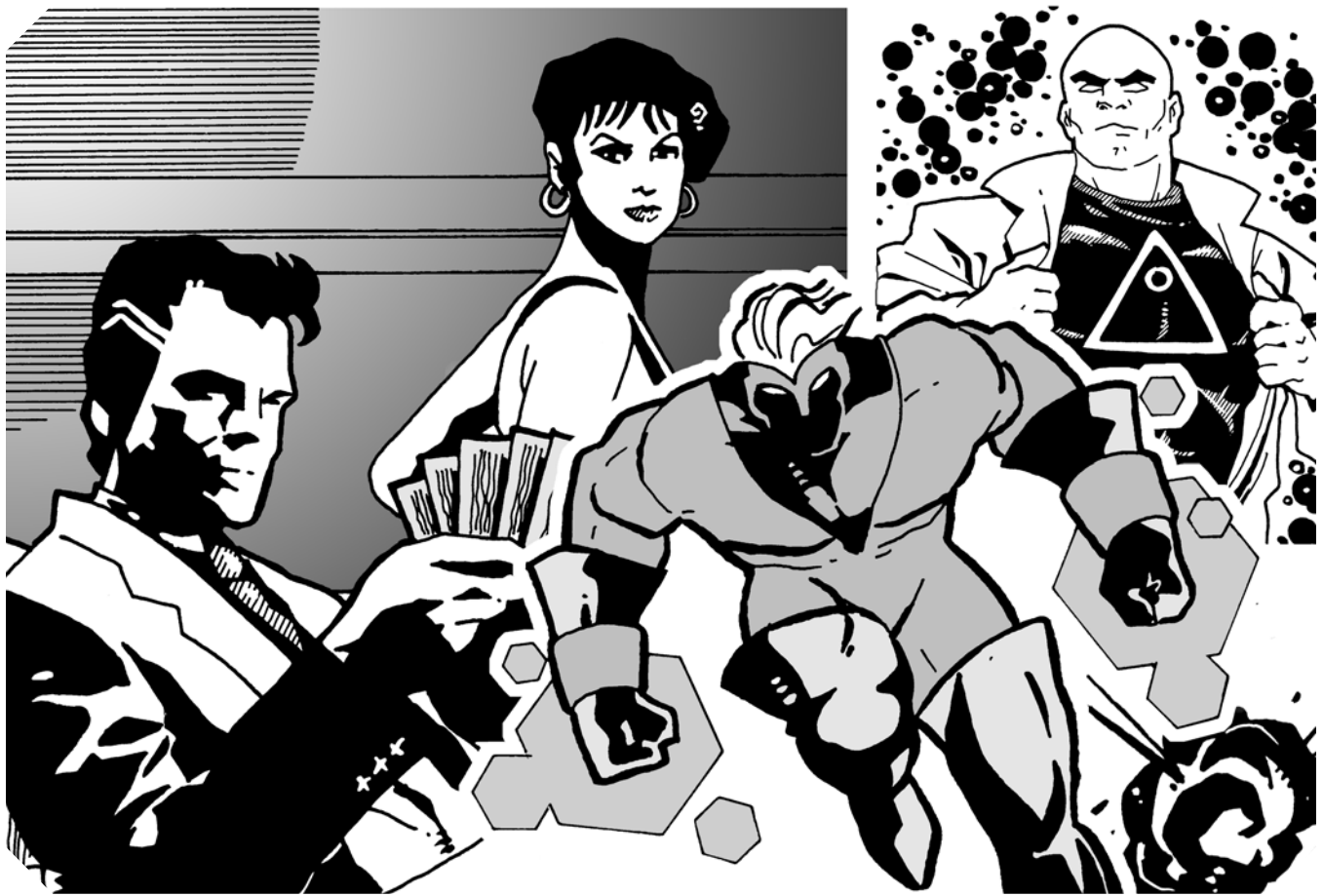


**GURPS**

Fourth Edition

# **POWER-UPS**<sup>TM</sup> **PERKS**



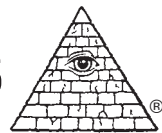
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**STEVE JACKSON GAMES**

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## About GURPS

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Rules and statistics in this book are specifically for the **GURPS Basic Set, Fourth Edition**. Page references that begin with B refer to that book, not this one.

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# INTRODUCTION

There's nothing quite like getting a bunch of bite-sized goodies for next to nothing – and perks fit the bill! As the *Basic Set* explains, a perk is a minor advantage that costs only 1 point. Perks are penny candy for your PC.

Despite being small and inexpensive, perks are big on flavor. Just a few can make an ordinary character concept extraordinary. This is to a great extent because perks are open to interpretation and rarely raise game-balance concerns, which encourages players and GMs alike to cast aside rules and consider *personality*.

*GURPS Power-Ups 2: Perks* is simply a big list of perks that tries to hold true to all of these principles: flavor, flexibility, and variety. Everything here has been checked for game balance. The GM must still exercise judgment, but we've made every effort to keep things sensible.

Have fun!

## WHAT PERKS ARE INCLUDED?

*Power-Ups 2: Perks* incorporates *every* perk published for *GURPS* as of spring 2008, including all the combat perks from *GURPS Martial Arts*, making it the “one-stop perk source.” But it isn't just recycled material! It expands on the old perks, makes them more generic, and mixes them 50/50 with *brand-new* ones.

The future holds more perks, of course, and perhaps further collections of perks. Until then, if you want a perk that isn't here, use what *is* here as your guide. Swapping the rule, skill, or die roll that a perk modifies for another object of the same general type will usually yield a perk that – with minor tweaks – is balanced and sensible.

## HOW WERE THEY NAMED?

Some perk names are utilitarian, others are whimsical, and still others have roots in the distant history of *GURPS*. The names mostly *don't matter* as long as the players and GM know the rules that accompany each name. If you prefer functional perk names – or fanciful ones – then change the ones that don't fit. And if a particular player really wants to rename a perk for *his* PC, more power to him – he's getting into the spirit of things!

## HOW ARE THEY SORTED?

Most people don't especially like huge lists, so the perks (more than

160 of them!) are sorted by *type*. If you prefer alphabetical order, see the index (p. 22).

## HOW MANY SHOULD I ALLOW?

The GM decides how many perks PCs can have. Perks are minor traits, so it *probably* won't break anything to set *no* limit. Like quirks, however, perks are characterization aids above all, and a character with scads of them risks coming across as scattered. As well, while the individual perks are reasonably balanced, it's impossible to check every possible combination – and unlimited access means greater odds of some unanticipated super-combo.

A suggested limit, then, is one perk per 25 starting character points, excluding racial perks. This lets the typical 150-point starting PC purchase up to six perks, which seems about right next to five quirks. As always, the GM has the final say.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Sean “Dr. Kromm” Punch set out to become a particle physicist in 1985, ended up the *GURPS* Line Editor in 1995, and has engineered rules for almost every *GURPS* product since. During the *GURPS Third Edition* era, he compiled both *GURPS Compendium* volumes, developed *GURPS Lite*, wrote *GURPS Wizards* and *GURPS Undead*, and edited or revised over 20 other titles. With David Pulver, he produced the *GURPS Basic Set, Fourth Edition*, in 2004. His latest creations include *GURPS Powers* (with Phil Masters), *GURPS Martial Arts* (with Peter Dell'Orto), and *GURPS Dungeon Fantasy 1-4*. Sean has been a gamer since 1979. His non-gaming interests include cinema and wine. He lives in Montréal, Québec with his wife, Bonnie. They have two cats, Banshee and Zephyra, and a noisy parrot, Circe.



# THE PERKS

## APPEARANCE PERKS

These mundane perks shape your personal appearance. See *Exotic Perks* (pp. 9-12) for superhuman alternatives, *Clothing Shticks* (p. 14) for perks that influence how your *clothing* looks, and *Social Perks* (pp. 17-18) for perks that affect how others react to your social position rather than your looks.

### Classic Features†

You have some well-defined set of features in spades. You might be markedly pale or tan, the epitome of blondes or redheads, or a musclemán – or perhaps you have idealized Chinese or Irish or *Orcish* looks. Whenever you interact with an NPC who fancies those looks – due to a quirk, GM fiat, or a note in a published adventure – you function as one Appearance level higher, cumulative with any specified reaction bonus. For instance, if you're a Classic Redhead with Average looks, an NPC with the quirk "Prefers redheads (+2 reactions)" would react to you at +2 for his quirk *and* another +1 because you count as Attractive.

### Forgettable Face

You *blend in*. Your face is hard to pick out or remember. You get +1 to Shadowing in crowds, while others have -1 to rolls made to recognize you from a lineup or mug shots – or even to recall meeting you!

You can't have both Forgettable Face and Distinctive Features (p. B165). Unnatural Features (p. B22), and Appearance above Attractive or below Unattractive, are likewise off-limits, except when this perk is actually an exotic ability.

### Honest Face

You simply look honest, reliable, or generally harmless. This has nothing to do with your reputation among those who know you, or how virtuous you *really* are! People who

don't know you will tend to pick you as the one to confide in – or *not* to pick you, if they're looking for a potential criminal or troublemaker. You won't be spot-checked by customs agents and the like unless they have another reason to suspect you, or unless they're truly choosing at random. You have +1 to trained Acting skill for the sole purpose of "acting innocent."

### Passing Appearance†

Regardless of your true ethnicity, race, or sex, your *looks* never trigger bigoted NPCs' biases or Intolerance disadvantages (although your words might!). Moreover, if someone like you would normally have a Social Stigma in your setting, *you* lack that Stigma – and if the Stigma is racial, this perk acts as a small Unusual Background that lets you buy it off at the usual cost.

*There's something special  
about your looks.*

You must specialize by type of looks. Two common examples:

*Androgynous:* With minimal effort, you can ensure that you're mistaken for whatever sex is convenient. Above-average Appearance with the Androgynous modifier (p. B21) means you don't *need* this perk.

*Passing Complexion:* Your ethnicity isn't readily apparent to onlookers.

At the GM's discretion, this perk is cinematic or even *exotic* if there's no believable way to explain others mistaking your appearance.

### Photogenic

You look great in posed, still photographs. Anyone looking at your picture reacts as if your Appearance were one level higher (if you already have Transcendent looks, you get another +1 to reactions). To look good in moving pictures, buy full-fledged Appearance.

## COMBAT PERKS

These are minor advantages for *veteran* warriors. Regardless of the campaign's limit on perks, it's recommended that the GM limit fighters to one combat perk per 20 points in combat, military, and/or police skills, and then allow one *extra* perk per 10 points spent on the skills and techniques of a combative character template, fighting style, or similar abilities package that offers combat perks. Combat-effective perks from other categories – notably *Shticks* (pp. 14-15), *Skill Perks* (pp. 15-17), and *Unusual Background Perks* (pp. 20-21) – count as combat perks for this purpose.

## Special Properties

This work uses three symbols to indicate special properties of perks:

- \* – The perk is *cinematic* and only suits larger-than-life heroes. If it affects combat, the GM should restrict it to warriors who have Gunslinger (p. B58), Trained by a Master (p. B93), or Weapon Master (p. B99).
- † – The perk *requires specialization* by advantage, piece of equipment, rule, skill, task, technique, etc., depending on exactly how it works. Read the description and pick a suitable specialty. The perk has *no effect* outside that one narrow area.
- ‡ – The perk *comes in levels*, exactly like an advantage that comes in levels. Each level is effectively its own perk and costs 1 point, but for compactness' sake, write it on your character sheet only once, along with level and total point cost; e.g., Courtesy Rank 3 [3].

For further details, see *GURPS High-Tech* (which discusses firearms-related perks) and *GURPS Martial Arts* (which defines “fighting styles”).

