



Ghost Legal Notice

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Ghost Concept

Ghost is a roleplaying game system written by Eric Petracca and is freely available on the Internet. Ghost material is modular and distributed electronically or as three-hole punched packets allowing players to create custom gaming handbooks with only the rules, items, adventures, and creatures they prefer, eliminating the expense and trouble of transporting and indexing large gaming volumes.

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Ghost Style Guide

Ghost-derived material must:

- 1) Be 8.5 X 11 in size.
- 2) Have a large enough border to be three-hole punched.
- 3) Have only one Ability, Item, Creature, etc., per page.
- 4) Include the following on every page:

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Ghost Introduction

Gamers use bits and pieces of many roleplaying games, supplements, or other non-game elements such as movies and comic books to create settings, characters, and adventures.

Ghost is modular and distributed electronically or as three-hole punched packets allowing custom gaming handbooks with only specific rules, items, adventures, and creatures, eliminating the expense and trouble of transporting and indexing large volumes.

The rules layout is such that any portion may be discarded or replaced by an Advanced Rule, and various settings, creatures, or items may appear in any place or more than one place in your customized Ghost handbook. Modify the order and contents to fit your unique style.

Ghost underwent minor revisions and clarity edits in March 2004 - July 2004.

Thanks for playing,
Eric Petracca

Ghost is a customizable gaming system.

The **Ghost Style Guide** describes the format of all new material to ensure consistent usability.

GHOST

Ghost

These are the basic rules.
Add advanced rules as you see fit.

You need at least one six-sided die, paper,
and a pencil to play.

New Characters

All characters have Mind, Body, and Spirit.
Characters start with two Traits at 3 and one
at 4. Higher is better.

Characters also start with 5 Abilities and 3
Items.

Actions

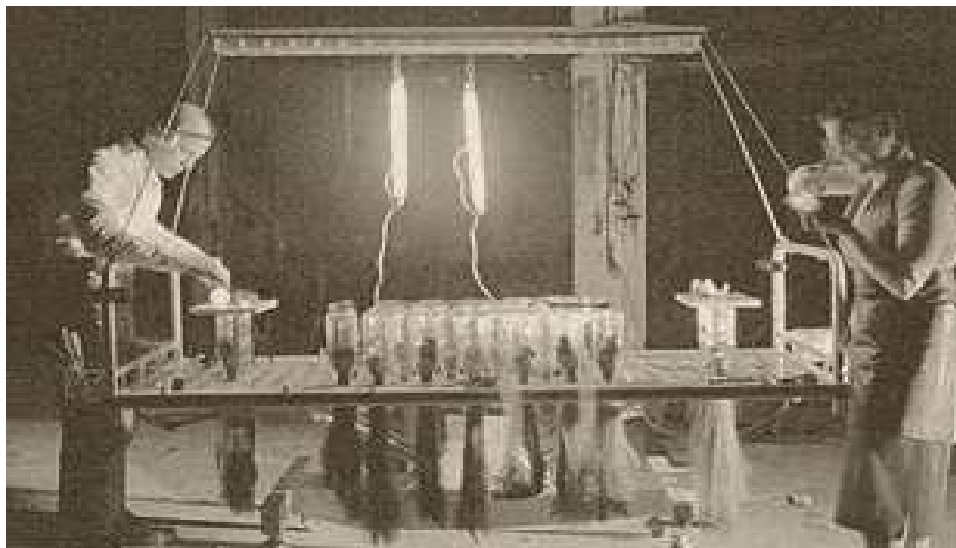
After announcing actions, characters roll under the relevant Trait (Mind, Body, or Spirit) to succeed. If the roll is equal to or greater than the relevant Trait, the action is unsuccessful.

With a relevant Ability or Item, actions succeed on a roll of 5 or less.

Damage and Dying

Characters are only as strong as their weakest Trait.

Damage temporarily lowers character Traits. When any Trait reaches 0, the character is unconscious. When more than one Trait reaches 0, the character dies.



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Traits

Body: Strength, Stamina, Agility

Mind: Intelligence, Knowledge, Perception

Spirit: Willpower, Charisma, Magic

Three **Traits** define characters. Average characters have 3 in every Trait, while extraordinary characters 5 or higher.

Abilities

Everyone in Jim's game setting can drive, so when Jim drives, he just hops into the car and drives off. Because Driving is a basic skill in Jim's game setting, Jim is assumed to know how to drive even though it isn't explicitly listed on his character sheet.

