GODLIKE

Created by Dennis Detwiller • Game Mechanics by Greg Stolze

"Godlike in their abilities, let us hope this new breed of man will carry the burden of a suffering world to our ultimate and unwavering goal—freedom for all the people of the Earth."
– President Franklin Delano Roosevelt's "Godlike Address," November 10, 1941

Welcome to *Godlike*

Welcome to the dawn of the Super-Age. In 1936, people begin manifesting strange powers, setting them apart from the rest of humanity. These so-called paranormal "Talents" allow a chosen few to do the impossible. No one really knows why. With these powers, man first took to the air without mechanical aid, explored the depths of the sea naked without life support and touched the rim of space. To these Talents, reality is something to be shaped and molded by the power of the mind alone. Most, however, can only warp reality in small consistent ways-each power as unique as their own personality.

To the rank and file of humanity, these chosen few seem godlike in their capabilities; still, only the Talents know the true secret. The secret is this: the power that they have found by chance seems pale and pointless in the face of death. Few know the way your family, friends and enemies look at you when you do the impossible. Few understand how the power sets you apart, how it makes you more, and yet, somehow less. How there is so much more to fail at, in a Talent's world without limits.

This is the secret: These fears, like the power that feeds them, are godlike in their scope.

Godlike is a Role-Playing Adventure Game

Godlike is a role-playing adventure game of Allied super-human "Talents" fighting in World War II. Talents possess super-human powers (such as flight, invisibility or teleportation,) that set them apart from the normal foot soldier—but unlike the comic-books, *Godlike* is set in a world much like our own. Talents don't wear costumes because the snipers would know who to shoot first, and just because you can lift a tank over your head, doesn't make you bulletproof. The brutal reality of combat is that Talents are much more likely to be thrown in the thick of it, and their powers don't help as much as one might imagine.

Missions reserved for parahuman Talents are often the most dangerous and difficult missions available. Not surprisingly only the smartest, swiftest or luckiest live to fight another day.

What's Included and What You'll Need to Play *Godlike*

This quick-play packet contains all you need to play a single *Godlike* session (or even a series of them, if you don't mind using the same characters over and over again.)

Inside you'll find:
- The *Godlike* rules.
- Six ready-to-play Talent characters.
- A ready-to-play mission.

What you'll need:
- Someone to run the game (the Game Moderator.)
- Three to six players to take the roles of the Talent characters.
- At least 10 ten-sided dice.
- Some pencils and scratch paper.
- Your imagination.

And now a Word from your Sponsor

Is this all there is to *Godlike?* No, there's much, much more—this packet represents a fraction of the main core rulebook: *Godlike: Superhero Roleplaying in a World on Fire, 1936-1946.*

We decided to release the rules in this nearly complete format to show just what an interesting and fun system we've developed—unlike other game companies, we're not interested into tricking you into buying the game through vague "quick-play" packages. If the rules here are not for you, they're not for you, but if you like them, please consider picking up the core rulebook. If you want to see more about the world of *Godlike,* pick up a book or two (or three or four!) and help us get our job done.

Thanks,
Greg Stolze and Dennis Detwiller

The Basics

The mechanics in *Godlike* are there to use when two requirements have been fulfilled. First, the outcome of an attempted character action is in doubt. Second, the action has to matter to the plot of the game.

If an action is trivially easy, there's no point in rolling for it. A game in which every action – lacing your boots, making coffee, reading the paper – has to be rolled for would be ludicrously tedious. Similarly, if you try something impossible ("I'm going to shoot down the sun!",) there's no point in rolling because no matter how well you roll, it still isn't going to happen.

On the other hand, there are all kinds of actions that are in doubt which just don't matter to the overall game. Maybe you want to show up one of your fellow PCs by winning a skeet-shooting bet. Sure, you could both roll a couple times to see who shoots better – but unless you're doing it as an excuse for in-character bonding, or to get used to the mechanics, what's the point? You're just going to leave the other players drumming their fingers while you posture with your shotgun.

In short, don't roll unless the GM asks you to roll. Sometimes he may not allow you to roll for something you thought you should be able to do, but just play along and trust his judgment. After all, he knows what's coming next and you don't.

Every attempt to do something is represented by a number of ten-sided dice. The more dice you roll, the better your chances of success. If you only roll one die, there is no chance of success. If you somehow rolled eleven dice or more, there would be no chance of failure. However, you can never roll more than ten dice. That's important, so I'm going to say it again:

Under no circumstances do you roll more than ten dice.

The number of dice you roll is known as a dice pool. (If you've played *Vampire: The Masquerade* or *Legend of the Five Rings,* you're already familiar with the concept.) You usually find the number of dice in your pool by adding together a stat and a skill.

Statistics represent your inborn or developed general abilities – things like how strong you are, how well you remember things, and how well you keep your head in a crisis.

Skills are particular applications of your statistics– things you've learned how to do in the course of your life, like shoot a rifle or crack a code.

Suppose, then, that Roland is trying to punch a Nazi spy in the face. The stat governing face punching is Body, and Roland's Body is 2. The skill of face punching is Brawl, and Roland's Brawl skill is also 2. He has four dice in his dice pool.

When you roll, you want to rack up matches. You get a match when two or more dice turn up the same number. So, if Roland's player comes up with 2,2,9,8, he lands a punch on his opponent. If he rolls 1,2,4,5, he misses.

There are some tweaks and details that make the system a little more complicated, but mostly, you just roll a number of dice equal to a stat plus a skill and look for matches. Getting more matches and higher numbers is generally better.

A Note for Novices

Godlike uses ten-sided dice to determine success or failure. A ten-sided die is abbreviated "d10." If you're rolling five of them, it's abbreviated 5d.

Most d10s are numbered 0,1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9. Other games use that 0 as an actual zero, but for *Godlike,* it's a ten. (Or you can just buy dice that have the number 10 printed on them.) Yeah, it's kind of a hassle, but that's just the way many d10s are made.

La Belle Curve

The larger your dice pool, the better your chances are of getting a match. To make this explicit, here's a rough guide to your chances of getting a match (or multiple matches) depending on how many dice you roll.

Bell Curve Table

Size of Dice Pool	Rough Odds of Getting One or More Matches
1	0%
2	10%
3	28%
4	50%
5	70%
6	85%
7	93%
8	98%
9	99.6%
10	99.9%

That's a chunky graph there. A seven-die pool is quite reliable, and raising a pool from 8 to 10 isn't going to give nearly the payoff that raising it from 3 to 5 is. Just thought you'd like to know.

Of course, these are just your chances of getting any success. If you need to get something done fast (that is, you need a wide success) a pair of ones might not do it. Similarly, difficult tasks (those that exclude certain low successes) are substantially harder.

Stats

There are six stats, which measure all of a character's general capabilities. They're rated from 1 to 5. One is dismal, while five is the human maximum. (Of course, Talents can have stats higher than five.) The normal human average is 2, with 3 being exceptional. There are two kinds of stats: those governing Physical Capabilities-Body, Coordination, and Sense; and Mental Capabilities-Brains, Command, and Cool.

Body

This is a measure of how big, strong and tough you are. A character with a high Body can lift more, take more punishment, and run faster than someone with a low Body.

Body Stat Table

Rank	Tested Lift	Bonus
1	100-210 lbs.	–
2	210-250 lbs.	–
3	250-370 lbs.	+1 wound box to Torso; +1 width to hand-to-hand attacks.
4	370-500 lbs.	+1 wound box to Torso and each arm; +1 width to hand-to-hand attacks.
5	500-800 lbs.	+1 wound box to each limb (arms and legs.)
6	800 lbs. – 1 ton	+1 wound box to Torso and each limb; +2 width to hand-to-hand attacks.
7	1–2 tons	+1 wound box to Torso and each limb; hand-to-hand attack does killing damage; +1 width to hand-to-hand attacks.
8	2–4 tons	+1 wound box to Torso and each limb; +2 width to hand-to-hand attacks.
9	4–6 tons	+1 wound box to Torso and each limb; +3 width to hand-to-hand attacks.
10	6–10 tons	+1 wound box to Torso and each limb;+4 width to hand-to-hand attacks.

Note: The wound box bonuses are not cumulative. Odd as it seems, the Talents with extraordinary strength are no tougher than the toughest of mere mortals.

Tested Lift is weight in a range where, if you try to lift it, you might fail, so lifting that much weight requires a successful roll. Lifting a heavier weight is generally impossible. Any weight in a lesser category can be lifted without a roll under non-combat situations. For example, someone with Body 6 has to roll a match to pick up something that weighs 900 pounds, but he can lift 600 pounds automatically and has no chance of lifting two tons.

If you want to throw something ten or fifteen feet or so, you can do so if it's two categories lower than your Body rank. (For example, if you've got Body 7, you can pick up something that weighs 700 pounds and throw it ten or fifteen feet.) Every level you drop increases the throw distance by twenty feet. (Thus, our Body 7 talent could throw a 220-pound man a good seventy feet.)

If you need to know how fast a character can run, assume that it's 10 yards plus twice their Body per round. This may be adjusted upward if conditions are good (wind's at their back, they're running unencumbered on a level road) or downward if they're bad (running over rubble, carrying a pack, or if they're injured.) If a character has an injured leg, it's 5 yards plus Body. If both legs are injured, it's just their Body score.

Coordination

This is a rough gauge of how well you control and maneuver your body. Someone with good Coordination is going to be a better shot, a better dart player and a better driver than someone whose Coordination is poor.

Sense

We experience the world through the mediation of our five senses – sight, hearing, taste, touch and smell. Someone with a high Sense score has keen hearing, clear vision and has a better shot at noticing that funny burnt-almond odor right before eating the poisoned date. Someone with little Sense is nearsighted, hard of hearing and generally oblivious to his surroundings.

Brains

Brains measures your natural intellect. Someone with a high Brains stat has a better memory, quicker math skills and a better grasp of abstract concepts than someone without.

For every point of Brains above 2, you get an extra point with which to buy skills. However, you can only spend these points on Brains skills.

Command

People with high Command scores are natural leaders. Call it what you will – charisma, personal magnetism, leadership – people who have it dominate conversations, sway opinions and get listened to in a crisis.

Command is not necessarily a measure of physical good looks (though if you want to have a good looking character, a high Command is one way to represent that.) It's more a sense of confidence and personal intensity. Even if she's not sure of herself, a woman with high Command always seems sure of herself.

Command combines with Cool to form a character's starting Will (see **Will** on page 31.)

Cool

Some people panic in a crisis. Some freeze, some choke…and some just cope with it and do what needs to be done. It's not a matter of intelligence or willpower: Some people have it, some don't. In any event, Cool is the ability to remain un-cracked under pressure, deal with unpleasant realities (like combat, for example,) and get the job done.

Cool combines with Command to form a character's starting Will (see **Will** on page 31.)

Skills

Where your stats measure your innate abilities, skills represent the payoff of a learning effort. Someone may have a great deal of innate coordination, but if he's never been behind the wheel of a car, he's probably not a safe driver. Pure talent only takes you so far: Hard work and study is also needed for success in most endeavors.

Quantifying Skills

Skills are simple concepts, and (most) should be easily described in one sentence. For example, the skill "Radar Operation" could be described as "The ability to operate radar equipment." Does "Radar Operation" allow its user to repair radar sets as well as operate them? That's up to the

GM to decide. His say is final. However, most likely, if it's not contained in the description, the skill doesn't cover it.

Maximum Skill Levels

Normal humans are limited to 5 as a maximum rating in any skill. So the maximum a human can have in any stat+skill is 10d (of course this would represent someone who dedicated his entire life in study of a particular skill.)

Talents are a little different. They can have skills higher than 5, but they must be bought as Hyperskills (see **Hyperskills** page 31 for more details,) which are super-human levels in otherwise mundane skills.

What if I Don't Have the Right Skill?

Not every character is going to have every skill. Sometimes a character may try to do something he's never done before. Your GM may allow a roll or not, depending on the circumstances and common sense. If your character doesn't have the Brawl skill, there's nothing to stop him from taking a swing at someone. In that case, you can just roll Body. After all, hitting is not a very sophisticated action.

On the other hand, if your character doesn't have a given Language skill, your GM would be well within his rights to not let you roll. It doesn't matter how smart you are: If you don't *parle Français* you're not going to get it.

Do-It-Yourself Skills

It's possible that your character concept involves a skill that's not listed here because it's highly specialized or esoteric. If that's the case, you can just ask your GM to let you write it in under an appropriate stat. If, for instance, your character is a rodeo clown he presumably has a "Horseback Riding" skill, probably under Coordination.

This is not a license to try to create broad, over-arching skills that let you do everything. ("Yeah, and I should be able to roll my 'Navy Captain' skill for sailing, navigation, gun cleaning and tactics.") Your GM knows best and if he says no, deal with it.

Body Skills

Athletics-You can pick up any sport and do a passable job at it, even if you've never played it before.
Brawling-You are a bruiser, and know how to attack with your hands, feet and head.
Endurance-You can pace yourself, hold your breath, run, or resist the ill effects of environment longer than most people.
Health-You eat well, have a strong metabolism, and are resistant to disease.
Run-You are well versed at running, and can sprint for short distances, or run for long distances without tiring.
Swim-You are a strong swimmer, and can float on your back in the water.
Throw-You can throw hand held objects farther than most people your size.

Coordination Skills

Anti-Tank Rocket- You can fire and maintain anti-tank rockets.
Dodge- You are adept at getting out of the way of attacks and danger.
Driving (Type)- You can drive a particular type of vehicle, such as a bicycle or car.
Flamethrower-You can fire, repair, clean and maintain flamethrowers.
Grenade-You can properly use a grenade without blowing yourself up.
Machinegun (MG)- You can fire, repair, clean and maintain machineguns
Pilot (Type)-You can pilot a particular type of airborne vehicle, such as a plane or blimp.
Pistol-You can fire, repair, clean and maintain pistols.
Rifle- You can fire, repair, clean and maintain rifles.
Sailing (Type)-You can pilot a particular type of sea borne vehicle, such as a sailboat, destroyer or kayak.
Stealth- You are light on your feet and know how to remain out of sight.
Submachine gun (SMG)- You can fire, repair, clean and maintain submachine guns.

Sense Skills

Hearing-Your hearing is more keen than the average person.
Sight-Your eyesight is more keen than the average person.

Smell-Your sense of smell is more keen than the average person.
Taste- Your sense of taste is more keen than the average person.
Touch-Your sense of touch is more keen than the average person.

Brains Skills

Cryptography-You have a working knowledge of codes, ciphers and encryption techniques.
Education-You were a bookworm in school and know all manner of basic facts about math, science, grammar and social studies.
Electronics- You can repair, use or build electronics without electrocuting yourself.
First Aid-With the proper equipment, you can treat wounds in the field - as long as they don't require surgery.
Language (Type)-You can speak, read and write a particular language type.
Mechanics (Type)-You can repair, use or build machinery of a particular type.
Medicine- You can treat illness and wounds through surgery, if you have access to the proper equipment. ***Note:*** Your Medicine skill cannot ever be higher than your First Aid skill. If you don't know First Aid, you can't learn Medicine.
Navigation (Land)-You can navigate using a map and compass or by dead reckoning on the ground.
Navigation (Sea/Air)- You can navigate by map, timing and instrumentation, or by astrogation.
Tactics-You are versed in the arts of war, and know how to use terrain, manpower and equipment to its maximum effect on the battlefield.

