

GENERAL GAME MECHANICS

General Concepts

In this section all the nuts-and-bolts of the JAGS's mechanics are explained. Here things like drowning, falling, interaction with NPCs (Non-Player-Characters), etc. are covered. These rules help detail real world events in game terms (a character falls out of a 7-story window—what happens?). If the GM does not like the way something is handled so long as it is changed in a fashion consistent with the rest of the system there should be no problem.

To an extent, all these rules may be considered optional as the GM may simply use common sense in place of complicated formulas ("Of course you can't fight full speed for 25 minutes!" or "You are trapped under freezing water for 15 minutes—make a CON roll to see if the paramedics can revive you.") If the players and GM want rules, on the other hand, these should be balanced and applicable.

Jumping

To see if a character can make a close jump, an AGI, Acrobatics, or appropriate Sports Skill roll is made. Each point the roll is made or missed by adds or deducts 1 foot from the jump up to .25x the total jump (so if a character is sprinting at 8.5 yards a second, has a 13 STR and a 13 BLD (3 mass), who is 6 feet tall the jump distance is $4.25 + 3 + 2 = 9.25$ yards. If the character blows a roll by 5, the character loses 5 feet which is less than the 2.3 yards of variance so the character goes 22.75 feet).

Swimming

The maximum speed of a swimmer is some fraction of his Sprinting speed. This fraction varies depending on what the swimmer is wearing.

Clothing Worn	Max Swim Speed
Normal Swim Gear	Sprint / 4
Swim Gear and Flippers	Sprint / 3
Normal Clothing	Sprint / 7

At this speed the swimmer is using Sprinting Endurance. If the swimmer wants to swim at a lower speed (and Endurance), Walking Endurance is α maximum swim speed and Running Endurance is β maximum swim speed.

Lift

Of course, anyone can lug around more than they can bench and the Encumbrance rules support that. A character can lift/press 130 lbs. if he has a 10 strength. He may lift up to 175 lb. if he has an 11 STR. Each point of strength after that is considered to be an increase of 75lbs. For strengths below 10, the press is 10lbs x STR (so a 7 STR can press 70 lbs.).

A character can pick up and walk around with 1.5x this number of pounds but will have to make a CON roll to lift more than the character can press above his head as a Medium action (if the weight is 1/4 or less, the character can lift it above his head with one hand for no action cost). With this maximum weight the character will not be very mobile (see the Encumbrance rules).

To see if the character can lift something which is close to the character's maximum the character makes a CON roll. Each point the roll is made or missed by adds or subtracts 1 pound of lift to each point of STR.

Ex1: A character with a 23 STR can bench press $130 + (13 \times 75)$ pounds = 1105 pounds. The character tries to bench-press a 995 pound weight bar. As this is pretty close to the maximum and there is a crowd watching (if he tries to do it in private he can simply keep rolling until he gets it) the GM calls for a roll. The roll is against the character's CON of 12 and the character rolls a 17, missing it by 5. The character's lift is $130 + (13 \times 70) = 1040$ which still lifts the bar easily. The GM shouldn't have called for a roll as this is the worst possible result (-5) and it was still sufficient. A truly nasty GM could rule that critical failures on such rolls can cause injury but this is rather a lot of rolling for very little gain.

O1: Heroic Max Lift. The GM may simply rule that Heroic characters, always capable of maximal output, never have to roll to make a lift—either they can or they can't.

Computing Lift:

A character's Lift (or bench press) for game purposes is usually 130lbs for a 10 STR, +75lbs per point above 10 or -10lbs per point of STR below 10. That means that a character with a 12 STR can bench press a maximum of 280lbs (pretty darn strong!).

Throwing

Characters may wish to throw objects during the game. If a question arises as to how far something can be thrown the GM is advised to use common sense but these rules give more detail if needed. Thrown weapons hit with an appropriate Weapon Skill or COR -2 roll. If the object is small (like a knife or a ball) and the character is not experienced in throwing then there is no Damage Modifier applied for the amount hit by. If the object is large (meaning that the character is probably paranormally strong) then there may a large weapon to-hit bonus applied.

A character can throw an object [**character's (STR -10) / Mass of the object**] yards (minimum of 1). It will strike for **[(STR -10) + Mass]** damage (see Combat). It should be noted that at the outer ends of the scales (ultra low masses and ultra high strengths) the results are far from realistic. In this case rules about terminal velocities (the speed at which an object in a medium can move no faster) should be applied if the GM wants to keep things realistic.