Jim hijacks an unfamiliar car, at night, in the rain, and needs to outrun three angry henchmen bent on killing him. In this situation, the unfamiliar car, stress, rain, and darkness all work against Jim's implicit driving ability. Even though Jim can drive, these circumstances require specialized driving skills, probably Aggressive Driving. Without such knowledge, Jim will have trouble outrunning the henchmen.

Abilities describe how well a character does something. All characters can do basic things under reasonable circumstances, but advanced things may require special skills.

The **Moderator**, the only player without a character, describes scenes and outcomes.

Actions

Linda wants to open a lock but does not have the Lockpick Ability. Linda must roll under her Mind to open the lock.

Linda wants to open a lock and has the Lockpick Ability. Because Linda has the relevant Ability, she must roll a 5 or less to successfully open the lock.

Actions succeed or fail based on the relevant Trait or Ability.

Items

A hit from a Pistol (50) reduces the target's Body by 1 and requires Bullets (1) to fire. The Pistol can be fired 50 times before it requires maintenance, while Bullets can each be fired only once.

The more powerful Rifle (40) reduces the target's Body by 2 and requires Bullets (1) to fire.

The Bullet-proof Vest (1) is a great way to put something between your character and any Bullets (1) that may be flying around. Once it blocks a Bullet (1), it becomes worthless.

Items are armor, weapons, equipment, or anything lying around, and act like consumable Abilities.

Experience

After a long, involved campaign, Jim seals a particularly nasty villain in a maximum-security prison to await trial. The moderator decides Jim's heroics are experience worthy. After Jim's efforts are recorded, he chooses to raise his Body by 1 and chooses two new Abilities: Running, and Hang Gliding.

Experience represents character progress by adding Abilities. When characters accomplish moderator-assigned goals, they receive two additional Abilities, and increase Mind, Body, or Spirit by 1. Experience is recorded as a brief note.



Rounds

Bob (Body 3) and Jim (Body 3) are fighting Troy (Body 4). Because Bob and Jim are tied with the lowest Body, they roll off to see who will declare the first action. Jim loses the roll off and so declares his action to begin the round.

Jim: "I'll leap onto the table in the middle of the room."

Next, Bob declares an action because he won the roll off.

Bob: "Seeing that Jim wants to leap on the table, I'll get underneath it!"

Finally, Troy declares the last action because he has the highest Agility.

Troy: "Since my enemies are converging at the table, I'll launch a missile at it."

Now the Moderator resolves the actions.

Moderator: "Troy levels his missile-launcher at the table and lets one fly. Unfortunately for Bob and Jim, they arrive at the table just as the missile hits."

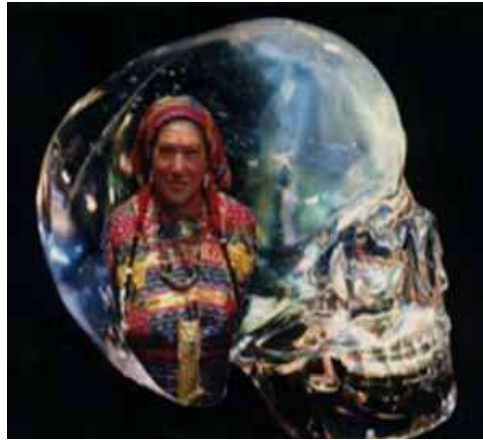
An **action** is a simple statement of intent.

A **Round** begins by declaring actions from lowest Body to highest, allowing faster characters to declare actions after slower characters. Then the Moderator resolves the actions simultaneously.

Spirit

Bob is about to lose consciousness because his Body is at 1. By concentrating for a round, he lowers his Spirit by 1, raises his Body from 1 to 2 and hopes the next attack won't be his last.

Mary fails to lift a car with Body 3, so she spends 2 rounds transferring 2 Spirit, raising her Body to 5, and finally lifts the car.



As an action, characters may raise any Trait by 1 by reducing **Spirit** by 1.

Resting

Ralph's Body and Mind are reduced after a near fatal wound from a magic arrow. For each hour Ralph rests, he recovers 1 Body and 1 Mind until they return to normal.

A minor god blesses Frank. The god helps Frank battle a demon by raising Frank's Body by 3. After battle, Frank loses 1 Body every hour until Body returns to normal.