Command Skills

Inspire- You can cause people to feel optimistic, despite any fears they might harbor.
Intimidation- You can cause a person to fear you through physical or psychological threats
Leadership-You can effectively direct those under your command, even under fire.
Perform (Type)-You have an entertaining skill and the confidence to perform it in front of large groups.
Seduction- You're skilled at attracting a member of a targeted sex.

Cool Skills

Bluff- You can bullshit your way through most situations, though any falsehood you tell will not be believed for very long.
Lie-You can contrive convincing falsehoods that are often believed until evidence to the contrary is discovered.
Mental Stability-You are not easily shocked, and have a psyche which can function even in stressful or grotesque situations.

Resolution

You know what skills are, what stats are, what a dice pool is. You've got the fundamentals. Here's how you put them together and interpret the results of a given roll.

The goal of a roll is to get *matches* – that is, you want two or more of the dice to turn up the same number. If that happens, you succeed. That's the bare bones of the system. However, there are a few nuances to success. Specifically, each matching set has *height* and *width.*

A tall (that is high) set is one that has very high numbers – a pair of 8's or a pair of 10's is a tall set. A wide set is one where a lot of the dice turned up the same number – a set of four 2's is very wide, as is a set of four 9's.

There's shorthand for results, and it's written as (width x height.) It looks like math, but all that means is that if you rolled eight ten-sided dice (8d, remember?) and got three tens, the result would be written 3x10.

Here are some examples.

- You roll 5d and they come up 1,3,5,9,9. The result is 2x9. This is a tall result, but not a wide one.
- You roll 8d and get 1,5,6,7,8,8,8,0. The result is 3x8. This result is both tall and wide.
- You roll 7d and it turns up 1,1,1,1,2,6,8. The result is 4x1. This is a very wide result, but it's short.
- You roll 5d and get 1,1,2,6,7. The result is 2x1. This is a narrow and short result – in fact, it's the minimum success possible.

Width and height both have implications to your success. (Exactly what they mean depends on what you're trying to do.) If you're competing against another person who is consciously trying to confound or surpass you, that's a *dynamic contest*. If you're struggling against an

inanimate object or situation, it's a *static contest* because the situation isn't actively changing in response to your actions.

Running a race, getting into a knife fight, playing chess, interrogating someone for information or lying to someone who interrogates you – these are all dynamic contests. In a dynamic contest, you're rolling against someone else's roll.

Climbing a wall, fighting off an infection, fixing a jeep, flying a plane – these are all static contests. In these situations, you're just rolling in a vacuum and trying to get a match.

Static Contests

In a static contest, height determines your degree of success, while width determines how quickly you get it done.

Some static contests are simple, and the question of time doesn't enter into it. If you're fighting off an infection with a Body + Health roll, for example, there really isn't a question of quickness: You either get sick or you don't. In that case, you can simply ignore the width of the roll. If you get even a single pair, you stay healthy.

Time

For more complicated contests, where time is a factor, your GM may simply decide what "sounds about right" for the time a task takes as determined by the width of the roll. If you want a general guideline, however, it works like this:

First, the GM decides what the time scale is, be it days, hours, minutes or combat rounds. (A combat round is a very abstract term, but generally, it's a couple seconds – about as much time as it takes you to take a shot or make a good attempt at diving for cover.) For example, fixing a jeep is probably going to take hours. Decoding and interpreting a lengthy and complicated Japanese battle plan is going to take days. Stripping and repairing a machinegun is going to take minutes, while running across a courtyard takes rounds.

Once the scale is determined, you make the relevant roll – Brains+Mechanics to fix the jeep, Body+Running to bolt across the courtyard, Brains+Cryptography (and maybe Brains+Language: Japanese in addition) to figure out the battle plan. If the roll is a success, the width is subtracted from 5 to find out how many units of time it takes to complete the task. For example, if the Brains+Mechanics result was 2x3, it takes three hours to fix the Jeep – five minus the width (2) equals three. If the Body+Running result was 3x7, it takes two rounds to get across the courtyard (5-3.) If the Brains+Cryptography outcome was 4x2, it only takes one day to figure out the Japanese plan.

No matter how wide you roll, however, a task always takes one unit of time. If you somehow manage to get a result six wide or wider, the job still takes one day / hour / minute or round.

Difficulty

The height element of the roll determines how well you perform the task. As with time, sometimes this doesn't matter. For instance, if you're trying to knock a door down, there are really only two possible outcomes: Either it breaks or it doesn't. It probably doesn't matter that you broke it down with grace, elegance and aplomb.

However, with some tasks it's nice to have gradients of success. If you're landing a plane in a storm and you get a really short roll on your Coordination+Pilot skill, your GM may decide that the plane is slightly damaged from the rough landing. Alternately, the height of your Cool+Seduction roll may determine whether you look suave and devastating, or whether you have to really make a fool of yourself to make an impression.

Finally, your GM may set minimum heights for certain tasks. If a door is really, really thick, for example, she may decide that a Body+Brawl match that isn't 5 or higher is insufficient to get through. If an aroma is somewhat subtle, she may decide that your match has to be at least a 2 on your Sense+Smell roll. If a task has this kind of minimum required height, that's called its difficulty. Fittingly, only particularly hard tasks should have a difficulty. A difficulty rating of 2 is for something that's just a bit trickier than usual. A difficulty of 4 is fairly complicated, while a difficulty of 7 or 8 is very difficult indeed (unless the character is going to have more than one try at it.) A difficulty of 10 is almost impossible.

Dynamic Contests

The essential difference between a static contest and a dynamic contest is simply this: In a static contest, you just roll and if you get a matching set that beats the difficulty (if any) you succeed. In a dynamic contest, you aren't just rolling in a vacuum. You're rolling against the other fellow's roll. Nonetheless, dynamic contests don't have to be terribly complicated. Simply put, the highest set wins, and the widest set finishes first.

Now, which is more important depends on the nature of the contest. If it's a foot race, width (that is speed) matters. A racer who won with 4x2 and outran someone who rolled 2x10 might be gasping and spitting up at the end, while the loser has the breath to politely congratulate the winner on his victory. With similar results in a car race, the winner with the wide but short result may have damaged his car, while the loser played it slow and steady and did not (aphorisms aside) win the race.

On the other hand, if time is no object the victor may simply be the contestant with the highest roll. In a chess match, for instance, someone who rolls 2x10 beats the fellow who rolled 4x4. The 4x4 player moved more decisively, but not as wisely.

If none of the competitors rolls a match of any sort, it's up to the GM to decide what that means. It could mean that neither one of them completed the task. They may have to roll again to keep going – if it's something difficult like a race up a slippery mud hill in the rain. On the other hand, if it's a simple task, he may just award the victory to whoever got the single highest result on a die.

Finally, it's possible for dynamic contests to end in a tie. If this happens, again, the GM decides the most appropriate way to resolve it. Maybe he just asks for a re-roll. Maybe the contest is deemed a tie. Or maybe the task is incomplete and the two have to continue competing.

Example: Roy wants information about Lieutenant Murdoch, and tries to get it by bullying Murdoch's girlfriend, Carla. Carla decides she's going to lie to Roy about where Murdoch went. Roy rolls Command+Intimidation to scare her into giving up the goods. Carla rolls Cool+Lie to persuasively fool him.

Roy's dice pool is 5d, while Carla's is 6d. He rolls 1,1,5,6,7 for a result of 2x1. She rolls 2,3,3,4,8,8 for a result of 2x8. She's got him buffaloed and he goes off into a trap believing he's hot on Murdoch's trail. In this case, the width of the rolls just doesn't matter.

Example: Murdoch wants to persuade Admiral Wilkes to move the fleet to Mariana bay, while Roy thinks it would be safer behind Tifol Island. Time is running out. Both of them are talking at once, and both of them roll Command+Leadership.

Roy's dice pool is 6d, while Murdoch's is 5d. Roy gets 1,5,5,5,6,7 for 3x5. Murdoch gets 1,3,4,7,7 for 2x7. While Murdoch's argument is better, Roy gets his point across faster. Maybe the Admiral is in such a hurry that he'll prefer Roy's slick case to Murdoch's well-reasoned argument.

Cooperation

Cooperating on static contests is pretty simple. All the characters involved just combine their dice pools, up to a maximum of 10 dice. You can also do this in dynamic contests if timing doesn't matter.

If the contest is dynamic and time matters, it gets a little more complicated, but not much. The people working together roll separately. If only one gets a set and the other has that number in his pool, he can add it. If both get sets, they use the highest number but the lowest width (because the faster guy has to wait for the slower one to catch up and help him.)

Multiple Actions and Multiple Sets

Astute readers may have noticed that in some examples, the dice pools yield multiple sets. For example, if I roll 5d and get 1,1,1,0,0, then I actually have two sets – 3x1 and 2x10. Which one is the right one to use?

The answer is that I can use whichever I prefer, but I can't use both. If my character is running a race, I'm going to pick 3x1. If it's something where quality is more important than speed, I'll pick the tens.

The only exception to this is when a player wants to do two things at the same time. Suppose I want to drive a car past someone and shoot him from the driver's side window? Or suppose I want to climb an exposed wall while staying out of sight?

These are difficult and unlikely stunts: Be aware that they're almost impossible to do if your character doesn't have (1) a really big dice pool or (2) Talent powers that make it easier. With that in mind, here's how you do two things at once.

You figure out the dice pools for both tasks. If I'm driving and shooting, the two pools are Coordination+Drive and Coordination+Pistol. I'll be rolling the smaller of the two pools. Furthermore, I roll one die less than I normally would (because, after all, my attention is divided.) Then, if I get two sets, I can assign one set to each task.

> ***Example:*** Arnie has to get out of the compound before his bomb goes off. Unfortunately, if he's spotted heading across the courtyard, the guards will probably mow him down with machinegun fire. So he needs to run across the courtyard, fast but quietly. His Body+Running dice pool is 6, while his Coordination+Stealth pool is 8. The pool for running is the lower one, so he rolls that – with a 1 die penalty. He rolls his five dice, hoping to somehow get two matches. As it happens though, he gets 2,7,7,8,9 – one pair, but no more. He decides to allocate that match to the Stealth contest. The GM decides that Arnie saw a spotlight coming and dove out of the way. He hasn't been spotted, but he didn't get a chance to cross the courtyard.

If Arnie had been blessed with absurdly high dice pools – say, 9 dice in each – he would have had a much better chance. Rolling 8 dice (with the 1 die penalty, remember) he could get 4,6,6,6,7,9,0,0 – giving him two sets. With 3x6 he's across the courtyard in two rounds, and with the 2x10, he does it unseen and unheard.

If your character gets an exceptionally wide single success – meaning four dice or more turn up the same – he can split that into two successes. In Arnie's case, if he'd gotten a 5x1 result, he could have made it into a 3x1 and a 2x1 to succeed (barely) at both tasks.

It's possible to try to do three things at once as well. The same mechanics apply: Figure out the lowest die pool, use that, and take a penalty. But the penalty isn't just one die: It's one die per extra task. The standard "doing two things at once" penalty is a single die because I'm trying to do one extra thing. If I try to do three things at once, that's two extra actions. My die pool is reduced by two dice. If I was crazy enough to try to do four things at once, there is no possible way I can succeed – Even if my dice pools for all the tasks were 10 (the maximum possible,) the three die penalty would make it impossible to get four sets.

Finally, it's impossible to do static tasks at the same time if they're done on different time scales. For example, fixing a jeep (done on the scale of hours) and field stripping a rifle (done on the scale of minutes.) You can't combine them; because the most time you could need to strip the rifle (five minutes) is insignificant compared to the least time it'll take you to fix the jeep (one hour.)

(I know that sounds very technical and fussy. I can't think of any reason you'd want to do two static tasks with different time scales simultaneously, but I'm sure someone will. Nonetheless, the benefits of permitting a very specialized application of a rule that's already specialized are pretty limited. Doing the quick one first is much simpler.)

Combat

Combat is complicated and dangerous. In World War II, combat is prevalent all over the place. (At least, it is all over the places PCs are likely to be.) Therefore, there are a few refinements to the rules that come into play specifically when people are trying very hard to hurt one another.

One issue to get out of the way is the question of time. Violence happens very, very quickly. If you've ever been in a wrestling match, you know that five minutes feels like eternity. Gunfights, being that much quicker and deadlier, are proportionately faster.

To simulate this in a way that gives you a chance to make some decisions, combat in *Godlike* is broken up into combat rounds. There is no given measurement for how long a combat round lasts: It's an abstraction. It's "however long it takes the slowest person in the fight to try one thing." Once everyone involved has tried something, the round is over and it's time to do something else.

Combat Round Breakdown

Each combat round is broken down into three phases, the declaration, roll and resolution phases. In order, here's what those mean.

1) Declare

Each person in the fight describes his character's action. The person with the lowest Sense score has to say what he's doing first. This is because people with higher Sense scores are more aware of what's going on in the fight and are better able to respond to what's going on around them. (I personally recommend that the players sit around the table in order, from lowest Sense to highest so that they can just go around in order with the GM interrupting when NPCs are acting.) If two people have the same Sense score, the NPC declares first. If two PCs have the same Sense score, use the Sight skill as a tiebreaker. Or just roll for it.

When you're declaring what you want to do in combat, make it short and specific. This doesn't mean you can't make it dramatic. "I bayonet the guard" is the same action as "I'm going to gouge that bastard in the guts!" but one is a little more engaging. If you're doing something

special – dodging, doing two things at once, making a called shot, helping someone else with what they're doing – say so now.

2) Roll

Everyone rolls the appropriate dice pool–usually Coordination+Pistol or Rifle, Coordination+Dodge or Strength+Brawl.

3) Resolve

The widest result gets resolved first. If two sets are equally wide, the tallest goes first.

When an attack hits, it immediately does damage. Anyone suffering damage in combat loses a die out of his highest set! (Why? Because being stabbed or shot is very, very distracting.) If someone's highest set is only a pair, that action is effectively foiled by the loss of a single die, (unless, of course, he's got a second set as a backup.)

If you're making a dodge roll, it only works on attacks that are narrower than the dodge roll. After all, if the attack is wider, it happened before you had a chance to react.

Attacks do damage, depending on several factors. Dodges avoid damage. Since both of these are important, they get their own headings. But by and large, that's all there is to a combat round. Everyone says what they're doing, they roll, the widest sets go first, and then the whole thing starts over.

Damage

So far, the system is fairly simple. You roll a bunch of dice and look for matches. If you get matches, that's good. More matches and higher numbers are better.

