

GAMERS

the generic Six-Letter System



Image courtesy [lumaxart](#)

INTRODUCTION

GAMERS is a roleplaying game harking back to the simple days of gaming. It requires pencil, paper, and five six-sided dice per player.

GAMERS is the generic version of the Six-Letter System, a series of games with the same mechanics, only the names of the basic six attributes changed, and all given six-letter titles which are mnemonics for those attributes.

- Kyle Schuant, 2008

This work may be reproduced, distributed and altered freely, provided that the same conditions are made on any reproductions, distributions, alterations and derived works.

AGENTS

no questions, no answers
that's the business we're in
you accept it and move on

FRIGHT

there is some shit
you don't *want* to know

HEROIC

"let me tell you the days of *high* adventure..."

SPACER

scifi adventure in the near future

WASTER

one world dead, another unable to be born

DICE SYSTEM

Most dice checks are 2d6. If something is written “difficulty 5+”, that means the player must roll 5 or more for their character to succeed. Sometimes rolls have dice modifiers, written like “DM+2”, meaning, “add 2 to the roll.”

TRAITS

The traits are Attributes, Features and Skills. Attributes and Features have a level of 2-12. Numbers are *hexadecimal*, that is based on 16 rather than 10. Levels 10, 11 and 12 are written as A, B and C. In some circumstances, the character's traits might rise higher, to D (13), E (14) or F (15), but can go no higher than that.

ATTRIBUTES

There are six **attributes**, and the player will roll 2d6 for each in order. If players are complaining wimps, the GM may allow them to arrange the rolls to taste. If they are even wimpier, the GM may allow them to buy them with points, 45 to spread among the six attributes.

Grit, resolve, willpower, confidence, chutzpah, courage, and feeling of being well-regarded.

Awareness, cognisance, observation, perception, nous, how much you notice, ability to grasp new concepts.

Mind, education, schooling, intellect, book-learning, but also general knowledge and experience.

Endurance, stamina, health, fitness, resistance to disease, poison and pain.

Reflexes, agility, dexterity, swiftness, balance, and co-ordination.

Strength, physique, thews, energy, power and overall bulk. A character's weight will usually be around 10 times their Strength in kilograms.

each are rated

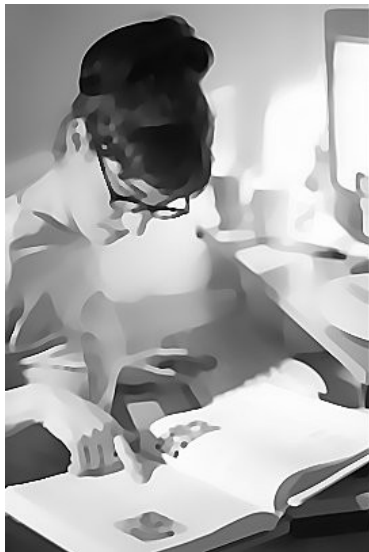
2-3, handicapped or child-like

4-5, low-ordinary

6-8, average ability

9, obviously able

A, B and C, impressive



FEATURES

Features are the things which describe the character's personality and relationships, and place in society. In many games this section can be left out entirely, for example “Wealth” probably has no place in a campaign of wandering adventurers who live by their swords, they are rich today, broke tomorrow; and many players won't want to roleplay whatever Psyche they happen to roll up. Still it's presented here as an option. There are six Features, which the player should roll 2d6 for in order.

Licence

A “licence” is the legally-recognised right to do something unusual in that society, such as,

bear certain types of weapons

drive a vehicle

practice law or medicine, or be a consecrated cleric

the level effect is relative to the society concerned, depending on how tightly they regulate things. Licences are very often *Specialties* (see below).

People, rated

2 on up; this is the people in your life and how much they'll do for you. If you had a rating of 7, you could have one person rated 7, or one rated 3, and another two at 2 each, and so on. The rating they have acts as a complementary trait (see below) when making requests.

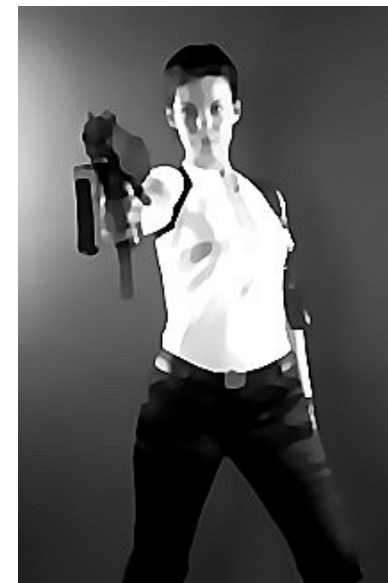
The People rating begins as no more than C, but it's possible to make it go higher in play, since it's composed of many relationships.