Bill pours Spirit into Body to hold together a collapsing bridge. Every hour after the fight, as Bill rests, he loses 1 Body and recovers 1 Spirit.

A character is **Resting** whenever not engaged in a strenuous situation. Every hour, Resting characters gain or lose 1 in every Trait as they return to base levels.

Unconsciousness and Death

Biff took several nasty punches already and his enemy Chuck isn't through yet. After several more attacks, Biff's Body has been reduced to 0 and the pain knocks Biff unconscious.

Now that Biff is unconscious, Chuck uses his Mind Drain ability to reduce Biff's Mind. Soon, Biff's Mind has been reduced to 0. Now that Biff's Body and Mind are both reduced to 0, Biff dies.

A character is **unconscious** when any Trait (Body, Mind or Spirit) is reduced to 0 and **dead** when two Traits are reduced to 0.



Character Creation

Linda decides to join the game. First, Linda must think of a name for her new character. Because Linda is a new player and is afraid she might miss a cue, she uses Spunky, her dog's name, as the name of her character.

Names, Traits, Abilities, Items, and Experience define characters.

Traits and Abilities

Linda now assigns her starting Traits and chooses her Abilities. She decides to make Body the highest Trait and chooses a few Abilities.



Starting characters have two Traits at 3 and one at 4, and 5 Abilities.

Body 4 Mind 3 Spirit 3

Espionage

Pianist

Balance

Ice Punch (Reduces target Body, Mind, and Spirit by 1, takes one round to activate)

Cold Resistant (As an action, reduce cold-based effects by 1 for one round)

Items

Because characters are assumed to have basic things, Linda picks 3 Items she thinks will come in handy during the game.

New characters choose 3 Items.

Pistol (50, Reduces target Body by 1, Requires Bullets)

Rifle (30, Reduces target Body by 2, Requires Bullets)

Bullet-proof Vest (1, Reduces Body damage by 1)

Experience

Linda knows that because Spunky isn't involved in the game yet, she doesn't have any experience, but because Spunky represents a character with a unique history, Linda writes a short background for her.

New characters have backgrounds but no experience.

Spunky learned to play the piano from her father, a concert pianist. After college, where Spunky was captain of the cheerleading squad, she joined the police. Moving quickly up the ranks, Spunky was offered a position with the FBI, but because of her latent abilities, her offer was revoked and the government hunted her. Now Spunky hides out in Canada, outrunning Project Echo, a United States government black book operation.



Linda's Character:

Spunky

Body 4 Mind 3 Spirit 3

Espionage, Pianist, Balance

Ice Punch (Reduces target Body, Mind, and Spirit by 1, takes one round to activate)

Cold Resistant (As an action, reduce cold-based effects by 1 for one round)

Pistol (50, Reduces target Body by 1, Requires Bullets)

Rifle (30, Reduces target Body by 2, Requires Bullets)

Bullet-proof Vest (1, Reduces Body damage by 1)

Spunky learned to play the piano from her father, a concert pianist. After college, where Spunky was captain of the cheerleading squad, she joined the police. Moving quickly up the ranks, Spunky was offered a position with the FBI, but because of her latent abilities, her offer was revoked and the government hunted her. Now Spunky hides out in Canada, outrunning Project Echo, a United States government black book operation.

Ghost Template

[N/PC Name]

Body X Mind Y Spirit Z

[Ability Name] ([Notes])

[Item Name] ([Uses], [Notes])

[Experience Notes]

Ghost characters, Skills, and Items follow this standard form.



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Ghost Advanced: Luck

Bill desperately needs his next attack to be successful or the building he has promised to protect will likely explode. His roll to subdue the bomber has failed, so Bill decides to lower her Spirit by 1 and re-rolls the attack.

The Luck Ability is available to new or existing characters and works like any other Ability:

Luck (Re-roll a number of attempts equal to Spirit per session)

Ron wants to save a child from straying too close to a dangerous cliff. To grab the kid before it's too late, Ron must roll under his Body (3). Ron's roll comes up a 6, and he fails to save the child. Now, Ron decides to use his Luck Ability to re-roll the failed attempt. This time, the roll comes up a 2, and Ron grabs the kid in time.