### Acrobatic Feints

You’ve practiced using gymnastics to catch enemies off-guard. You may use your Acrobatics skill to feint and may improve the Feint (Acrobatics) technique. The GM may allow similar perks for other noncombat skills: Dancing Feints for Dancing, Sexy Feints for Sex Appeal, and so on.

### Acrobatic Kicks

You’ve learned to kick as a natural extension of flips, jumps, and spins. Roll against Acrobatics-2 to hit with a kick. Kicking techniques can likewise default to Acrobatics. Acrobatic kicks *don’t* receive Brawling or Karate damage bonuses, however.

As with Acrobatic Feints, above, other skills may have related perks; e.g., Dancing Kicks for Dancing.

### Akimbo\*†

You’re not restricted by having two hands full of weapons. You can open doors, reload, and so forth without putting anything down. This doesn’t help you *fight* using a weapon in either hand – take Ambidexterity (p. B39), Dual-Weapon Attack (p. B230), and/or Off-Hand Weapon Training (pp. 16-17) for that. You must specialize by one-handed weapon skill.

### Armor Familiarity†‡

You’re accustomed to fighting in armor. This perk comes in levels. Each level lets you ignore -1 in encumbrance penalties to attack or parry with Judo, Karate, or a fencing skill. For instance, two levels mean you have no penalty up to Medium encumbrance, -1 at Heavy, and -2 at Extra-Heavy. You must specialize by skill: Armor Familiarity (Judo), Armor Familiarity (Rapier), etc.

### Armorer’s Gift†

You’ve practiced assembly and disassembly drills on a firearm until you can do it in your sleep. Roll against the relevant Armoury, Beam Weapons, Gunner, Guns, or Liquid Projector specialty to accomplish this in record time: 10 seconds for a handgun, 30 for a long arm (e.g., rifle), or 60 for a support weapon (e.g., rocket launcher). Conditions are unimportant – you can do this upside down, blindfolded, underwater, etc. You also get +2 on rolls to clear malfunctions (p. B407). You must specialize by weapon skill.

### Biting Mastery

You’ve learned a highly developed body of effective bites for close-quarters use. You may roll against Karate to attack with a bite and add its damage bonus to biting damage.

### Clinch†

You’ve integrated limited grappling moves into your Boxing, Brawling, or Karate skill – choose one. Whenever you grapple a *standing* opponent’s head, neck, or torso (only), use your striking skill for the attack roll. This is rarely worth the point if you already know a grappling skill!

### Combat Vaulting\*†

You can use a pole weapon to aid balance and make impressive vaults in combat. To benefit from this perk, you must first take a Ready maneuver to grip your weapon properly. After that, you may *either* add (Reach - 1) to combat uses of Acrobatics and Jumping, *or* add Reach to vertical or horizontal

Jumping distance – choose each turn. Returning to a fighting grip requires another Ready; learn Form Mastery (below) to make this a free action after a stunt. You must specialize by Reach 2+ *pole* weapon: Combat Vaulting (Halberd), Combat Vaulting (Long Spear), Combat Vaulting (Quarterstaff), etc.

### Cotton Stomach\*

You’ve learned to catch attackers’ hands and feet using your abdominal muscles (or rolls of fat!). Once per turn, you can attempt a standard unarmed parry against a punch or a kick to your torso, but using your *body* instead of a limb. Success lets you use a follow-up technique capable of trapping an attacker – e.g., Arm Lock – “hands-free.”

This is a cinematic combat version of Hands-Free (p. 16).

### Dirty Fighting

You’re talented at fighting dishonestly. You get +1 on success rolls for *Dirty Tricks* (p. B405) and similar improvised combat deceptions. The GM may extend this bonus to any feint or attack made *before* combat begins, or the *first* illegal blow you make under formal tournament conditions, if he feels that it represents a real “sucker punch” rather than a free combat bonus.

### Drunken Fighting\*

You’ve mastered the mythical art of fighting while intoxicated (see pp. B439-440). When you’re tipsy or drunk (p. B428), treat the -1 or -2 to DX as a +1 or +2 *bonus* in a fight. Penalties to IQ and self-control rolls apply normally!

### Dual Ready†

You can use a *single* Ready maneuver to draw a weapon with either hand. Specialize by weapon combination in left hand/right hand order; e.g., Dual Ready (Axe/Pick) lets you ready an axe in your left hand and a pick in your right. This is mostly redundant if you can Fast-Draw those weapons – but not every weapon allows Fast-Draw.

### Exotic Weapon Training†

Certain weapons have a built-in skill penalty due to their unusual balance relative to other weapons used with the same skill. You’ve trained enough with such a weapon that you no longer suffer this penalty. You must specialize by weapon; e.g., Exotic Weapon Training (Three-Part Staff) to avoid -1 to Two-Handed Flail skill for the three-part staff (see *GURPS Martial Arts*).

This is a combat form of Exotic Equipment Training (p. 9).

### Focused Fury\*

Unlike most fighters, you can combine *Mighty Blows* (p. B357) with All-Out Attack (Strong), improving its damage bonus to the higher of +2 per die or a flat +3. You can also do this with the Committed Attack (Strong) maneuver from *GURPS Martial Arts*, raising its damage bonus to the better of +1 per die or a flat +2. Either use costs 1 FP per attack.

### Form Mastery†

When using a weapon that works with multiple skills, you must normally specify the skill you’re using *once*, at the *start* of your turn. You’ve practiced fluid shifts between forms and can change skills *repeatedly*, *during* your turn. For instance, you could start your turn using a spear with the Staff skill, switch to the Spear skill to attack, and then return to Staff for parrying. You must specialize by weapon: Form Mastery (Naginata), Form Mastery (Spear), etc.

## Grip Mastery†

Switching between one- and two-handed grips, or a regular grip and the Defensive Grip in *GURPS Martial Arts*, usually takes a Ready maneuver. You've practiced until this has become second nature. You can do either grip change (or *both*) as a free action *once* on your turn, before or after your maneuver. For instance, you could make a one-handed katana cut and end your turn in a two-handed Defensive Grip. Next turn, you could shift to a regular two-handed grip and attack. You must specialize by weapon; e.g., Grip Mastery (Katana).

## Ground Guard

You know a body of tactics for use when you're lying face-up, lying face-down, or crawling and your opponent is *also* in any of those postures. In that situation only, you get +1 in all grappling Contests – pins, chokes, attempts to break free, etc. If your foe knows Ground Guard, too, your bonuses cancel out.

## Huge Weapons‡

You can use weapons that would normally be too large for your SM or ST. There are two specialties:

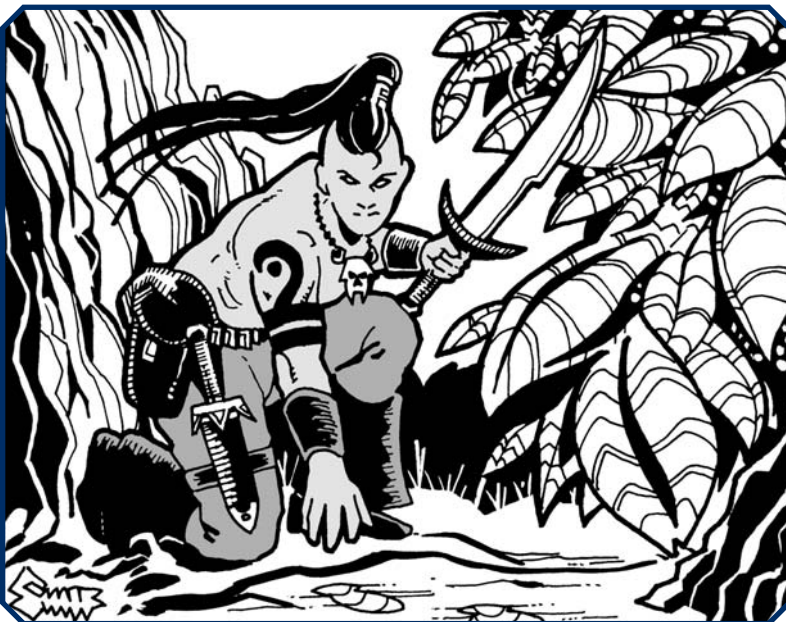
*Huge Weapons (SM):* Add +1 to effective SM for the sole purpose of determining what weapons are "oversized" for you.

*Huge Weapons (ST):* Add +1 to ST for the sole purpose of avoiding penalties for insufficient ST to use weapons. This never affects damage!

You may take either or both twice, for double the benefit. "Big hands" is as likely an explanation as training; thus, this perk *isn't* specialized by skill or weapon.

## Improvised Weapons†

You've practiced fighting with everyday items. These weapons might be improvised for others but they're familiar to you. Ignore skill penalties (only) when wielding them. You must specialize by combat skill. You *can* learn Improvised Weapons (Brawling) or Improvised Weapons (Karate) to use improvised fist loads effectively.



## Iron Body Parts\*†

You've toughened a body part through exotic exercises. This provides resistance to injury – either a bonus to resist harm from breaks and locks, or DR against strikes – and the right to buy optional abilities. Details depend on the body part, each of which is its own specialty:

*Iron Arms:* You have +3 to ST and HT rolls to resist injury from Arm Lock, Wrench Arm, and the like. You may optionally purchase DR 1 or 2 (Partial, Arms, -20%; Tough Skin, -40%) [2 or 4] or Striker (Crushing; Limb, Arm, -20%) [4].

*Iron Hands‡:* You have DR 1 (Partial, Hands, -40%; Tough Skin, -40%) [1]. Once you've acquired this perk, you may elect to buy a second level of DR [1] and/or Blunt Claws [3].

*Iron Legs:* You have +3 to ST and HT rolls to resist injury from Leg Lock, Wrench Leg, and similar techniques, and may optionally acquire DR 1 or 2 (Partial, Legs, -20%; Tough Skin, -40%) [2 or 4].

*Iron Neck:* You have +3 to ST and HT rolls to resist injury from chokes, strangles, and Neck Snaps, and may optionally buy DR 1 or 2 (Partial, Neck, -50%; Tough Skin, -40%) [1 or 2].

## Naval Training

You've trained at fighting on a rocking ship or boat. You may ignore the -2 to attack and -1 to defend for bad footing under those circumstances.

## Neck Control†

You're adept at striking from the clinch. You must specialize by unarmed striking skill. Whenever you've grappled a *standing* opponent's head, neck, or torso (only), you get +1 to hit when you strike that foe with your skill.

## One-Armed Bandit\*†

You can operate a lever- or pump-action long arm *one-handed* and *without* changing your grip. The gun's RoF becomes 1. Roll against the appropriate Guns specialty before each shot. Failure wastes your turn; treat it as a Do Nothing maneuver. Critical failure means an immediate roll on the *Critical Miss Table* (p. B556)! You must specialize by Guns skill.

## Pants-Positive Safety\*

You can carry a loaded, cocked firearm shoved through your waistband without any risk of accidental discharge – even if you leave the safety off!

## Peg-Leg Fighting\*

*Prerequisite:* *Lame.*

You've developed fighting moves that exploit the lurching gait caused by your *Lame* disadvantage (p. B141). You suffer the usual effects of *Crippled Legs* or *Missing Legs*, but you may sideslip as an alternative to retreating, moving a yard to either side instead of away – for you, staggering off to the side is as effective as retreating! Moreover, your *All-Out Attacks* are wildly unpredictable and give opponents -1 to defend.

## Pistol-Fist\*†

You can roll against *Beam Weapons (Pistol)* or *Guns (Pistol)* – you must specialize – to pistol-whip people, and can parry melee attacks at (firearms skill/2) + 3.