When a character first meets another, they'll have a **Reaction** to them. This Reaction is 2d6, that is it varies around “7”, an accomodating reaction. To turn a Reaction into a People rating costs effort and time, just like developing a skill. Reaction ratings can change, but the People ratings are much harder to change.

Psyche

Your emotional nature, self-insight, and empathy

2, sociopath – other people aren't real to you, you may understand them (decent Perception or Diplomacy), but only in the same way you understand a machine – you don't *care*. Note that it doesn't mean the person is *cruel* – children begin this way, but most grow to understand others.



- 3, chronic depressive, or quite callous and indifferent.
- 4 a loner by intent or effect, perhaps considered annoying or self-absorbed
- 5, you only bother trying to get along with people you like, and most of your virtues and flaws are unknown to or denied by you.
- 6-8, ordinary, you get along with people and know most of your own virtues and flaws
- 9, good, you should definitely work with people.
- A-C, impressive, you can empathise with anybody, and could be a remarkable religious leader or psychotherapist

Status

Your position in society, which includes some command or influence over others.

- 2 lowest-status. In modern Western societies, this would be a poor, unemployed or homeless person. In others, someone who has *several* of low-caste, woman, ethnic minority, etc.
- 3-4, low. Perhaps poor, disenfranchised (no vote and/or doesn't participate in public affairs due to feeling they'll have no impact, etc). Pushed around all your life.
- 5, pushed around and looked down on often, but can *possibly* get ahead on other abilities.
- 6-8, ordinary Status, sometimes pushed around, sometimes pushing.
- 9, well-thought-of without your even doing much about it. Lower nobility in feudal or caste societies.
- A-C, high or highest Status, spending most of your life commanding others whether officially or not.

Tech, rated

- 0, no technology, animal, neither Education nor skills available.
- 1, improvised tools discarded immediately
- 2, stone age, the minimum to be "human"
- 3, advanced stone or copper age
- 4, bronze age
- 5, iron age
- 6, wind & water age (Renaissance, 1400+ Europe on Earth)
- 7, steam age (1750+ Europe)
- 8, oil, chemical & nuclear age (1950+ Europe)
- 9, electronic & renewable age (2000+ Europe)
- A, space age
- B, interstellar age
- C, galactic age

The technological level is generally not rolled for, but set by the GM.

Wealth

Wealth is *both* income and assets. Wealth's dealt with in terms of a gameworld-specific "average monthly income." An "ordinary" wage is normally about twice the minimum wage set in that country, which is usually set to provide basic necessities only.

- 2, dead broke – clothes on your back and a month's ordinary wages in possessions
 - 3-5, poor, minimum wage income, six months' wages in possessions/savings
 - 6-8, ordinary, twice minimum wage income, a year's wages in possessions/savings
 - 9, good, four times minimum wage income, two years' wages in possessions/savings
 - A-C, impressive, eight times minimum wage income, five years' wages in possessions/savings
- Wealth is of course not guaranteed, if a character abandons their job or spends their savings at the casino, that's that.

Specialties of Wealth

- Assets** – the character has more assets than you'd expect from their income, they are either thrifty or had a bigger income in the past.
- Income** – the character has more income than assets; they earn big don't save, or perhaps only recently increased their income.
- Debt** – the character has a debt. This is in game terms the same as an assets Specialty. They have more than their income would indicate.
- Low hours** – normally income requires 30 hours per week of work. A character with the Low Hours Specialty need only devote 10 hours a week to their work.

SKILLS

There are 36 skills, each covering broad areas, and rated from 0 on up. Every character is considered to have 0 in every skill as a default, though they will have -3 on *familiarities* within that skill.

A skill level of +1 is basic knowledge, an apprenticeship.

+2 is practicing *if* the skill is complemented with other skills.

+3 or more could be professional.

The player should roll 2d6, and then roll that many times on the random skills table. Each time a skill is rolled, the character gets +1 in that skill. "Player choice" may include the "66" option, rolling again twice.