Ex1: A man with a 14 STR picks up another man and tries to throw him. He can toss the man 2 yards, as the Mass of the man being tossed is 2.

For people with STR's of less than 10, treat a STR of 9 as .75, a STR of 8 as .5, and a STR of 7 as .25.

O1: Fractional Masses. The GM can give objects fractional masses if he wants to. This can be used to help with a person throwing really small objects.

Encumbrance

Encumbrance is the measure of how carrying gear can slow down a character. To figure out if a character is encumbered, figure out what the character's lift is and apply the amount on the chart below.

Encumbrance Table

Weight Carried	Encumbrance
Lift / 10	Unencumbered
Lift / 5	Slightly Encumbered
Lift / 2	Encumbered
Lift	Heavily Encumbered
Lift x 1.5	Weighted Down

Encumbrance Effects Chart

Level of Encumbrance	Move	Init.	AGI Bonus
Unencumbered	None	-0	-0
Slightly Encumbered	-1 yard	-1	-1
Encumbered	- α	-2	-2
Heavily Encumbered	- 2	-3	-3
Weighted Down	1 yard	-4	-4

Optional Throwing:

If, logically, all throwing were treated like collisions, objects would not add their Mass to the damage done by the throw—the objects Mass would simply reduce the distance it would go.

While this is somewhat realistic, remember that distance for parabolic arcs is fairly complicated—the maximum distance a character could throw something is proportional—but not necessarily equal—to the damage it might do. These rules present an approximation that is good for gaming (you can pick up a heavy object and heave it for more damage).

Throwing In Combat:

It is a Medium action (5 REA) to pick up an object (the same as drawing a weapon). Thrown objects cannot normally be aimed; however, an 8 REA Long Aim action for an unbalanced object adds +1(GM-ruled "balanced" objects may be aimed normally).

For game purposes, almost any object will add +1 to damage.

Effects Notes:

As with collisions, most of the Encumbrance effects deal with combat so you have to understand that section before you fully get all the rules here.

The primary time that Encumbrance will come into play is in fantasy scenarios where some characters will wear heavy armor. These rules are intended to balance those characters by making weak characters tend to choose lighter armor.

Move: Move represents the effect of weight on the character's ground speed. The deductions are from Sprint and effect all lower speeds (e.g. a character with a sprint of 9 yards / sec at Encumbered level sprints at 6 yards / sec and walks at 2).

Init. : This is the effect on the encumbered character's Initiative roll. It effects when he gets to act in a combat turn (encumbered characters tend to act last).

AGI Bonus: A character's AGI bonus is the negative others are at to strike him due to his Agility. It is usually equal to AGI - 10. Slower characters are easier to hit so when subtracting, if the number is negative, the character is easier to hit. This means that a character with a 13 AGI (-3 to be hit in hand-to-hand combat) is actually at +1 to be hit if he is Weighted Down (since he's basically standing still).

Ex1: A character with an 11 STR has a lift of 205 lbs. If the character is wearing 50lbs of armor, the character is Slightly Encumbered and takes the listed penalties.

Ex2: A character with a 24 STR has five 150 lb. people clinging to him as he tries to run. His lift is $130 + (24 \times 75 \text{ lbs.}) = 1930 \text{ lbs.}$ The people weigh 750 lbs. Assuming the character is carrying nothing else heavy, the character is at Slightly Encumbered level (but is almost Encumbered).

NOTE: If a character's Initiative or AGI is 20 or higher, his Init. and AGI Bonus negatives are 10%, 20%, 30%, and 40% respectively.

Other Encumbrance Rules and Effects:

These should be considered advanced rules since they don't add much to play except realism in certain situations.

- At Slightly Encumbered and above, running costs Sprinting Endurance.
- At Heavily Encumbered and above, walking costs Running Endurance.
- At Weighted Down, any movement costs 1 Endurance per turn.
- Above Weighted Down, the character must make a STR roll to move one yard. For each 75lbs above that point the STR roll is at -1.
- If a character is reduced to a 7 or less STR roll in the above fashion, he is at +5 to be hit in combat (as though standing perfectly still).

Swimming and Encumbrance:

Swimming speeds are affected by Encumbrance in the following manner:

- Slightly Encumbered: Swimmer max speed is calculated as though his REA were one less.
- Encumbered: - α max swim speed (do not calculate max swim speed as though Slightly Encumbered)
- Heavily Encumbered: - 2 max swim speed
- Weighted Down: The character will not move and must spend Sprinting Endurance to keep from sinking.