## Power Grappling

You're adept at applying force precisely when wrestling. *Except* when rolling to hit or for an active defense, you may opt to shift normally DX-based grappling rolls to ST. Moreover, whenever you make a ST roll that usually enjoys a ST bonus from Sumo Wrestling or Wrestling – e.g., the roll to break free – you may waive your bonus and attempt a ST-based Judo, Sumo Wrestling, or Wrestling roll *instead*.

## Quick-Sheathe†

You've practiced holstering or sheathing your weapon *quickly*. A successful Fast-Draw roll shaves one second off the time needed to stow your weapon, reducing it from two seconds to one in most cases. Specialties match those for Fast-Draw (p. B194): Quick-Sheathe (Knife), Quick-Sheathe (Pistol), etc.

*You can make your fighting moves more effective.*

## Quick-Swap†

You've perfected the art of juggling a one-handed weapon between hands. Shifting a weapon to an empty receiving hand normally demands a Ready maneuver, but becomes a free action with this perk. Swapping two weapons between full hands normally takes *two* Ready maneuvers, but requires just one with Quick-Swap. You can use this perk once per turn, *on your turn*.

You must specialize by one-handed weapon skill: Quick-Swap (Pistol), Quick-Swap (Rapier), etc. If two different weapons are involved, you need this perk for both skills.

## Rapid Retraction†

You punch or kick so quickly that it's difficult for opponents to trap your limb. You get +1 on all rolls to avoid such techniques as Arm Lock and Leg Grapple when they follow an enemy parry. You must specialize in Rapid Retraction (Punches) or Rapid Retraction (Kicks). The GM may allow Rapid Retraction (Bites) for nonhumans.

## Razor Kicks

You can hold a shuriken, straight razor, or tiny knife between your toes while kicking barefoot, enabling your kick to inflict thrust-1 *cutting* damage, plus bonuses for unarmed combat skill. A special variant is available if you have High-Heeled Heroine (p. 14):

*High-Heeled Hurt\**: You can kick with high-heeled footwear, dealing thrust-1 *large piercing* damage, plus unarmed skill bonuses.

## Reach Mastery†

Changing Reach with certain long weapons covered by the Kusari, Polearm, Spear, Two-Handed Axe/Mace, Two-Handed Flail, or Whip skill requires a Ready maneuver. You've practiced until this has become second nature. You can change Reach as a free action *once* on your turn, before or after your maneuver. You must specialize by weapon; e.g., Reach Mastery (Glaive).

## Sacrificial Parry†

You're adept at protecting less-capable or exposed allies. You can sacrifice a parry defense to parry an attack on an ally standing *beside* you within your weapon's Reach. You must specialize by melee combat skill.

## Secret Styles\*‡

You can make your fighting moves more effective by shouting out their names before executing them: "Dragon's Claw," "Eagle's Beak," etc. Doing so before an attack gives your foe -1 to defend against it, while doing this before an active defense gives you +1 to defend. If attacker and defender *both* do this, the modifiers cancel out. You may use each Secret Style perk just *once* per battle.

## Shield-Wall Training

You've drilled extensively at fighting from behind a shield wall. You can sacrifice your block defense to block an attack on an ally standing *beside* you. Furthermore, you may ignore the -2 to attack when holding a large shield (p. B547).

## Shoves and Tackles†

You've trained at using a melee weapon to press and overbear the enemy. Whenever you make an *armed* shove or slam – whether a shield rush (p. B372) or one of the long-weapon options in **GURPS Martial Arts** – add a damage bonus similar to that which Sumo Wrestling gives unarmed shoves and slams: +1 per die at skill DX+1, or +2 per die at DX+2 or better. You must specialize by Melee Weapon skill.

## Special Setup†

Certain techniques require a specific "setup" before execution. You've learned an alternative setup. Your specialty must name *one* technique and spell out the change. For instance, if you can use Arm Lock after a Karate parry instead of after a Judo parry, you have Special Setup (Karate Parry > Arm Lock).

## Strongbow

You've learned how best to draw a heavy bow. If you know Bow at DX+1, you can shoot a bow of your ST+1 instead of your ST. Bow at DX+2 or better lets you use a bow of your ST+2. You need a strong bow to see range and damage improvements; there's no effect when shooting a bow of your ST or less.

Similar perks may exist for weapons that require a minimum ST to *cock* rather than to draw or shoot. For instance:

*Crossbow Finesse*: You've learned to optimize leverage when cocking a crossbow. If you know Crossbow at DX+1, add +1 to ST for the sole purpose of cocking crossbows. If you have it at DX+2 or better, add +2.

## Style Familiarity†

Style Familiarity means you've studied and/or practiced a fighting style; for the full ramifications, see **GURPS Martial Arts**. Paying a point to be familiar with a style gives the following benefits:

- You can acquire the style's combat perks, learn its cinematic skills (provided that you have Trained by a Master or Weapon Master), improve its techniques whenever you have the points, and in some cases buy "optional traits" that are generally off-limits to PCs. For that one style, Style Familiarity serves as a global Unusual Background perk (p. 20) for *all* of these things.

- You're familiar with the style's *culture* and don't suffer the -3 for lack of Cultural Familiarity when using such skills as Connoisseur (Weapons), Games, Savoir-Faire (Dojo), or Teaching to interact with co-stylists.

- In most settings, you have the equivalent of a 1-point Claim to Hospitality (p. B41) with a school or an instructor.

- If your opponent has studied one or more styles and you have Style Familiarity with them *all*, you may reduce the defense penalty from his feints and Deceptive Attacks by -1. You're aware of his styles' tricks and tactics!

### Sure-Footed†

You've studied low, stable stances for fighting on unfavorable ground. This lets you ignore the -2 to attack and -1 to defend for a specific type of bad footing:

*Sure-Footed (Ice)*: Frozen puddles, lakes, etc. – and waxed floors!

*Sure-Footed (Sand)*: Beach or desert.

*Sure-Footed (Slippery)*: Mud, oil, and blood (but not grappling a slippery opponent).

*Sure-Footed (Snow)*: Snow, loose or packed.

*Sure-Footed (Uneven)*: Rocks, corpse piles, etc.

*Sure-Footed (Water)*: Water no more than waist-deep.

The GM may allow others. See, for example, *High-Heeled Heroine* (p. 14) and *Naval Training* (p. 6).

Sure-Footed doesn't aid DX in general, or Move. For that, buy Terrain Adaptation (p. B93).

### Teamwork†

You've practiced fighting in a team. To use Teamwork, everyone in the squad must take a Ready maneuver to "form up." After that, the entire group acts at the same point in the combat sequence as its *slowest* member. On the team's collective turn, each member may choose his actions freely. The sole requirement is that after everyone in the original formation has taken his turn, they're all still adjacent to one another (in adjoining hexes). If anyone gets separated, the team must form up again – with or without the straggler.

A fighter who's formed-up may:

- Brace a teammate in *front* of him and within a yard, adding 1/5 (round down) of his ST or HP, as applicable, to his ally's score when his friend resists a slam (p. B371), executes a shove (p. B372), or suffers knockback (p. B378). This is a free action.

- Feint and transfer the benefits to another teammate who can reach the same foe.

- Ignore the -2 to attack enemies in close combat with teammates (p. B392).

- Sacrifice a parry or a block to defend a teammate *behind* him from a long weapon or missile that passes within a yard (through his hex).

You must specialize in working with a particular small group (e.g., an adventuring party). Only those with the *same* specialty can form up and enjoy these benefits.

### Trademark Move†

A Trademark Move is a prescription for a full turn's worth of combat actions. Write down *every* detail when you buy it; e.g., "All-Out Attack (Strong) using Broadsword, for 2d+3 cutting, thrown as a Rapid Strike with a chop to the neck, at skill 13, followed by a Deceptive slash at the torso giving -2

defenses, at skill 14." Damage and attack rolls can improve with ST, DX, and skill, but all *weapons, maneuvers, combat options, and hit locations* remain fixed. In return for committing a point to such a specific move, you're at +1 on all skill rolls made to execute it exactly as written – no substitutions.

A Trademark Move *must* be distinctive – no "Attack with Broadsword to torso." The GM is free to forbid one that isn't!

### Unarmed Parry†

You've adapted armed parrying motions to the empty hand. This lets you use a Melee Weapon parry – unmodified by a weapon's Parry stat – as your unarmed parry. You're at -3 against non-thrusting weapons and risk hand injury if you fail; see *Parrying Unarmed* (p. B376). You must specialize by Melee Weapon skill; Unarmed Parry (Rapier) is most common, and used while wearing a mail glove. If you also want to *strike*, learn Boxing, Brawling, or Karate instead.

### Weapon Adaptation†

You've adapted the moves used with one group of melee weapons to another class of weapons. This lets you wield the weapons covered by one weapon skill using a different skill and its techniques, with all of the benefits and drawbacks of that skill, provided the replacement skill defaults to the usual one at no worse than -4 *and* uses the same number of hands. Each adaptation is a separate perk; e.g., Weapon Adaptation (Shortsword to Smallsword) lets you use the Smallsword skill to fight when equipped with a Shortsword weapon – complete with fencing parries, superior retreats, and encumbrance penalties.

In a cinematic campaign, the GM may permit any adaptation, even Knife to Halberd. He might also allow adaptation of Reach C weapons to *unarmed* skills – e.g., Knife to Karate – complete with unarmed damage bonuses.

## EQUIPMENT PERKS

Equipment perks grant improved access to gear and/or make specific items or classes of items work better. For perks that reflect *built-in* equipment, see *Accessory* (p. 10).

### Better (Gear)†

You can obtain gear that's *slightly* better than run-of-the-mill items in your world – although still of the prevailing TL. Perhaps you invented the process or bought from a limited production run. You must specialize by narrow category: Better Pistols, Better Powerstones, Better Rapiers, etc.

You must acquire the equipment with starting money or as Signature Gear. The GM determines the benefits. Many **GURPS** supplements offer options to improve the looks, durability, or weight of gear, and the GM may allow a one-step improvement in a single category (but not for *quality* – good, fine, etc.). For items with introduction dates, like guns in **GURPS High-Tech**, you might instead have early access to prototypes. Otherwise, the GM may allow stats commensurate with hardware worth 50% more than what you spent.

### Cheaper (Gear)†

You can buy one category of gear more cheaply. Explain *why*: "in" with a dealer, guild membership, belong to a race that favors its own, etc. If you can't exploit these ties – e.g., you're buying guns from a Tennessee shop, not Yuri the Russian – you pay *full* price.



The discount depends on scope:

*Broad Category* (ground vehicles, dwarven goods, guns): 10%.

*Large Subcategory* (cars, dwarven weapons, rifles): 20%.

*Small Subcategory* (sports cars, dwarven blades, sniper rifles): 30%.

*Specific Class* (Italian sports cars, dwarven axes, Russian sniper rifles): 40%.

The GM may allow another 10% off if such purchases are hard to set up (e.g., you must journey to the Pixie Lands). *Halve* the final discount for items worth more than campaign starting money (e.g., spacecraft).

If both *Better and Cheaper Gear* would apply, you must choose one per acquisition.

### Doodad\*‡

This perk comes in levels. Each instance lets you use one Gizmo (p. B57) per game session – but only to reveal a nearly *insignificant* item that's ubiquitous in your setting but that you didn't say you had. This limits you to things like books of matches, dead rats, packets of gum, pencils, etc.

### Equipment Bond†

You own a piece of equipment (e.g., sensor or vehicle) or a kit (tool, medical, etc.) that's uniquely suited to you. You must acquire it with cash or as *Signature Gear*. When you use it, you get +1 to the skill associated with that equipment, regardless of the gear's actual quality. This is cumulative with any bonus inherent to the hardware.

