characters for being involved in the action and no matter what the specific plotline is. Unlike many other role-playing games, all Fight! characters excel at combat. In fact, even if they are experts at something else as well, chances are that they are still better fighters than their mastery of other fields of expertise. Thus, the Director need not fear that too many combat scenes will alienate the player whose character just isn't as useful in such scenes! In fact, important plot points, the clues the characters need to move forward, and great moments of personal character-based revelation should all occur during combat.

So no matter the plot, it is inevitable that it will eventually come down to fighting in some form. Oftentimes, this will be obvious, such as the case of an assault on an opposing lord's fortress or a quest for revenge against one's enemies. But even a covert infiltration will go sideways, a quest for answers will require defeating a guardian in combat, and an attempt to help an innocent bystander with their "little problem" will require using one's fists. Combat is the primary form of conflict resolution in Fight!, and even if occasionally diplomacy, stealth, or clever planning win the day, most sessions should end in bare-knuckled violence or the clang of clashing swords.

Despite this section's emphasis on the stories being told beyond the walls of the arena, it has to be noted that tournament combat also holds a particular place in Fight! stories. Tournaments serve several purposes: they are excuses for organized combat, they attract powerful people, especially other Fighters, and they can be great sources of rivalry and intrigue attached to the main plot of the campaign. They can serve as a break in the tension of a larger or more complicated story, and can be an easy environment for role-playing a character who



### Examples of Locations for Combat Stages

Here is a list of examples drawn from fighting games to provide inspiration for the Director in devising his own stages during stories.

- In a martial arts school, while students train or cheer in the background
- In a back alley in a bad part of town
- In a building that's on fire
- In a cage with cheering crowds looking on, hungering for violence
- In a cave with lava pools and falling rocks
- In a dirty, bloodstained fighting arena in an underground fight club
- In a dive bar surrounded by patrons annoyed by the interruption
- In a haunted ruin, surrounded by ghosts
- In a massive arena, surrounded by thousands of fans and giant video screens
- In a parking garage
- In a public restroom with frightened patrons within
- In a top secret lab, surrounded by expensive and potentially dangerous equipment
- In front of a schoolyard while students pass by
- In front of or on top of a national monument
- In the center of a native village in the middle of a jungle
- In the grand room of a stately mansion
- In the middle of a bamboo forest
- In the middle of a factory with grinding gears and conveyer belts
- In the middle of a public square while people pass by
- In the middle of a restaurant as patrons are eating
- In the middle of a spa, bathhouse, or resort
- In the middle of an upscale party at an exclusive country club
- In the ruins of an abandoned temple
- On a beach under the moonlight
- On a fiery plain in Hell itself
- On a floating platform at the heart of an alternate dimension
- On a street while traffic is driving by at high speed
- On the center of a high bridge near a roaring waterfall
- On the dance floor in the middle of a nightclub
- On the deck of a luxury ship
- On the edge of a cliff leading to a precipitous drop
- On the launch platform of a rocket, as the rocket is getting ready to take flight
- On the middle of an ice floe with snow blowing
- On the roof of a castle while thunder and lightning fill the sky
- On the roof of a skyscraper while helicopters fly overhead
- On the stage or in the balcony of a theater
- On the tarmac of a military base, surrounded by planes or tanks
- On the top of a mountain with an expansive view of the land
- On the top of a moving train
- On the wing of a moving airplane

Dozens more ideas can be found just by playing fighting video games.

makes fighting their life. For all these reasons, the inclusion of a local tournament, underground fight club, street fight or, of course, an official stage in the main campaign tournament can provide a focus for the dissemination of plot points or conversely as a distraction from a more intense storyline.

Because combat is going to be a frequent occurrence, the Director should give thought to where these fights are going to take place (referred to as "stages" in fighting video games). Certainly, some of them are going to occur in a conventional arena setting, but the locations should never, ever be mundane. Even the most traditional setting can be spiced up with details about the crowds, the lighting, and the pieces of the scenery sure to be destroyed during the course of the fight.

There are a number of common tropes in the fighting game genre. Brief descriptions of several of them are presented here. Including any of these into stories can make the game seem more true to the source material.

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**Action, Action, and More Action:** This sort of goes without saying, but a Fight! session should have no shortage of action. Even in sessions in which role-playing, character plumbing, or investigation take center stage, there should almost always be an excuse for a quick Thug fight, a chase, or some other use of an Action Sequence to remind the players that these characters are Fighters first and foremost.

**Collateral Damage:** This trope is seen less often in fighting games themselves (aside from bonus stages such as destroying a car with one's bare hands), but it is in evidence in the intros to fighting games and in the manga and anime based on fighting games. Fighters are highly destructive weapons, and the scenery is never safe when a fight breaks out. Depending on the tone of the campaign, this may mean holes punched in walls or it may mean buildings crumbling around the combatants. Regardless of the level of destructiveness, this emphasis on collateral damage should be kept in mind when describing combat.

**Costume Changes:** Even in more realistic representations of the genre, Fighters can often change into their traditional fighting garb from whatever street clothes they might be wearing with a simple whirl about in a circle or by tearing their street clothes off at the collar, revealing their fighting outfit underneath. This is especially so for female characters. In some cases, these transformation sequences can be much longer and even feature brief moments of gratuitous nudity.

**Dying Soliloquies:** While there are no specific rules that determine when a character actually dies in Fight!, it is a common trope of the genre that any person who gets killed and who is also important to

the plot or a particular character's subplot will usually die slowly, so they can impart final clues, advice, blessings, or wisdom to the heroes.

**Epic Storyline:** In the overall course of the campaign, the fate of the world is in the hands of the player characters. This may be literally the case, or it may be the case that the fate of their world, i.e., their personal lives, or the lives of their loved ones, is in their hands. The price for failure is always grave and most heroes rise to the occasion to meet their destiny.

**Meeting the Boss:** Sometimes the player characters will encounter the final Boss before the climax of the whole campaign. These scenes can be used to impress upon the heroes the evil of the Boss'character or to provide clues into his master plan. Occasionally these meetings will even be combat situations. For story reasons, the Boss will crush the heroes utterly in these encounters but will leave them for dead, because "obviously" they are now no longer a threat. This also serves to increase the desire of the player characters to see the Boss defeated, as they seek revenge for their humiliation.

**Mirror Match:** In many fighting video games, the Fighter will face a stage in which he needs to fight himself controlled by the CPU. This trope can also be used during a Fight! campaign. There may be many reasons why the character needs to fight himself. Perhaps the opponent is a clone or cyborg that looks and fights exactly like him. Perhaps he is actually a long lost twin relative. The mirror match may occur in a more mystical or psychological framework, as the character battles against himself to master his greatest fear or to find peace within himself after a great failure. Such a scene also gives the Director an opportunity to try a different play style with the Fighter than the style normally used by the player himself.

**Training Journeys:** Somewhere during the middle stages of the campaign, one or more of the player characters may feel called to go on a training journey to improve themselves, realize their potential, or uncover some secret technique to defeat a nemesis. These journeys often occur after some sort of crushing defeat or personal crisis. The Fighter goes off to find himself, returns whole, and learns some dangerous new techniques along the way. The rules for the Realize Potential Skill can be used in conjunction with this trope.

Examples of the application of these conventions, as well as additional conventions not included here, can be easily gathered from the source material. The best way to keep generating new ideas for a game is to simply play more fighting games, especially those with story modes.

## Combat Systems and Glory

The Director also needs to decide how he wants to pace the acquisition of Glory during the campaign. The rules present three different ways of earning Glory in combat: through the normal combat system, the Thug Thrashing sub-system, and the Dramatic Combat sub-system. Glory is earned much more quickly in the main system than it is in either of the two sub-systems. Thus, the choice of what kinds of combat scenes the Director includes in his stories and the system used to resolve them has a significant effect on the pacing of the campaign and the characters' increase in Power Levels.

Using the normal combat system for all fights and rarely allowing the player characters to face Thugs is the fastest rate of play. Many groups could expect to progress from Power Level 1 to Power Level 8 in about six months of regular play. The more frequently other kinds of combat are used in the game, the slower the rate of advancement.

While it is obvious that the Director will use the Thug Thrashing sub-system when the player characters are facing opponents who are not Fighters, there are different ways to choose how to adjudicate combat scenes solely between Fighters. One approach is to use the normal combat system solely for tournament combat. This prioritizes the strictly tactical aspects of the rules for the explicitly competitive scenes in the narrative. The Dramatic Combat sub-system can then be used for all other battles between Fighters, and can even be used for certain Thug Thrashing confrontations. This allows more Skill use and the reduced Life Bars potentially speed up combat.

Another approach is to use the normal combat system for almost all combat scenes during the campaign, but reserve the Dramatic Combat sub-system for climactic fights at the end of story arcs or to resolve important rivalries. This method allows for a more cinematic approach to important fights, but the sub-system's reliance on Basic Moves rather than Special Moves might serve to create the opposite effect.