Should the players be wimps, the GM may allow point-buy of skills, with level 1 costing 1 point, level 2 another 2 (3 total), level 3 costing another 3 (6 total) and so on. 15 total is a good level, allowing one skill at 3, two at 2, and three at 1.

Any skill the PC does not have listed, they're considered to have level 0 in.

Other non-generic gamebooks will have *lifepaths* instead of random skills.

Random Skills Table		
11	Acrobatics	41 Acting
12	Climbing	42 Burglary
13	Swimming	43 Deceit
14	Brawling	44 Diplomacy
15	Fire	45 Hunting
16	Melee	46 Intimidation
21	Languages	51 Law & Society
22	Speech	52 Liberal Arts
23	Writing	53 Navigation
24	Interview	54 Physician
25	Search	55 Psychology
26	Tracking	56 Sciences
31	Aircraft	61 Stealth
32	Landcraft	62 Survival
33	Seacraft	63 Veterinary
34	Engineering	64 <i>Player choice</i>
35	Handicrafts	65 <i>GM choice</i>
36	Technician	66 <i>Roll twice</i>

free. After the native language, a second or more can be known, spread the levels among known languages. A +1 in a language is a basic grasp of everyday conversation, +2 is fluent for reading newspapers and such, and +3 and more are extremely eloquent.

Speech: public speaking, story-telling, persuasiveness

Writing: whether poetic or prosaic or technical

Athletic

Acrobatics: tumbling, jumping, and balance

Climbing: from free-climbing to mountains

Swimming: from treading water to crossing the Channel

Combat

Brawling: unarmed combat of all types

Fire: ranged and thrown weapons.

Melee: every kind of muscle-powered weapon not cast.

Communicaton

Languages: This skill *must* be specialised in. A person's *native* language will be known at +1 for Mind 2-4, +2 for Mind 6-8, and +3 for Mind 9+, and this skill is granted

Detection

Interview: gaining information by talking, may be hostile (like police interrogation) or friendly (like a first date)

Search: noticing things which can be seen or surmised, and finding things by a physical going-over

Tracking: discovering things about people and animals by the physical traces they leave of themselves, and following them by that means.

Driving

Aircraft: all kinds of flying craft, including spacecraft at Tech A+

Landcraft: all kinds of ridden animals and driven land vehicles.

Seacraft: all kinds of powered and unpowered craft which travel on or in liquids.

Gadgeteering

Engineering: design and principles of all kinds of machinery.

Handicrafts: everything from cooking to blacksmith, all things made by hand.

Technician: building and maintenance of machinery; does not grant ability to *design*.

Intrusion

Burglary: breaking into places, either leaving a trace (quick) or not so much (slow).

Deceit: all kinds of deception, from simple lying, to forgery, disguise and sleight of hand.

Stealth: being a sneaky bugger. Includes covering up after a Search, or avoiding Tracking.

Magic or Psi

Body Psi: Powers affecting the body (human or animal) healing, harming and altering it.

Elements Psi: Powers affecting the elements (fire, water, earth, air, electricity, etc).

Mind Psi: Powers affecting the mind – telepathy, possession, illusions, etc.

Medical

Physician: Making the sick better, fixing up wounds, etc.

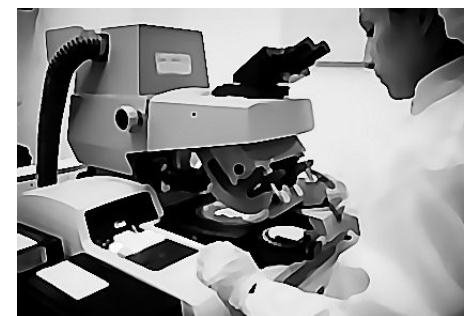
Psychology: understanding of people's mental and emotional processes.

Veterinary: being a nurse or physician for animals.

Persuading

Acting: convincingly portraying a person and their emotions, motivations, etc.

Diplomacy: making others comfortable; persuading them is Speech.



Intimidation: convincing others that you are willing and eager to do them harm.

Scholarship

Liberal Arts: history, archaeology, anthropology, literature, etc.

Law & Society: the laws, cultural mores, bureaucratic methods, and important stories of societies.

Sciences: physics, chemistry, mathematics, and the like; *applied* sciences are called Engineering.



Wilderness

Hunting: knowing the lifestyles of and being able to butcher animals.