This perk reflects the fact that you're used to *your* stuff; in the case of a kit, you might even have assembled the contents. If you lose that particular item, you lose the perk. You can acquire a new Equipment Bond in play, however.

### Exotic Equipment Training†

Certain equipment – fancy cameras and musical instruments, experimental jets, etc. – has a built-in skill penalty due to complex controls or unusual balance rather than poor quality. You've trained enough that you don't suffer this penalty. You must specialize by particular piece of hard-to-use gear; e.g., "F-102 jet fighter." This perk applies whenever you operate any item of that class; it isn't particular to your personal example.

See *Exotic Weapon Training* (p. 5) for the combat version.

### Intuitive Repairman†

You can maintain something of *yours* – typically electronics, vehicles, or weapons – without needing formal repair skills. You must specialize by particular item; e.g., "My '76 Dodge Ram." Roll against IQ instead of *Armoury*, *Electrician*, *Electronics Repair*, *Machinist*, or *Mechanic* to fix or install standard accessories on your equipment. To do custom work or maintain an identical item that isn't yours, you'll need actual skills.

This perk is *inefficient* for two or more pieces of gear that require a single repair skill between them. Such skills are IQ/A, so spending the 2 points on one of them would give IQ level for *all* purposes.

### Suit Familiarity†

You've learned to compensate for the limitations of a bulky environment suit and may ignore its DX penalties. The *Environment Suit* skill (p. B192) still sets an upper limit on effective skill – you just don't suffer *extra* DX penalties. You must specialize by *Environment Suit* skill: *Suit Familiarity (Diving Suit)*, *Suit Familiarity (Vacc Suit)*, etc.

### Supersuit\*

*Prerequisite: Superhuman abilities.*

You have a costume that's compatible with your superhuman abilities. You won't damage it by using them, and if your body changes size, form, or substance, it changes with you.

### Weapon Bond†

You own a weapon that's uniquely suited to you. Its quality might be no better than normal, but when *you* use it, you're at +1 to effective skill and all techniques based on that skill. This isn't a supernatural attunement, nor does it require a specially modified weapon; it's a matter of balance, fit to your hand, and intimate familiarity.

You can have a bond to a weapon of any type or quality. The bond changes neither the weapon nor its price. If you lose the weapon, you lose this perk – although you can buy a new *Weapon Bond* in play. To avoid such fates, buy the weapon as *Signature Gear*.

## EXOTIC PERKS

Exotic perks are subject to the restrictions on exotic advantages (p. B32). Typically, they have one of these explanations:

- Cybernetics, genetic engineering, magical transformation, etc. What's possible depends on the alterations available in your game world.
- Racial templates for nonhumans, robots, etc. This doesn't grant general access to exotic perks – just the ones on the template.
- Superhuman powers; see *Power Perks* (p. 11).

See *GURPS Bio-Tech* and *GURPS Supers* for other low-cost exotic traits, including 0-point features, further details on these perks, and 2- and 3-point advantages.



## Accessory†

Your body incorporates a useful gadget that provides minor benefits not covered by a specific advantage. You might even *be* an item of the specified type, built on points; e.g., an intelligent magical harp would list Accessory (Harp) among its perks. The following Accessories are usually acceptable, provided that you're big enough to contain (or *be*) the item:

- Everyday household or office equipment in your setting: Cigarette Lighter, Fan, Flashlight, Laser Pointer, Stereo System, Vacuum Cleaner, etc.

- Specialized tool or electronic device of your personal TL or less. Low-tech options are things like Hammer, Pick, and Shovel. High-tech tools are more interesting. Testing and diagnostic instruments like Dosimeter, pH Meter, and Ultrasound Scanner are valid perks. A Hypo perk can carry a single dose of a drug (bought normally). The Mini Tool Kit, Micromanipulators, and Molecular Manipulators perks let you make *trivial* repairs on items of the appropriate scale, regardless of the skill needed.

- Kit of *basic* equipment for a single skill of your personal TL: Cleaning Equipment (for Housekeeping), Climbing Line and Grapnel (Climbing), First Aid Kit (First Aid), Lockpicks (Lockpicking), Medical Gear (Physician), Surgical Instruments (Surgery), etc. If the skill requires a specialty, so does your kit. Equipment good enough to grant a skill bonus cannot be an Accessory.

- Computer. This can run the utility software standard for ordinary desktop or smaller computers in your setting – word processor, spreadsheet, e-mail, games, etc. It *can't* run software good enough to grant advantages or skill bonuses, or real-time combat aids like targeting programs. The GM may set a Complexity limit. A suggestion is (SM + TL - 5); e.g., a SM 0 person at TL9 could *at most* implant a Complexity 4 computer.

- Any of the above for *others* to use: Biomonitor gives medics +2 to skill rolls to treat you; Terminal lets allies use your Accessory (Computer); Video Display enables you to display images received via your Telecommunication advantage (or stored in your mind, if you have Digital Mind); and Wet Bar is great fun, even if refills get expensive!

- Nanotech that exists in your setting and doesn't grant effects expressible as a full-fledged advantage.

- One-shot weaponry (e.g., a rocket in a finger) that requires repair skills to reload. A reusable, reloadable weapon requires a full-fledged Weapon Mount (p. B53).

- Vehicle component that doesn't emulate an attack, defense, ranged sensor, or full-featured communicator: Airlock, Headlights, IFF Transponder, Siren, Tow Cable, etc.

Many Accessory perks ape other exotic perks; e.g., climbing equipment is Climbing Line (below), a fan is Air Jet (below), flashlights and headlights are Illumination (below), a cigarette lighter is Ignition (below), a mirror is Periscope (p. 11), and a shovel is Burrower (below).

*The lists aren't exhaustive – they're intended strictly as examples!*

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## Air Jet

You can project a constant stream of air strong enough to scatter dust and extinguish candles at two yards. This might be a respiratory feature, a magical gift, or the result of air powers. It has no combat effect.

## Burrower

You can dig with your body as if equipped with a shovel. See *Digging* (p. B350) for speed; this is almost certainly slower Tunneling (p. B94).

## Climbing Line

You can generate a climbing line at will, in the form of a silk thread, spider web, or similar. This gives you improved climbing ability (p. B349) and can also be used with Swinging (p. 16). Buy Binding (p. B40) if you want to entangle foes.

## Cross-Species Surrogacy†

*Prerequisite:* Female.

You can carry implanted embryos of certain other species to term. This might only work for closely related species, or it might be more general.

## Extreme Sexual Dimorphism

You have exaggerated primary male or secondary female sexual attributes. This gives +1 to Sex Appeal – but also +1 to others' attempts to identify you, and -1 to Disguise or Shadowing when trying to remain anonymous.

## Feathers

You have feathers. These prevent sunburn and help shed water, eliminating up to -2 in penalties for being wet – notably for *Cold* (p. B430).

## Fur

You have fur. This prevents sunburn and serves as an Unusual Background justifying Damage Resistance 1-3 (p. B46), Spines (p. B88), and/or Temperature Tolerance 1-3 (p. B93), depending on the fur. You must buy these other traits separately.

## Generator

You can produce a steady flow of direct current, not unlike a battery. Your maximum sustained power output in watts equals your Basic Lift in pounds *before* considering any ST-modifying advantages or enhancements. For short-term exertions, make a ST roll to perform such feats as turning over a car's engine.

## Ignition

You can produce a small spark that can light candles, fuses, lanterns, tinder, and other Highly Flammable or Super-Flammable material (p. B433) with a touch. You can inflict 1 point of burning damage by touch, once per object.

## Illumination

You can emit light from your body. This could be due to light powers, a supernatural nimbus, cool flame, or built-in lamps. This is usually equivalent to a flashlight (a narrow 10-yard beam) or a torch (lights a 2-yard radius) – but for vehicles built as characters, it's as bright as the headlights standard on a vehicle of that type.

## Power Perks

Individuals with superhuman powers can use perks to represent their powers' most trivial abilities. Perks defined as part of a power are subject to the power's limitations but get the benefit of the power's Talent on any rolls required to use them. For inspiration, here's a modest selection of perks for a few powers from **GURPS Powers**:

**Air:** Accessory (Vacuum Cleaner), Air Jet, Perfume, and Pressure-Tolerant Lungs.

**Animal Control:** Call of the Wild, Feathers, Fur, Good with (Animal), Limited Camouflage, Pet, and Scales.

**Body Alteration:** Compact Frame, Extreme Sexual Dimorphism, Hands-Free, Iron Body Parts, Limited Camouflage, Long Fingers/Thumbs, Natural Pockets, No Visible Damage, Striking Surface, and almost any Appearance perk – any of them Switchable.

**Body Control:** Acceleration Tolerance, Chi Resistance, Controllable Disadvantage (physical), Cotton Stomach, Focused Fury, Iron Body Parts, Parthenogenesis, Reproductive Control, Rinse, Sanitized Metabolism, and Special Exercises.

**Death:** Brotherhood (Zombies or similar undead), Carrier, Covenant of Rest, Dramatic Death, Immunity to (Specific Disease or Specific Poison), and Rest in Pieces.

**Healing:** Medical Accessory perks like First Aid Kit, Hypo, Medical Gear, and Surgical Instruments.

**Illusion:** Illumination, Limited Camouflage, Perfume, and Appearance perks, possibly made Switchable.

**Life:** Covenant of Rest, Parthenogenesis, Reproductive Control, and Rest in Pieces.

**Light:** Illumination, Periscope, and Robust Vision.

**Magic:** Almost any supernatural perk pertaining to magic.

**Sound/Vibration:** Accent, Accessory (Stereo System or Ultrasound Scanner), Extended Hearing, Penetrating Voice, and Robust Hearing.

**Telepathy:** Brotherhood, Controllable Disadvantage (mental), Good with (Social Group), and Influence Shticks.

In this case, Accessory perks don't represent physical gadgets but the ability to emulate their effects.

In addition, any power that can generate webs or vines might have Climbing Line and Swinging. The Rule of 17 perk fits powers with many resisted abilities. Sartorial Immunity suits powers that generate force fields capable of protecting against fuss and muss. And supers often justify Clothing Shticks and Supersuit via powers.

### Immunity to (Specific Hazard)†

As a *realistic* trait, this means you're totally immune to an extremely rare or specific metabolic hazard that DR wouldn't affect; e.g., Immunity to Gas Narcosis.

As a *fantasy* trait, you – or your race – are immune to the damaging environmental hazards of one specific locale or narrow type. The operative words here are “specific” and “narrow”! Not “Immunity to Fire” or “Immunity to Corrosives,” or even “Immunity to Lava” or “Immunity to Acid,” but things like “Immunity to Mount Doom” (if you're adapted to one specific volcano) or “Immunity to Swamp Acid” (if your world's fantasy acid swamps don't harm you).

### Immunity to (Specific Poison)†

You're totally immune to one *specific* poison – it simply has no effect on you.

### Limited Camouflage†

Your surface (fur, paint job, skin, etc.) blends in with a particular terrain or vegetation type, giving +2 to Camouflage and Stealth when posed *still* and *unclad* against a suitable backdrop. For instance, a gargoyle with Limited Camouflage (Stone) would get a bonus next to a rock face (and possibly +2 to Acting to “impersonate” statuary!), while a tiger with Limited Camouflage (Jungle) would be hard to see in his wilderness home.

### Long Fingers/Thumbs

You don't have Claws (p. B42), but your digits are long enough that when you target the eyes with a barehanded strike or eye gouge, you get the ×4 wounding modifier for the skull. If you have Talons or Long Talons, you don't need this perk.