The damage system adds a little sophistication to this, but not too much. Damage in *Godlike* is pretty specific. When you are hit, you'll know exactly where and how much it stings.

Types of Damage

There is a world of difference between being punched in the gut and being stabbed there. A punch aches, it bruises, but unless you are severely pummeled for a long time, it's unlikely that you're going to suffer any severe harm. Being stabbed (or worse, shot) is entirely different. Your internal organs are being re-arranged and exposed to all kinds of germs, viruses and pollutants. Damage that penetrates the skin is serious.

Therefore, in *Godlike* there are two types of damage: shock damage and killing damage. Shock damage shakes you up and can be very dangerous in the short term, but you can shake it off fairly easily. Killing damage is just what it sounds like: Damage that can end your life.

On your character sheet, you'll see a silhouette of a human form with a bunch of boxes on its arms, legs, torso and head. Each box represents a hit point. If you get hit in the arm for two points of damage, you mark off two boxes. If those two points of damage are shock, you just put a single diagonal line through the boxes. If they're killing damage, you put two lines in an X. It's important to know what kind of damage you've taken, because killing damage is so much slower to heal and so much more dangerous.

When your head fills with shock damage, you pass out. When your torso fills with shock damage, your Body and Coordination are both effectively reduced by 4 for the purposes of making rolls. (This effect cannot drop either stat below 1.) When a limb is filled with shock damage, you can't use it until it recovers.

> ***Example:*** Bruce has Body 8 and Brawl 2. Normally he rolls 10d when he's trying to hit someone. When his torso is filled with shock damage, his Body becomes 4 for the purposes of rolling dice. He doesn't lose his extra wound boxes, he still does lethal damage if he hits, and he can still lift a ton without a roll. However, if he tries to hit someone or lift something in his Tested Lift range, he only rolls 6d.

It is possible for shock damage to get converted to killing damage. Once all the boxes in a limb are filled up (either with all shock damage, or with a mixture) any further shock damage to that limb becomes killing damage.

> ***Example:*** Rocco and Lance have been beating on one another. Rocco has managed to fill up all five boxes on Lance's left arm with shock damage. Lance can't use his left arm for the rest of this fight. Rocco rolls another Strength+Brawl and gets a result of 2x6 – two more points of shock to the left arm. But because that arm is so bruised and weakened, those two points become killing damage. If he hits that arm again, those points will become killing damage as well.

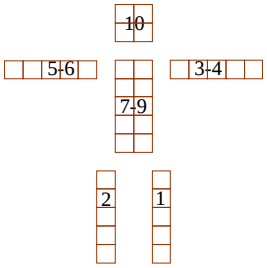
Once a limb is filled up with killing damage, any further damage to that limb goes right into the torso, which is where things get really dangerous.

Damage Location

Given the choice between having someone stomp on my foot and having them stomp on my face, I'll pick the foot every time. The location of an injury matters. Because it matters, that poor little damage silhouette on the character sheet has numbers on each of his limbs. The number rolled on a successful attack indicates where that attack hit. Thus, if you roll a higher number, you're much closer to killing your opponent. The hit results are as follows (the numbers next to them represent how many hit boxes are located in each location on the damage silhouette):

Damage Location Table

Roll	Hit Location
1	Left leg (5)
2	Right leg (5)
3-4	Left arm (5)
5-6	Right arm (5)
7-9	Torso (10)
10	Head (4)



Once all the boxes in either a character's head or torso are filled up with killing damage, that character is dead. It doesn't matter if he still has a bunch in his arms and legs; they're no good without guts and brains. Once all the boxes in the head are filled with shock damage, the character is unconscious.

If all the boxes on a character's limb are filled with killing damage, two things happen.

- That limb is seriously damaged and will never, ever be as good again. Depending on how merciless your GM is feeling (and on where the damage came from) the limb might be all the way off. On the other hand, it might just lose a wound box permanently and be a little stiff when the rain is coming.

- Much more important – any more damage that goes to that hit location goes straight into the torso. If you want to be bloody-minded about it, you can think of your arms and legs as armor that protect your lungs, heart and spinal cord.

Getting Better

Damage is nasty stuff, so you're naturally wondering how you can get rid of it. If it's shock damage, it's pretty easy. At the end of a fight, half the shock damage taken during that particular combat just evaporates.

You can also heal shock damage with long-term rest and relaxation. Every game day after a good night's rest, you can make a Body+Health roll. If it succeeds, you shake off a number of shock damage points equal to the width of the roll.

Example: After falling down a flight of stairs, Brian has two points of shock damage on every limb – each arm and leg, his head and his torso. After he gets up, catches his breath and shakes himself off, he recovers one point on each. The next day he rolls his 5d Body+Health pool. He gets 2x5 as his result. This means he can erase two points of damage - just enough to get his head and torso back to normal.

Example: Barney is hit in the arm with a baseball bat and takes four points of shock damage. After the fight, two of those points vanish. The next day he rolls his 4d Body+Health pool and gets no matches, so his arm stays bruised and sore. The day after that he rolls again and gets 3x1. He can erase another three points of shock damage, more than enough to return his arm to full function.

Killing damage takes considerably longer to heal. It can only be healed by a long recuperation or by medical attention. "Medical attention" means an operation in a hospital, not your buddy putting on a splint and making a Brains+First Aid roll.

Every time a character gets an operation or real medical treatment, the doctor rolls Brains+Medicine. The width of the roll determines the length of the operation, as usual. The

height of the roll determines how many points of killing damage are converted to shock damage within a given limb.

> ***Example:*** Scotty has three points of killing damage in his broken left leg and five points of killing damage from shrapnel in his torso. The doctor decides the shrapnel is more dangerous and decides to go after that. He has 6d in his Brains+Medicine die pool, and his outcome is 2x5. So, after a three-hour operation, all the damage in the torso is now shock damage. However, the leg is still badly hurt, because it hasn't really been treated.

One point of killing damage is turned into a point of shock damage per week of complete rest.

Getting Worse

Some injuries slowly get better until there's nothing but a scar and a bitter memory. Others get worse until there's nothing but a dead soldier and a telegram home. The difference is often made by immediate treatment - not extensive surgery and therapy, but immediate action to control shock and staunch the flow of blood.

To simulate this in *Godlike*, injuries have a chance of becoming much more dangerous if they are not successfully treated with the First Aid skill. Specifically, a player must make a Brains+First Aid attempt within fifteen minutes of the injury. If the injury is to an arm or leg, any match is sufficient to keep it from worsening. Rolls to stabilize head and torso injuries are made at difficulty 3.

A character with an unstable injury cannot make daily Body+Health rolls to recover shock damage. Furthermore, he takes an additional level of shock damage to the affected limb every day.

For simplicity's sake, only one injury at a time can be unstable.

Using this rule can add a real sense of urgency and helplessness to *Godlike*. Imagine a group of powerful Talents behind enemy lines, trying exfiltrate one of their number back to an Allied hospital as his condition slowly degenerates…

Dying

Any time a character's head or torso is completely filled with killing damage, that character is dead. No Medicine or First Aid rolls can avert this. Once that final box is filled in, that's it.

Gunfire

The nasty thing about having someone shoot at you is that, once the bullet's in flight, there's not much you can do about it. Bullets are fast: People are slow. Consequently, the first clue many soldiers get that they're being shot at is the sensation of high-velocity lead plowing a furrow through their flesh.

To represent this unpleasant reality, shooting a gun in *Godlike* is a static contest. The guy you're shooting at has no way to interfere with your attack (unless he sees you and starts toward cover before you fire.) Simply make that Coordination+Rifle (or Pistol) roll and, if you get a match, you hit your target.

If you've already read the Damage section, you know that the height of your roll determines the location of the hit. Roll a set of ones and you hit the other fellow in the leg. Roll tens and you put it in his head. The width of the roll determines how many boxes get checked off.

By and large, that's how it works. However, in order to keep every fight from stagnating into endless repetitions of "I shoot him. I shoot him. I shoot him," we're providing some tactical options that change your chances and results a little bit. These actions must be decided during the declaration phase of combat. You can't roll and then decide you want to make a called shot.

Aiming

This is a very common action: By taking your time and sighting carefully, you improve your chances of hitting. To represent this in the mechanics, for every combat round you spend squinting down the barrel and muttering, "Die, you Nazi bastard," you can add one die to your pool. You cannot take any other action while aiming, and you cannot add more than two dice in this fashion.

Called Shots

The default roll assumes a shot at the center of mass, that is, the torso. However, what happens if you want to shoot someone in the leg?

This is known as a called shot. Because it's trickier than an ordinary shot, you have to take one die out of your pool before you roll. Then take one of the dice that remains and set it to the number you want. If you're aiming for his right arm, set it to a five or a six. If you're headhunting, set it to ten.

> ***Example:*** Roderick can only see the face of the Italian soldier in the trench across from him, so he sights on that target. Normally his Coordination+Rifle pool is 6d, but because he's making a called shot, he reduces that to 5d. He then sets one die aside and sets it to "10," the hit location he's hoping for. He rolls the remaining 4d and gets 1,4,6,7. No match: He misses. If one of those four dice had come up 10, however, it would have formed a match with the die he set aside, for a result of 2x10.
>
> ***Example:*** Doris the resistance fighter sees a known traitor to the cause running away from her safe house. She wants to interrogate him before killing him, so she aims for his leg. Her normal pool is 5d. She reduces this to 4d for the called shot, and sets one die to 2. She rolls the three remaining dice and gets all 7's, accidentally putting the bullet in the quisling's torso instead. On the plus side, he does stop running.

Multiple Shots

Sometimes you want to fire more than one shot at someone (or at more than one person.) This is simply handled by the multiple action rules (see **Multiple Actions** on page 8.) You drop a die out of your Coordination+Pistol or Rifle roll and hope to get two sets.

You cannot combine this trick with aiming or with a called shot. If you spend a turn aiming and decide to take a multiple shot the next turn, the extra die from aiming does not apply.

Cover Fire

Sometimes you just want to use your weapon to communicate something like "It's very dangerous to come any closer!" If you're just sticking your gun out of the foxhole or around a corner and firing blindly, your chances of hitting aren't very good. On the other hand, this is one way you can fire without exposing your head, and you might get lucky.

When you're using cover fire, shoot off at least three bullets and roll only two dice. If they come up as a match, everyone who might get hit by the shells rolls a single die. If any of the potential targets gets the number that came up in your match, he is hit. However, the weapon only does damage as if the result was a width of 1.

> ***Example:*** Rocco lets loose with his pistol (rolling 2d) around a corner at an oncoming German patrol. He gets a 7 and a 7, a match! The seven Germans roll two 2's, a 7, an 8, 1, 4 and a 9. One of the German patrol is hit in the torso for 1 killing and 1 shock point of damage, and the others quickly take cover.

Depending on the circumstances, the GM may demand a Cool+Mental Stability roll for people who want to charge into cover fire.

Cover fire becomes much more serious when you're firing a weapon with the Spray quality (see **Spray** on page 20 for details.) Even firing blind, you can add the weapon's Spray rating to the two Cover Fire dice.

> ***Example:*** This time, Rocco fires a SMG with Spray 3. He rolls 5d and gets two pair - 2x2 and 2x5. Of the seven Germans, two of them roll 2s. The SMG does Width+1 in killing, and width in shock. Each soldier takes 1 killing and 1 shock to a leg.

Range

The default gunshot roll assumes medium range, and because the system is fairly-grainy "medium range" covers a lot, and it differs from pistols to rifles.

- At close range add another die to your pool.
- At medium range your dice pool is unaffected.
- At long range reduce your dice pool by one.
- At anything farther than long range, you have to make a Sense+Sight roll to even have a chance of hitting, and then make an ordinary long range roll.

Moving Targets

Experienced troops under fire (who can't find cover) often zigzag to throw off the enemies' aim. This "serpentine" motion forces the attacker to overcome a Difficulty rating of 3 or miss. This tactic is ineffective against machinegun or submachine gun fire (since so many bullets are being flung downrange, a little zigzagging isn't really going to help.) But it sometimes is a dandy when you're being shot at with a rifle or pistol.

Sniper

Any time you shoot at someone who doesn't know he's being fired on, you can add one die to your die pool in addition to any aiming bonuses you take. It's one of the big bonuses of shooting at someone who isn't screaming, dodging, running around or firing back.

Hand-to-Hand

Rolling around in the mud with someone who wants you dead is a lot more confusing than calmly drilling him from a hundred yards out with a well-placed gunshot. Hand-to-hand combat is, in its own way, much more dangerous than gunplay.

Mechanically, fighting hand-to-hand (armed or not) is a dynamic contest, with the vague goal being "Get the upper hand in this fight." All the fighters who have declared involvement roll dice. As with all combat, the widest set is resolved first. That person's attack goes off flawlessly. If he does damage his opponent loses a die out of his highest set. The next widest roll goes next, and so forth. This does mean that someone who rolled low can still injure an opponent who rolled higher - as long as his set is wide enough to still be a set after losing a die, or as long as he didn't get hit by the winner. This is a bit different from the usual dynamic contest, but that's why hand-to-hand gets a section of its own.

The dynamics don't change if the person you're attacking is doing something other than fighting hand-to-hand. If he's got a gun and you're unarmed, his action is probably going to be a gunshot at you while you try to grab the gun away. In this case, you'd better hope your attack is wide enough to spoil his shot.

As with firearms, the width of the roll determines how many levels of damage hand-to-hand attacks inflict, while the height determines location.

> ***Example:*** Armando and Veronica are ganging up on Guillame. No one has a weapon. Everyone's rolling Body+Brawl. Guillame rolls 6d, while Armando and Veronica both roll 4d. Guillame rolls 2,4,5,6,8, 10 - no set, he misses. Armando rolls 1,1,2,6 for a result of 2x1, while Veronica gets 2,5,0,0 for 2x10. Their rolls are equally wide, so her blow to poor Guillame's head gets resolved first (since it was a tie, height was the tie-breaker.) He takes two levels of shock damage. While Guillame is distracted, Armando closes in and stomps his foot for two levels of shock damage.

Called Shots

A called shot - that is, trying to hit one specific part of the body - is handled just as it is with firearms. Throw one die away from your die pool, set another one to the hit location you're hoping for, and roll the remaining dice. Thus, if your die pool is 4d, you only actually roll two dice - one gets lost in the aiming and one gets set to your chosen location.

Knockouts

To knock someone out, just use called shots (see above) to the head. Once his head fills with shock damage, the target's unconscious. But be careful, if the head fills with killing damage, that's it, the target is dead.

Multiple Attacks

Attacking more than one person is done just like any multiple action (see **Multiple Actions** on page 8.) Reduce your Body+Brawl pool by 1 and hope you get two sets.

Strangling

Smothering, choking and drowning are all pretty much the same thing: Someone can't breathe until he passes out and (often) dies. The cause of death is lack of oxygen. If your character tries to choke someone with his bare hands, do it as a called shot to the head. If you succeed, you only do a single point of shock damage. However, you continue doing one level of shock damage to the head per round, automatically, until one of the following things happens:

- You declare that you're doing something else.
- You take damage from any source.
- The guy you're choking escapes by beating your Body+Brawl roll.