Endurance

The Endurance rules determine how long a character can keep doing something without getting tired, slowing down, etc. These require some record keeping and should only be invoked if there is a concern of the amount of effort expended—characters out having a picnic, even if there is some physical exertion should not bother keeping track of endurance unless the GM requires it.

The Endurance system works by the GM monitoring the amount of time a character spends in a taxing activity and telling the player to mark down Endurance. When the total number of Endurance equals the character's CON (*not* Damage Points) the character becomes tired and as Endurance continues to mount, the character's abilities degrade more and more.

Activities: Activities are divided into four difficulty levels starting with Thought and ending with Sprinting Endurance. When a character performs a listed action within the base period of time, mark 1 Endurance.

Reducing Endurance: Endurance goes away as the character rests. For each 15 minutes the character rests, he removes 1 Endurance. For each 5 minutes the character rests, he loses a fractional point (if they're being kept track of—but that's really, really not necessary unless something weird is going on).

Endurance Table

Level of Exertion	Time Each Endurance Is Acquired
Thought	Never (costs no Endurance)
Walking	1 point each 15 minutes
Running	1 point each minute
Sprinting	1 point per second

Effects of Endurance Table

Total Endurance	Effect
CON or Less	None or Tired
CON x 1.3	Very Tired. -2 Initiative Rolls
CON x 1.5	Exhausted. As above and -2 STR
CON x 2	Debilitated. As above but -4 STR instead. Any time an additional Endurance point is gained the character must make a CON roll or become unconscious.
CON x 3	Automatic Unconsciousness

Endurance Cost Table

Action	Endurance	Notes
Full STR used twice in a second	Sprinting	Typical combat
Maintaining a minor magic spell	Walking	May vary
Carrying a body	Running	
Using a paranormal ability	Walking	Varies a lot.
Blocking or dodging	Thought	

Reducing Endurance:

Characters can reduce the amount of endurance an activity costs them by reducing the level they use it at.

Any time the effective power of an ability or Strength is cut by a third then the endurance cost is lowered by one.

This means that if a character with a STR of 13 and a CON of 12 fights all out, he can fight for 17 seconds before becoming "Very Tired." After that he will degrade rapidly. When he fights for 26 seconds (all out) he's about wasted.

On the other hand, he can use a 12 STR (one third less effective than full STR), thereby gaining an Endurance point for every minute he fights so he can fight about half an hour before falling.

The primary purpose of endurance rules is two-fold: to keep characters with paranormal abilities in check ("I use my power beam to destroy the mountain") and to keep spell casters in check ("I'll keep casting my fireball spell until I toast the whole army!").

Most combats won't last long enough for it to be a problem anyway.

Perception

A search of an area is more than just a perception roll; it's a concentrated effort to look for something. A quick glance over an area (5 REA Medium action) gives the character a Perception +2 roll to notice anything in sight. A careful search of an area (8 REA Long action) will be a Perception roll at +4. Quick glances may cause normal perception rolls or rolls at a minus.

Sleep

A character must get six hours of sleep a night or incur 6 Endurance that cannot be removed by resting (only sleeping). Each hour of sleep will remove 1 point. If a character is above CON in Endurance due to sleep loss, he must make a WIL roll to avoid falling asleep once an hour or during any prolonged period of inactivity.

Asphyxia

A character caught by surprise can hold his breath for CON seconds. If he has time to take a few deep breaths, he can hold his breath for CON x5 seconds. A character holding his breath is at -1 to all STR and AGI rolls. A character who performs no physical exertion may extend the time by 1.5x. If the character then cannot breathe when his time is up, he will *Asphyxiate*: the character rapidly accrues Endurance (6 per second); if the character still cannot breathe after losing consciousness due to Asphyxia, he will lose 1 Damage Point each second after losing consciousness.

Healing

Just as characters get hurt, so do they heal. In some campaigns this is done with magic or technology. In modern society characters are not so much healed as helped to heal. These rules cover the application of medicine and the natural recuperative abilities of the body.

Natural Healing Rate: The rate a character heals damage is determined by Condition level and Wound size. If a character has suffered only a small wound or is only bruised the character will be fine in a short while. If the character is more gravely injured the time is correspondingly greater. But, even if each individual wound is small, a great number of cuts, bruises, etc. will place a strain on the character.