### No Degeneration in Zero-G

Races that evolved in a gravity field suffer from a slow loss of bone density when they live in microgravity or zero gravity. Without special exercises or treatments, they must roll vs. HT every six months. Failure indicates a loss of one point of ST; critical failure gives Vulnerability (Crushing ×2) [-30]. This perk grants immunity to these rolls.

### No Visible Damage\*

*Prerequisite:* Unkillable.

Regardless of your injuries, you don't *look* wounded until you reach -10×HP. You can be crippled, but your limbs can't be amputated and your eyes can't be put out – crippling injury leaves them in place but nonfunctional.

### Parthenogenesis

*Prerequisite:* Female.

You can trigger pregnancy by inducing voluntary hormonal changes via biofeedback, or by taking a pill. The fetus is effectively your clone. This is a perk if you can also use sexual reproduction; it's 0-point feature if you can *only* reproduce this way.

### Perfume

Your body generates its own natural scent, which most people find pleasing. You have +1 on reaction rolls where a pleasant smell makes a difference.

### Periscope

You're able to bend or reflect light, either with a material object (making this perk an Accessory) or using a light-control power, so that you can see over obstacles and around corners. This requires continuous Aim maneuvers, and you can't see directly in front of you while doing so.

### Pressure-Tolerant Lungs†

Your lungs and other organs can handle a wider range of atmospheric pressures than an ordinary human's. Add either thin or dense atmospheres to the range of pressures you can breathe without penalty, and shift the penalties for thinner or denser atmospheres, respectively, by one class; see *Atmospheric Pressure* (p. B429).

## Racial Gifts†

This is strictly a *racial* perk. You can buy a specific set of exotic and/or supernatural advantages that are allowed but not mandatory for your race, but off-limits for most other races in your setting. For instance, if you belong to a demonic species that's superficially human but *sometimes* has Claws, Innate Attacks, Strikers, and/or Teeth, then your race might have "Demonic Gifts."

The GM lists the optional advantages and decides whether you can buy them in play. He might waive this perk for a race whose extra options aren't all that remarkable – or require one perk *per advantage* for powerful, rare abilities.

## Reproductive Control†

*Prerequisite:* Female.

This perk comes in two versions:

*Fertility Control:* You can control your fertility. Adjusting hormone levels takes about a day.

*Reabsorption:* You can absorb an early fetus back into the womb. Make a Will roll to cancel the pregnancy.

## Rinse

You can moisten the exterior of your body at will, becoming damp enough to negate ongoing damage due to Cyclic (pp. B103-104) contact effects. You can extinguish flame if you're on fire, flush away acid or poison, and so on. Each use costs 1 FP that you can only recover if you have access to water; see *Dehydration* (p. B426).

## Sanitized Metabolism

You're totally *clean*. Your body produces minimal, sanitized waste products, and you never suffer from bad breath, excessive perspiration, or unsightly skin problems. This gives -1 to attempts to track you by scent and +1 to reaction rolls in close confines (cramped spaceships, submarines, elevators, etc.).

## Scales

You have scales. This prevents sunburn and serves as an Unusual Background for Damage Resistance 1-5 (p. B46), which you must buy separately.



## Striking Surface

*Prerequisite:* Damage Resistance 3+ *without* Flexible, Force Field, or Tough Skin.

You have a hard body surface that increases barehanded damage. Your punch counts as having brass knuckles and your kick works as if wearing heavy boots. This gives +1 to damage. If you can't turn this off, there are no additional effects; if you *can* switch it off and on, your perk is *hidden* when not in use but you suffer Bad Grip 3 while using it (such control usually exists for a reason!).

## MENTAL PERKS

These mundane perks are skill-like – learn them using the rules for skills (pp. B292-294). Where it matters, treat ordinary Cultural Familiarity (p. B23) as a mental perk, too.

## Accent†

*Prerequisite:* Relevant Language at Broken or better spoken comprehension.

You've practiced an accent for a particular Language advantage until it has become second nature. You never have to make the rolls under *Accents* (p. B24) for this. If your comprehension is Broken or Accented, though, you'll come across as uneducated, giving -3 or -1, respectively, to impersonate a sophisticated or intellectual individual (but +1 to impersonate a rube!).

## Autotrance

You can enter a trance at will. This requires one minute of complete concentration and a successful Will roll, at -1 per additional attempt per hour. This trance gives +2 on rolls to contact spirits, etc. You must make a Will roll to break your trance. If you fail, you can try again every five minutes.

## Call of the Wild\*

*Prerequisite:* Animal Empathy.

Your attunement with beasts lets you ignore up to -5 in penalties when you use skills such as Animal Handling on frightened, man-eating, mutant, or wild animals. If there's a *real* animal in there, you can treat it more-or-less like a tame one, provided that you have appropriate skills.

## Controllable Disadvantage†

You can inflict one specific mental disadvantage on yourself by making a Will roll, at -1 per additional attempt per hour. Valid options include Callous (benefits Intimidation), Easy to Read (helpful for convincing others you're telling the truth when you really are), Flashbacks (to fake insanity), and Split Personality (for impersonations that can get past a psych evaluation). Berserk is *off-limits* – it already includes similar rules of its own.

### Eye for Distance

You can accurately gauge distances within line of sight without using tools. Error is around 5%; where relevant, the GM will secretly roll 2d-7 for the percentage, keeping negative numbers. The only *combat* effect is that you don't need a rangefinder to benefit from rules that require one.

### Focused (Task)†

You get +3 on success rolls for a specific, lengthy *noncombat* task – at the cost of -5 to rolls for everything else, much as if you had Single-Minded (p. B85). Focused is only allowed for tasks where *both* modifiers regularly matter; e.g., Focused Driver might give +3 to Driving but -5 to Area Knowledge and Navigation, and Perception rolls to notice road signs. The GM's word is final.

### Good with (Animal)†

You have the Animal Empathy advantage (p. B40) for one specific species – dogs, horses, whatever.

### Good with (Social Group)†

You enjoy the Sensitivity advantage (p. B51) – an IQ-3 roll to sense intent and +1 to Detect Lies and Psychology – when dealing with one *specific* group: kids (anyone under 12 years of age), old folks (adults over 65), wizards, etc. “Men” and “women” are much too broad for this purpose!

### Headhunter

You're good at finding potential employees. You get +2 to the rolls under *Finding a Hireling* (p. B517). This is only *useful* in campaigns where the PCs regularly need to recruit troops, staff their base, etc.

### Job Hunter

This is like Headhunter, above, but the shoe is on the other foot: you're an expert at finding *work*. You get +2 to the rolls under *Finding a Job* (p. B518). This only matters if the GM makes jobs and income a meaningful part of the campaign.

### One-Way Fluency†

For Languages (pp. B23-25), spoken comprehension by default specifies one's ability to speak *and* understand a tongue. It's common to be able to understand but not speak a language, however – and rarely, someone can speak by making sounds without knowing their meaning. Either is a perk, written as, for instance, One-Way Fluency (Understands French) or One-Way Fluency (Speaks French). Effective comprehension is Accented – or Native, if you have Language Talent – and no IQ roll is required.

### One-Way Literacy†

This works like One-Way Fluency, above, but for written language. For instance, One-Way Literacy (Reads French) would let you read French at the Accented level but not write it, while One-Way Literacy (Writes French) would do just the opposite.

### Patience of Job

You can withstand physical nuisances with ease; for instance, you could spend hours in a mosquito-infested swamp without scratching or swatting. You may ignore up to -2 in penalties for such distractions on long tasks (at least an hour); e.g., on Stealth rolls when crawling through 100 yards of nettles and biting ants.

### Rule of 15

A Fright Check normally fails on any roll of 14+, regardless of modified Will; see *The Rule of 14* (p. B360). This perk means you only fail on 15+. Will and bonuses (like Fearlessness) must total 14+ for this to be *useful*, of course!

## PHYSICAL PERKS

Some of these mundane perks might be “learnable” via exercises, at the GM's option.

### Acceleration Tolerance

You get +3 to HT rolls to resist the effects of high acceleration (p. B434).

### Alcohol Tolerance

Your body metabolizes alcohol with remarkable efficiency. You can drink steadily for an indefinite period with no major detrimental effects. *Binging* affects you as it would anyone else. You get +2 on all HT rolls related to drinking.

### Carrier†

You have a non-disadvantageous form of Social Disease (p. B155) where the ailment – choose one – doesn't visibly afflict *you*. This lets you undetectably infect others via social contact (see *Contagion*, p. B443), which can be useful for long-term biological warfare. Short-term, diseases inflicted this way cause nothing worse than itching and scabs; *really* bad effects take months or years. For a plague speedy and deadly enough for tactical use, buy Innate Attack and add Cyclic.

### Compact Frame

You're a natural phone booth-stuffer! You can tuck in limbs and ball yourself up to reduce effective SM by one. Doing so takes 10 seconds – and while you're crunched up, you can't *do* anything besides talk. You get +1 to Escape when the goal is to fit through a narrow space.

### Controllable Disadvantage†

You can inflict one specific physical disadvantage on yourself by making a HT roll, at -1 per additional attempt per hour. This must be an easily faked problem: breaking wind at will to get Bad Smell, talking strangely to emulate Disturbing Voice, dislocating your shoulder to simulate the effects of One Arm, and so on. Epilepsy is *off-limits* – it already includes similar mechanics.

*Some mundane perks might be “learnable” via exercises.*

### Deep Sleeper

You can fall asleep in all but the worst conditions, and can sleep through most disturbances. You never suffer any ill effects due to the quality of your sleep. You get an IQ roll to notice disturbances and awaken, just like anyone else; success is automatic if you have Combat Reflexes.

### Extended Hearing†

Extended Hearing (High) lets you hear – barely – the sounds covered by Ultrahearing (p. B94). Extended Hearing (Low) does the same for Subsonic Hearing (p. B89). To use either, the environment must be silent in the normal audible range and you must make an *active* Hearing roll at -3. This perk never gives skill bonuses.

### Immunity to (Specific Disease)†

You're totally immune to one *specific* disease that exists in the campaign setting. At high TLs, vaccines sometimes grant this perk.

### Low Rejection Threshold

Your body can easily accept tissue transplants, cybernetic parts, undead limbs, and so on. You're exempt from rolls to see whether they "take." This is only worth the point in a setting where such implants are available to PCs *and* carry the risk of rejection.

### Natural Pockets

You have overlapping fat rolls, a hollow left by surgery, or an unusually flexible body orifice that enables you to conceal things. This works like one level of Payload (p. B74), with whatever inconveniences the GM deems suit your ability. Some interpretations have the potential to offend, and the GM is free to forbid them – but people *have* trained their bodies this way.

### No Hangover

No matter how much you drink, you will never get a hangover. This doesn't mitigate the effects of intoxication – it just eliminates the unpleasant aftereffects.

### Penetrating Voice

You can really make yourself heard! In situations where you want to be heard over noise, others get +3 to their Hearing roll. At the GM's option, you get +1 to Intimidation rolls if you surprise someone by yelling or roaring.

### Resistant to (Specific Poison)†

You have +3 to resist one *specific* poison. You *might* be able to acquire this through slow acclimatization. This perk is less effective than Immunity to (Specific Poison) (p. 11), but available to anyone.

### Robust (Sense)†

One of your senses is less prone to overloading, much as if you had a weaker version of Protected Sense (p. B78). You must specialize by sense. For instance:

*Robust Hearing:* You may ignore -1 in Hearing penalties due to noise and get +1 to HT rolls to resist deafening effects (flash-bang grenades, Thunder-clap spells, etc.).