Linda has one chance to crack a safe without triggering the alarm. Her first attempt fails, which would normally activate the alarm. Instead, Linda uses her Luck Ability to re-roll the failed attempt. Again, her attempt is a failure. Linda chooses to re-roll as many times as her Luck allows her to open the safe.

In Ghost, luck comes in two forms: the **Luck Ability** and **Luck** as a function of Spirit.

Just as a character can transfer Spirit to another Trait by concentrating for an action, a character can also lower Spirit by 1 to re-roll a failed attempt. No concentration round is required in this case; Spirit is simply lowered by 1 and the roll is reattempted. Spirit lost in this manner recovers in the usual way: Resting.



Ghost Advanced: Non-Skilled Penalties

Sometimes it doesn't make sense for a character to do something based on the relevant Trait when they don't have the relevant Ability. For instance, Computer Programming would default to Mind if a character lacked the Computer Programming Ability, but programming a computer might be too complex for even the smartest non-skilled character to attempt. With this advanced rule, assign a -2 penalty to the relevant Trait for a character that lacks a relevant Ability.

Since Linda wants to pick a mechanical lock but lacks the Lockpick Ability, she must roll under her (Mind -2) to open the lock.

Bob has a Pistol (50, Reduces target Body by 1, Requires Bullets), but lacks the Pistol Ability. Without this Ability, whenever Bob fires his Pistol, he must roll under his (Mind -2) to hit the target.

When a non-skilled character attempts and action, assign a -2 penalty to the relevant Trait.



Ghost Advanced: Environment



In Bill's setting, the weather is always warm and sunny. Because Bill is human, and accustomed to warm and sunny weather, adventures in the cold, at night, or in a wet area could throw Bill off. To represent this, the moderator decides that when it is cold, dark, or raining, Bill receives a -1 penalty to all target numbers for each environmental factor. Beyond this, when the

Environment variations such as weather, light, or temperature can sway outcomes by making an otherwise simple situation complicated.

environment is extreme, such as during a monsoon or blizzard, Bill receives a -2 penalty to all target numbers.

Gill loves fire, lives in fire, and eats fire. He is a fire elemental from a hot and earthy place populated by brimstone and burning lakes. For him, extremely warm temperatures are normal, but even the warmest day in another dimension might be frosty to a fire elemental. Because of this, the moderator decides that whenever Gill is in a dimension where things don't normally burst into flame, he receives a -1 penalty to all target numbers.





Ghost Advanced: Ghost Conversions

(Concept Matt Drake)

Because everything in Ghost is a non-random whole number, converting almost anything (character, item, spell, ability, weapon, armor, relic) from another system to Ghost is simple.

The general rule is to always compare what's being converted with what's average in the other system, and keep the average power-level the same in Ghost.

For instance, if a piece of armor in the other system reduces damage by 10, and an average character has 60 hit points, then in Ghost, the same piece of armor might reduce damage by 1 (1/6 of the maximum Trait score in Ghost).

Or, if the other system uses a random number, as many systems do to determine damage, figure out the average, compare it to the relevant trait in that system, and convert to Ghost accordingly.

For example, if a sword in the other system does 1D6 damage, it will do 3 damage on average. If an average character in that system has 9 hit points, a sword would kill that character in 3 hits. So, in Ghost, since an average character Trait is 3, the converted sword would do 1 damage.

To use characters, abilities, and items from other systems in Ghost, consider these suggestions.

Traits

Body: Strength, Might, Stamina, Hardiness, Agility, Speed

Mind: Intelligence, Knowledge, Understanding, Perception, Awareness

Spirit: Willpower, Determination, Charisma, Magnetism, Magic, Potency

Most games contain more than the 3 Ghost Traits, but by combining or discarding Traits, converting characters to Ghost is easy.

If the character in the other system has a 5 in Intelligence, and 10 is the maximum, that same character in Ghost would have a 3 in Mind because that is the equivalent Ghost Trait and 3 is half of 6, the maximum Ghost Trait score.

Another system may have 3 Traits that fit into the Mind Trait in Ghost. When this happens, average the 3 Traits, then convert to Ghost.

Converting across genres

Usually, a fantasy game will have different armor and weapons than a cyberpunk game. When converting, consider relative power levels.

Although plate armor offers good protection in most medieval settings, it doesn't work so well in a game with two-dimensional, phasing ninja, wearing corrugated, atomic poly-chain. Use common sense when converting across genres.