Healing Rate Chart

Condition	Time to Recover 1/10 th Total DP
Normal	1 minute
Hurt	1 hour
Injured	1 day
Serious	2 days

NOTE: Penetration Damage is always healed as a Major or Critical Wound and requires that the character make a CON roll to heal each amount—this CON roll is modified by the character's condition.

First Aid: Immediate assistance can have many different effects but the list here shows the most common. It assumes a modern level of technology—in more primitive conditions, the GM may only allow up to Level 2 skills (plus herbal medicines) for healers and in futuristic games there may be much better medical technology (which would be operated with an appropriate Operations Skill).

Basic Medical Skill Effects Chart

Skill Level	Effect
Level 0	An RES roll at -4 and 5 minutes stops bleeding.
Level 1	A roll will restore 1 point Penetrating or 2 Impact
Level 2	A roll will restore [Minor Wound / 2] Penetrating or [Minor Wound] Impact
Level 3	May perform surgery.
Level 4	Surgery can reverse a death result

NOTE: The points gained this way are “temporary” if the damage was Penetrating. This means that any continued, strenuous activity can open the wound again (make a CON roll). If the Condition level of the character was Injured or worse, and he performs strenuous activity for CON seconds, he must make a CON roll at -1. If this is failed, the damage taken returns and the wound starts to bleed again.

Healing Notes:

- Bleeding rates are listed under the combat section.
- The amount of damage points a character gains from a successful first aid roll is dependent on his total damage points. 1 point can be substituted for 10 percent and 2 points can be substituted for 20%. Conversely, if the roll is made for a massive beast (a human attempting to confer first aid on a dragon, for instance) then the actual number of points may be fewer than the target's Minor Wound. The GM must determine what makes sense.
- A success by 5 or more on a Level 1 or Level 2 roll will usually heal a minimum of 4 points or +1 above Minor Wound—whichever is more.
- Healing of any kind does NOT effect the rate at which the character naturally recovers points.

Medicine:

When characters are diseased, they usually make a CON roll at some interval against the diseases' Power (PWR).

If they succeed, they reduce the PWR of the disease by the amount they succeeded by. If they fail, either the effect of the disease gets worse or its PWR goes up, or both.

Medicine (usually requiring a Level 3 Physician to administer) usually adds +1 to +3. Rest adds +1—exertion -1 to -2. If the doctor makes his roll by 5+, this adds his Medical Skill - 10. If the doctor is Level 4, he automatically adds that to his primary patient's CON roll and can effect others with a roll made by 5.

The GM determines what effects the disease has and

O1: Advanced Healing. The rates above are “flat rates.” A more realistic method is to have the character make a CON roll for each healing period. If the character was active during the period the roll is at -2. If the character was resting the roll is normal, and if the character was under the care of a Level 3 physician (and a roll was made) the character is at +2. If the CON roll is made—the character heals. If the CON roll is missed the character does not heal. Successes by 5 indicate double the rate of healing and failures by 5 indicate a worsening of condition. If a character’s CON roll is reduced, then the reduction is applied to this roll (the more badly hurt the character is, the slower he’ll heal).

how often it strikes. Some examples might be:

A bad cold: PWR 14, strikes all the time—effect -1 to all rolls. It goes away in 4 days if the character doesn’t beat it before then.

Ebola: PWR 15, effect—if it wins the roll the character’s CON is reduced by 1 point. When it hits 0 he liquefies and dies. It effects every hour after the incubation period.

Influenza: PWR 12, effect—if it wins the roll by 5, the character is at -1 CON (cumulative) for the rest of the disease. Otherwise, if it wins by 3 or 4 the character is bedridden. If it wins by 0 - 2 the character is at -1 STR and -1 AGI (and all related rolls). If it does not win but still persists, the character must make a CON roll to perform any strenuous activity or be at -1. It effects every day—once.

Interaction

This section covers how things like having a winning personality, great looks, or a mean glare work in game terms. For the most part, this is entirely up to the GM. Professional hitmen are trained in being unfeeling and while good looks may influence a jury, a smart judge might certainly see beyond that. The GM is allowed to, at any time, disregard these rules and judge that a given NPC, like the PCs (for the most part) are unaffected by such things.

Interactions

There are four basic Interactions that a character may attempt. In each case, different skills and Enhancements may be applied to the attempt. The four Interaction types are detailed below.