*Robust Vision:* You may ignore -1 in Vision penalties due to bright light and get +1 to HT rolls to resist dazzling effects (flash-bang grenades, Flash spells, etc.).

### Sea Legs

You have +3 to resist *Seasickness* (p. B436) and any similar form of motion sickness.

## SHTICKS

A *Shtick* is a cool move or slick feature that occasionally gives minor benefits in play. It isn't exactly physical *or* mental, and while a flashy Shtick might seem exotic, it could be entirely mundane in a cinematic game. It's up to the GM whether a given Shtick suits his campaign.

### Clothing Shticks†

Some heroes, especially *superheroes*, are able to go adventuring in the craziest getups without suffering the logical bad effects. Each particular knack for improbable couture is its own Shtick. Any such perk might give +1 to Influence and/or reaction rolls in a social situation where its sudden revelation would impress – or +2 if, in the GM's opinion, it's *exceptionally* dramatic and relevant to the scene.

Examples:

*Cloaked\*:* You can wear a cape, a cloak, or a katana-length trench coat and yet move about unimpeded. This garment never gets tangled in doors or machinery, and foes can't tug on it in combat. Your perk doesn't stop *you* from entangling *them* in a cloak, but you must buy the Cloak skill (p. B184) to do so. The most suitable setup for a reaction bonus is a dramatic entrance or exit.

*High-Heeled Heroine\*:* You can run, climb, fight, and so on while wearing high heels without suffering any special penalty for bad footing. In effect, you have a form of Sure-Footed (p. 8). This can give a reaction or Sex Appeal bonus in situations best left to the imagination.

*Looks Good in Uniform:* This is a highly specialized version of Fashion Sense (p. B21). When wearing your legitimate service uniform (military, police, etc.) for official purposes, others react to you at +1. You can't dress others or claim a bonus under any other circumstances.

*Masked\*:* You can put on a mask that covers only your eyes and nose – and become unrecognizable! Your best friends won't believe your two identities are the same person. The GM may allow similar perks that work by putting on or taking off glasses, changing hairstyles, or wearing a wig.

*Sartorial Integrity\*:* Your clothes never get torn or dirty – even after combat, swimming the Nile, etc.

*Skintight\*:* You can wear a costume or clothing *under* another outfit without bulges and without anything showing, allowing you to perform quick costume changes.



## Combat Shticks†

Some warriors practice moves that are mostly for show but aren't *entirely* worthless. A few generic examples appear below. Be sure to customize them with nifty names! All require specialization by combat skill.

*Flourish*: On the turn *after* you knock down or kill a foe, you may opt to perform an impressive flourish. This takes a full Ready maneuver and requires a skill roll. Success lets you use Intimidation with the maximum +4 for "displays of strength."

*Follow-Through*: On any turn during which you knock down or kill an enemy using the chosen skill, make an immediate skill roll. Success lets you try Intimidation (p. B202) against any remaining foes as a free action that turn. A good example here is *chiburi*: flicking blood off a sword blade, practiced by Japanese swordsmen.

*Twirl*: Twirling a handgun, sword, or other weapon lets you present it hilt- or butt-first as if to surrender it . . . and then make a skill roll to ready it *instantly*, with time left to attack. Failure means dropping the weapon, accidentally discharging a firearm, etc.

## Influence Shticks†

You have a trademark pose, stare, or walk that lets you use a specific Influence skill – Diplomacy, Fast-Talk, Intimidation, Savoir-Faire, Sex Appeal, or Streetwise – without conversation, contact, or appreciable time. This only works in person (*not* via phone, telepathy, etc.) and still requires an Influence roll (p. B359), but it enables you to act quickly and silently (thus, Voice modifiers never apply).

Examples:

*Convincing Nod*: Whenever you need to get into a place where you don't belong, you can nod as though you recognize those watching (e.g., security guards) to fake your way past. This demands a standard Influence roll with Fast-Talk.

*Disarming Smile*: In any sticky situation where Diplomacy is a possible solution, you can just smile and shrug by way of an Influence roll.

*Fearsome Stare*: You can use Intimidation without saying a word: simply cross your arms and glower. This conveniently leaves no evidence of a weapon, recorded threats, bruises . . .

*Gangster Swagger*: Your manner of walking is a full-time use of Streetwise. The GM will make a secret Influence roll whenever this might impress low-life enough that they don't randomly pick *you* to hassle.

*Haughty Sneer*: You can make doormen at exclusive hotels, salesmen at expensive shops, bank managers, and so on back off merely by peering down your nose and making an Influence roll with Savoir-Faire (High Society).

*Sexy Pose*: You can use Sex Appeal simply by thrusting your chest out, cocking your hips, licking your lips, etc. This is useful when you can see but not safely approach your mark; success can convince *him* to approach *you*.

## Standard Operating Procedure†

Standard Operating Procedure exempts you from having to tell the GM that your PC is doing something that's second-nature for him. You always get the benefit of the doubt. Things like reloading and refueling "off screen" *are* valid, but you must have had access to sufficient ammo, fuel, and/or power at some point – and the GM is free to debit your ammo supply or bank account whenever this perk does its magic.

Examples:

*Back to the Wall*: You always sit with your back to the wall and keep a minimum of one piece of improvised cover (e.g., a table) between you and the exits. The GM must warn you when you *can't* do all this!

*Energizer\**: Your battery-operated gear gets fresh cells or a recharge between action scenes.

*Full Tank\**: Your vehicles are always fully fueled when you arrive at an action scene. If you operate an armed vehicle, it's also reloaded.

*Last Man Out*: Whenever there's any doubt whether you locked the car doors, closed the vault, turned off the stove, etc., there is no doubt – you did it.

*Off-Screen Reload\**: Your weapons that use ammunition or power cells are reloaded between action scenes.

*On Alert*: You always have full kit packed and ready to go in the event of emergency. This doesn't mean you react faster (get Combat Reflexes for that) – it just means always being able to scoop up all your gear without wasting valuable time.

## SKILL PERKS

These perks affect defaults, modifiers, and/or techniques for many varieties of skills. Most are legal for combat skills in particular, and count as combat perks (pp. 4-8) in that context. All can be learned in play.

### Attribute Substitution†

You've trained a skill to use an attribute other than its usual controlling score. The GM decides what to allow, and the change should *make sense*. Some guidelines:

*DX-based* skills with a complex technological aspect can shift to IQ ("Battlesuit based on IQ"), while those that involve fine work or hand-eye coordination can move to Per ("Driving based on Per").

*IQ-based* skills for small tools can go over to DX ("Lockpicking based on DX"), those used to find or follow things can move to Per ("Shadowing based on Per"), and those with a supernatural angle can shift to Will ("Ritual Magic based on Will").

*HT-based* skills for movement can shift to DX ("Swimming based on DX"), those with a social side can move to IQ ("Sex Appeal based on IQ"), and those for cinematic combat effects or resistance can become Will-based ("Body Control based on Will").

*Will-based* skills can generally drift to IQ ("Exorcism based on IQ"), and those with cinematic combat effects or that aid resistance can shift to HT ("Power Blow based on HT").

*Per-based* skills involving hand-eye coordination or fine manipulation can move to DX ("Search based on DX"), and most Per-based skills can shift to IQ ("Detect Lies based on IQ").

This affects *routine* skill use but doesn't override a GM- or scenario-mandated roll based on a specific attribute (see p. B172). For instance, if an adventure calls for a Per-based Lockpicking roll, Attribute Substitution (Lockpicking based on DX) doesn't let you make a DX-based roll – you have to make a Per-based roll like anybody else.

You must specialize by skill and attribute, as in the examples. Nobody may have more than four Attribute Substitution perks.

## Background Knowledge†

You have a background that gives you skill defaults available only to those who grew up or lived in a specific locale, worked in a particular profession, etc. This doesn't grant the skills, nor does it give defaults for skills that normally have no default for anyone. It merely allows default rolls for things that the GM feels aren't general knowledge in the game world. For instance, any New Yorker could try Area Knowledge, Current Affairs (Regional), Geography (Regional), History, or Law (Municipal) for New York at default. If he wanted the same benefits for Chicago, that would be a perk.

The GM should give the benefits of *appropriate* Background Knowledge for free to any PC with a decent backstory. This perk exists to let players simply declare they have some hard-to-justify history without explanation, or play PCs with implausibly broad past experiences.

## Cross-Trained\*†

You're familiar with *all* makes and models of equipment used with a particular skill. If the skill has specialties, you must also name the specialty. When working within your area, you never suffer unfamiliarity penalties (see *Familiarity*, p. B169).

This perk is cinematic, but a version that covers a large-but-finite list is realistic for spies and soldiers who receive lavish training. The GM decides what constitutes such training and which models it covers.

Cross-Trained is most common for Driving and Guns, but is available for any skill that uses equipment.

## Cutting-Edge Training†‡

You've received instruction in one specific technological skill above your personal TL; e.g., a TL7 test pilot might have Cutting-Edge Training (Piloting/TL8 (Aerospace)). At the GM's option, this perk may come with *minor* social connections, such as a trivial Claim to Hospitality among participants in the same training program. It often has Duty or another social obligation as a prerequisite.

This perk is cheaper than High TL (p. B23) for those with fewer than five specialties. If someone manages to get Cutting-Edge Training in five areas, the GM may opt to let him replace his five perks with High TL 1 for the same points!

In a setting that spans many TLs, the GM may treat this perk as having levels, one per TL. In that case, our test pilot would pay 2 points for Cutting-Edge Training 2 (Piloting/TL9 (Aerospace)).

## Dabbler†

You know a little about a set of *related* skills – but not enough to have a full point in any of them. Select eight skills (which *must* have defaults) that you can use at +1 to the usual attribute default. You can trade in two choices for one at default+2, or four choices for one at default+3. If a skill has an unusually generous default, you can't raise it to the level that actual points in the skill would buy.

*Example:* Mr. Mack the science teacher dabbles in Biology, Chemistry, Mathematics (Applied), and Physics, all of which default to IQ-6. He trades his allowed eight skills at default+1 for four at default+2, and has all four skills at IQ-4.

The selected skills still count as defaults, not as studied skills. You *can't* default other skills to the improved defaults and *don't* benefit from rules that apply only to people who "know" a skill.

## Efficient†

You've learned what corners can be cut without causing *too* many disasters when it comes to a particular skill. This lets you ignore up to -2 for haste; see *Time Spent* (p. B346). Thus, if a noncombat skill can be hastened, you can safely use it in just 80% of the usual time. You must specialize by skill.

## Hands-Free†

You can perform tasks using a body part other than the one a particular skill usually assumes. In most cases, this means a feat that requires a hand but *not* fine manipulation, performed without using the hands. For instance, Hands-Free (Driving) lets you steer a car with your knees at no penalty.

This perk is allowed for combat skills. In that case, it's cinematic *and* a separate perk for each task the skill allows. For examples, see *Akimbo* (p. 5) and *Cotton Stomach* (p. 5).

## Hyper-Specialization†

You're an expert in an area far narrower than Optional Specialties (p. B169) allows. You get +5 to one skill in some specialty so obscure that it takes at least three words to describe and is unlikely to matter more than once in an adventurer's career; e.g., Hyper-Specialization (Top Quark Mass Models) for Physics, Hyper-Specialization (Trivalent Flu Vaccines) for Bioengineering, or Hyper-Specialization (Trapped-Ion Quantum Computers) for Engineer.

You must specialize by skill and area of expertise. Hyper-Specialization is only possible for IQ-based "knowledge" and "scientific" skills unless the GM makes an exception.

## No Nuisance Rolls\*†

*Prerequisite:* Attribute or skill at 16+.