Unlike most shock damage, *all* damage from choking comes back at the end of the fight (if you survive, of course.)

That's choking. Strangling is actually different: If something closes off the blood vessels to the brain, unconsciousness and death come on much quicker. It's possible (with training) to strangle someone with your bare hands, but in World War II, not many Westerners had the knack. Since you can get the same effect by using a scarf, a rope or any other handy garrote, not many care to learn.

Thus, if someone tries to strangle with a cord, it works just like a choke, only it does two ranks of shock damage per round.

Pinning

The standard hand-to-hand attack is a punch, kick, stab or slash. Many fights start out with a standing exchange of blows, but end with both people on the ground wrestling.

If you want to take someone down, say you're doing it in your declaration phase. If you succeed, you only do a single point of shock damage to the indicated location, but the person you've knocked down loses a successful die out of his highest match, just as if you'd hit him with killing damage. (After all, it's hard to deliver a strong punch when you're being knocked on your keister.) Furthermore, if you successfully take someone down, that person is pinned until he escapes.

People who are pinned cannot dodge or take cover and cannot attack anyone except the person who pinned them. Furthermore, any hand-to-hand attacks made on a pinned person are made with an extra die in the pool because of their reduced mobility.

A person who is pinned remains pinned until one of three things happens.

- You declare that you're doing something else.
- You get killed or are knocked out.
- The guy you're pinning beats you with a Body+Brawl roll.

While you're pinning someone, you can start choking him with any successful Body+Brawl - not the called shot required when standing.

Disarming

If someone's coming at you with a weapon, you're probably going to want to take the weapon away from him. Good luck. Make a called shot to the arm holding the weapon. If you succeed, you do no damage but you get the weapon away from him.

If the weapon has an edge or a point, take a point of killing damage to whichever limb you're using to disarm. If that seems harsh, remember that there's nothing to grab it by but the pointy bits. Besides, the same thing will happen to the next Nazi who tries to take your bayonet.

Aiming

You cannot aim while making a hand-to-hand attack unless you are attacking a target from surprise and making a called shot. If you do this, you make the regular called shot without any penalty.

> ***Example:*** Marcus wants to strike a German guard in the head. He can only do this if he's sneaking up behind the guard. He has a Body+Brawl dice pool of 6d, places a dice at 10 and rolls a 3, 4, 1, 2 and 10 on the remaining five. Thus, he strikes the guard in the head for 2 points of shock damage. If the guard and Marcus had been in hand-to-hand combat however, he would not have had the leisure to aim, and would have had to make a standard called shot with a 1d penalty.

Dodging

Most people don't like being hit, stabbed or strangled. They therefore dodge when others try to harm them. Here's how "getting the hell out of the way" works in *Godlike.*

There are basically two ways to get clear, though both are handled with a Coordination+Dodge roll. One is when you're trying to dive for cover in general, to protect yourself from long distance attacks. This is explained below, under "Cover." The other way is

when you're trying to avoid a perceptible hand-to-hand attack - something like kick or a tackle or a blow from a club.

During the declaration phase of combat, you indicate that you want to block, duck, dive for cover or otherwise shield yourself from a perceived source of injury. Roll Coordination+Dodge. Width and then height determine who goes first, as always. If an attack roll is wider than your dodge roll, you can't dodge it.

Any matching dice in your pool become "gobble dice." Each gobble die can take a die whose result is equal or lesser out of an attacking set. (This mechanic is also used for defensive applications of certain Talents.)

> ***Example:*** Adam and Mark are engaged in a knife fight, and Adam knows his buddy Steve is breaking down a door to come in and help him. He figures he just needs to keep Mark from gutting him until Steve arrives, and then they can double team. Accordingly, he decides he's going to Dodge while Mark attacks.
>
> Their first combat round, Mark rolls his 6d Body+Brawl, while Adam rolls his 6d Coordination+Dodge. Mark's result is 2x5 - normally a hit. Adam, however, rolls 2x6. Using one of his gobble dice, he reduces Mark's result to 1x5 - a failure.
>
> Next round, Steve bursts through the door but can't attack, and Adam is still dodging. This time Mark's result is 2x9 and Adam gets 2x3. Since their results are equal in width, the taller set goes first - Mark shanks Adam. Ouch.
>
> Now it's Mark's turn to make a 7d Coordination+Dodge roll against Adam and Steve, both of whom have 5d Body+Brawl pools. Adam gets a 3x2 and Steve gets a 2x4, both of which should be solid hits - but Mark rolls well and gets a 3x4. With those three gobble dice, he can take one out of Steve's set (ruining it) and two out of Adam's set (ruining that.) If he'd only had a pair instead of a set, he would have still been able to ruin Steve's set, but Adam would have hit. But Adam's hit would only be two wide instead of three wide, which is still an improvement.

Cover

Instead of ducking an attack, you may choose to dive for cover behind something that's tough enough to stop a bullet - something like a wall, a tank or a car engine. These objects have Heavy Armor qualities (see **Heavy Armor** on page 18.) This is usually the only option for dodging gunfire or explosives, unless you have a Talent power that allows you to see a bullet as it's coming at you, and the speed necessary to dodge it. Normal grunts just leap for cover and hope for the best.

If you take this option, it doesn't do you any good against hand-to-hand attacks, since a fist fighter is already in your face and able to take a swing at you. However, if you get behind cover before someone shoots at you, it can make up for an awful lot of kicks to your shins.

Here's how it works. During the declaration phase, you say you're taking cover - making sure that the GM understands what you're hiding behind and so forth. Then you roll your Coordination+Dodge. The order of action goes off normally. The height of your roll interacts with the quality of your cover to determine how much of you get hidden. As a general rule, the GM can judge this on his own, but some guidelines follow.

Taking Cover Table

Roll	Cover is tiny	Cover is okay	Cover is great
1-3	Hide one limb	Hide three limbs	Hide five limbs
4-7	Hide two limbs	Hide four limbs	Completely hidden
8-10	Hide three limbs	Hide five limbs	Completely hidden

(GMs - You really don't need to bother with consulting this chart in the heat of combat. It's just to give you the idea that a good roll isn't going to save you if all you have to hide behind is a skinny sapling, while even a poor roll is good if you're diving into a fortified trench.)

If you successfully take cover, you can position a number of limbs so that they can't get shot. The number depends on how good you rolled and how good the cover is. If (for example) your cover is good - like the corner of a building - and you roll 3x2 on your Coordination+Dodge roll, you can hide three of your limbs. If you choose to hide your head, torso and left leg, any gunshot that would hit those areas (that is, any set that came up x10, x7-9 or x1) does nothing. However, gunshots that came up x2-6 hits a leg or arm. (The contortions needed to protect the torso while leaving both arms and a leg exposed are left as an exercise for the player and GM.)

The lovely thing about cover is that it protects you for the rest of the combat, until one of three things happens.

- You break cover.
- Someone else attacks you from a different direction (and even then, the cover still protects you from the original direction.)
- The cover itself is destroyed or removed.

If you spend another round hiding (that is, you declare that you're trying to get further protected) you can make another Coordination+Dodge roll. If this roll is better than your first one, you can take that result and hide more limbs. If the roll isn't as good, you can keep the original one.

Once you're covered, you can act (at a distance) from that cover. If you want to shoot, you will have to reveal at least one arm and your head. Same if you want to throw something, unless you're using the cover fire rules (see **Gunfire** on page 12.)

For more on cover, see **Heavy Armor** on page 18.

A Word on Cover

Sometimes you'll be shooting at someone who is hiding, protected or otherwise harder to hit. The full rules for cover are on page 16. under the heading "Cover" but here's a basic breakdown of how it works: If someone is in a ditch or standing behind a waist high wall, shots that would have hit the concealed area hit the cover instead. If someone is shooting at you from a foxhole with only their head and arms showing, your shots at them miss unless the hit location is the head or one of their arms. It's much like making any other static roll with a Difficulty rating, only in this case particular numbers are excluded.

You Still Have To Hit

Even if a weapon has high-level Area quality, it doesn't come into play unless your attack roll is successful. You can throw a grenade at a hundred massed troops and still do no damage if you botch the roll.

This may seem a little counterintuitive at first, but there are good reasons for this rule. First, there's realism. Consider the following:

- Combat is very distracting, making stupid mistakes a lot more common.
- Weapons are not infallible- every factory turns out a few duds.
- Even a grenade does nothing if you forget to pull the pin.

Second, there's play quality. This is a game. If either side has weapons that automatically do damage, regardless of operator error, it loses a lot. Even if it's less historically accurate, there's not a lot of point to a game when the outcome is the same no matter what you do.

Third, there's a mechanical reason. If I know I can do 3 dice of Area damage with a grenade even without a successful roll, the smartest thing I can do is make as many multi-attacks as I can with grenades every combat. Sure, I have no chance of rolling even one match if I take three penalty dice to my four die pool. But if the grenade does automatic damage, I don't need matches. If there's no incentive to do it right, nothing stops me from accepting every penalty I can get, and then throwing the grenade anyway . . .

Armor

There are basically two kinds of armor in World War II. There's light armor - that is, armor light enough that you can pick it up and carry it with you - and there's heavy armor. Heavy armor acts like cover, though many vehicles with heavy armor can move under their own power.

Light armor works in two stages. First, all shock damage taken from an attack is reduced to a single point. Second, a number of points of killing damage equal to the rating of the armor are turned into shock damage.

Example: Verne takes a 3x10 pistol shot to the head. Normally that would be lights out for Verne - 3 levels of killing and 3 levels of shock. But he's wearing a steel helmet rated at Light Armor 2. First off, those three levels of shock are reduced to 1. (It would be the same if he'd taken 2 shock to the head, or 5, or 10.) Next, two of those three killing levels are turned into shock as well. All told, he takes 1 killing and 3 shock - enough to knock him out, but he'll come around pretty quick.

Penetrating weapons (see **Penetration** on page 21.) automatically breach light armor if they hit.

Heavy Armor

Heavy Armor is stuff like thick steel plate. It works very simply: For every point of Heavy Armor, the width of a successful attack is reduced by 1. If you have Heavy Armor 2 protecting every hit location, any attack that has a width of 3 or less simply fails.

Sample Armor Ratings Table

Armor Type	Armor Rating
Infantry Helmet	2 LAR (Head)
Flak Jacket	3 LAR (Torso)
Steel Plate	5 LAR (depends)
1" Wood Wall	1 LAR
6" Wood Wall	1 HAR
Sandbag	1 HAR
1" Concrete Wall	2 HAR
Type 95 Japanese Light Tank	1 to 0 HAR
SdKfz 251 Halftrack	4 to 0 HAR
PzKpfw II Light Tank	3 to 1 HAR
M3 "General Lee" Medium Tank	5 to 1 HAR
Panzer IV Medium Tank	7 to 2 HAR
M36 Jackson Medium Tank	7 to 1 HAR
Cromwell Mk VIII Medium Tank	7 to 2 HAR
T-34 Medium Tank	6 to 1 HAR
Sherman M4 Medium Tank	7 to 3 HAR
Panther V Heavy Tank	7 to 2 HAR
Churchill Mk VIII Heavy Tank	9 to 2 HAR
M4 Sherman "Jumbo"	9 to 4 HAR
J S 2, Josef Stalin Heavy Tank	9 to 6 HAR
King Tiger	10 to 7 HAR

Penetrating weapons counteract Heavy Armor. They reduce Heavy Armor ratings permanently, and are described on page 21.

Murder

All these attack rules make the reasonable assumption that the other fellow doesn't want to get hit and is doing his best to avoid it. There are some times, however, that an individual can't avoid what's coming.

If your GM is doing his job, your PCs should never have to face a situation where they're going to get killed and there's nothing they can do about it. (After all, as the main characters it makes for a bad game if they become helpless and die.) This doesn't mean your characters have ludicrous plot immunity. If you make a forward charge at a Panzer division with your Boy Scout knife, don't expect the GM to put on kid gloves. Similarly, if you pull some blockhead maneuver that delivers you directly into the power of your nemesis, don't be surprised if he drills you in the skull instead of saying "Ach, Captain Torpedo. Only you vill understand ze brilliance of my plan… "

On the other hand, there are going to be situations in which your character has others at his mercy. Could be you're friends with a Talent who can paralyze people. It could be that someone surrendered to you, but you have no safe way to keep him imprisoned. It could be that you got in a lucky shot and knocked the guy out with one punch. He's helpless. Do you want to kill him?

If the answer is "yes," don't bother with any combat rolls. An armed man firing into a motionless body at point blank range does not have a measurable chance of failure. Same thing for a guy with a trench knife, or even a heavy pair of boots.

If you do opt to kill someone in cold blood, however - not in the heat of battle, not as the executioner after a legal trial, but simply because you can and he can't stop you - be aware that you'll have to make a Cool+Mental Stability check. But for more on that, see **Battle Fatigue** on page 32.

Weapons

Every attack uses a weapon. Different weapons do different amounts of damage, as well as different types of damage. (That's the difference between being hit with a sap and being stabbed with a sword.) The categories of weapon are pretty broad: Each weapon lists the type of weapon done (shock, killing or a mix of both) and how much.

The damage location is always based on the height of the roll.

The damage amount is always based on the width of the roll. Usually it's "width+X" where X is some number. If you're striking with a club, for example, it does width+2 damage, and the damage is shock. If you roll 3x5, it does 5 wound points (3 = the width, +2 for the bonus) to your target's right arm.

Following is a list of the standard weapons that do normal damage.

Standard Weapons Table

Attack	Damage
Fists and Feet	Width in shock
Club	Width+2 in shock
Piano Wire	As strangling (see p. 14,) but damage is killing
Small Knife	Width in shock + 1 killing
Trench Knife, Shovel	Width in killing
Bayonet (unfixed)	Width in killing
Bayonet (fixed)	Width+1 in killing
Axe, Spear, Saber	Width+1 in killing
Pistol	Width in killing and in shock
Carbine	Width +1 in killing, width in shock
Submachine gun	Width in killing and shock+Spray Dice
Long Rifle	Width +2 in killing and in shock
Machinegun	Width+2 in killing and in shock+Spray Dice

Weapon Qualities

Some weapons have particular abilities that make them more effective against particular targets. For instance, a hand grenade explodes, making it more dangerous to multiple targets. A machinegun sprays out a stream of lead that can hit an individual many times in a single second. A bangalore torpedo is designed to penetrate armor and remove cover.

Rather than provide separate rules for each and every weapon used in WWII these special abilities are abstracted into five qualities. A weapon's rating in its quality determines how effective it is at its designated task. Many weapons have more than one quality, of course.

Area

Most weapons with the Area quality do extra damage when they hit, and specifically do damage to everyone within a particular area. This is represented by rolling for locations and assigning extra damage. For instance, if a weapon has the quality "Area 3," three extra dice are rolled once the weapon hits. Everyone within 10 yards of the impact zone takes a point of killing damage to each location rolled on those three dice. The person at ground zero - that is, the target for the attack - takes damage as rolled on top of the hits from the Area dice.