A different way to consider the two methods of resolving combat is to define conditions for which each system will be used. For example, in a campaign that aims to prioritize the tactical aspects of combat for important fights, the Director decides that the normal combat system will be used for the first time a new Fighter is introduced in a story, for all official tournament fights, and for any time the player characters have a re-match against a Fighter who stands in the way of the main plot arc from moving forward (as a result of using the milestone guidelines described in the next section, for example). Aside from these situations, the group will use the Dramatic Combat sub-system, as the

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Director hopes the reduced Life Bar will keep these less important combats moving more swiftly.

### **Pacing a Campaign**

Based on the patterns found in fighting video games themselves, a Fight! campaign has a natural structure built into it. The beginning of the game introduces the heroes and should rapidly introduce the Tournament that serves as the means for delivering the plot (even if the "tournament" is not understood as a conventional fighting competition). The campaign progresses through any manner of stories as the characters face opponents and build up their Power Level. As they reach Power Level 8, it is time for the Director to move the narrative towards the final confrontation with the Boss. After the Boss is defeated, there should be a brief denouement to find out what happens to the player characters after the fighting is over, and the campaign draws to a close.

This campaign model may seem excessively "railroad-y" to some players, but if the stories being told are true to the genre that Fight! seeks to emulate, there are really no plot elements in this framework that one shouldn't reasonably expect to encounter anyway. The details will differ from campaign to campaign, and most especially the Fighters will differ from campaign to campaign, and that is what's most important.

Furthermore, there is still room for flexibility in this standard format. The heroes may face the Boss before Power Level 8. By some miracle,



they may even defeat him before Power Level 8. If that occurs, there is simply more reason to wrap up any existing plot threads that must be addressed, and move on to the sequel. Similarly, while it is reasonable to expect that the player characters will be involved in the main plot, that shouldn't prevent them from pursuing other side quests that may have little or nothing to do with it. But *Fight!* is not really constructed as a "sandbox" game; there is a definite expectation that there is an overarching plotline and a major villain that sooner or later need to be addressed.

The number of Fighters that the Director has chosen for his game can be used as a tool to moderate the progress of the campaign. As a simple guideline, the Director can divide the total number of non-player character Fighters by eight. This is the number of Fighters that should be introduced to the player characters in the course of each Power Level. As they advance in Power Level, new Fighters are introduced. Generally, these new Fighters will be the same Power Level as the player characters, so as to keep the game challenging. But occasionally a slightly more powerful opponent can be introduced to set up a future rivalry. Conversely, Fighters faced by the player characters at lower Power Levels can remain at these lower levels and then be re-introduced later on. A lopsided re-match can be a fun experience for the players, especially if these Fighters had defeated the heroes earlier in the campaign.

The division of the campaign's Fighters across the Power Levels can be formalized even further by introducing the idea of milestones. A milestone is a fight or series of fights that must not only be endured, but also won before being able to advance. For example, suppose the campaign had 24 non-player character Fighters. Dividing these Fighters across the Power Levels means the player characters

will face three new Fighters every Power Level. Instead of just using that number as a guideline, the Director could insist on achieving a milestone: the player characters must face and defeat each of these three new Fighters in order to move forward.

What it means to "move forward" can take different forms. Perhaps the Director has decided on a series of critical pieces of information that need to be acquired before moving forward in the story, and the characters will not be able to get these revelations without achieving a milestone. Or the Director might want to make the milestones even more mechanically significant by restricting the player characters from advancing in Power Level until they achieve the milestone, regardless of their actual Glory totals.

The idea behind milestones is an emulation of the very structure of fighting video games. In every one-player fighting game, the player is presented with a series of opponents that must be faced before being able to reach the Boss, defeat him, and achieve his character's unique ending. If the player is defeated by one of these opponents, he does not move on to the next one; he must face the same opponent again and again until he has won. Milestones are an attempt to emulate this same pattern.

As a variation on the concept of milestones, the Director can pay homage to a different classic fighting video game motif. During the course of the campaign, he can insist that at least one of the player characters (the one reckoned as the game's "hero" is the ideal choice for this if there is one in the group) has defeated every other non-player character Fighter in the campaign in combat, and perhaps has even faced off against all of his own



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## ***THE WORLDS OF FIGHT***

allies in combat as well. All of this must occur before the characters can face the Boss. This firmly establishes the hero of the campaign and, in a nod to the metagame of *Fight!*, also establishes the main protagonist of the hypothetical video game that is the campaign as well.

Thus, there are many ways that the natural limits of the Power Level system and the limited number of Fighters in the setting can be used to pace the campaign as a whole.

### **Creating and Fighting the Boss**

In many campaigns, the Boss will be a Power Level 8 character, fit to fight any one of the player characters. But this raises the question: who gets to fight the Boss? If you have an established "hero" character in the group, and the other players don't object, that character makes an appropriate choice. In this scenario, the other Fighters can face off against the Boss' lieutenants or hordes of especially powerful minions.

But as every character probably had a hand in reaching the final confrontation, they may all want a piece of the final opponent. Depending on how cleverly the Boss has been built, and how well he is played, he may be able to hold his own against a small group of opponents. At this point in the campaign, it's not really important that the Boss wins; the fact that he is fighting at a disadvantage is a bonus from the narrative point of view at this stage in the game. However, the Boss should not be a pushover. He should lose, but he should be able to get some scary hits in first. The Boss can also be buffered by some Thug groups to give him some more staying power, but the focus should definitely be on the epic confrontation with the mastermind

behind it all.

If the campaign is using Tag Teams or some other form of team combat where the Fighters fight individually, the heroes can face the Boss one at a time. In this way, every character gets to fight him, but without the advantage of ganging up on him. To make the fight more challenging, the Boss can have a Life Bar (and maybe even Fighting Spirit) that is multiplied by the number of opponents he is facing (though this will make for a long fight scene). If the players wonder why they don't fight all together against such a dangerous foe, the Director can appeal to the genre: these mighty Fighters respect the challenge of one-on-one combat, even when it could mean one of their friends getting killed.

Another way to make the Boss fight more memorable is to simply make him higher than Power Level 8. Many fighting video games do not have initially "playable" Bosses. Similarly, some games have Sub-Bosses that must be defeated before meeting the Boss. If the Director wants to simulate this, he can create the Boss as a Power Level 9 character or create the Sub-Boss as Power Level 9 and the final Boss as Power Level 10. Such characters should be built as Power Level 8 in all respects, except for the characteristics specifically pertaining to Power Level contained on the chart below. It is impossible for regular player characters and other NPC Fighters to achieve Power Level 9 or 10.

Power Level	Total Glory	Super Moves	Combat Bonuses	DET	Full Defense	Life Bar	Fighting Spirit
9	N/A	7	8/4	5+	5	110	110
10	N/A	8	9/5	6+	6	120	120

### Secret Characters

In a similar manner to having Bosses and Sub-Bosses beyond the normal hierarchy of Power Level and the established roster of Fighters in the campaign, the Director can also create additional Fighters and introduce them during the campaign as "secret playable characters." Such characters will often have unusual abilities, deviate from the normal patterns of character design of the other Fighters, and/or will have a provocative connection to the plot that may not be fully explored in the present campaign.

If the Director is feeling especially cruel or is suddenly inspired toward the end of the campaign, he could also introduce Secret Bosses beyond the main Boss. Normally, it is best to introduce such characters in a non-combat situation before the campaign denouement, as a set-up for the next campaign. But if the Director wants the heroes to fight it out right away, he can create them as exceptionally high Power Level characters. If a Secret Boss is beyond a Power Level 10 Boss, treat them as PL 10, but add another 5 or 10 points of Life Bar and Fighting Spirit to them.

### Losing to the Boss

It's quite possible that things will go wrong in the final showdown. The Director has paced the campaign well, the heroes have progressed on a fairly steady course through the Power Levels, they reach Power Level 8, the Director arranges the big fight...and the heroes lose.

The Director should give thought to this outcome before the confrontation occurs. He needs to decide what consequence the heroes will face for failure and in what possible directions the story could go afterwards. The Director may decide to let the dice fall where they may – the heroes fail, the Boss gloats, and the world becomes a horrible place. Many fighting video games that allow a player to play as the Boss also have an ending for the Boss in which they win. Perhaps the sequel to the campaign will be the next group of heroes' attempt to undo the Boss' victory.

But for most groups, this will be an unsatisfying conclusion to the build up. So the Director needs to devise a balance between reasonable consequences of failure, while providing new story elements that will give the heroes a chance to re-group and get a re-match in a way that seems plausible in the story.

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Perhaps the Boss leaves the heroes for dead, giving them a chance to retreat and recover in secret. In the meanwhile, the Boss is destroying cities with his death ray, but the heroes will be able to reach him once again. Maybe a powerful supernatural ally or a sudden influx of massive ki energy revives the heroes, but only at the cost of a part of their souls or even crippling them after the energy leaves their bodies at the Boss's defeat. Maybe the Boss insists that the heroes witness the birth of his new dark age and they get a last second chance to ambush him before he flips the switch, but not before the Boss kills their loved ones before their eyes. It might just be easiest to frame the confrontation with the Boss in a way that it is reasonable to see that he was not as close to completing his project as they might have thought, or there is a complication that arises that the Boss himself didn't foresee, giving the heroes a chance to face him at a different time, in a different place.