- **Charm:** The character simply tries to make the character *like* him. This can be a simple use of charisma or an *Entrance* attempt where the character inspires love or lust (sexual attraction). It can be used to distract targets, for personal reasons, to get information, or simply to be popular at parties.
- **Intimidate:** The character tries to make the target fear him. This is a psychological fear—if the character is decked out with weapons and armor many will fear the character anyway.
- **Persuade:** The character tries to manipulate the target to do what he wants them to. This can have a number of different approaches from fast talking a target to go along to simply being charismatic guy that people want to help.
- **Recruit:** This is the term for an attempt to inspire loyalty in someone or to take command of a situation and, if necessary, lead. It usually applies to troops or henchmen under the character's command but it can also be used to rally crowds, calm down a hysterical person, or otherwise "take command by force of personality."

Interaction Rolls: The character has an Interaction roll (probably a different one for each type) based on Traits and Enhancements. When you want to Charm, Intimidate, Persuade, or Recruit an NPC, you make a roll and they make their WIL roll against you (take what you made it by and subtract what they made theirs by). The charts for effect are at the end of this section.

Ex1: A police officer is staring down a thug with a .32 revolver. The cop doesn't have his gun drawn yet and wants to resolve the situation without a shoot-out. He tries to Persuade the punk to lower the gun. His Persuade roll is an 11- (not real good) and he rolls a 9. The punk makes a WIL roll by 0, so the success is by 2. The result is that the punk trusts and/or agrees with the officer (the officer is persuasive) he lowers the gun. If the punk had been crazed or he thought he had a good chance of shooting his way out, the GM could easily rule that the success result wasn't enough to disarm the situation. It might take Intimidation roll to scare him down.

* * *

Katrina gazed into the darkness behind the bar, watching him through the tiny reflections of the curves surfaces of the bottles. She felt more than saw him slide into the seat beside her. He'd been following her with his eyes all night . . . perfect.

Allowing herself to act surprised to see him there, she turned to face him, opening her mouth slightly as though she had something to say.

"I saw you dance," he started, "You were . . . extraordinary . . ."

She tilted her body then, making the shadows on her shift. Like a musician changing chords, she eased forward, a slight flash of her teeth catching the faint light. She thought she heard him inhale.

Top government experimental physicists don't get out much, she thought. His clothes had been fashionable a decade ago—his haircut over two. He blinked rapidly when she looked into his eyes.

"You think so?" she asked.

"For an Eastern intelligence agent," he said, blushing. "Most of the ones we get out here in Nevada aren't nearly as talented . . . would you like to go for a walk?"

* * *

Determining Interaction Scores

To determine how effective a character is at a given Interaction, compute their roll for each Interaction

Basic Roll: 10 + [Listed Modifiers + 1 (if mods are above 0)]

Note: DROP fractions.

Modifiers: The below chart contains the basic modifiers list for all the listed Enhancements and Traits. The GM may feel free to add to the table as he sees fit (a great speech, for example, could improve a Recruitment score . . . or a terrible, unintentionally insulting one could hurt it).

Enhancement/Trait	Charm	Intimidation	Persuasion	Recruitment
Presence		+1.5 Lvl		+ .5 Lvl
Likeable	+1 Lvl		+1 Lvl	
Leader			+ .5 Lvl	+1.5 Lvl
Exotic	+1.5 Lvl		+ .5 Lvl	
Attractive	+1 Lvl		+1 Lvl	
Statuesque	+ .5 Lvl	+ .5 Lvl	+ .5 Lvl	+ .5 Lvl
Rugged		+1.5		+1.5
Flair	+1			
Bad Reputation	-1 Lvl	+ .5 Lvl	-1 Lvl	- .5 Lvl
Baaaad Reputation	- .5 Lvl	+1 Lvl		+1 Lvl
Good Reputation	+1 Lvl		+ .5 Lvl	+ .5 Lvl
Ugly	-2 or -6		-1 or -3	-1 or -3

Situational Modifiers

Known Level 3/4 Combat skill		+1 / +3		+ .5
Frightening Appearance	-2	+2	-1	+ .5
Heavily Armed / Show of power		+1 to +3		+1
Tactics/Strategy at L3 or L4				+1 or +2

Ex1: A character with Level 1 Statuesque gets an 11- roll to Charm, Intimidation, Persuasion, and Recruitment. The math is:

10 + .5 (for Lvl 1 Statuesque) + 1 (since there is a positive modifier).