In addition, everyone in the area of effect takes two points of shock damage to every hit location.

It should be noted that cover and armor protect normally against Area weapons.

Example: Ron throws a grenade with Area 3 into a trench containing four enemy soldiers. He picks the soldier in the middle and rolls his Body +Throw after aiming for a turn. He rolls five dice and gets 2x5 as a result. The grenade does width+1 in killing and shock to its primary target - 3 killing and 3 shock to the target's right arm. After that, Ron's player rolls three more dice for the Area effect, getting a 1,7,8. This Area effect hits both the target and those surrounding him, so the poor fellow who already took 3 killing and shock damage, now takes 1 killing point of damage to the left leg (the 1,) and 2 points of killing to his torso (the 7 and the 8.)

Ron's grenade also does a point of killing damage to the right legs of all four soldiers, and 2 points to their torsos. On top of all that, they all take two points of shock to every hit location from the concussive force of the explosion.

Burn

Fire based weapons are common in World War II (see page 22. for a description of flamethrowers.) The Burn quality differs from other weapons qualities in that it has no number rating associated with it. Instead, targets hit by the Burn attack are also on fire.

When a Burn weapon strikes, it does its normal damage – which is often quite low, usually a single level of killing damage. However, in addition to that damage, every limb except the head takes a level of shock damage, and all those limbs are also on fire. (If the weapon's attack roll came up 10s, the head is also on fire.) People who are set on fire have to make Cool+Mental Stability rolls to avoid panicking.

Charging a Burn weapon is also very intimidating. GMs may require a Cool+Mental Stability roll to do so.

Burning limbs take one point of shock damage every turn until the fire is out. Most fire-based military weapons use a sticky fuel that is particularly difficult to extinguish. Typically, only full immersion or lack of oxygen will do it. For more information on fire effects, see page 26.

Weapons with both Burn and Area qualities have a different sort of Area effect. Normally Area attacks do a great deal of shock damage and also inflict killing damage on the rolled locations. Area burns are less instantly traumatic: Affected targets only take one point of shock damage to each rolled location. They take no killing damage (unless the affected limb was already full of shock) and they receive no damage at all to areas that don't get rolled. However, those areas that do come up on the Area dice are on fire.

> ***Example:*** Elton's Coordination+Flamethrower pool is 5d and his weapon has Area 2. Four soldiers are charging at him, and he aims for the one in the middle. Rolling 2,3,4,5 and 10, he fails. His GM considers rolling Cool+Mental Stability for the charging Nazis, but decides it would interrupt the flow of the game. However, they do hesitate long enough to give Elton another chance next round.
>
> This time Elton hits the middle Nazi with a pair of eights. That soldier takes a level of killing damage to his torso, and all his hit locations are on fire except his head. Elton now gets to roll his two Area dice. They both come up 3's, indicating a hit to the arm. The other three soldiers now have one arm on fire apiece. Now they all have to make Cool+Mental Stability rolls. Only one of them makes it. That soldier is able to think clearly enough to run back towards a ditch, while the other three panic and fruitlessly scream or swat at the flames.

Spray

Spray weapons are those that fire multiple times, or that have some other factor that makes it easy to aim at many targets. They were built to make extra attacks. Consequently, any multiple attacks (see page 8.) made with a spray weapon take no extra action dice pool penalties. Instead, a number of dice equal to the weapon's spray rating are added to the pool. The extra dice are not added if a single attack is made (that is, you opt to fire one bullet) but they are added if you make multiple attacks against a single target.

> ***Example:*** Holden normally has 4 dice in his Coordination+Rifle pool. Firing a submachine gun with Spray 3, he adds 3 dice, giving him a 7d pool. The weapon does Width+1 in killing and in shock. As three enemy soldiers charge him, he decides to try to mow all of them down. He rolls seven dice, getting 2,2,2,6,7,8,8. He assigns the 3x2 to the first attacker. This does 4 killing and 4 shock to that attacker's right leg, destroying it completely. He then assigns the two 8's to the next attacker, doing 3 killing and 3 shock to that man's torso.

Spray Definitions Table

Rounds Per Minute	Spray Number
300 rpm	1
400 rpm	2
500 rpm	2
600 rpm	3
700 rpm	3
800 rpm	4
900 rpm	4
1000 rpm	5
1200 rpm	5
1500 rpm	6

A weapon's Spray rating can also be added when using **Cover Fire** (see page 13.)

Slow

A weapon that is Slow can only be fired once in a number of rounds equal to its Slow rating, plus one. If you want to fire it, you have to spend a number of actions equal to its Slow rating to prepare it. If the weapon is already prepared, you can fire it on the first action, but after that, it's going to take time to reload (or whatever.) For instance, a bazooka is Slow 3. It can only be fired once every four actions. If your bazooka is already loaded, you can fire it on the first turn of a fight, but after that, it's going to take you three actions of loading before you can fire it again.

Penetration

Penetration weapons are designed to go through Heavy Armor (see page 18.) If a weapon with the Penetration quality hits a target with Heavy Armor, the Heavy Armor is reduced by the Penetration quality of the weapon and the width of the result (to a maximum of double the original Penetration value.)

If a weapon has both Area and Penetration qualities, the Area damage is not applied like Penetration damage. There is no weapon in World War II that penetrates all heavily armored targets within an area of effect. Instead, the Area effect is applied after the Penetration. If the Penetration didn't get through a particular batch of Heavy Armor, the people protected by that Armor aren't hit. People outside the armored enclosure, however, are still hit with the Area damage. So are people inside if the Penetration does get through.

> ***Example:*** Fritz fires a *Panzerschreck* with Penetration 5 and Area 6 at a U.S. Sherman Tank with 7 points of Heavy Armor on the front. His roll (3x7) indicates a hit. The Penetration of the weapon is added to the width of the roll for a total of 8 (which, at a maximum could be up to 10, double the original Penetration value of the weapon, depending on the width,) and the result is removed from the Heavy Armor, eliminating the front armor. The target of the round was the tank itself, so it took the Width damage, but with the armor gone, the crew within is exposed to the six Area dice.

Some penetrating weapons have Area qualities as well. If a Penetration weapon reduces the armor on its target to 0, the Area damage gets through to any people behind the armor.

Area/Penetration Chart

Explosive Type	Charge	Radius	Area/Penetration
Stick of Dynamite	10 g	5 yds	2/0
Volkshangranate 45	36 g	10 yds.	3/2
Mk2 Grenade	93 g	10 yds.	3/2
Einhandgranate 39	112 g	12 yds.	4/2
5cm - *Granatwerfer*	120 g	13 yds.	4/3
Stielhandgranate 24	165 g	15 yds.	4/3
Panzerschreck Round	660 g	17 yds.	6/5
Bazooka Round	702 g	20 yds.	7/5
PIAT Round	741 g	20 yds.	8/6
Panzerfaust Round	800 g	20 yds.	8/7
Tellermine 29	4 Kg	25 yds.	9/9
35 cm Shell	9.24 Kg	25 yds.	10/10

Special Weapons

Machinegun

A machinegun is a weapon of mass destruction designed to stop troops from rushing forward by blanketing them with bullets. Most machineguns fill the air with a 500 to 1000 rounds per minute, cutting down almost everything in their line of fire.

Machineguns are usually fixed weapons, heavy and awkward. For most, unless it's mounted on a vehicle, it's not mobile. Machineguns are Spray weapons (see **Spray**, on page 20. to see exactly what that means.) Most machine guns do Width +2 points of killing and shock damage for each successful hit.

The number of machinegun rounds used each attack is equal to the dice pool rolled. This goes both ways: If a machinegun is low on ammo, it reduces the dice pool. This can even reduce the dice pool beneath the stat+skill rating, because these weapons are usually not designed for single-shot accuracy.

> ***Example:*** Otto opens up on an American soldier, making three attacks with an MG42 machinegun. It has a Spray rating of 6d, which he adds to his 4d Coordination+Machinegun pool for a total of 10d. He rolls 1,2,2,3,4,4,7,7,9 and 10. He has three matches, 2x2, 2x4 and 2x7. Three rounds hit the American, one in the right leg, one in the left arm and one in the torso each for 4 killing and shock in each location. A total of 10 rounds were fired in the attack.
>
> Next round, Otto only has eight rounds left in his machinegun. That means he can't get the full benefit of the Spray 6 rating. Instead, he rolls 8d - the maximum amount allowed by the ammo. If he was down to two rounds, he could only roll two dice, even though this is beneath his Coordination+Machinegun rating.

Submachine Gun

A submachine gun is a smaller and more portable version of the machinegun. When fired fully automatic it is not very accurate.

SMGs have Spray ratings, as described on page 20. Each successful hit does Width +1 points of killing and shock to the hit location.

When on full automatic, the weapon fires a number of bullets equal to the number of dice in the attacker's pool. Note that some submachine guns cannot be fired at less than fully automatic fire. If your SMG is low on ammunition, it may reduce the weapon's Spray rating. (For instance, if you only have five rounds left, you can't use the Spray rating to increase your dice pool above five.) Unlike the heavier machineguns, SMGs don't suffer as much when single rounds are fired. If you're firing a single shot, just roll Coordination+Rifle or Submachine gun. If you're firing multiple rounds, but don't have enough for the full Spray+stat+skill pool, the maximum limit on your die pool is either your stat+skill pool or the number of rounds left in the weapon - whichever is higher.

> ***Example:*** Ronnie's Coordination+Submachine gun pool is 3d. He has a SMG with Spray 3. If the gun is full of bullets, he rolls 6d (Coordination+Submachinegun+Spray.) If his SMG is down to four rounds, his dice pool is down to 4d - still better than his usual die pool, but he's not getting the full Spray benefit. If there are only two rounds, he still rolls 3d - the baseline amount he gets from his stat and skill.

Flamethrower

A flamethrower is rolled like a normal weapon, except that it has a very limited range, and it sets things on fire. Detailed information about being on fire is on page 26. (Quick version: You make a Cool+Mental Stability check or panic. Each burning limb takes a level of shock damage every turn until the fire is out.)

On a successful hit, the target takes a single level of killing damage to the indicated area. In addition, however, every limb on the target is on fire, except for the head. (Realistically, the head should be on fire too, but in the interest of game balance, the head is excluded.)

Some flamethrowers also have an Area rating because they throw a fan of flame instead of a jet. These Area dice work a little differently than the standard Area die. They only do a single point of shock damage to each indicated hit location, but those locations catch fire on every soldier struck.

The flamethrower is an effective "terror weapon" as well. Those troops facing an enemy flamethrower in combat must make a Cool+Mental Stability roll or break and run for cover.

Repeated hits from a flamethrower do not accelerate the burning process. It does an additional level of killing damage, but it's not possible to set the same limb on fire "twice."

There is one very big drawback to using a flamethrower, however. It is extremely dangerous when your fuel tank gets hit. If you're wearing a flamethrower and you take a hit to location 9 – not just any torso hit, but specifically 9 – your tank has been hit and blows up. If this happens, you take a point of killing damage to your torso (in addition to whatever other damage you took from the enemy hit) and every hit location is on fire, including your head. Furthermore, 3 Area dice are rolled to set people around you on fire.

It is possible to make called shots to flamethrower canisters.

Grenades

A grenade is an explosive anti-personnel weapon. Although there are significant cosmetic differences between Allied and Axis grenades, they are effectively the same thing- an explosive charge covered in a steel shell which becomes shrapnel when detonated.

To keep things simple, Grenades go off one combat round after they're thrown, with the width of their roll determining the timing of the explosion in that round. When attacked by an enemy grenade, in that intervening round before it explodes, you can attempt one of four things:

1) You can kick the grenade away: With a successful roll against a Coordination stat, you can kick a grenade away. If you succeed in beating the width of the detonation with your Coordination roll, you kick it clear and take none of the main damage or Area damage from the grenade attack. In the case of a tie, or if you fail, you take the full brunt of the explosion. Shock damage, however, occurs normally, no matter what. Notably, this move requires a large open space, in a foxhole or other tight quarters, kicking a grenade will do you no good.

> ***Example:*** An *SS* man heaves a "potato masher" grenade into Orvis' vicinity with a roll of 6, 6, 1, 2, 9 and a 1. No one else sees it, so Orvis tries to give it a kick. He rolls 4d for his Coordination and gets a 5, 5, 5 and a 3. Since Orvis' roll has a width of 3, and the *SS* man's attack is the width of 2, in the next round Orvis kicks the grenade away before it goes off (since a 3 beats a 2.) However, he still takes 2 points of shock damage to every hit location when the grenade detonates the next round.

2) You can pick the grenade up and throw it back: This is a multiple action. Drop a die (unless you have an appropriate Hyperstat or Hyperskill,) roll your Coordination pool and look for two sets. Succeed at both sets and you pick the grenade up and throw it back at your attacker. If the width of either is smaller or equal to the width of the attack however, the grenade goes off while you're still fumbling with it.

> ***Example:*** A U.S. soldier throws a "pineapple grenade" into Klaus' foxhole with a roll of 6, 6, 6, 5, 1, and 10. Klaus tries to grab it off the ground and throw it back out with his Coordination of 5d. He drops 1d and luckily, rolls a 10, 10, 5 and a 5. Klaus assigns the 10's to the throw, and the 5's to the pick up, but the U.S. soldier's roll is wider, so the grenade goes off first in the next round. The Area dice are rolled and Klaus takes 7 points of killing damage and 4 points of shock to his right arm (4 for the width of the roll, 3 for the Area dice,) in addition, he takes 2 shock to every hit location.
>
> Klaus' arm is blown clear off. In addition, 2 killing and 4 shock points of damage are transferred to his torso, since his arm is completely filled with damage.

3) You can catch it in mid-air and throw it back: This daring move actually happened a lot during the war. To attempt it, you must be able to clearly see the grenade as it comes in (in other words, it doesn't work at night, or in other sight-obscuring conditions.) This is another multiple action, but if you succeed, it gains you a little time (since you don't have to fumble on the ground for the grenade,) so you don't drop a die out of your set. Roll your full Coordination pool and look for two sets. Assign one to the catch and the throw. Make sure the throw result is wider than the initial grenade attack otherwise; take all the grenade damage to your right or left arm as it goes off in your hand.

> ***Example:*** A *Heer* soldier hurls a grenade at Boris with a roll of 6, 5, 5, 3, 4 and 3. Boris wants to catch it in mid-air and throw it back. Boris rolls his Coordination of 5d and gets a 9, 9, 9, 3 and a 3. He assigns the 2x3 to the catch and the 3x9 to the throw, so he catches the grenade in mid-air and throws it back. Since his throw width of 3 beats the width of the initial attack of 2, he throws the grenade back at the *Heer* soldier, where it blows up, inflicting normal damage.