When the second confrontation occurs, the Director may want to adjust things slightly in the players' favor. Perhaps a few points of Life Bar and/or Fighting Spirit can be taken away, or the Director can just choose to play the character less efficiently than he might normally. After all, the Boss has reason to be overconfident and careless, having already defeated these lesser opponents before. This time, the heroes should prevail.

If they fail a second time, the Director is faced with a hard choice. To continue to manufacture circumstances to simply allow more re-matches will take away any of the thrill of the eventual victory. On the other hand, the Director may come to realize that he has made his Boss too strong, or made the circumstances of the final battle too challenging for the PCs. In this case, a third try might be

engineered. But if this is not the case, perhaps it is best to just let evil win the day until more skilled heroes arise to set things right again.

### **Once the Boss is Defeated**

The defeat of the Boss is the natural conclusion to a Fight! campaign. There are probably still some important scenes to be played out, but certainly the combat has most likely finally come to an end. The question then becomes: what to do with these victorious Power Level 8 characters? There are several possible answers to this question.

The default structure of a Fight! campaign also relies on an implied meaning to the concept of Power Level. Power Level is not necessarily a reflection of the overall power of a character, but rather a demonstration of the character's realized potential within the campaign storyline.

With this idea in mind, the easiest thing to do after the campaign is over is to just start the next campaign using the same characters. This is the equivalent of a video game sequel, with recurring faces along with new ones, a new Boss or a new plan from an old Boss, and usually some tweaks to both the individual characters' Special Moves as well as the optional rules in effect in the campaign as a whole.

Because Power Level refers to the characters' realized potential within a specific plotline, the players will remake their same characters at Power Level 1 once again. They then develop their Power Level in response to the events of this new campaign. For some, this completely breaks the suspension of disbelief: "Why can't I suddenly do my flying uppercut anymore? Did I somehow forget it?" The rationale for this in the new campaign is not that the character has forgotten his moves, but

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rather circumstances haven't required him to pull these tricks out yet. When he "learns" his old moves in the new campaign, this simply means that the Fighter realizes he will need all of his moves in order to face this new danger.

If this idea is used, the Director can impose certain requirements on the new versions of the old characters. Basic Qualities should not change. All of their old Special and Super Moves from the previous campaign should be kept on file and the Director can require that all players re-acquire some percentage of their old moves over the course of eight Power Levels. This should be a minimum of 50% in order to make sure that the characters are recognizable from one game to the next.

The Director in turn decides which non-player character Fighters to keep in the campaign (usually the most interesting or those most connected to the player characters). He could keep as few as none of them or as many as all of the old ones, even adding up to a half a dozen new Fighters. A new Boss is introduced, or the old one is re-vamped (Bosses have an extraordinary ability to shrug off defeat).

The advantage of this approach is that it provides some of the novelty of new characters mixed with the familiarity of old favorites. This model is the default approach implied by the design philosophy of the Fight! rules, but it's certainly not the only approach.

Instead of the Boss fight marking the end of the campaign, the characters could just continue to adventure on their own. At this point, there is no Tournament to serve as a framework on which to hang stories, so the Director has more freedom to come up with different kinds of adventures. The mighty Power Level 8 heroes are at the height of their power, so they no longer gain any

improvements. Likewise, there is no longer any reason to continue tallying Glory (unless the players want to).

This approach allows the players to continue to use the characters that they have worked so hard to play through the Power Levels. Eventually, however, story lines may become strained, as the Director needs to keep coming up with increasingly implausible opponents to face the characters. It begs the question: if all of these powerful Fighters, gods, and monsters were around during the events of the tournament, why did they choose not to get involved? If the Director and the players can continue to satisfactorily answer this question, the game can continue as long as they like. But eventually the desire to return to a more "normal" level of play will be the sign to start a new campaign.

After defeating the Boss, the Director can create a slight extension to the campaign by simply introducing a new Boss right away. If the campaign had a Boss at Power Level 8, a Power Level 9 Boss could be introduced. This storyline could then be lengthened even further by introducing a Power Level 10 Boss after that. This gives a couple more challenges for the heroes to face, but ultimately, this is only a temporary solution. Such new, powerful opponents might be interesting for both the players and the Director, but again the question arises of why such a powerful figure has remained a mystery throughout all the events so far, unless there are some lingering plot threads that can be ascribed to the actions of these mysterious new Bosses. Perhaps these final Boss' hands can be seen even in other previous stories with a little creative hindsight.

Finally, the group can just decide to start a brand new campaign, with new Fighters, a new Boss, and a

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new plot. This could be a good occasion to change the parameters of the game, trying out a different tone, time, or scope. This approach is simple and effective, though leaving established characters behind when the potential for a sequel is so readily available might be difficult for many groups to do.

### **Original Video Animation**

Another more significant deviation from the normal pattern of pacing a campaign is to design an OVA (original video animation). This refers to a stand-alone movie, often using characters from an established series and/or characters that will not be seen in any version of the video game. The concept of an OVA opens up three more ideas for running the game.

The first use of the OVA is with characters that have reached Power Level 8. Instead of using any of the ideas described above, the Director can come up with a detailed, and usually fairly long, plot line for a single adventure (or perhaps a short series of small stories around a common plot). The Director can also introduce a new set of villains that exist outside of the "official" list of Fighters in the campaign. By the end of this special story, these new villains will inevitably be defeated (though they may show up again in a future OVA if so desired). The purpose of this kind of story is to allow new challenges for established characters, without necessarily having to invent a whole new chapter of the ongoing story. If it matters to the group, however, the Director should be careful not to let the events of the OVA damage the continuity of the established game so far.

A variant of this use of the OVA is to use such a story with characters who are not yet PL 8. Perhaps the Director wants to give the campaign a temporary diversion by changing the normal tone of the campaign in progress. This use of the OVA requires more work on the part of the Director, as he needs to provide reasonable explanations to fit the side events of the OVA into the larger campaign plot.

A final use of the OVA concept in *Fight!* is to create a one-shot story. The players can make PL 8 characters (or any other Power Level, for that matter) and just have a single adventure involving them. In this way, *Fight!* can be used in a convention setting, as a break from another ongoing game, or as an introduction to the fighting game genre before considering the possibility of a full-fledged campaign.

While the fighting game genre is a consistent genre unto itself, there are many ways to use the tropes of the genre to tell exciting stories of heroic Fighters and the brutal Bosses who oppose them. This chapter has provided a collection of guidelines, ideas, plot hooks, and inspiration, but in the end,

they are just suggestions. Come up with your own version of a fighting game and may it inspire sequels for years to come.





## APPENDIX

### Appendix 1: Example Characters

Here are two example Power Level 1 characters. They can be used as inspiration, as examples of how to make characters, as NPC Fighters in the Director's campaign, or even as pre-made player characters. Their backgrounds are fairly brief so that players or Directors can adjust them as necessary to better fit into their own games.

#### Hideki Douglas

Hideki is half-Japanese and half-American. He is also the latest scion of the Azure Scythe School, a style known for its cutting ki attacks and its honorable practitioners. Hideki is an exemplary member of his school's tradition: driven, honorable, and intelligent. As a result, most people who meet him like him or at least respect him.

A little while ago, he had an encounter with an attractive British woman named Shine Holly. She was a difficult person to deal with, as her approach to life conflicted with his own more reserved outlook. But he couldn't help himself: before he knew it, he was in love with the reckless adventurer.

Long before Hideki found his way to the Azure Scythe, however, the young Douglas murdered his American father in a fit of anger. His father was a stern and brutal man, who treated Hideki's mother cruelly. At the time, Hideki justified his action, but since he has embraced the school of the Azure Scythe, he has been haunted by the actions of his past. His guilt motivates him to ever-greater excellence in the martial arts, in the hope that one day he can believe himself worthy of his school's glorious tradition.

#### Shine Holly

Shine Holly is a wealthy young British woman. Her family name is unknown, as she has carefully concealed it to protect the lives and reputation of her aristocratic family. Just a few years ago, she was contacted by a mysterious figure. He explained to her that she had been chosen to be the bearer of the Magnificent Spectrum, an awesome power given to one person in a generation to face the malevolent depredations of the Empty Black. Shine never even learned if the enigmatic figure was human or not, but she didn't worry about too much: she had superpowers!

She embarked on a life of adventure and excitement. Her enhanced fighting prowess brought her into the events of the campaign and introduced her to a whole new world of interesting people (including the handsome but rather conservative Hideki Douglas). She has since learned that she should be able to wield powers corresponding to all the colors of the rainbow, but so far, she has only mastered the red portion of the spectrum.

Shine has worked hard to keep her true identity a secret. If her family connection should become known, she would be disowned for the frivolous waste of her inheritance and her family would be in danger from the power of the Empty Black. So she keeps her secret, tries to learn about her powers, and parties around the world.