Navigation: finding your way about, with or without aids like compasses.

Survival: making do in the wilderness, being able to find shelter, make fire, water, and vegetable foods.

SPECIALTIES

Attributes and skills can have **specialties**. A specialty is a particular ability within that trait. Some examples,

Strength – weightlifter, heavy puncher

Reflexes – flexible, quick

Endurance – good-looking, high pain threshold, disease resistance

Physician – paediatrician, thoracic surgeon

Fire – machinegunner

Liberal Arts – historian, painter

A player can select a specialty for any or all traits which their character has at least level 1 in. That trait is effectively **1 level higher** when dealing with that area. Each character may have three Specialties in all to begin with. A character may have only one Specialty for each trait.

Familiarities

Many skills have certain things in them with which a skilled character will be familiar, depending on how they learned the skill. For example, someone who learned Fire+1 in the navy will know different kinds of firearms to one who learned Fire+1 in the police force. Likewise, a character who learned Landcraft+1 in their rural upbringing will know different kinds of vehicles to one who learned it in the army.

When a character learns a skill, the player ought to write down **three** things they're familiar with for each level of the skill. A character with a skill of 0 has no familiarities to begin with.

If a character comes across something they're not familiar with they'll have DM-3 on their player's rolls until they've had a day or so's practice to become familiar with it. A skill-0 character may achieve familiarities.

Most of the time when someone feels they've learned something quickly, it's not been a skill gained, but a Familiarity. For example, a city boy goes to the Army and in Recruit Course learns a few firearms; earlier he had no Fire familiarities, now he has his three, and has lost the DM-3 for those, but he still doesn't have Fire 1.

Masteries

If an attribute is held at A+, or a skill at 3+, the character must spend about an hour a day on it to maintain it. Failing that, after a year it declines by 1.

Equipment from skills

Regardless of Wealth, a character will have equipment related to their skills.

A skill of 0 grants nothing.

A skill of 1 grants one basic item related to the skill. A Technician-1 might have a multi-tool.

A skill of 2 will grant a few basic items, or one advanced one. A Physician-2 would have a doctor's bag or a box of pharmaceuticals.

A skill of 3 will grant a few advanced or many basic items related to the skill. Aircraft-3 might own a small aircraft, or have regular use of a larger one.

Otherwise, appropriate equipment for each setting will be listed in its book.

GETTING BETTER

An Attribute, Feature or Skill may be improved by +1 after three months of training under an instructor, or a year of training alone. A *temporary* improvement is granted after one-third that time, but the character must train for the full period to make the improvement permanent.

They may acquire a Specialty in one-third this time.

To improve to level 2 in a skill takes twice as long, to level 3 takes three times as long, and so on.

A character may generally only improve one thing at a time, though the GM may allow a second thing to be trained at if the player makes an 8+ check for their character, which can be complemented by things like Grit.

GETTING WORSE

As well as the effects of injury during a Conflict (see below), a character may lose levels of Features. For example, a character might lose levels in Status and Licence from a criminal conviction, or in Psyche from a traumatic experience.

TASK RESOLUTION- QUICKIES

Quickies are where a character is trying to do something, and whatever the result the task will be over quickly. Quickies have four basic difficulties,

6 for tasks which even a person without specific training should be able to manage

8 for tasks which require some training

10 for tasks which require very specialised training, or some luck.

And a difficulty of **2d6 + skill** if someone is actively opposing the character, as for example in an arm wrestle.

A quickie is resolved by rolling 2d6 against the difficulty, adding the relevant skill, and with any dice modifiers.

Some actions within a Conflict (see below) may be resolved as Quickies, for example if Jen wishes to knock Alex off her feet or grapple her, those would be resolved as Quickies.

Triumphs and Balls-Ups

If a player rolls 1, 1 on the 2d6, or if the roll with is 0 or less, they roll again against a relevant attribute and skill, and if they *fail*, it's a balls-up. If the player rolls 6, 6 on the 2d6, they roll again as with balls-ups, and if they *succeed* it's a triumph. In general, because players are more cruel to themselves than the GM will ever be, the *player* should describe the results of the balls-up, and the *GM* the results of the triumph. Be creative!

Complementary Traits

Sometimes a player may argue that some attribute or skill not directly related to the task at hand may help, or some other player may say, "my character helps". If the GM agrees that this is reasonable, then this is a **complementary trait**. Usually bringing in a complementary trait takes extra time.