4) Your can dive on it: This is the truly heroic option. Unless you have a Talent power that will protect you from the brunt of the attack, you are pretty much doomed after a move like this. You don't even need to make a roll to do this, if you want to dive on a grenade, you do it, but take all the grenade damage to your torso (the 2 points of shock damage to each hit location usually caused by a grenade is focused on your torso as well for a total of 10 points of shock.) No one else present takes any damage.

> ***Example:*** Paul sees a "potato masher" land amidst his men gathered in a trench. There's nowhere to kick it, no time to find it and throw it, so Paul leaps on it, to save the rest of the

men. It goes off the next round causing 7 points of killing and 14 points of shock to Paul's torso, killing him instantly. The rest of the men in the trench however, are saved.

The average soldier can throw an average fragmentation grenade about 30 yards. For every Body point above 2, add 20 yards to that number with a successful Body roll.

Example: Peter wants to throw a grenade as far as he can. His Body is 2hd+7d. 9d is 7 more than 2, so he can throw it an extra 140 yards. Peter can throw the grenade about 160 yards (300 feet.)

Throwing Rocks or Debris

Throwing a rock or debris at someone requires a Body+Throw roll and it does width in shock damage. No big deal. However, when somebody strong enough to lift a tank throws a cinderblock at you, it suddenly becomes a lot more of a problem. To avoid a mess of calculation based on the weight of the object and its distance, *Godlike* uses a quick fix: The damage from a big missile equals either the width of the roll or half the thrower's Body (rounded down) in shock damage to the hit location rolled. Furthermore, if the thrower has Body 6+, such throw attacks do killing and shock instead of just shock damage.

Other Sources of Harm

In *Godlike*, if the bullets and mines don't get you, the frostbite, car wrecks or other untoward events probably will. Various terrible things that can happen to your character are covered in detail below.

Electrocution

Electrical hazards have a dice pool representing how dangerous they are, rated on a scale of 1-10. This goes from a nine-volt battery (1 die) to a thunderbolt (10 dice.) When a PC is zapped, just roll the electric pool as a static contest. If a match comes up, the PC takes shock damage equal to the width of the roll. However, the hit location is not determined by the height of the roll, but rather by the circumstances. If the PC is poking at wires with a stick, the shock starts in his arm. If he's hit by lightning, it either starts in his head or in the highest point of his body. (If he's lucky, he had a hand raised.)

Electric damage doesn't stay in one place, though. Specifically, it starts wherever it made contact, and then goes to the ground through the shortest route. So, if you grab both ends of a live wire with one hand, you only take damage in that one arm. But if you grab an end in each hand, the jolt travels from one hand, up the arm, through the torso, and out the other arm, doing the same damage to all three locations. If you only grab one end, the juice goes down the arm, through the torso, and out the closest leg. If you are hit by lightning, it goes straight down your head, through your torso and out one or both legs. (This is why lightning victims sometimes have their shoes blown off.)

That's what happens with a one-time shock, like a bolt of lightning or sticking your finger in a light socket to blow the circuit breaker. It does damage, you go "Ouch!" and that's it. But what if it's a steady current? That's a bit nastier. In that case, you have to make a static Body roll to let go. If the roll fails, your muscles have locked shut on the current source and you get juiced again - meaning, the GM rolls the electric die pool again. This is repeated until (1) you make your Body roll, or (2) someone knocks you free or (3) you die and there's no point rolling damage any more.

What's more, if you're soaking wet, the electric pool has one of its dice turned into a wiggle die (see **Wiggle Dice** on page 30 for details.)

Example: Jane is running through the rain when she gets hit by lightning. The GM figures it was a 7d bolt, so he rolls 6d and keeps one as a wiggle die because Jane is drenched. He rolls 2, 4, 5, 3, 2 and 3. He's got two pair, and it doesn't really matter which he picks: He can add the wiggle die to get a result 3 wide. Jane takes 3 points of shock to her head, 3 to her torso and three to one leg.

Example: Renard gets thrown into a mass of high voltage wires in the middle of an electrical plant. It's a 10d hazard. The first round the GM rolls and gets 1, 2, 4, 4, 6, 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10 - not a bad roll for ten dice, the best pair is a measly 2x6. However, because he's completely entangled, the GM decides he takes the damage to every location except his head. Renard rolls his 3 Body to try to let go and doesn't get a match. Next round, he's stuck twitching in the wires and the GM rolls again. This time it's 1, 2, 3, 3, 5, 6, 7, 7, 7 and 10 - three levels of shock to every location. Lucky for him, one of his buddies knocks him out of the wires with a broom, so he gets by with just five shock to every location except his head.

Falling

Any time you fall more than five feet, there's a chance of injury. The type of damage depends on what you hit. The degree of damage depends on your height. The location of the damage depends on how well you control your fall.

You take only shock damage if you land on something forgiving – soft ground, water, or an awning. You also take shock damage if something breaks your fall on the way down. (People have survived falling out of airplanes by crashing through pine branches and landing on snow.) If you land on hard-packed earth, rocks, metal or cement, you take killing damage.

For every ten feet fallen, you take a point of damage to each relevant area.

While falling, you may make one Coordination roll. (If you have a rare skill that relates specifically to falling, absorbing impact, or controlling your body in midair, you may add that skill. Relevant skills would be Jujitsu (virtually unknown in the West before the 1950s,) Acrobatics, Parachuting, Diving and the like.) If that roll succeeds, you land well and take damage only to your legs. If that roll fails, you land badly and take damage to every hit location.

> ***Example:*** Gretta jumps out a second-story window, trying to leap into an open window across the alley. She misses and falls fifteen feet to the cobblestones below. She rolls her Coordination (3d) and gets 1,7 and 9 – no match. She falls badly, taking damage to every location. Since she landed on stone, it's killing damage. But since it's a short fall – under twenty feet – it's only one point to each location. She's badly bruised, but she can get up and run away.
>
> ***Example:*** Ryan throws Aki off a cliff into the deep water sixty feet below. Aki, being an officer with samurai lineage, has studied Jujitsu and knows how to take a fall properly. He rolls Coordination+Jujitsu and gets a pair of 2s. He lands well, taking damage only to his legs. Landing in water is only shock damage. Still, sixty feet is a long fall – Aki takes six points of shock to each leg.

The exception to these rules is, of course, using a parachute. Parachutes are only effective on falls of 1000 feet or farther. With a successful Coordination+Parachute roll, a paratrooper only takes a point of shock to each leg, no matter how far he fell. Even if the roll fails, the fall is treated as if it was a twenty-foot fall.

Drowning

Drowning is what happens when you run out of air underwater or in some other airless environment. A character can hold his breath for a number of minutes equal to his Body divided by 2 (rounded down.) After that grace period, the character must roll Body+Endurance each round to keep from inhaling water.

Each combat round after the first roll, the character loses a die from his Body+Endurance dice pool. When his dice pool drops to 1 or he can't make a match, he inhales water and starts dying.

Each round of drowning inflicts 1 killing point of damage to the torso and 1 point of shock to the head. When the head is filled with shock damage, the subject is unconscious, and when the head fills with killing damage, the subject is dead.

Cold

In most cases, extended exposure without any access to a heated environment is lethal. Wetness only compounds the problem.

You have a grace period equal to your Body in days if you're in reasonable (but cold) shelter. The Body grace period drops to hours if you're well dressed but out in the open. If you're not wearing cold-weather gear and in you're in subzero temperatures, the Body grace period drops to minutes.

After the grace period runs out, you start taking shock damage to your arms and legs - one point per limb every five minutes. When your arms and legs are filled with shock damage, you start taking shock damage to your torso and head as well, the same amount at the same rate. Your arms and legs continue to fill with damage, but it's now (of course) killing damage. Once this chill gives you two or more points of killing damage in a limb, there's a chance of gangrene. When your character gets two points of killing cold damage in a limb, make a Body+Health roll. If it succeeds, you're just hurt. If it fails, the limb has to come off eventually, or it will kill you. Make this roll every time you take another frost-based killing point to your limbs. (You don't need to roll it for every point on each limb, however: after a certain point you'll be making these rolls every five minutes.)

If the temperatures are extremely cold - forty below or worse - you take this damage every minute instead of every five minutes. This accelerated rate is also used if you've gotten soaked and don't have a chance to dry yourself before your clothes can freeze.

That's not all: For every night you spend in a subzero environment without the chance to heat up, you lose half your Will.

> ***Example:*** Johan is at Stalingrad in the winter of '43. He has a Body of 3, so he can spend three days in freezing conditions with cover, or three hours without cover before considering all the nastiness of damage. When that time is up, however, Johan starts to freeze, and fast. Every five minutes he takes a point of shock damage to each arm and leg. He's has about a half an hour to get some warmth before his legs are filled with shock. If he can't do it, he starts taking killing damage to his limbs from frostbite - one point of it every five minutes. After ten minutes of that, he has to start making Body+Health rolls every five minutes to avoid gangrene. Meanwhile, his torso and head begin to freeze. He has twenty minutes before he passes out (five minutes times the four damage boxes in his head.) After that, it's another twenty minutes before he's dead.
>
> ***Example:*** Wilhelm has been exposed past his Body limit to an arctic snowstorm with no cover in sight. The GM decides that this situation is grave enough that Wilhelm takes damage every minute instead of every five minutes. In about ten minutes, he falls unconscious - six minutes to fill the legs with shock, and four minutes for the head. Four minutes after that he's dead, when his head takes four more shock - which are converted to killing damage.

Fire

If a limb catches on fire, that limb takes a point of shock damage every round. Once a limb has filled up with killing damage, the flame spreads to the torso. If it matters, once the torso fills with flame-induced killing damage, the fire spreads to every other hit location.

Fire incites panic, and burning people have to make a Cool+Mental Stability roll in order to avoid panic. If you fail, you fruitlessly swat the flames, spreading them to other hit locations at the rate of one every round until you succeed at a Cool+Mental Stability roll.

If you're on fire and you make your Cool+Mental Stability roll, you're almost certainly going to make dousing it your top priority. If there's a sufficient quantity of water nearby, you don't need to roll. During the declare phase, you simply state that you're putting out the fire. If it's imperative to know the timing, make a Coordination+Dodge roll and treat it like you're diving for cover. (If the water is at the bottom of a ditch, you might well get some cover in the process.)

If there's no water, you can also extinguish flames by rolling on the ground. This is less certain than using water: Make a Coordination+Dodge roll. If it fails, the flames remain. If it succeeds, the fire goes out.

Regardless of which technique you use, the fire on all hit locations is doused in a single action. It doesn't matter if one arm is on fire, or your whole body: Dropping and rolling puts it all out–if you make the appropriate roll.

If your head catches on fire, you're in real trouble. Not only are you in danger of dying in eight turns, even if you survive, you're effectively blind for the next five minutes.

Flamethrowers use particularly sticky fuel, which makes their flames harder to douse. Often, if you are hit by a flamethrower, simply dumping water on it won't work. Neither will rolling on the ground, unless it's extremely muddy. Only submersion or a complete lack of oxygen can put out sticky fuel (treat this as a difficulty rating of 4, for the purposes of extinguishing the flames.)

Car Wrecks and Other Crashes

How fast were you going when you hit? This is the most important factor in determining the effect of a crash. Other things matter as well of course. Were you secured into your seat? Did you know you were going to crash and have time to brace yourself before you hit?

Wrecks are a dynamic contest between your Body +Endurance and a difficulty number. Overcome the difficulty number, and you survive the crash, more or less.

Start With a Base Difficulty number:
Boat Wrecks: Base Difficulty Number 3
Car Wrecks: Base Difficulty Number 3
Plane Wrecks: Base Difficulty Number 5

First add 1 to the Difficulty number:

- For every 10 mph over 20 mph you were traveling.
- If you were on a dirt road.

- If you have no driving skill appropriate to the vehicle.
- If your vehicle was damaged in combat.
- If you had no restraining device to keep you in the vehicle.

Note: The maximum difficulty number possible is 10. All additional modifiers past 10 are discarded.

Then Subtract 1 from the Difficulty number if:

- If you have a moment to prepare for the crash.
- If you have a skill in excess of 2 for the vehicle you are crashing.
- If you are a passenger, or are secured in the back of the vehicle.

If you fail the roll, every hit location on your body is filled with shock damage. In addition, you take the difficulty number of the crash in shock damage to the hit location that matches the difficulty number.

If you make the roll, you take twice the difficulty of the crash in shock damage. You may spread this around hit locations as you wish.

> ***Example:*** Claude's Spitfire is auguring in. The base difficulty number for a plane crash is 5. Claude has managed to slow down his airspeed to 150 mph, which is 130 mph more than 20 mph, giving him a 10 max difficulty number (if totals above 10 were counted, he would have had an 18, but since everything past 10 is discarded, it's just a 10.) Claude is then able to subtract 2 from that difficulty number since he has a moment to prepare and he has a skill in excess of 2 for the vehicle. So his difficulty number is 8. Claude rolls his 3d of Body and gets a 4, 4 and a 1, a 2x4. Since Claude failed to overcome the difficulty number, every hit location fills with shock. He also takes eight more points of shock to hit location 8 – his torso. Since his torso is already full of shock, this becomes killing damage. Claude is bleeding, unconscious and near death: Only two more points of shock to his torso are needed to kill him.
>
> ***Example:*** Luke is bringing his bomber in on a wing and a prayer. The base difficulty for a plane crash is 5. The bomber is traveling at 200 mph when it hits, maxing out its difficulty number at 10. But Luke has a moment to prepare for the crash (-1,) and he has piloting skill in excess of 2 (-1,) so his difficulty number is now 8.
>
> Luke rolls against his Body of 3d and gets a 3, 8 and an 8, a match that beats the difficulty number! He spreads 16 points of shock damage (twice the difficulty) throughout his body, allocating 3 to each arm, 4 to each leg, and the last two to his torso. The injury isn't even bad enough to give him any killing damage.

Talents

Talents are paranormal powers the characters of *Godlike* possess for some unknown reason. Some Talents can cruise at 10,000 feet— without an aircraft, while others can shrug off a 88 mm shell explosion without their hair even messing up their hair.

Talents are not super-powers in the comic book sense, no matter how they appear—Talents represent nothing less than the ability of the human mind to supercede physical reality.

How Talents Work

No one knows how Talents work. Somehow, the people who possess them just seem able to do the impossible. Flying Talents don't require wings, or even a source of propulsion to take to the air. Hyperstrong Talents don't need to be rippling with muscles to lift a truck. Bulletproof Talents don't have rock-hard skin, but the bullets bounce off anyway. In fact, almost every single Talent looks completely human. They have no discernible features, marks or anatomical differences that would set them apart from humanity. This makes them very effective weapons in guerrilla warfare, espionage and insurgency campaigns. It's hard for the enemy to confiscate a weapon if it's hidden in your mind, and the mind seems to be the crux of the Talent phenomenon.

There seems to be some link between morale, self-will and the activation of Talent powers. Self-belief seems to fuel a Talent's paranormal abilities. Often disappointments, depressions, defeats or bad news can cause Talent powers to fail. Again, no one has any real idea why.