**NAME:** Shine Holly

**PLAYER:**

**LIFE BAR** 30

**FIGHTING SPIRIT** 10

**SUPER ENERGY**

**POWER LEVEL:** 1

**GLORY:** 0

**STORY POINTS:** 0



**VITAL STATISTICS**

**AGE:** 22

**HEIGHT:** 162 cm

**WEIGHT:** 52 kg

**BLOOD TYPE:** B

**STYLE:** Magnificent Spectrum

**APPEARANCE:**

(See cover art)

**REASON FOR FIGHTING:**

To protect the world and have a blast doing it!

**STRENGTH**

-1

**DAMAGE BONUS**

**SPEED INITIATIVE/CONTROL**

2

**ACCURACY/CONTROL BONUSES**



**STAMINA**

0

**DEFENSE BONUS**

**REPUTATION**

**WIN QUOTES:**

"Smile – It's not that bad!"

**OPENING POSE:**

Winks and blows a kiss

**WINNING POSE:**

Dances to club music

**TAUNTS:**

Puts finger coyly to her lips

**COMBAT SKILLS**

**DEFENSE:** 2

**COMBO:**

**EVASION:** 3

**KI:**

**TACTICS:**

**NON-COMBAT SKILLS**

Agility 2

Zen State 1

Athletics 2

Draw Ki 1

Fast Reflexes 1

High Society 2

Presence 3

Realize Potential 1

Sense Ki 2

Spirituality 1

**QUALITIES**

Attractive

Light

Mobility

Wealth

**WEAKNESSES**

**QUIRKS**

Reckless

Secret

# FIGHTING PROFILE

NAME: Shine Holly

INITIATIVE/CONTROL d10/ d6

BASIC DAMAGE: 1

## SPECIAL MOVES

MOVE: Crimson Sky COMMAND: d, db, b + P

**DESCRIPTION:**

Shine leaps gracefully in the air, arches her back as if she were going to dive into water, and comes down on her opponent with a glowing red fist.

L 3 ACCURACY: +0 DAMAGE: d6 GLORY

ELEMENTS x 4 Aerial Mobile: Move 2 Ranges

Inc. Dmg. (2) \_\_\_\_\_

L 3 ACCURACY: +1 DAMAGE: d4+1 GLORY

ELEMENTS x 4 Inc. Acc (3) Inc. Dmg.

MOVE: Ruby Flash COMMAND: d, df, f + P

**DESCRIPTION:**

Shine steps forward with blinding quickness, there is a sudden bright red flash that obscures vision, and she strikes her opponent with a driving thrust punch.

MOVE: Scarlet Strike COMMAND: d, d + P

**DESCRIPTION:**

Shine twirls around rapidly and strikes with three spinning backhand strikes, red sparks flying off of her as she spins.

L 3 ACCURACY: +0 DAMAGE: d4 GLORY

ELEMENTS x 4 Fast Recovery Increased Knockback

Priority Reversal \_\_\_\_\_

L \_\_\_\_\_ ACCURACY: \_\_\_\_\_ DAMAGE: \_\_\_\_\_ GLORY

ELEMENTS x \_\_\_\_\_

MOVE: \_\_\_\_\_ COMMAND: \_\_\_\_\_

**DESCRIPTION:**

MOVE: \_\_\_\_\_ COMMAND: \_\_\_\_\_

**DESCRIPTION:**

L \_\_\_\_\_ ACCURACY: \_\_\_\_\_ DAMAGE: \_\_\_\_\_ GLORY

ELEMENTS x \_\_\_\_\_

L \_\_\_\_\_ ACCURACY: \_\_\_\_\_ DAMAGE: \_\_\_\_\_ GLORY

ELEMENTS x \_\_\_\_\_

MOVE: \_\_\_\_\_ COMMAND: \_\_\_\_\_

**DESCRIPTION:**



**NAME:** Hideki Douglas

**PLAYER:**

**LIFE BAR** 30

**FIGHTING SPIRIT** 12

**SUPER ENERGY**

**POWER LEVEL:** 1

**GLORY:** 0

**STORY POINTS:** 0

**STRENGTH**

1

**DAMAGE BONUS**

**SPEED INITIATIVE/CONTROL**



1

**ACCURACY/CONTROL BONUSES**

**STAMINA**

0

**DEFENSE BONUS**



**VITAL STATISTICS**

**AGE:** 25

**HEIGHT:** 170 cm

**WEIGHT:** 75 kg

**BLOOD TYPE:** A

**STYLE:** Azure Scythe

**APPEARANCE:**

(See cover art)

**REASON FOR FIGHTING:**

To atone for his past and for Justice

**REPUTATION**

**WIN QUOTES:**

"Another win – for Justice!"

**OPENING POSE:**

Arms at his side, flexes his fists, jaw set in grim determination

**WINNING POSE:**

Raises a fist into the air

**TRUNTS:**

Pumps his fist towards his opponent and yells

**COMBAT SKILLS**

**DEFENSE:** 3

**COMBO:** 2

**EVASION:**

**KI:**

**TACTICS:**

**NON-COMBAT SKILLS**

Athletics 1

Thug Thrashing 1

Awareness 1

Climactic Super Move 2

Danger Sense 2

Deduction 1

Grim Determination 2

Meditation 1

Reaffirm Purpose 3

The Fighting World 1

**QUALITIES**

Attractive

Driven

Intelligent

Reputation

**WEAKNESSES**

Honorable

**QUIRKS**

Disgraced

In Love



# FIGHTING PROFILE

**NAME:** Hideki Douglas

**INITIATIVE/CONTROL** d6 / d8

**BASIC DAMAGE:** d6

## SPECIAL MOVES

**MOVE:** Final Blade **COMMAND:** d, f, df + P

**DESCRIPTION:**  
Hideki braces himself and flicks his wrist, generating a hard to see blade of ki force in the air that cuts his foe.

L 4 **ACCURACY:** +0 **DAMAGE:** d10+1 **GLORY**

**ELEMENTS** x 5 Reach Subtle

Inc. Dmg. (3) \_\_\_\_\_

L 3 **ACCURACY:** +0 **DAMAGE:** d8 **GLORY**

**ELEMENTS** x 4 Juggle Launcher

Knocks Down (2) \_\_\_\_\_

**MOVE:** Cloudseeker Strike **COMMAND:** d, df, f + P

**DESCRIPTION:**  
Hideki lunges forward while drawing back a punch, blue energy coalescing around his fist, and then he thrusts the punch forward, driving his opponent high in the air, with Hideki flying after in pursuit.

**MOVE:** Blue Sky Wind **COMMAND:** d, db, b + K

**DESCRIPTION:**  
Hideki launches a series of whirling kicks as he floats towards his opponent on blue lines of ki force.

L 3 **ACCURACY:** +0 **DAMAGE:** d10 **GLORY**

**ELEMENTS** x 4 Easy to Combo Mobile: Move 2 Ranges

Inc. Dmg. (2) \_\_\_\_\_

L \_\_\_\_\_ **ACCURACY:** \_\_\_\_\_ **DAMAGE:** \_\_\_\_\_ **GLORY**

**ELEMENTS** x \_\_\_\_\_

**MOVE:** \_\_\_\_\_ **COMMAND:** \_\_\_\_\_

**DESCRIPTION:**

**MOVE:** \_\_\_\_\_ **COMMAND:** \_\_\_\_\_

**DESCRIPTION:**

L \_\_\_\_\_ **ACCURACY:** \_\_\_\_\_ **DAMAGE:** \_\_\_\_\_ **GLORY**

**ELEMENTS** x \_\_\_\_\_

L \_\_\_\_\_ **ACCURACY:** \_\_\_\_\_ **DAMAGE:** \_\_\_\_\_ **GLORY**

**ELEMENTS** x \_\_\_\_\_

**MOVE:** \_\_\_\_\_ **COMMAND:** \_\_\_\_\_

**DESCRIPTION:**

## Appendix 2: Character Generation Guidelines

Included here are all the steps necessary to create a character, as well as all of the lists of Skills, Qualities, Weaknesses, Quirks, Move Elements, and Move Liabilities.

1. Choose the character's Basic Qualities.
2. Choose four additional Qualities.
3. If desired, choose Weaknesses and Quirks to possibly earn more Qualities.
4. Spend 5 points on Combat Skills.
5. Spend 15 points on other Skills.
6. Spend 10 points on Special Moves.