You're exempt from skill or attribute rolls to perform one specific background task *not* directly relevant to such adventuring situations as combat, investigation, and theft. This most often affects "off-screen" rolls against skills used to get from A to B, like Area Knowledge, Driving, and Navigation. Each perk exempts you from *one* task; this can involve multiple skills, but you must have 16+ in any score for which you want the GM to waive success rolls.

Examples:

*Swinging:* Whether in the city or in a jungle, you can travel above the ground by swinging on vines, ropes, artificial spider webs, or similar. With this perk, you can routinely find new places to attach your lines, or new vines already in place, without having to make repeated skill rolls. You must have Perception or Observation, Acrobatics, and whatever skill you use to cast or shoot your swinging lines at 16+.

*Transporter:* This perk enables you to get your vehicle and all its passengers and cargo safely through *known*, friendly or neutral territory without having to make skill rolls. You must have your vehicle operation skill and relevant Navigation specialty – plus Area Knowledge for the area you're crossing – at 16+.

## Off-Hand Training†

You've practiced a particular skill enough with your "off" hand that you can ignore the -4 for using that hand (see *Handedness*, p. B14). This extends to all defenses and techniques based on that skill – including feats of fine manipulation, unlike Hands-Free (above). You must specialize by skill; any skill qualifies, including combat skills, *if* it has applications that normally use only one hand.



This perk completely replaces the Off-Hand Weapon Training *technique* on p. B232 (but you can still *call* it that when buying it for a weapon skill). The Off-Hand Training perk is cheaper than Ambidexterity for those with fewer than five specialties. If someone is dedicated enough to buy five perks, the GM should let him replace these with full-fledged Ambidexterity for the same points!

### One-Task Wonder†

There's one specific trick you can do with a particular skill . . . without knowing the skill! This can't be the skill's *primary* use, a combat move, or anything done at a penalty. Any other task is acceptable. To perform your trick, roll against the skill's controlling attribute.

*Example:* A crook who can always hotwire a car without knowing Mechanic could take OTW (Hotwiring Cars), because that's a near-trivial use of Mechanic, not a primary application, and not combat-relevant. Mechanic is an IQ-based skill, so he must make an IQ roll for the deed.

For another example, see *Intuitive Repairman* (p. 9).

### Skill Adaptation†

The tasks and techniques listed for a skill represent its basic "sub-skills." You know some less-orthodox methods. You can learn techniques that *don't* default to a skill as if they did, with the usual default penalties (if a technique's penalties vary by controlling skill, use the easiest). Alternatively, you can add specific skill applications – like getting a parry based on the skill – which techniques don't cover. Either must be borrowed from another, *related* skill.

The GM sets the scope of each specialty. It might be as sweeping as Skill Adaptation (Brawling techniques default to Karate) or as narrow as Skill Adaptation (Alchemy-style elixir analysis is possible with Herb Lore).

Many combat perks are forms of Skill Adaptation. For examples, see *Acrobatic Feints* (p. 5), *Acrobatic Kicks* (p. 5), *Clinch* (p. 5), and *Unarmed Parry* (p. 8).

### Technique Adaptation†

This perk allows you to adapt a technique you know for one skill to any other skill for which it's legitimate simply by spending the points – no instruction required. You must specialize by technique. For instance, if you have Technique Adaptation (Feint) and at least one point in Feint (Karate), you can go on to raise Feint (Judo), Feint (Shortsword), and so on whenever you can afford it.

This perk is most common for combat techniques, but isn't limited to them. It isn't meaningful in a campaign where the GM doesn't *require* training to learn techniques!

### Technique Mastery†

You've trained so intensively at a technique that you enjoy a higher maximum level. You must specialize by technique. This must have a normal maximum of full skill or better, which disqualifies techniques that "cannot exceed prerequisite skill-*x*," as well as combat techniques based on active defenses. A skill's core uses aren't eligible; e.g., Technique Mastery (Kicking) and Technique Mastery (No-Landing Extraction) are fine for Karate and Piloting, respectively, but Technique Mastery (Punching) and Technique Mastery (Fly Plane) aren't. If the standard maximum is full skill, *yours* is skill+4. If the limit is ordinarily greater than skill, yours is two levels higher (e.g., skill+6 with Arm Lock).

### Unusual Posture†

You can perform a specific task with a particular skill from a posture other than the usual one, thereby avoiding posture penalties. This perk only makes sense for skills that would take posture penalties in the first place! Combat skills are the obvious example, but in that case you must specify one combat technique. For instance, Unusual Posture (Karate kick while lying down) eliminates the -4 attack penalty when on the ground for Karate *kicks* only; to avoid the penalty for all Karate applications, get Ground Fighting (p. B231).

## SOCIAL PERKS

Social perks provide position, privilege, friendly associated NPCs, or similar benefits on a modest or temporary scale. They make excellent rewards for successful adventures. Note that any 1-point Favor (p. B55) counts as a social perk.

### Base†

You have a physical base of operations *separate* from any holdings implied by your Status and from property bought with money. This is easily accessible but lacks obvious ties to you. Subtract three from your Status level and consult the table on p. B266 (or your campaign's equivalent) to determine quality; thus, Base is only *useful* at Status 1+ in most settings. Use the rules for Secret (p. B152) to establish whether the world can connect you with your Base.

### Brotherhood†

One narrow group of potential foes – military unit, monster species, street gang, etc. – doesn't *like* you but remains neutral toward you if you stay out of their way. They must know you're there. Thus, this perk only works if you're visible and identifiable.

If the perk is mundane, it's usually the result of being known to the target group. For instance, mobsters might avoid killing the boss' son, while soldiers probably won't gun down their old commanding officer.

If the perk is for fantasy monsters, like zombies, the things *ignore* you as long as you aren't hostile. Perhaps you simply don't smell like food!

Members of this group will shove you aside if you get between them and anything or anyone they're out to attack, break, eat, rob, etc. If you do *anything* more hostile than get in the way, or refuse to step aside, you become a valid target. Of course, letting them act unhindered may make you an accessory to a crime . . .

Brotherhood guarantees an automatic good reaction in return for your respect. As with all NPCs, some encounters with the affected group may involve predetermined reactions; these override your perk. Supernaturally controlled NPCs may likewise ignore it.

### Citizenship†

In settings where nations defend borders and restrict such things as voting rights and property ownership to citizens, each PC is assumed to be a citizen of one particular state, complete with passport, Social Security Number, etc. Each citizenship beyond the first is a perk. This *isn't* Cultural Familiarity (p. B23) – you might "inherit" citizenship through a parent without ever encountering the associated culture!

## Courtesy Title†‡

You have an honorary social advantage: Courtesy Rank (p. B29) for Rank, Emeritus Professor for Tenure, Ex-Cop for Legal Enforcement Powers, Honorary Title for Status, and so on. This most often represents a symbolic reward (e.g., “the key to the city”), a purchased title, or credentials deactivated after retirement.

Courtesy Title comes in levels: 1 point per 5 points the full advantage costs. Its only benefits are the legal right to use a fancy title (+1 to reactions per *full* 5 points) and avoid any skill penalties the GM imposes for trying to impersonate the real McCoy.

If you *also* have a full-fledged advantage, you can “stack” this perk with it to get your title on paper. For instance, Rank 4 [20] plus Courtesy Rank 2 [2] entitles you to present yourself as having Rank 6, although you only have the *authority* of Rank 4.

## Disposable Identity†

You have a *completely reliable* Alternate Identity (p. B39) that you can use for *one* encounter – arms deal, border crossing, etc. Then it’s gone, and your point value drops by a point.

## Friend†

You have a 1-point Claim to Hospitality (p. B41) with someone. Name the friend and his place of residence. When you visit him, you’ll have somewhere to stay. He’ll react to requests for aid like any NPC, but at +3. He *isn’t* a Contact, much less an Ally, and won’t get involved in adventures.

## License†

It’s normally assumed that in the course of learning the skill(s) for a regulated activity – Law if you represent others in court, Physician if you practice medicine, Piloting if you fly, etc. – you earn any necessary license. In some settings, though, licenses carry modest social benefits that qualify as perks. The GM should add up the following elements:

- Courtesy Rank [1/level] if the profession has Rank.
- Cultural Familiarity [1] if ordinary people have -3 to influence or impersonate those in the profession.
- Debt 1 [-1] if there are professional dues.
- Duty (6 or less; Involuntary; Nonhazardous) [-2] if there’s periodic testing of skills.
- Enemy (Small group; Watcher; 6 or less) [-1] if the professional association has an aggressive oversight committee.
- Favor [1] if the licensee gets one legal “bailout” (once used, he’s on probation).
- Independent Income 1 [1] if the profession enjoys cash incentives or tax breaks.
- Quirk-level Code of Honor (Professional) [-1] or Vow [-1] if the profession takes “honor” seriously.
- Trivial Reputation (below) [1] if the profession is well-regarded in some quarters.

A positive total merits a License perk. The actual sum isn’t important – the benefits overlap and are rarely worth more than 1 point all told. What matters is that the License is basically advantageous.

*Example:* Pilots might get Courtesy Rank 3 (“Captain”) [3]; Debt 1 (Dues) [-1]; Duty (Yearly test) [-2]; and Favor (Lawyer will be provided in the event of serious accident) [1]. “Pilot’s License” is therefore a perk.

License is *unnecessary* if you’re already buying Status to represent membership in a prestigious profession. A new graduate from med school might need Medical License [1] in some settings, but an established doctor with Status 1 [5] wouldn’t.

*Some perks make excellent rewards for successful adventures.*

## Office†

You hold a minor civil office, like dogcatcher or reeve. This *isn’t* merely Courtesy Title (above) – you possess real authority equivalent to 5 points of Legal Enforcement Powers, Security Clearance, Status, or similar. However, this has such limited scope (e.g., “Authority over dogs in the town of Castle Rock”) that it’s only a perk. A more expensive social advantage or *lack* of social disadvantages is often a prerequisite, and you may have a Duty.

## Permit†

If a piece of gear has a Legality Class (LC) equal to or greater than your setting’s Control Rating (CR), anybody without Social Stigma (Criminal Record) may own it. But if its LC is lower, it requires a permit. A permit is a perk – one per equipment class. For weapons, *concealment* lowers LC by one; e.g., handguns are LC3 but treated as LC2 for concealed carry, so Concealed Carry Permit is a perk in most modern states, which are CR3+.

Individuals with suitable social advantages – typically Legal Enforcement Powers or Military Rank – *don’t* need this perk for equipment used “on the job.”

See also *Control Rating and Legality Class* (p. B507).

## Pet†

You have a small, *ordinary* pet – cat, ferret, hamster, parrot, etc. This is equivalent to a modest Ally balanced by being a modest Dependent, but don’t bother doing the math. Aside from companionship, a pet grants *occasional, minor* benefits; e.g., a kitten might hiss at ghosts and give you +1 to reactions from cat fanciers.

Buying an animal as a Pet rather than with cash secures the GM’s promise to do what he can to avoid terrible fates for it provided that *you* do your best to keep it out of harm’s way. It’s effectively Signature Gear. If you want an attack dog or a shoulder dragon, buy an Ally!

## Trivial Reputation†

Rather than do the detailed calculation under *Reputation* (pp. B26-28), just treat +1 to reactions from a specialized group of people (e.g., “Women of the Tokugawa Clan”) as a perk.

## Vehicle†

You have an ordinary civilian vehicle (no fighting vehicles or spy cars!) *separate* from anything implied by your Status, and not bought with Signature Gear or money. This is an anonymous-looking backup vehicle that isn’t linked to you. Subtract three from your Status level and consult the table on p. B266 (or your campaign’s equivalent) to determine quality; in most settings, Vehicle is only *useful* at Status 2+. Use the rules for Secret (p. B152) to resolve whether nosy rivals connect you with your Vehicle.