Breaking the Law

Talents routinely break laws that no one believed could be broken-by anybody or anything. Name a physical constant or law: inertia, mass, gravity, or what have you, and some Talent has already bent, twisted and broken it… and made it look easy.

There are strongmen who weigh 98 lbs. soaking wet, who can stop oncoming trucks with a single outstretched hand. Despite the fact that they have no leverage, and the truck has far more mass than they do, they bring the roaring vehicle to a full stop… without even leaving footprints in the dirt.

There are men who fly faster than sound whose skin isn't sloughed off by the incredible wind pressure. In fact, their skin looks fine; and don't forget they seem to stay warm and breathe at altitude, despite the fact that it's -40 degrees and there's not enough pressure to breathe at 25,000 feet.

Talents alternately fascinate and disgust scientists. There is a perverse feeling of wonder and horror that only scientists can feel, in watching everything they thought they knew being ripped to pieces by watching a man fly, lift a truck, or move objects with his mind.

Studies of Talent abilities hint at the mechanics behind these strange occurrences, but no definitive proof of just how the hell they are doing these things (that no one is supposed to be able to do) is ever found. All the scientists can do is document *how much* Talents warp reality with their powers.

So far, no one, not even the Talents know how they are doing "it."

Physics and Talent Powers

Talent powers sidestep or re-write physical reality. They do not reflect "Genetic mutations" which make the operator somehow able to control magnetic fields or to fly through the expulsion of unknown energies from their bodies on some cellular level. Instead, the Talent represents the power of the operator's mind to supersede physical reality, and re-write it at his whim. Therefore, almost nothing is "impossible" for Talent abilities to accomplish (although some powers remain forbidden by the very nature of the Talent phenomenon itself.) However, the effects of Talent powers are very fickle, and often very fragile. Injuries or mental infirmity often cause them to fail. Exactly what happens when certain powers fail during their use, leaving the Talent in a sticky predicament (like in the air, mid-teleport or holding up a 28-ton tank) is left up to the GM to decide. Some powers are simply more dangerous to use than others.

Is a parahuman passing through a wall with an insubstantiality Talent killed when his power fails, fusing him with the wall? Or is he expelled from the other side of the wall untouched? The effects of such a power failure remain up to the GM to adjudicate.

Delusions and the Operation of Talent Powers

Talent abilities are located on the deepest levels of human consciousness, and as such, are linked inextricably with the subconscious mind. The subconscious, like Freud's Id or Jung's Shadow, is like a mind unto itself, separate from the dominant surface consciousness. Deep-seated fears and desires, along with every other conceivable discarded observation are stored here, and these ideas affect Talent abilities in strange and often inexplicable ways.

Some Talents can only use their abilities while singing a particular song; others only while crossing their eyes or making complex finger gestures. If they can't complete these subconscious rituals, the power doesn't work. It's that simple.

Some Talents' delusions are far more complex than others. There are Talents who believe they are aliens from other planets; others that they are the re-incarnation of famous people from days past, and still others who believe that they are some kind of divine entity. Hell, there are even Talents who think they are genetic mutants, magical creatures or freakish scientific mistakes, just like the superheroes of the comic books.

They aren't any of these things of course, they're just Talents. But they believe they are, and they can do amazing things that corroborate their stories. Isn't that all that really matters?

Appearances Are Deceiving

As far as is known despite what their powers may seem to enable them to accomplish, Talents never actually cease physically being human beings. There are Talents who appear to transform into animals, both fictional and factual, Talents who seem to become inanimate objects, hell there's even a Talent who may or may not be a walking house. However, as far as these abilities are understood, no actual transformation occurs outside the minds of those observing the Talent. All present see what the Talent's power wants them to see.

This ability (called “Projected Hallucination” by Allied scientists) seems to enable the Talent to implant ideas or perceptions in observer’s heads to make them believe that such a transformation has taken place. In some cases, this ability even seems to work on the Talent himself, making him believe that a transformation has taken place as well. In other cases this Projected Hallucination is a conscious tool controlled by the Talent, who can place any idea, picture, smell, texture or sound in another’s’ head.

That is not to say that some Talents do not actually alter local physical effects. Many Talents do actually change the physical world with their mind-or they *appear to*. Certain Talents who turn invisible, may actually turn invisible, while others might make others believe they have. As you can imagine, it is very difficult to determine which is which.

In any case, when a Talent dies, despite what his power may dictate his appearance to be, his body is *always* that of a normal human. When Talents cancel each other’s power out, such illusions vanish instantly, and when their power wanes, they tend to have trouble maintaining consistent illusions or transformations-even unconscious ones.

Talent Against Talent

In combat, Talents are quite effective against normal humans. Many powerful Talents can sweep through dozens, even hundreds of heavily armed humans before falling in combat, but when two Talents clash, things get very interesting.

First of all, when Talents attempt to use their powers directly on other Talents they report a feeling of “resistance” or “interference” lessening or preventing the use of their ability. Sometimes during one of these struggles, one Talent will suddenly overwhelm the other, while the other’s power fails, almost as if strength were transferred between them by some unknown process.

The Talent power in question must be used in a direct assault on another Talent to be affected by this defensive struggle, otherwise, it just works. For instance, a Talent could try to prevent another Talent from shooting him with heat rays from his eyes, but not prevent another Talent from hefting and throwing a tank at him. The heart of the matter seems to be what is affected. In one instance, the heat-rays affect the Talent himself so his inherent ability “defends” him. In the other, only the tank is affected, nothing about its deadliness comes from the attacking Talent (except its untoward flight through the air as a weapon.)

Second of all, when two Talents see each other, and one or more is using their powers, each automatically knows the other is a Talent. Sight and the attempt to activate a power are the necessary elements here. Without both of them, a Talent can remain anonymous and invisible, even right under the nose of other Talents. So, if you’re a Talent and you see another Talent using his power, both of you can immediately tell the other is a Talent. This is because you are using your Talent to “detect” the other Talent. This ability is unconscious and automatic.

Third of all, surprise attack negates any struggle between powers. If you are unaware of a Talent attack, then your Will cannot work against it. An ambush with Talent powers is just as deadly to a Talent (at least initially) as it is to a normal human being. This makes combat between Talents just as deadly (if not more so) than combat between normal troops. Whichever Talent has the advantage of surprise, can stay hidden, and is well prepared, will most likely win, or at least cause many casualties before being killed.

See **When Wills Collide** on page 32 for more details.

A Note About Negation: the Zed Talent

Zed is a Talent power which negates the effect Talent powers have on the environment. It is the only Talent power that can affect another Talent in a destructive manner without activating a Contest of Wills; in truth, it is not affecting the targeted Talent at all. Instead of stopping the Talent effect from happening, it detects what the target’s power is doing to the environment around the Talent, countering that force, which is why it works.

Some Talents unconsciously project their Zed power, affecting all Talents within a certain range, while others can target specific Talents at will.

A flyer targeted by the Zed power would lose his capability to keep himself airborne (because the Zed power would push him downwards,) and would probably crash with catastrophic results. A Hyperbody Talent targeted by the Zed power would be squashed like a bug underneath the tank he was up until that point lifting, which suddenly became far more difficult to lift.

Zed, a word used for zero in Britain, is a very effective and relatively common power in *Godlike*. Almost every world leader and secure location in the world is looked after by a Talent possessing the Zed power.

Hitler's personal Zed Talent, *Null,* was perhaps the most powerful Zed ever. In one conflict during the last days of Nazi power in Berlin, *Null* effectively cut off and rendered thirty-five forward acting Soviet Talents powerless, whereupon they were overcome and killed by the *Volksturm*.

Power Mechanics

Talent powers work like everything else in the game: You roll a set number of dice and look for matches. However, given that possessing a Talent means that you have the ability to reconfigure reality more to your liking, there are two dice tricks that are used primarily for modeling Talent powers. They're called *hard dice* and *wiggle dice.*

Hard Dice: A hard die is a die in a dice pool that is always a 10. You don't roll it. It's just automatically a ten. If you have a dice pool with two or more hard dice, you will always succeed (and succeed dramatically) at simple tasks using that skill or stat (unless of course, you are opposed by someone who has more 10s in their dice pool.) Like every other die, hard dice count towards the ten-die maximum.

Wiggle Dice: A wiggle die is like a wild card in poker. You can assign any number to this die *after* you've rolled the other dice in the pool. This is even better than a hard die, because any simple roll with a wiggle die succeeds, and if you have two Wiggle dice, you can choose any height for that success. Like every other die, Wiggle dice count towards the ten-die maximum.

> ***Example:*** Suppose you have 4 regular dice and one wiggle die in your pool. You roll 1,6,8,10. Normally that would be a failure. But you can take your wiggle die and make it a ten as well, giving you a pair of tens. On the other hand, if you later roll 1,4,4,8, you have a choice. You can either make the wiggle die an eight (giving you a higher match if you want a better success) or make it a four (giving you a quicker action with a trio instead of just a pair.)

Using Hard Dice and Wiggle Dice in the Game

Since these two dice types are exceptions to the regular dice rules, they deserve a careful examination. Let's have a look at hard dice first.

Hard dice are always a 10, so naturally if you have 2hd in anything, you will always achieve a dramatic success. But what happens when you use hard dice in combat? Since it's always a 10, do you always hit the target in the head? Can you make called shots with hard dice?

The answer is that multiple hard dice always hit (unless they're dodged or blocked.) If you can see the target (even a hit location which is not the head,) you can hit the target. However, when you hit it, the attack is counted as an attack towards the head for the sake of damage only. The GM might say you hit the target in the arm, or the leg or the torso, and describe the hit in that way, but the damage is still counted towards the head. So the answer is no, you cannot choose to make a called shot with hard dice, because even if you do, the attack is counted as a hit to the head for damage purposes. When attacking an object, consider it an attack against the weakest part of the object. Hard dice lack finesse, but they're deadly.

There is one way around the hard dice hit location conundrum however. If your hard dice are in an attack dice pool along with other regular dice, you can discard the hard dice and try to hit with the regular dice as per a normal attack.

When using hard dice in non-combat situations, they become much more basic. With 2hd in any skill, you will be able to *at least* match the ability of anyone with the same skill (but not the speed.)

Wiggle dice are much more versatile. With 2 wiggle dice, you can hit any hit location you choose (you must see the hit location you want to hit, however.) Also, wiggle dice are much more "friendly" towards regular dice in the same dice pool. Since you can choose what a wiggle die becomes after the roll, you can match it to whatever matches you already have in your regular set. Hard dice are much harder to use in normal dice sets, since unless a regular die in that pool comes up a 10, it's useless. Wiggle dice are very useful as well when it comes to multiple actions. If you split your dice pool that has 2 wiggle dice and 3 regular dice, even with the 1d penalty, you can always succeed at those two actions.

The utility of wiggle dice increases in non-combat situations. In a dynamic contest, they become very useful because you declare what you want the wiggle die to be *after* all the dice are rolled. So you can look at what your opponent rolled and beat it, by any amount if you have 2wd or more in your set (unless it's a set of 10, then you could just match it.) Since wiggle dice are much more friendly towards regular dice, you can usually choose to have a tall or wide set (sometimes both.) With hard dice, it's usually only a tall set. In combat, the difference between a

match of 2 dice and a match of 3 dice is huge. Wiggle dice have the advantage over hard dice, as width and not height determines initiative.

Hard dice are blunt, wiggle dice are skillful.

Hyperstats, Hyperskills, and Miracles

There are three kinds of Talent powers (well, there are hundreds or even thousands of Talent powers; but they all fit into three general categories.)

First, there are *Hyperstats*. These are simply normal human qualities like intelligence or physical strength exaggerated to super-human levels. The game mechanics cover these by simply adding levels to your normal stats, or by making dice in normal stats hard or wiggle dice.

Next, there are *Hyperskills*. Like Hyperstats, these are modeled by adding extra or special dice to ordinary skills. They're just more specific (and therefore cheaper) than Hyperstats.

Finally, there are *Miracles*. These are the uncanny powers that normal people just cannot do: It's a difference of kind, not of degree. Anyone can lift some weight: Someone with a Body Hyperstat can just do a lot more of it. Similarly, someone with a medicine Hyperskill is just much more reliable at surgery than someone with a normal medicine skill. However, no ordinary person can turn invisible or change metal into ice. Those are Miracles.

Will

The powers exhibited by Talents are all variations of the same power: The power to impose your beliefs on the physical world. It's a combination of belief and hope that allows Talents to use their abilities; to model this, we have the Will stat.

Unlike your other stats, Will goes up and down all the time. Depending on circumstances, your character's ability to believe in his powers may be strong or weak, and the rise and fall of Will reflects that. Generally speaking, the better he does, the stronger he becomes. Defeats and setbacks weaken his Will and, consequently, his powers.

You start out with a Base Will score equal to Command + Cool. (Will depends, after all, on your perceived ability to control your surroundings and your ability to control yourself.) Normal humans only have a Base Will statistic; they do not have, like Talents, a Will stat that fluctuates up or down—Talents have both.

Base Will is fairly stable, and does not generally change during the course of play. Base Will is your default Will when you're not swollen with self-confidence or crushed by loss. If you lose all your Will, it will gradually rise back up to the Base Will levels, provided you are not under constant adverse conditions (Unfortunately, war can have a lot of those.)

The general Will trait is more important and less stable. You'll see a track on your character sheet for following its rise and fall. Will is used in two ways: You can risk it, or you can spend it. If you spend it, it's gone - Spend 3 Will, your Will rating (the points, not your Base Will) drops by 3. If you risk it, it means there's a chance you could lose it; or a chance you could keep it - or, for that matter, a chance you could increase it.

What Will is Good For

- You can't use any of your Talent powers – Hyperstats, Hyperskills, or Miracles - if you have no Will points.
- You can spend a point of Will to defend yourself if another Talent is trying to attack you directly with his power (and you know that he's there.) He can in turn spend a point of Will to buy off the Will you just spent. This turns into an auction pretty quickly; see **When Wills Collide** below for more details.
- Whenever you use any Talent ability, you must risk a point of Will (See **Gaining Will and Losing Will,** below.) If you succeed at activating the power, you do not lose that Will point; if you fail, that Will point is lost.

Gaining Will

Your Will rating increases by 1 point whenever one of the following occurs.

- You roll a 10 while successfully using one of your Talent powers. Hard and wiggle dice do not count for this: It must be a naturally rolled 10 (this may seem unfair to those with hard or wiggle dice, but since they succeed so much more often when they attempt an action, they tend to make Will points back in other ways.)
- You defeat another Talent in a Contest of Wills (see **When Wills Collide,** below.) You'll almost certainly have a net Will loss even if you win, but it's still a victory.
- You wake up after a good night's sleep and your current Will is less than your Base Will.

- You successfully take a significant military position, prisoner, enemy intelligence or the like (in other words, achieve a significant success, or contributed to one.)
- At the GM's discretion, you may get a point of Will when you do something particularly spectacular and gratifying (if all the players cheer, you've probably made this one,) or when you do something that really seems to boost your character's self-image.