### Power Level Chart

Power Level	Total Glory	Super Moves	Combat Bonuses	DET	Full Defense	Life Bar	Fighting Spirit
1	0-25	0	0	3	+1	30	10
2	26-50	0	1	3	+2	40	20
3	51-100	1	2	3	+2	50	30
4	101-175	2	3/2	3	+3	60	40
5	176-250	3	4/2	4	+3	70	55
6	251-350	4	5/2	4	+4	80	70
7	351-500	5	6/3	4	+4	90	85
8	501+	6	7/3	5	+5	100	100

## APPENDIX

### Combat Skills

Defense  
Evasion  
Tactics  
Combo  
Ki

### Non-Combat Skills (Mechanical)

Agility  
Climactic Super  
Move  
Gadgeteering  
Magic  
Power  
Psychic  
Reaffirm Purpose  
Realize Potential  
Stance Evaluation  
Thug Thrashing

### Non-Combat Skills (Narrative)

Animal Handling  
Acrobatics  
Athletics  
Awareness  
Call Forth Wisdom  
Cooking  
Danger Sense  
Deduction  
Draw Ki  
Endure Great  
Hardship  
Fast Reflexes  
Grim  
Determination  
High Society  
Intimidation  
Knowledge  
Lockpicking  
Lost in the Crowd  
Meditation  
Occupation  
Perception  
Performance  
Presence  
Property Damage  
Receive Wisdom  
Sense Ki  
Shadowing  
Sleight of Hand  
Smooth Talking  
Specialization  
Spirituality  
Stealth  
Street Society  
Technological  
Aptitude  
The Fighting World  
Zen State

### Qualities

Attractive  
Beautiful (females only)  
Big  
Bishounen (males only)  
Buxom (females only)  
Charming  
Connections  
Cute (females only)  
Dashing (males only)  
Driven  
Fame  
Followers  
Friend  
Gadgeteering  
Genius  
Great Destiny  
Gun Expert  
Immortal Being  
Influence  
Intelligent  
Intimidating  
Light  
Lucky  
Magic  
Mobility  
Pet  
Power  
Powerful Item  
Psychic  
Reputation  
Sensei  
Sexy (females only)  
Sharp Dressed (males only)  
Short  
Suggestive Attire (females only)  
Tall  
Technique  
Theme Music  
Tomboy (females only)  
Wealth  
Weapon Expert

### Weaknesses

Amnesia  
Annoying Voice  
Bad Reputation  
Code  
Curse  
Dangerous Job  
Dark Side  
Dependence  
Doomed  
Dull Personality  
Duty Bound  
Fanatic  
Fearsome Appearance  
Fragile Self-Image  
Glass Jaw  
Haunted  
Honorable  
Hunted  
Obsession  
Phobia  
Physical Handicap  
Poorly Drawn  
Ritual  
Significant Other  
Style Weakness  
Thick  
Ugly  
Unattractive  
Unintelligent  
Unlucky  
Vow  
Warped

## APPENDIX

### Quirks

Age  
Arrogant  
Attitude  
Brutal  
Bumbling Friend  
Clueless  
Cooking  
Dead Serious  
Demure  
Disgraced  
Distinctive Appearance  
Fan Service (females only)  
Glutton  
Greedy  
Immature  
Impulsive  
In Love  
Lecherous  
Loves Combat  
Nosebleeds (males only)  
Pacifist  
Reckless  
Revenge  
Rivalry  
Scarred  
Secret  
Short-Tempered  
Suspicious  
Unworldly

### Move Elements

Aerial  
Always Does Damage  
Anti-Air  
Area Effect (2 or 4)  
Bounce  
Charge Back  
Counter  
- Counter only (0)  
Critical Hit  
Easy to Combo  
Evade Ranged  
Explosive (3 or 5)  
- Reduced damage (2)  
Fast Recovery  
Hard to Evade (1-2)  
Harry  
Hits Low  
Increased Accuracy (3-6)  
Increased Damage (1-6)  
Increased Glory (1+)  
Increased Knockback  
Increased Stun  
Interrupt  
Interrupt only (0)  
Invincible Interrupt  
Juggle  
- Launcher  
- Spinning Juggle  
Ki and Strength  
Knocks Down (2)  
- Only at the end of a Combo (1)  
Knockback Advance  
Mobile: Full movement after attack  
Mobile: Increased movement  
- Only 2 Ranges (0)  
- Moves Low  
Mobile: Movement before or after attack  
Pass Through  
Position Shift  
Power Up: Extra Control  
Power Up: Life Bar  
Priority  
Ranged (2)  
- Accuracy for Damage  
- Draw Closer  
- No Ranged Response  
- Short Range  
- Very Fast  
- Very Slow  
Reach  
Reversal  
Subtle  
Teleportation (2)  
- End in mid-air  
Temporary Invulnerability (3)  
Temporary Technique (1+)  
Throw (2 or 0)  
- Carrying Grapple  
- Hurl  
- Sustained Hold (2)  
Unblockable

## APPENDIX

### Move Liabilities

Behind Opponent  
Cross-Up  
Decreased Accuracy (1-3)  
Decreased Damage  
Limited Damage: Knock Back Only  
Limited Damage: Stun Only  
Limited Move  
Limited Movement:  
Movement away only  
Limited Movement: Must move forward 1 Range  
Limited Movement: No movement before attacking  
Limited Use (2)  
- Can Reload (1)  
Negative Positioning  
No Combo  
No Damage (2)  
No Super Energy  
Non-Finisher  
Only When Prone (2)  
Random Element  
Range 0  
Self-Damage: Damages Attacker (2)  
Self-Damage: Stuns Attacker (2)  
Self-Prone  
Slow Recovery  
Super Energy (2)

### Exotic Move Elements

Absorbs Attacks  
- Absorb All Attacks  
- Absorb and Use Ranged  
- Transform Energy  
Bomb  
- Moveable Bomb  
- No Range  
- Short Timer  
Borrow Identity  
Copies Moves  
Entangle (2)  
Fake (2+)  
Flight (2)  
Free Movement (2)  
Gradual Effect  
- Delayed Onset  
Healing (2-3)  
- Heal others  
- Only heal others  
Illusionary Doubles  
- Defensive Illusion (2)  
- Offensive Illusion (1+)  
Invisibility  
- Maintain Effect  
Power Enhancer (1+)  
- Delayed Onset  
Reflection  
Style Change  
Super Move Enhancer (2)  
- Not Stunned (2)  
Suppression: Suppress Special Moves (2)  
- Suppress Super Moves  
Suppression: Suppress movement  
Suppression: Suppress Special Moves and movement (5)  
- Suppress Super Moves  
Taunt  
- Modify Super Energy  
- Element Addition

### Exotic Move Liabilities

Move Sub-Set  
Multi-Part Move: Multi-Part Attack  
Multi-Part Move: Multi-Part Throw  
Prop  
- Recover Prop with Special Move  
Random Move

### Additional Elements for Super Moves Only

Breakthrough (1-4)  
Decreased Super Energy Cost  
Extended Duration  
Increased Accuracy (3-9)  
Increased Damage (1-8)  
Infinite Supers (5)  
Invincibility (1-4)  
Unique Super Move

### Additional Liabilities for Super Moves Only

Increased Super Energy Cost (1-3)  
Limited Choice



## Appendix 3: Example Special Moves

The following pages contain 20 fairly common Special Moves found in fighting video games. These examples serve two purposes: to give simple examples of how to construct Special Moves and to provide some pre-constructed typical moves for players who wish to save themselves some effort. Note also that these are not the only ways these moves could be constructed.

### Air Fireball: L4

Ranged (2)  
Aerial  
Hard to Evade  
Accuracy: +0  
Damage: Based on Ki +1  
The Fighter leaps into the air and throws a fireball down at the opponent.

### Air Throw: L2

Interrupt Only  
Throw (2)  
Limited Move: Can only Interrupt an Aerial attack  
Accuracy: +1  
Damage: 1d8  
The Fighter leaps up to meet his opponent in the air, grabs him, and throws him forcefully to the ground.

### Charging Smash: L3

Mobile: 2 Ranges  
Accuracy: +0  
Damage: 1d8+1  
The Fighter charges towards the opponent and smashes him with his shoulder.

### Close Ki Attack: L3

Ranged (2)  
Short Range

Limited Move: Can't be used at Range 3  
Accuracy: +0  
Damage: Based on Ki + 2 die sizes  
The Fighter generates a ki energy effect that has no range with which to attack his opponent.

### Fireball: L3

Ranged (2)  
Accuracy: +0  
Damage: Based on Ki +1 die size  
The Fighter launches some form of ranged ki attack at the opponent. It might be fire, ice, sound, magic, or any other form of energy.

### Flying Flip Kick: L3

Aerial  
No Movement  
Accuracy: +1  
Damage: 1d6+1  
The Fighter back-flips in place, using the flip to kick the opponent.

### Flying Knee Thrust: L2

Anti-Air  
Knocks Down (2)  
Accuracy: +0  
Damage: 1d6  
The Fighter lunges forward with a quick knee.

### Flying Smash: L3

Aerial  
Hard to Evade  
Accuracy: +0  
Damage: 1d8  
The Fighter leaps into the air and uses his whole body to smash into the opponent.

### Flying Spinning Kick: L3

Mobile: 2 Ranges

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### Knockback Advance

Accuracy: +0

Damage: 1d8

The Fighter leaps spinning into the air, with his leg outstretched like a blade.

### Forward Flip Kick: L3

Self-Prone

Hard to Evade

Accuracy: +1

Damage: 1d6+1

The Fighter performs a forward flip, bringing his legs down on the opponent, and ending up on his back as a result.