# SUPERNATURAL PERKS

These perks concern arcane training or your ties to the supernatural. In each case, you must specify the perk's origin or "power source" (see pp. B33-34) – chi, divine, magic, psionic, spirit, etc. – unless this is obvious. This means the perk is subject to any limitations on the chosen phenomenon; e.g., a *magical* Named Possession is powerless without mana.

Just about anything under *Exotic Perks* (pp. 9-12) could also be considered supernatural when associated with a supernatural power. See also *Power Perks* (p. 11).

## Charms†

Charms resemble Unusual Training (p. 21) but bestow supernatural, intuitive (*not* learned) knowledge. Each Charm waives the spell and Magery prerequisites for one particular spell. You must pay points for the spell like any other IQ/H or IQ/VH skill, and Magery gives its usual bonus. You can't *cast* the spell unless you have at least Magery 0 or are in an area with high or better mana.

For divine magic, a Charm waives the need for Power Investiture – such spells don't have spell prerequisites – and *does* let you cast the spell. However, you can only choose spells offered by your god.

## Chi Resistance\*†

You can rally your chi to get +3 to resist a specific, hostile chi-based effect. You must specialize by resisted ability, usually a cinematic martial-arts skill. Examples include Chi Resistance (Invisibility Art), Chi Resistance (Kiai), and Chi Resistance (Pressure Points).

## Covenant of Rest

You've promised a god or a spirit that you'll carry out particular (usually *good*) acts in its name. In return, it has vowed to give you a restful death. When you die, it will be impossible to summon, reanimate, or resurrect you – in body or in spirit – unless your benefactor wills it. Attempts to raise you as undead or possess your corpse will simply fail. High-tech medicine can still resuscitate you, however.

## Dramatic Death\*

You're guaranteed to go out with a bang – a morbid but spectacular Destiny (p. B48). If a roll of the dice indicates that you'll die for sure from anything but instant death (e.g., execution), roll 1d+1 for the number of seconds you get for a dying action (see *Dying Actions*, p. B423). During this time, you suffer all effects of injury *except* collapse due to death or unconsciousness, giving you time to prime grenades, run burning off the cliff, etc. Then you die.

This is worth no points in campaigns where the GM routinely lets everybody do this!

## Magical School Familiarity†

This perk exists only in backgrounds where each wizard must study with a particular academy, guild, or master that

teaches a small subset of known spells. Paying a point for familiarity with a school gives these benefits:

- You understand the arcane principles that undergird the school's spells, and thus can always use measures such as Counterspell and Ward at full skill against any of its spells, even if you don't know the spell you're trying to defeat.

- You can acquire the school's spells by spending earned points in play.

- You're acquainted with the school's culture. When dealing with another wizard who has the same perk, neither of you suffers -3 for lack of Cultural Familiarity when making Savoir-Faire rolls, Teaching rolls to pass along the school's spells, or similar.

- You have the equivalent of a 1-point Claim to Hospitality (p. B41) with an academy, guild, or archmage. This mostly means that you have somewhere to stay while studying.

Similar perks may exist for schools that teach alchemical formulas, rituals, and so on instead of "spells" as such.

## Named Possession†

You own a ritually named possession; details depend on the setting, and may involve oaths, spells, or inscriptions, and/or require a fine-quality, holy, or similarly special item (GM's decision). This perk grants that article the potential for gaining special abilities. It earns character points at the same rate as you *when you perform deeds of supernatural significance*. Each point can be exchanged for 25 energy points' worth of enchantments chosen by the GM (optionally increasing the possession's value as Signature Gear). Use the standard rules for magical enchantment to determine what's possible – but note that the power involved might be divine, psionic, spiritual, or otherwise nonmagical. You can have multiple perks, but then the Named Possessions evenly split the points they earn.

## Obscure True Name

In settings where names have magical power, having a name unknown to anybody but the gods is a small but potent advantage.

## Purpose\*†

You have a Higher Purpose (p. B59) so inconsequential that "Higher" is pretentious. You get +1 on all success, damage, or reaction rolls made in pursuit of a trivial goal like "Make martinis." This most often manifests as +1 to reactions from those who share your mania. Gods sometimes grant Purpose perks as backhanded rewards.

## Rest in Pieces

Thanks to innate holiness or a sacred pact, anything that you, personally, slay can't be resurrected or reanimated by *external* means, like Resurrection and Zombie spells. Once it's down, it's down for good, and won't be returning. This doesn't bypass your victim's advantages. If he has some form of Injury Tolerance, Regeneration, Supernatural Durability, or Unkillable that would cause him (or *part* of him) to "get better," too bad.

*Game Masters and players can make exotic perks supernatural by associating them with a supernatural power.*

In high-magic worlds where the Final Rest spell is common and provides similar benefits, the GM may tone down this perk to avoid undermining magic. It might only spontaneously confer immunity to necromancy that costs up to 20 energy points, spoiling Skull-Spirit, Summon Spirit, and Zombie, but not major spells like Lich, Resurrection, and Wraith. For non-spell effects, use the nearest spell effect to decide.

### Rule of 17 (Skill)†‡

You've practiced overcoming great resistance with a particular *resisted* supernatural skill: cinematic martial-arts skill, Enthralment skill, spell, etc. *The Rule of 16* (p. B349) kicks in one level later for you, becoming the Rule of 17. You must specialize by skill.

The GM may allow multiple levels of this perk (making it Rule of 18, Rule of 19, etc.), setting the limit at whatever he considers "balanced."

### Spirit Contract†

*GURPS Magic* includes a simple black-magic system, which *GURPS Thaumatology* expands into broader rules for spirit-assisted casting. If the GM uses either, each contract with a suitable spirit is generally a perk. See the relevant rule-book for details.

### Trivial Destiny\*†

You have a *very* minor Destiny (p. B48). This perk grants you a single critical success when you need it and then disappears, lowering your point value by 1 point. The effect is like paying in advance for *Buying Success* (p. B347). You receive your critical success even if that would usually cost more than a point in the situation, but the GM – not *you* – picks when it happens, in light of your Destiny.

## UNUSUAL BACKGROUND PERKS

These are one-point Unusual Backgrounds (p. B96) for those with *specific* rare gifts but not access to a broad category like "psi" or "super-powers." For a perk that provides access to a trait, the trait's cost is separate – the perk merely enables the purchase.

### Extra Option†

The rules are full of advanced and optional rules that change how the game works in particular situations. Usually, these don't cost points because they're *campaign* options – either everybody uses them or nobody does. However, the GM may allow certain rules that normally aren't used in the campaign on a PC-by-PC basis. Access to each of these is a perk.

Options that cost FP or character points to exercise are the fairest. For instance, each aspect of *Influencing Success Rolls* (p. B347) and *Extra Effort in Combat* (p. B357), as well as *Flesh Wounds* and *TV Action*

*Violence* under *Cinematic Combat Rules* (p. B417), could be an Extra Option perk in a campaign where those rules don't universally apply.

Rules that inflict penalties are usually fine, too. For example, the GM may not want to use the complicated new hit locations in *GURPS Martial Arts* – or his campaign might be set before medicine *knows* about those locations! Then an Extra Option could enable a warrior familiar with one of those locations to target it at the standard penalty. Indeed, *many* optional rules in *Martial Arts* could work this way, with access to them becoming attractive special abilities for skilled fighters.

If either kind of rule expands the spectrum of an advantage, cinematic skill, or spell, the GM should require a separate Extra Option perk for *each* trait that can benefit from the added option. The same goes for cinematic or supernatural rules options available for mundane skills, like the most extreme cinematic rules in *Martial Arts*: specialization by skill is advisable.

Finally, rules that demand significant time or effort are good candidates. In particular, lengthy, difficult ceremonial magic and enchantment methods from *GURPS Magic* and *GURPS Thaumatology* make excellent perks for wizards in campaigns that don't use those options in general. These perks *shouldn't* require specialization by spell, as long setup times and the need for special resources balance potency.

### Rules Exemption†

This works identically to Extra Option, above, except that instead of granting access to a specific, *beneficial* optional rule that generally *isn't* used in the campaign, it gives an exemption from a particular, *detrimental* optional rule that *is* used in the campaign. For instance, Rules Exemption (Maintaining Skills) would allow a PC with high skill levels to keep them without practice in a campaign that uses *Maintaining Skills* (p. B294).

As with Extra Option, exemptions that apply in cinematic or supernatural situations should have narrow specialties. For instance, if the GM requires material components for spells in his campaign, the ability to ignore them is a distinct perk for each spell.

For examples of exemptions from the standard rules, see *No Nuisance Rolls* (p. 16) and *Standard Operating Procedure* (p. 15).

### School, Style, or Template Adaptation†

In some campaigns, only characters built using a particular character template, trained in a given fighting style, or taught at a specific school can buy certain skills, techniques, and perks. With the GM's permission, this perk lets you buy such abilities without being from the correct background. You must specialize by school, style, or template.

### Secret Knowledge†

You can buy one particular skill that's possible in your game setting but *not* taught to entire academies or professions – or possibly to anyone. This usually means Hidden Lore specialties, spells, and ritual magic Paths. If the skill normally isn't even *possible* in your world, this perk can't help (but see *Unusual Training*, p. 21).



### Special Exercises†‡

You pursue an exercise regimen that grants access to an attribute level or advantage that's usually cinematic or off-limits for your race. Each trait requires its own perk.

Examples:

*Attributes:* Special Exercises (DX), Special Exercises (IQ), and Special Exercises (HT) come in levels, with each level letting you exceed the racial norm in that score – 20, for a human – by one.

*Secondary Characteristics:* Special Exercises (Will) and Special Exercises (Per) work much the same way as higher attribute limits, but each level lets you exceed the norm by *two*. Each level of Special Exercises (Basic Speed) lets you increase Basic Speed by one beyond the normal two levels, while each level of Special Exercises (Basic Move) lets you increase Basic Move by one past the usual three levels. For HP and FP, take Special Exercises (HP can exceed FP by 100%) and (FP can exceed HT by 100%).

*Advantages:* Special Exercises (DR 1, Ablative), Special Exercises (DR 1, Tough Skin), Special Exercises (Arm ST 1), Special Exercises (Lifting ST 1), and Special Exercises (Striking ST 1) are typical. Each level extends the right to buy one level of the indicated advantage.

The GM should consider limiting humans to two or three levels of any Special Exercises that comes in levels, if he wants them to be remotely believable characters.

### Unique Technique†

You can use and improve a technique that's otherwise forbidden in the campaign. Most often, the GM will let you “buy off” a common skill penalty as a Hard technique in a setting where no technique for that exists. Each exemption requires its own perk.

This is Secret Knowledge (p. 20) for techniques, with the added facet that you can sometimes coin new techniques.

### Unusual Training†

With sufficient training, certain cinematic skills and techniques might work in reality. You've studied one of these. Unusual Training lets you buy a cinematic capability in a realistic campaign, or *without* a prerequisite advantage such as Gunslinger, Trained by a Master, or Weapon Master. Since what's “cinematic” is often not the feat but the ability to perform it unrestricted, the perk might specify a set of “believable” circumstances that must be true to use the skill or technique.

Examples:

*Unusual Training (Breaking Blow, Only vs. well-braced objects out of combat):* Lets you break boards.

*Unusual Training (Dual-Weapon Attack, Both attacks must target the same foe):* Lets you improve the Dual-Weapon Attack technique for use on one opponent. You still have the full -4 to attack *adjacent* adversaries simultaneously.

*Unusual Training (Musical Influence, Only on tame pets):* Lets you be a snake-charmer.

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