An **attribute** will be complementary if the player rolls equal to or under it on 2d6.

A **skill** will be complementary if the player rolls 8+ on 2d6 + relevant skill for the first complementary skill, 10+ for the second, and so on.

As soon as one complementary attribute or skill roll is failed, or the group runs out of things to help with, the player must roll the primary skill.

CONFLICTS

Conflicts are of two kinds: *physical* and *mental*. They differ in game mechanics terms only in the kinds of injuries they inflict. A conflict occurs when one person wants something from another. Conflicts are either physical or mental, and follow a pattern,

THREAT

Someone *initiates* the conflict, choosing whether to Posture/Defuse, or Fight. Who goes first is determined by a Quickie contest of the relevant conflict skills of each. If one is ambushing the other, then it'll be a contest of the relevant conflict skill of the victim (knowing Brawling, etc lets you know how people are likely to ambush you with that skill) against the Stealth of the other. People not expecting attack have a DM-3 to their check.

In each round, a character gets *two* actions, choosing between **handle**, **orient**, **move**, **attack** and **defend**. Attacks and defences after the first are at DM-1. Things like talking and so on are free actions. "**Handle**" means drawing or sheathing a weapon, reloading, and so on. "**Orient**" means to look around the field and see what's happening, otherwise the character sees just who or what's in front of them.

A character may **defend** against ranged attacks they cannot see coming, their running around makes it harder for them to be hit. A defence roll uses an appropriate skill; Fire is used to defend against Fire attacks, and Brawling or Melee against either.

RESPONSE?

Submit – In a Submission you offer no resistance and comply with the foe's demands. No conflict is chosen; if the foe attacks anyway, the victim's defence is at DM-3.

Flight – can be physical (in person conflict) or mental (by mail, on phone, etc).

Defuse – mental attack, using words or other non-violent and non-threatening means to de-escalate the situation; note that if you do a mental attack in a round, you have no defence against a foe's physical response that round.

Posture – mental attack, trying to psychologically, emotionally or socially dominate the foe using voice and body language. Physical attributes and violent skills are excellent complementary traits for this, though if the conflict is not in person, Writing and the like may be useful.

Defuse and Posture in game mechanics terms work the same way; the difference is how the foe feels about you afterwards.

Fight – physical attack or defence.

RESULT

As with a Quickie, the two parties each roll 2d6 plus their skills; if the attacker's roll *exceeds* the defender's, injury is inflicted. Bringing in a Complementary Trait requires an action, if for example Jim has Reflexes A and wants them to help his Melee 2, instead of an attack and another action, he will have only an attack that round. After determining injury (see below), the conflict goes on, with each party choosing a response.



Ranged attacks

Attacks by thrown or missile weapons are limited in *range*. A character may only physically throw a weapon Strength x Strength metres; this is divided by the weight of the weapon; weapons of less than 1kg are treated as 1kg.

For example, a Strength 7 character may throw a 2kg spear $7 \times 7 / 2 = 25m$, while a Strength 9 character may throw a 0.5kg knife $9 \times 9 / 1 = 81m$.

Some ranged weapons such as bows have a *Strength multiplier*, for example shortbow x1.5, longbow x2, composite bow x3. Firearms typically have a Strength rating giving their maximum range, for example musket Str 15 (225m), FN-FAL Str 28 (784m).

Ranged attacks are affected by distance from target to victim, and if the character takes at least one action to aim, Awareness; find the range in metres, find the number corresponding to it, take the lower number of the band, and that is the range number.

Range table	
Str/Awa	Range/m
1	1
2	4
3	9
4	16
5	25
6	36
7	49
8	64
9	81
10	100
11	121
12	144
13	169
14	196
15	225
16	256

Range attack DM =

+Awareness (if aiming for one action) - Range number

Scopes and so on may also give DM. Again, the victim of a ranged attack may be actively evading it even if unaware of the exact location of the firer. If they are not evading, then the victim's roll is automatically 0; the firer can still miss if they get a Balls-Up (rolling 1,1 or getting a roll with DM of 0 or less).

For example, Jim has Awareness 9, and his target Bob is 75 metres away, which is range band 8. If Jim just fires there'll be a DM-8 to his roll. If he takes an action to aim, he'll be at 9-8 = DM+1 to his roll.