### Grab and Throw: L2

Throw (2)

Hurl

Accuracy: +1

Damage: 1d6

The Fighter picks up his opponent and throws him.

### Overhead Smash: L2

Hard to Evade

Accuracy: +0

Damage: 1d8

The Fighter brings down a strong overhead swing.

### Shockwave: L4

Ranged (2)

Knocks Down (2)

Hits Low

Accuracy: +0

Damage: Based on Ki

The Fighter sends a wave of ki energy across the ground to impact with his opponent.

### Slide Kick: L2

Hits Low

### Knocks Down (2)

Accuracy: +0

Damage: 1d6

The Fighter ducks low and slides into the opponent, tripping him.

### Super Fireball: L5

Ranged (2)

Knocks Down (2)

Accuracy: +0

Damage: Based on Ki + 1 die size

The Fighter throws a larger, more powerful fireball attack at the opponent.

### Super Uppercut: L4

Anti-Air

Knocks Down (2)

No Movement

Accuracy: +0

Damage: 1d8+1

The Fighter leaps into the air, delivering a powerful uppercut.

### Takedown: L2

Throw (2)

Position Shift

Accuracy: +1

Damage: 1d6

The Fighter performs any number of standard grappling takedowns on the opponent.

### Teleport Attack: L3

Evade Ranged

Knocks Down (2)

Teleportation (2)

Accuracy: -1

Damage: 1d6

The Fighter disappears from his present location and reappears next to his opponent, launching an uppercut as he reappears.



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### **Teleportation: L3**

No Damage (-2)

Evade Ranged

Teleportation (2)

End in Mid-Air

Priority

Fast Recovery

The Fighter disappears from his present position and reappears elsewhere.

### **Tumble Attack: L4**

Mobile: Move 2 Ranges

Hits Low

Accuracy: +1

Damage: 1d6

The Fighter rolls himself into a ball and bowls himself into his opponent.

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### Appendix 4: Combat Summary

The following pages describe all the basic effects that apply to Initiative, Control, Accuracy, defense, and damage. It also lists all of the Action Point Options available in Dramatic Combat. This summary does not contain any effects of optional rules nor does it contain effects of Environmental Hazards.

#### Initiative

##### Conditions That Increase Initiative

+1 to combatant with highest Initiative on previous turn if he hit his opponent  
Await Opening increases Initiative or Control  
Full Defense increases Initiative or Control by one die size  
Spend Fighting Spirit at the beginning of the turn to increase die size

##### Conditions That Lower Initiative

Await Opening increases Initiative or Control  
Full Offense lowers Initiative or Control by one die size  
Recover from being Stunned and stand up from Knock Down at the same time lowers Initiative by one die size  
Recover from being Stunned by being hit lowers Initiative by one die size  
Standing up from being Knocked Down lowers Initiative by one die size unless character has already acted before being Knocked Down

#### Control

##### Conditions That Increase Control

Add Control Bonus  
Full Defense increases Initiative or Control by one die size  
Spend Fighting Spirit at the beginning of the turn to increase die size  
Spend FS to increase Control 12 (special case – see rules)  
Unused Control after Hit Stun increases Control by two die sizes

##### Conditions That Lower Control

Full Offense lowers Initiative or Control by one die size  
Hit Stun lowers Control by 4 or reduces it to 1/2 (round down), whichever is lower

#### Movement

Move 1 Range and attack  
Move 1 Range and receive defense bonus instead of attacking  
Move 2 Ranges  
Move 2 Ranges and attack with Basic Move or some Special Moves for 1 FS  
Move 3 Ranges for 1 FS  
After Knocking Down opponent: Move 1 Range  
Power Up: No movement  
Refocus and Await Opening: Move 1 Range  
Movement after Hit Stun costs 1 extra FS

#### Attack

##### Conditions That Increase Accuracy

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Add Accuracy Bonus  
Add Accuracy of Move  
Attacking after a successful Evasion without movement: +2  
Attacking at Range 0: +1  
Attacking on Full Offense: roll 1d10  
Attacking with a Cross-Up: +2  
Await Opening increases Accuracy  
If rolled Control is higher than needed for specific attack, +1 bonus to Accuracy  
Spend FS to increase Accuracy  
Tag Team Switch Combo: +2

### Conditions That Decrease Accuracy

Attacking at Range 2: -1  
Ending a Combo with a Special Move: -1  
Every full 3 moves in a Combo: -1  
Subtract Accuracy of Move  
Using a Combo in a Defensive Response: -1 (costs 2 FS)

### Defense

#### Conditions That Increase Defense

Add Defense Bonus  
Defense and Evasion can be used together for 1 FS  
If attacker only moves 1 Range and does not attack: +1  
On Full Defense, Defense (only) is increased according to the Power Level Chart  
Spend FS to increase Defense Total

#### Conditions That Decrease Defense

On Full Offense, Defense is 1/2 and no other option may be used  
When defending against a Defensive Response,

Defense is 1/2 and no other option may be used  
While Stunned, Defense is 1/2 and no other option may be used and FS cannot be used

### Successful Defense

Attack misses

### Successful Evasion

Attack misses and defender can either move exactly 2 Ranges for 1 FS or receive bonus to Accuracy on next attack

### Successful Tactics

Attack misses and defender can choose Defensive Response

### Defensive Responses

Anti-Air/Juggle Response  
Basic Response  
Counter Response (based on Defense)  
Evade Ranged Response  
Interrupt Response  
Jinking Response  
Priority Response  
Ranged Response (based on Ki)  
Reversal Response  
Throw Response

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### Damage

#### Conditions That Increase Damage

Add Damage Bonus  
Combo adds damage  
Ki Skill determines damage of Ranged Special Move  
Opponent's Stamina may add die size to damage  
Some Elements add damage  
Strength may add die sizes to damage

#### Conditions That Decrease Damage

Opponent's Strength may subtract die size from damage  
Some Liabilities decrease damage  
Stamina may subtract die sizes from damage

#### Effects of Damage

First successful damage in a round: Attacker regains FS equal to Power Level  
Damage is subtracted from opponent's Life Bar  
Defender suffers Hit Stun and loses 4 Control or is reduced to 1/2 (round down) Control  
Defender is Knocked Back 1 Range (Increased Knockback or Launcher: 2 Ranges)  
Defender may be Knocked Down or Stunned

#### End of Turn

Tally Glory and Super Energy  
Roll Time Roll and describe events of the turn

### Action Point Options in Dramatic Combat

#### Initiative Option

Fast Reflexes

#### Movement Options

Athletics  
Leaving Combat

#### Attack Options

Climactic Super Move  
Debilitating Injury  
Final Blow  
Flourish  
Freeze Frame Attack  
Knocking an Opponent out of Combat  
Property Damage  
Pulling Punches  
Special Moves  
Surprise Attack  
Team-Up

#### Defense Options

Endure Great Hardship  
Full Defense  
Ignore Hit Stun  
Ki Face Off  
Taking a Hit for Someone Else

#### Recovery Options

Draw Ki  
Friendship Morale Boost





Healing Life Bar  
Reaffirm Purpose  
Realize Potential  
Stand Off

## Special Options

Gadgeteering/Magic/Psychic  
Ki Yelling  
Mind-Manipulating Magic  
Power  
Presence  
Pushing It  
Sense Ki  
Spirit Combat  
Stance Evaluation

## Spiritual Combat

Call Forth Wisdom  
Meditation  
Spirituality  
Zen State

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### Appendix 5: Glossary

**Accuracy:** An attack's bonus to hit, based on the move's Elements, Control, Range, Accuracy Bonus, and Fighting Spirit.

**Action Point:** A resource acquired almost every turn in Dramatic Combat, used to power various special effects, attacks, and Skill uses.

**Action Sequence:** A special sequence of skill checks used to dramatically resolve a particular scene, such as a chase or infiltration.

**Attack String:** An optional rule that modifies the rules for Combos and Special Moves as a way to emulate the fighting patterns found in 3-D fighting video games.

**Basic Move:** Any punch, kick, elbow, head butt, or simple attack form used to strike an opponent. It is distinguished from the special effects found in Special Moves and Super Moves. All Basic Moves are considered L1 and have a base damage of 1d4.

**Basic Quality:** Strength, Speed, and Stamina. These are the core characteristics that define a Fighter's physical capabilities. They are established at character generation and never change.

**Boss:** The principal villain of a campaign. This character will usually be the last opponent the player characters will face at the climax of the campaign.

**Campaign:** A series of connected stories featuring the same protagonists, working towards a climactic confrontation, usually against a Boss. The campaign

as a whole represents the storyline found in the background of a fighting video game. At the heart of a campaign's story, there is often a tournament.

**Combat Bonus:** A bonus to be added to a character's Accuracy, Control, Damage, or Defense in combat. Combat Bonuses are acquired automatically by advancing in Power Level.

**Combat Skill:** A Skill that has a specific application in the combat rules and little or no use outside of combat. The five Combat Skills are Combo, Defense, Evasion, Ki, and Tactics.