Your Will rating increases by multiple Will points whenever one of the following events occur:

- You subdue or kill another Talent in combat. If you do this, you gain his Command stat in Will points (Note that killing is not necessary for the reward; it's the breaking of the enemy's Will to fight that matters.)
- Your power saves a person's life directly. If you do this, you gain that person's Command stat in Will points (Your GM may choose to double this reward in the event that you save a civilian un-involved in the combat.)

Losing Will

In addition to spending it, your Will rating decreases whenever one of the following things occurs.

- If you fail a Cool+Mental Stability roll, you lose half your Will.
- If a personal tragedy occurs in your life (i.e. a "Dear John" letter from your fiancé , a notice that your mother has died, or a buddy gets killed in combat,) you lose half your Will.
- If you fail to activate a Talent power, you lose a point of Will.
- If you attempt and fail to save someone with your power, you lose their Command score in Will points.
- If you are subdued in combat by another Talent or enemy, you lose half your Will.

Battle Fatigue

When do you roll a test of Cool+Mental Stability for a character? Good question. You roll Cool+Mental Stability whenever a character is:

- A witness to a terrible event.
- Under attack by a tank, flamethrower or other heavy weapon.
- In immanent danger of death.
- Under a large amount of personal stress.

Otherwise, it remains up to the GM to decide just what constitutes the necessity of a Cool+Mental Stability roll.

What happens when you fail a Cool + Mental Stability roll, anyhow? A number of things- none of them pleasant.

Immediate Result

First off, there's the immediate result of a failed Cool+Mental Stability roll: Your character loses control. You, as the player, have three choices here:

- The character can immediately flee the scene at top speed using every means at his disposal, losing half his Will (and he can't fight anyone who tries to stop him.)
- He can curl up in a ball, losing half his Will, (rendering him incapable of offensive action.)
- Or he can hold his ground and fight on, losing *all* his Will (and the use of his Talent powers.)

When you fail, it's up to you whether your character flees, curls up on the ground bawling, or holds his ground but loses his mental stability.

Regardless of which response you pick for your character, it either lasts fifteen minutes, or until the maddening stimulus is removed. (Or until your character dies, of course.)

When Wills Collide

Talents can use their Will to interfere with the use of enemy Talent powers. This is by no means a general ability however. Talent powers can be countered with Will under only if the Talent knows the power is being directly used to cause mental or bodily harm to him.

Any time someone else's Talent is going to affect you, make some deleterious change to your surroundings or otherwise directly interfere with your actions, you can spend Will to fight it. Examples follow.

An invisible man tries to hit you.
You cannot spend Will to make him visible. It's his action in hitting you that's the trouble, and that's not a Talent. By making himself invisible, he's only affecting himself.

A guy attacks you with his heat vision.
You can spend Will to interfere with his power.

An impossibly strong Talent tries to crush you in a bear hug.
You can spend Will to interfere with his strength - but if you succeed, he can still make his attack. He just doesn't use the extra dice, hard dice or wiggle dice given by his Hyperstat.

A really strong Talent throws a jeep at you.
You cannot interfere. His Talent affected the jeep, not you or your surroundings. Once he lets go of it, it's a physics problem—for you.

A Talent with inhuman coordination fires at you with a rifle.
You can spend Will to reduce his coordination to human levels as long as you know he's attacking you. It's maybe a little counterintuitive, but what his extreme coordination lets him do is aim at you exceptionally well, and it is that aiming that you resist. (Plus, if you couldn't spend Will to resist this, hyper-snipers would make this a very quick game indeed.)

A Hypercoordinated Talent tries to dodge your punch.
You can't counter this, because his speed is (in this instance) affecting him and not you. If he tries to hit you, you *can* counter that use of it.

A Talent uses mind control on you.
You can counter this.

A Talent uses Hypercommand to force a Cool+Mental Stability check on you.
Hell yes, you can counter this.

Now that you know what and when you can counter, it's time to learn how: During the declaration phase of combat, if you want to counter a Talent ability (and are able to,) you simply spend a point of Will. The Will that the other Talent is gambling gets lost: You're both down one point. However, the other Talent can spend another point of Will to counter your counter (thus starting over.) You can then counter that again, and so on. If you choose to withdraw from the contest, you're out a point and he's out two points (but he gets one back because he defeated you in the contest.) Basically, it's an auction (or maybe more like a game of chicken -who's going to cave in first?)

If the auction goes to the person using the Talent, he still has to make a roll. It's perfectly possible to spend a lot of Will on an attack, win the auction, and screw up when rolling the dice.

This does put Talents into a rather ugly position. Using Will to counter the Will of an attacker leaves less fuel for their own abilities. On the other hand, being hit is no picnic either, unless you have some sort of defensive power.

Oh, and I almost forgot, there's a catch to this whole Talent Will bidding system. The catch is this: a surprise attack made with a Talent ability, even if it is affecting a targeted Talent directly, *cannot* be countered by a Contest of Wills. It just happens; no Will defense by the subject of the attack can be made. This is why so many Talents die in the war.

Will Points in Game Play

The maximum Will points a Talent can possess in the default setting for *Godlike is* 50 Will points, but you can alter this as you please. The power-level remains, for the most part, up to you and the kind of game you want to play.

Using Talents in the Game

Using Talent abilities is as easy as concentrating for a moment. In game terms, to activate a Talent, a character must pause, concentrate one combat round, and make a successful roll on his power dice pool. On a match, the power manifests, on a failure, nothing happens and they lose 1 Will point.

Some powers are always active, and require no such roll to activate. Defensive abilities such as Heavy Armor and others are simply always on, to protect the operator from harm. Bear in mind that any power that normally requires an activation roll can be made automatic, simply by purchasing the Always On Extra for it.

Other powers are fickle, and are activated only by the operator's subconscious. In this case, the power is activated and deactivated at the whim of the GM.

Miracle Power Ranges

Most Miracle powers listed (unless otherwise noted) work within sight range of the operator. Anything that can be seen can be affected by the power, unless that some sort of Flaw limits the power, or the object affected is too large for the power to overcome. Other Talents (such as transportation powers or other self-affecting powers such as Heavy Armor or passive psychic abilities) work only on or directly around the operator.

Hyperskills and Hyperstats only work on the operator, of course (unless they are modified with some sort of Extra.)

Some Talent powers have no limit to range. If a Talent ability has an effective range beyond sight range, it is usually listed under the description of the power and costs more Will points.

Talents, Concentration, and Damage

It's difficult to concentrate while bullets rip through your flesh, and most Talent powers require concentration to work. Since Talents seem to be shot so much, it's important to cover this eventuality.

First off, someone who's rolling to activate a Talent loses a die out of a match if he is hit in combat. This is the combat standard rule – get hit, lose a die out of your highest match (wiggle and hard dice are removed first.)

If a power is always active, it still may fail if the Talent is injured. If a Talent is using a power that doesn't require a roll and he is hit, he does have to roll the relevant pool. If the roll fails, the Talent shuts down until a successful roll is made.

> ***Example:*** Skip is flying along with his Flight Miracle of 5d when he is hit by a machine gun burst from a tank on the ground. He rolls his pool to try to stay aloft, but with 1,5,6,8 and 9, he gets no matches and begins to fall. The GM rules that there's another round before he impacts, but that the attacker gets another shot at him. Both Skip and his attacker roll. This time Skip gets a 2x2 match, but the gunner gets a 3x5 hit. Not only is this sufficient to blow off Skip's right arm, it also knocks a die out of his match, making his Flight power fail. He plummets.

Talent Detection

All Talents possess the ability to detect other Talents whose powers are active. This knowledge is two-way, since the Talent noticing the "signature" of a power is using a Talent ability to do so. Both the user and the detector immediately *know* the other is a Talent, but only if one activates a power first in plain sight. If both Talents have no powers active at the moment they see each other, or if one Talent is using a power to obscure himself, they remain anonymous and invisible to one another.

Some Talent powers are active all the time, and are therefore visible all the time. Others can be switched on and off, or can be hidden. Generally speaking, Hyperstats and defensive Miracles (such as Heavy Armor) are always on, and therefore always visible; Hyperskills and Miracles are not (such as a Hyperskill in Archery, or the ability to breathe fire,) and are only visible when used.

Transformation powers such as Alternate Form, Dead Ringer, and Transform are like beacons for Talent sight. No matter the form assumed, Talents in the area can automatically tell the subject is a Talent. A Goldberg Scientist's devices, and items transmuted or created by Talents, are also clearly visible as such to all Talents present.

On the other hand, obfuscation powers such as Fade, Invisibility and Projected Hallucination can obscure Talent sight. Once the Talent is seen clearly (or if they are seen as they activate their powers) their signature can be sensed by any Talent present. It's not enough to target, but the Talents will be aware that someone unseen is present. This is often enough to keep a power active and handy, just in case.

Some Talents describe this "signature" as a visible aura around the target, others as a low tone in the back of their skull. Like describing a smell, a definitive definition for Talent sight is not easy.

In game terms, no roll is required to spot another Talent whose power is active, it just happens.

Talent Targeting

This is the foreknowledge that all Talents have when they are being directly targeted by another Talent's power. The major limitation to this ability is that it does not work against surprise attacks, but otherwise, if the target of a power is the Talent, he or she knows a split-second before that a paranormal attack is coming. Most Talents describe it like a high-pitched whining in their mind. What does this foreknowledge mean in game terms?

During the declaration phase of combat, if a Talent is being targeted by another Talent's power (and he knows he's under attack,) he can choose to counter that attack with a Contest of Wills before that attack is rolled; or he can take his chances and let the attack through his mental defenses. A Contest of Wills does not require the Talents in question to stop in their actions. Both participants can fight and move normally; until one of them gets fried, that is.

Defensive Powers In Talent vs. Talent Combat

What happens if another Talent attacks you, you lose the contest of wills, but you have some sort of Talent ability that protects you against harm like Heavy Armor? Does your defensive power stop the Talent attack?

In a Talent against Talent clash, defensive powers *do* work against other Talent abilities, as long as the attack fits within the defense's parameters. For example, if you had a shield power against ice attacks, and an enemy Talent fried you with lightning bolts, your power would obviously not defend against it.

Keep in mind though that in Will against Will contests, one Talent is often left without enough Will to fuel his or her powers at all. When your Will=0, none of a Talents powers work, even armor and other defensive powers.

Also, keep in mind that unless the defense has the Always On Extra, surprise attacks cause normal damage and cannot be defended against.

Using Powers Defensively

Sometimes even powers that aren't usually used to defend, such as Harm or Invisibility can be used defensively.

When a power is used in this way, the dice rolled in the power's dice pool are read a little differently, with a dice mechanic called "gobbling." This is not a new dice type, such as wiggle or hard dice, but a different way of working out the outcome of a dynamic contest between a defending power and an incoming attack.

A Talent power can be used in a defensive manner if the following circumstances are met:

1) You know you are under attack: Your power may not be used to defend against attacks you don't know are coming.

> ***Example:*** Chuck, a telekinetic, is skulking around when he is shot in the back by a sentry. He cannot use his telekinetic power to defend against this attack, since he didn't know it was coming.

2) You can see the Attacker: The defense is no good if you don't know the exact distance and direction of your attacker.

> ***Example:*** Chuck's squad is under assault by an enemy sniper in a distant bell tower. Try as he might Chuck cannot see the sniper, so he cannot defend against this attack with his power.

3) You are not defending against another Talent power: Direct assault by Talent powers may not be defended against by other non-defensive Talent powers, instead a Contest of Wills between the two Talents must be resolved (see **When Wills Collide** on page 32.) Indirect assault can be defended against, however. For example, if a Talent bruiser threw a truck at you, you could defend against the truck itself. If someone shot you with their death beams, that would be a Contest of Wills situation.

The exception to this rule is defensive Talent powers such as Heavy Armor or Immunity. These defensive powers *can* and *do* block relevant Talent attacks normally.

Example: Chuck is under attack by an enemy Talent. The Talent tries to fry Chuck with lightning bolts from his hands. Chuck cannot defend against this attack with his power; instead, he may defend against this attack with a Contest of Wills.

If however, the enemy Talent had used the lightning bolts to ignite gasoline drums near him, Chuck could have used his power to contain the explosion.

4) The weapon which is being used to attack you does not have a Penetration rating higher than your total power dice pool: Your power cannot defend against weapons with a higher Penetration rating than your power dice pool. If a weapon with a higher Penetration rating than your dice pool is fired at you, your defense automatically fails.

Example: Chuck sees an enemy trooper with a *Panzerfaust* aiming at him and his men. Chuck braces and attempts to defend with his TK power. His TK power dice pool is 5d, and the Penetration rating of the *Panzerfaust* is 7. Since 7 is greater than 5 (the total number of dice in Chuck's TK pool) the *Panzerfaust* will automatically breach any defense Chuck tries to raise.

If the above conditions can be met and the power can be used defensively, you can use your power dice pool to gobble up dice from the opposing attacker's set, hopefully negating the attack. This works just like dodging. See **Dodging** on page 15 for more details.

Example: Chuck has 5d in Telekinesis and a Nazi with a rifle attacks him. He wants to defend against the incoming bullet. The attacker rolls 4d and gets a 2x5 hit. Chuck rolls his Telekinesis in a defensive capacity and gets a 2x6 success. This means he can remove 2 dice from his attacker's dice pool (the width of his roll) and that those dice he removes can be of no number higher than 6 (the height of his roll.) Chuck removes the two 5s from his attacker's set, foiling his attack and effectively stopping or deflecting the bullets in flight with his TK.

Hard dice and wiggle dice are used normally in gobbling.

Example: Marcus has 2d+1hd+1wd in Energy Blast and a Nazi with a machine gun attacks him. The attacker rolls 5d (his skill) +5d (for the machine gun's Spray value) and gets two sets, a 3x8 and a 4x7. Marcus wants to vaporize the bullets in the air with his energy blast, so he rolls his normal dice pool and gets a 7 and a 2. His hard die does not match, but he can make his wiggle die match it, giving him 2x10.

Unfortunately, it doesn't matter. Since the attacker's sets are wider than Marcus', he is hit by both the 3x8 and 4x7 set.

The biggest advantage to defensive gobbling is its utility against multiple opponents or multiple attacks.

Example: Margot is jumped by two Luger wielding assassins and decides to use her inhuman speed to dodge the bullets. Both attackers rolled successes - a 2x5 and a 2x7 respectively. Margot rolls her defensive pool and gets a 2x8. All the moves are of equal width, so height serves as a timing tiebreaker. Margo has two dice to gobble with, so she can counteract one 5 out of the first pair and one 7 out of the second. Both sets are ruined and neither attacker hits.

Hyperstats and Hyperskills can defend as gobble dice in the same manner, if the situation seems appropriate. For instance, trying to defend with a Hyperstat in Sense against a bullet attack is foolish (you may see the bullet quicker, but you can't move quicker,) while trying to defend with a Hyperstat in Coordination for the same attack makes sense (you are super-humanly swift and can maybe sidestep the shot, if you know it's coming.)