If Bob knows someone's firing at him, he can be running along with his Fire 1 complemented by his Reflexes 7, rolling 2d6. Jim's roll must exceed this.

Armour

Armours are given a Coverage Rating, this is how much of the body they cover. When struck by something which would inflict injury, the character's player rolls to see if it struck a covered place.

For example, Samantha's kevlar armour is on her torso and abdomen, giving her Coverage 8. If she rolls under 8 on 2d6, the armour protects her.

The other number is Armour Rating. When injury strikes, the armour's rating has three effects: the first level is stopped completely, the second lot is halved, and anything after that gets through fully. Any fractions are lost.

For example, Samantha is wearing kevlar (10), and is struck by a round from a large calibre rifle, doing 24 points of damage. The first 10 are stopped, leaving 14. The next 10 are halved, turning into 5. The remaining 4 go through. Thus, a total of 9 get through.

INJURY

The level of injury will depend on the weapon used. Physical conflicts inflict injury on Endurance, Strength and Reflexes; mental conflicts on Awareness, Mind and Grit.

Weapon damage is generally broken down into small, medium, large and huge, doing 1d6, 2d6, 3d6 and 4d6 damage each. Some attributes may add to damage, level A adds +1, B +2 and C +3 to total injury.

Strength adds to injury in muscle-powered physical conflicts, Reflexes adds to injury in *ranged* physical conflicts.

Awareness adds to injury in mental conflicts

In physical conflicts, injury is inflicted on a random one of Endurance, Strength and Reflexes; in mental conflicts, on Awareness, Mind and Grit. Any injury left over after reducing an attribute to zero flows on to another attribute.

Combatants may *target* one of their foe's three attributes, which is a DM-3 to their roll. Any triumph allows targetting.

After *any* conflict, a character takes a single level of injury to an attribute (physical or mental as for the conflict); they're fatigued by it.

Zeroing out

When one attribute is reduced to zero, the character is effectively unconscious and out of the fight; though they may try to wake up with a Grit or Endurance 8+. When two have been zeroed, the character is definitely out, and severely wounded physically or emotionally. When three physical attributes are zeroed, the character is dead; when three mental attributes are zeroed, the character is mentally disabled in a permanent way.

Unconscious characters wake up ten minutes later halfway between 0 and their full attribute level; round down.

Severely wounded characters wake up three hours later with their zeroed attributes raised to 1.

Dead/Permanently Disabled characters obviously won't recover on their own, and require trauma care.

Healing

First Aid is simply a Physician (for physical injuries) or Psychology (for mental injuries) check, and immediately recovers 1d6 injury.

Trama Care is for dead/permanently disabled characters, and is a Physician/Psychology check with DM-3. A character who was *severely wounded* or *dead/permanently disabled*.

Recuperation is simply rest for the injured character. Each day of rest is a quickie of Fitness or Grit,

difficulty of 6 for comfortable and well-equipped surrounds (a clinic)

difficulty of 8 for comfortable *or* well-equipped surrounds (a poorly-equipped clinic, or at home with family)

and difficulty of 10 for sparse surrounds (a cave somewhere)

with DM+0 if the character was made unconscious, DM-1 if they were severely wounded, and DM-3 if they were dead/disabled. The care of the attending Physician/Psychologist will be a complementary trait. Success on the roll gives +1 to an injured attribute, failure gives nothing, triumph heals 3, ballsup is another -1 injury.

MOVE, ENCUMBRANCE & FATIGUE



Characters may move up to Reflexes paces for each action used in a combat round, and as many kilometres an hour.

Each multiple of Strength carried after the first reduces Endurance, Reflexes and Strength by 1. Thus a character with ERS 468 could carry up to 8kg without effect, but carrying 9-16kg would make them ERS 357, 17-24kg ERS 246, and so on.

Each hour of marching about inflicts a level of injury on *each* of Edurance, Reflexes and Strength.

EXTRA EFFORT

In a quickie or conflict, a player may expend 1 or more levels of injury on their character, each giving DM+1. They may choose the attribute affected, but it must be physical or mental as appropriate to the quickie or conflict.

In a cinematic game, rather than DM+1, each injury level taken should turn one of the dice to "6", so that two injuries taken will give a Triumph, and one will avoid a Balls-Up.

In both cases, it is more realistic to have the Extra Effort decided on *before* the dice roll, and more cinematic to allow it afterwards.