**Combo:** A series of attacks combined into one attack for the purposes of rolling to hit. Combos deal greater damage than a normal attack and are also worth more Glory and Super Energy. Also the name of one of the five Combat Skills, which sets the maximum length of a character's Combos in combat.

**Control:** A measure of a character's self-control, tactical efficiency, and ability to make the best use of an available situation in combat. Control is rolled each turn and determines how powerful a move a character can use as well as how long a Combo the character can create. It also has an effect on Accuracy.

**Defeated:** The condition of a character who has been reduced to zero Life Bar. In a fighting video game, this almost always means knocked unconscious, but the specific narrative meaning of defeated in the game depends on the situation. In any case, the character is no longer capable of fighting without rest and recovery.

**Defense Total:** The number that the attacker needs to roll equal to or greater than in order to hit the defender. It is derived from the defender's chosen

## APPENDIX

defensive Skill, plus his Defense Bonus, Fighting Spirit spent on defense, and miscellaneous modifiers.

**Defensive Option:** The choice of which defensive Skill the defender uses to attempt to block or avoid an attack. The three defensive options are the same as the three defensive Skills: Defense, Evasion, and Tactics.

**Defensive Response:** One of a series of choices available to a character who has successfully defended using the Tactics Skill. Available Defensive Responses depend on the defender's Special Moves and the move used by the attacker. A few Defensive Responses are instead based on Defense or Ki.

**DET:** An acronym referring to the three defensive Skills: Defense, Evasion, and Tactics. Unlike all other Skills, the maximum level allowed for these Skills is based on a specific entry on the Power Level chart, and is much lower than other Skills.

**Die Size:** The specific die used to determine a result in combat. Fight! uses d4s, d6s, d8s, d10s, and d12s. Many effects throughout the rules modify the die roll used by increasing or decreasing the die size before the roll. For example, a one die size increase on a d6 increases the die used for the roll to a d8.

**Difficulty Level (DL):** The number set by the Director that a character must equal or exceed on a skill check in order to succeed at the task. Difficulty Levels usually range between 4 and 20.

**Director:** The person responsible for setting up the campaign, preparing the stories for the player characters, adjudicating the rules, and playing all of the non-player characters encountered. Often called a Game Master or GM in other role-playing games.

**Distance:** The measure of distance between a character and an Environmental Hazard in combat. It is an abstraction and is rated from 0-6. It serves a similar purpose but is not considered to be equivalent to Range.

**Dramatic Combat:** A sub-set of the normal combat rules that provides for more skill use in combat, faster resolution of turns, and a greater emphasis on narrative detail. In exchange, it simplifies the main combat system and removes some of the capabilities and options of the characters.

**Element:** An aspect of a Special Move or Super Move that enables it to use special rules in combat depending on the situation. Examples include a move that is more accurate, more damaging, one that can interrupt an opponent's move, or one that can knock an opponent down. A Special Move has a number of Elements equal to its Level +1, while a Super Move has a number of Elements equal to twice its Level.

**Environmental Hazard:** A feature of a battleground that can have a specific effect on the combatants. Examples include walls, ring-outs, dangerous scenery, or cliffs. The space between a character and an Environmental Hazard is measured in Distances (not Ranges).

**Fighter:** A term used to describe any character that is in an entirely different league of combat capability from the rest of the world. This term describes all of the player characters and all of the important non-player characters in the campaign. All of the characters found in a fighting video game are Fighters.

**Fighting Spirit:** An abstract measure of a character's

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ability to be flexible, creative, lucky, or focused in combat. It also represents a character's drive and training, as well as the strength of their confidence and willpower. It is used for many purposes in combat; very few die rolls cannot be modified by the use of Fighting Spirit.

**Glory:** The measure of a character's ability to show power, flexibility, versatility, and skill in combat. It is gained primarily through the use of a variety of moves as well as the ability to hit with long Combos. It functions equivalently to experience points in other role-playing games.

**Hit Stun:** An effect of being hit in combat. It reduces the character's available Control, often preventing him from acting during the turn.

**Initiative:** A measure of a character's speed, aggression, and ability to take advantage of a break in the opponent's concentration. The Initiative roll at the beginning of the turn determines the order of action for the turn.

**Knock Back:** The effect of being driven back one or more Ranges after being hit in combat. All attacks that do damage also do Knock Back.

**Knock Down:** The effect of being knocked prone by an attack. Such a condition requires the character to spend an action standing up before being able to move or attack again.

**Level (L):** A measure of the power and difficulty of a particular Special Move or Super Move. A move that is higher level requires more Control to use in combat, but is also composed of more Elements and is therefore more powerful and/or flexible. Basic Moves are considered to be L1. Special Moves are

L2 or higher. Super Moves are L5 or higher.

**Liability:** An aspect of a Special Move or Super Move that hinders the move's flexibility in some way, making it less effective. However, in turn, the Liability allows the move to have one or more additional Elements. Example Liabilities include reduced accuracy, a move that permits no movement, a move that does no damage, or a move that has a slow recovery time.

**Life Bar:** The measure of a character's health, stamina, and willpower. As a character takes damage, he loses Life Bar. When Life Bar is reduced to zero, the character is defeated. The speed of recovery of Life Bar is up to the Director, but is usually assumed to occur as fast as the story needs. The term "Life Bar" refers to the long colored bar at the top of the screen in a traditional fighting video game.

**Mechanical Skill:** A type of Non-Combat Skill. Mechanical Skills have specific mechanical game effects in certain situations, unlike Narrative Skills, whose use is based on circumstances within the story narrative and adjudicated solely by the Director.

**Narrative Skill:** A type of Non-Combat Skill. Narrative Skills are basically equivalent to "skills" in most role-playing games, in that they are used outside of combat situations and the Director sets their difficulty of use and their effectiveness within the narrative.

**Non-Combat Skill:** A Skill that is not normally used in combat, though many Non-Combat Skills can be used in special situations in the Dramatic Combat sub-system. While they are called "skills," many Non-Combat Skills also represent special abilities or forms of training in mysticism and the martial arts.

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**Non-Player Character (NPC):** A character in the game, who may or may not also be a Fighter, who is not controlled by one of the players. Normally, the Director controls all non-player characters.

**Player Character (PC):** A Fighter in the game who is controlled by a specific player. The player speaks for the character, in both the dialogue he says and in dictating what actions the character attempts to perform in the story. Normally, each player controls only one player character at a time.

**Power Level (PL):** A measure of a character's realized potential within a particular story arc. Player characters normally begin at Power Level 1 and progress through Power Level 8 over the course of the campaign. Power Level is roughly equivalent to the term "level" in other level-based role-playing games.

**Quality:** A positive aspect of a character not directly related to his combat abilities or his Skills. Qualities define the character's appearance, personality traits, social connections, or special resources that provide benefits for the character in appropriate situations.

**Quirk:** A minor personality trait that poses an occasional inconvenience to the character. In general, Quirks simply define certain key aspects of a character's personality, but under certain circumstances, they may influence the character's actions or other characters' reactions to him. Having three or more Quirks counts as a Weakness.

**Range:** The measure of distance between a character and another character or Thug group in combat. It is an abstraction and is rated from 0-5. The Accuracy of attacks is affected by Range. It is not the same thing as Distance, which measures distance between a character and an Environmental

Hazard.

**Special Move:** A unique move of a Fighter. Special Moves, more than any other characteristic, define the combat style of a Fighter. They can vary widely, and are composed of Elements and Limitations, which define how the move is used in combat. Most Special Moves are between L2 and L5. All Special Moves have a base damage of 1d6.

**Story Point:** An expendable resource acquired through various means throughout the game. Story Points can be used to re-roll die rolls, make use of Qualities, modify combat abilities, and exert narrative control over the immediate circumstances of the story.

**Stunning:** A consequence of a particularly powerful hit in combat. A character who is Stunned loses two actions and has severely limited defensive capabilities.

**Stunt Sequence:** A special tactic available to Fighters which uses Story Points as a weapon against Thugs in the Thug Thrashing combat system. A Stunt Sequence is intended as a particularly colorful narrative circumstance that allows a Fighter to defeat several Thugs at once without directly attacking them by conventional means.

**Super Energy:** A resource used to power Super Moves. Super Energy is gained each turn in combat by various means. When a Fighter wishes to use a Super Move, he must expend 10 or more Super Energy to do so.

**Super Move:** An especially powerful form of Special Move. Super Moves function in most ways like Special Moves, but they are made up of more

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Elements and do more damage. Super Moves are only available to Fighters of PL 3 or higher. A Fighter must first accumulate Super Energy before he can use a Super Move in combat. All Super Moves have a base damage of 1d8.

**Thug:** Usually a reference to an opponent in combat who is not a Fighter. However, in terms of the rules, a Thug is any character who is not a Fighter, encountered in combat or otherwise. Thugs operate with different rules when it comes to both combat and Skill use.

**Thug Group:** A group of Thugs, numbering from one (under certain circumstances) to 10. A Thug group moves and acts as a single character in combat. All the members of a Thug group must be of the same Thug level and share the same characteristics.

**Thug Level:** A relative indicator of the overall capability of the Thugs that make up a Thug group, especially in combat. Thug level is rated from 1-5; the higher the Thug's level, the more dangerous he is. There is also a special level called "Normal," which is used for any Thugs that are not intended to be combatants.

**Thug Thrashing:** A sub-system of the main combat system used whenever non-Fighters are engaged in combat. It functions in most ways like the main combat system, but with special considerations for the differing characteristics of Thugs. Also the name of a Mechanical Non-Combat Skill that is used in Thug Thrashing combat that indicates a character's special skill at fighting multiple opponents at once.

**Tournament:** Either a reference to an organized fighting competition that occurs in the context of a story, as is commonly seen in the source material, or

the framework of the campaign as a whole. In this latter sense, a Tournament may be a traditional competition, but it may also be simply the rationale provided by the Director in the campaign as to why the Fighters encounter and fight one another.

**Weakness:** A negative aspect of a character not directly related to his combat abilities or his Skills. Weaknesses define the character's appearance, personality traits, or background that impose liabilities on the character in specific situations.



### Appendix 6: Source Material

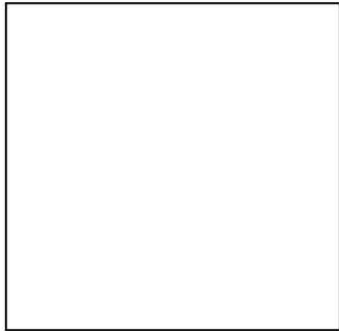
The following list contains all the video games and video game series that were actively played and researched in designing the rules for Fight!

Arcana Heart series  
Art of Fighting series  
Asuka 120% Burning Fest series  
Battle Arena Toshinden series  
Bloody Roar series  
Capcom Fighting Evolution  
Capcom vs. SNK series  
Critical Blow  
Darkstalkers series  
Dead or Alive series  
Ehrgeiz  
Evil Zone  
Fatal Fury series  
Fighters Impact  
Fighters Megamix  
Garou Mark of the Wolves  
Guilty Gear series  
Hokuto no Ken  
JoJo's Bizarre Adventure series  
Kakuto Chojin  
Kensei  
King of Fighters series  
Kizuna Encounter series  
Last Blade series  
Last Bronx  
Marvel Super Heroes vs. Street Fighter  
Marvel vs. Capcom series  
Melly Blood series  
Mortal Kombat series  
NeoGeo Battle Coliseum  
Power Instinct series  
Psychic Force series  
Real Bout series  
Rival Schools United By Fate series

Samurai Shodown series  
Sengoku Basara X  
Soul Blade/Soul Calibur series  
Star Gladiator series  
Street Fighter series  
SVC Chaos  
Tao Feng  
Tekken series  
Tobal series  
Virtua Fighter series  
Vs.  
World Heroes series

The following video games are either non-traditional fighting games or non-fighting video games that inspired thematic elements in Fight!

Bushido Blade series  
Cannon Spike  
Death by Degrees  
Def Jam series  
DBZ Budokai series  
Fighting Force series  
Godzilla Destroy All Monsters series  
Gundam Battle Assault series  
Mortal Kombat Shaolin Monks  
Ninja Gaiden series  
Pocket Fighter  
Power Stone series  
Tech Romancer  
Thrill Kill  
Urban Reign  
War of the Monsters



**LIFE BAR**

**FIGHTING SPIRIT**

**SUPER ENERGY**



**NAME:**

**POWER LEVEL:**

**PLAYER:**

**GLORY:**

**STORY  
POINTS:**

**VITAL STATISTICS**

**AGE:**

**HEIGHT:**

**WEIGHT:**

**BLOOD TYPE:**

**STYLE:**

**APPEARANCE:**

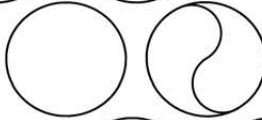
**REASON FOR FIGHTING:**

**STRENGTH**



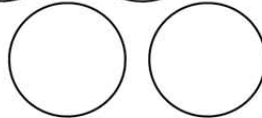
**DAMAGE BONUS**

**SPEED  
INITIATIVE/CONTROL**



**ACCURACY/CONTROL  
BONUSES**

**STAMINA**



**DEFENSE BONUS**

**REPUTATION**

**WIN QUOTES:**

**OPENING POSE:**

**WINNING POSE:**

**TRUNTS:**

**COMBAT SKILLS**

**DEFENSE:**

**COMBO:**

**EVASION:**

**KI:**

**TACTICS:**

**NON-COMBAT SKILLS**

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**QUALITIES**

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**WEAKNESSES**

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**QUIRKS**

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# FIGHTING PROFILE

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

INITIATIVE/CONTROL / \_\_\_\_\_

BASIC DAMAGE: \_\_\_\_\_

## SPECIAL MOVES

MOVE: \_\_\_\_\_ COMMAND: \_\_\_\_\_  
DESCRIPTION:  
\_\_\_\_\_

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L \_\_\_\_\_ ACCURACY: \_\_\_\_\_ DAMAGE: \_\_\_\_\_ GLORY   
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MOVE: \_\_\_\_\_ COMMAND: \_\_\_\_\_  
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## APPENDIX

### Contributor Bios

#### Christopher Peter

Christopher is an academic who has spent about as many years playing role-playing games as he has spent in school collecting advanced degrees. Gaming before his age reached double digits, he is thankful for all the good times that role-playing has brought, especially for the friends who have become family over several decades together. When he is not gaming, Christopher spends his time writing journal articles and books in his field. He is a longtime fan of fighting video games, collecting dozens of obscure titles, even though he considers himself merely an intermediate player on a good day. Fight has been the product of over a decade of work and he is happy that it is finally seeing print.

#### Wayne Deitrick

Wayne has spent more than three decades playing role-playing games, but this is his first published contribution to the hobby. A software designer by trade, he enjoys the thought process involved in bridging sound, interesting game mechanics with equally interesting ways of improving the narrative. When not working or playing games, he enjoys video games, sci fi television and movies, and living out his own adventures in the great outdoors.

#### Bob and Jennefer Noberini

Bob is a freelance artist who has been providing artwork for role-playing games for the past 25 years. A gamer himself, his favorite genre is superhero gaming, though he also enjoys fighting video games. Bob has also been active in the local comic

convention scene for the past 10 years. He is the writer and artist for Players Wanted. His gallery can be seen at <http://stubbiedtoe.deviantart.com>. His wife Jennefer is also an artist and gamer, but she prefers providing digital support for Bob, faking her way through Photoshop and still getting great results.

#### Melissa Wang

Bless you all! It is an honor to be in this publication! I'm an art, manga and graphic novelist and entertainment media enthusiast with hopes of making interesting manga. I love watching people play video games while drawing! I love drawing for others and creating original art. You can see my work at <http://muddymelly.deviantart.com>. I can be contacted on Facebook and Skype as muddymelly.

#### Danrey Borja

My name is Danrey. I am an aspiring artist that always tries to improve my skills as much as I can. Although I was born in the Philippines, I'm currently residing in Ontario, Canada. I primarily use Photoshop for my artwork. My works can be seen at <http://killafliip.deviantart.com>. I learned how to draw usually from trial and error since most of my skills are self-taught. Most of my works are influenced by anime and video game culture. I'm currently studying at University of Toronto and mainly study sciences, but I do pick up some art courses now and then. Art is my hobby. I enjoy sitting down and drawing something. I'm inspired by many great artists who push me to be better. I really hope you all enjoy my pieces.

#### Imperia Studio

Imperia Studio is a small independent graphic studio established by Valeria Rodao and Andres Lacuesta.



## APPENDIX

Valeria Rodao is a graphic designer and plastic artist born in 1986 in Montevideo, Uruguay. She studied Paint and Drawing in the Universidad del Trabajo del Uruguay (UTU) (Work University of Uruguay) and Graphic Design in the Bios Academy, becoming one of the best of her class. Andres Lacuesta, born in 1989, also in Montevideo, is a self-taught drawing student, screenwriter, historical sciences and literature student, and investigator for Universidad de la Republica Oriental del Uruguay (UDELAR). The style of the Studio is the result of the combined forces of the two artists, giving every illustration the sensory power of the art by using the method of science and deep observation.

Catalina Silva

My name is Catalina, AKA Neko Rulz. I love cats, tigers and wolves. I drink tea all day and enjoy walking under the rain. My favorite places are those surrounded by nature, mountains and trees. I was born in Chile; a city named Temuco is my hometown. Here art is not very appreciated. Even if you have talent, you can't easily do this for a living, because in this culture, people prefer other life priorities. To have something to work with, I'm studying Graphic Design, and I try to tell everybody that the career will be my future, but for me, it is just a second chance. I just like illustration too much and that's why I've decided to offer myself working for people via the Internet. And that's why I'm really grateful that people around the world like my art this much.