If the character has Level 2 Statuesque, he gets 12- rolls to all Interaction types.

If the character has Level 3 Statuesque, he also gets 12- rolls to all Interaction types (he has +1.5 in each which gets rounded down) *but* if he has any other reaction modifiers, his .5 will get him at least a 13- in that area.

Ex2: A character with Exotic L1 and Likeable L2 gets the following:

- Charm: 10 +1.5 (Exotic) +2 (Likeable) +1 (positive mod): 14-
- Intimidate: 10 +0 (Exotic) +0 (Likeable) + 0 (positive mod): 10-
- Persuasion: 10 +.5 (Exotic) +2 (Likeable) +1 (positive mod): 13-
- Recruitment: 10 +0 (Exotic) +0 (Likeable) + 0 (positive mod): 10-

Interaction Definitions

Knowing what exactly constitutes an attempt to Charm, Persuade, or Recruit can be difficult. If a character is trying to talk his way out of a ticket how does the GM know what to roll against? The answer is that it depends on *how* the character is trying to talk his way out.

Charm: This is the ability to use wit, grace, humor, and/or looks to get people to like you. Charm examples include:

- Attempts to ingratiate yourself with your hosts.
- Making someone “like you” before trying to feed them a line (Con Artist) or doing something unusual.
- Making the locals think you’re “okay for an out of townner.”
- Entrancement: if you trying to seduce or otherwise use sex appeal to influence someone, you are trying to *Entrance* them. Entrance is a function of Charm, however it only works against some people (usually the opposite sex). Some modifiers may only effect your chance to Entrance, *not* to Charm.

Intimidation: Intimidation is easy and straightforward—this is the ability to scare your target. This is done by making an overt or veiled threat, looking imposing, or simply staring them down. Some notes:

- Small people can intimidate big ones with a successful roll. Even if there’s no physical way for the big guy to lose, he may be scared by the target’s general demeanor (“I think that guy has something up his sleeve”).
- When rolling against someone else with Presence, subtract their modifiers from yours (and vice versa). It’s hard to scare frightening people.
- If you are facing a professional soldier or battle-hardened veteran, the GM will usually rule that this just won’t work.
- Intimidation attempts are 5 REA Medium actions. If you don’t get the result you were hoping for, you can try again, but each successive attempt is at a cumulative –4.
- You can intimidate several people at once, but each additional person gives you a cumulative –2 to the roll up to a maximum of –6.

Persuade: This is the ability to make people agree with or believe you using either logical or emotional rationales (appealing to the target’s psychological profile, using coherent logical arguments, appealing to a sense of fair-play, etc.). The main difference between Persuade and Charm is that Charm gets people to like *you*; Persuade gets people to like the *idea*. Persuade examples include:

- Appealing to an ideological weakness in the target (good for talking guards into letting you make a phone call or something).
- Convincing someone who doesn’t want to “to do the right thing.”
- Getting someone to trust you for a short period of time (i.e. to open a door for you).
- NOTE: Persuasion *isn’t* just about using logic (per se) it’s about making a compelling case that appeals to the person’s innate sense of right and wrong, generating trust, seeming sensible and levelheaded, and making a good case *psychologically* even when the facts may not support you. If you have a compelling case you may not even need to persuade (but if the audience won’t listen to you, that’s when this comes into play).

Examples:

Charm:

Ex1: You try to get the Duke’s battle plan (at a fancy party) by telling him how sensual your female character “thinks a man with a battle plan” is.

Ex2: You try to talk your way out of a fight by joking with the huge bruiser that he shouldn’t fight you because hey, he might break his hand by compacting your face.

Intimidate:

Ex1: You can Intimidate prisoners to give up information, punks to back down, and you can make an Intimidation roll when walking into a tough bar to carry yourself in such a way as to suggest you’re a bad dude. Usually a roll made by 2-4 insures that no one will mess with you without reason.

Ex2: It’s hard to scare an angry mob that’s coming to get you. Usually making a Persuade attempt (to talk them into returning to their homes) or a Recruit attempt (to convince them that they’re taking out their anger on the wrong guy) will have better results.

Persuade:

Ex1: You probably can’t Persuade the Duke to give away his troop locations but you might convince him that he would go down in history as a humanitarian if he let some of the villagers flee.

Ex2: You try to talk your way out of a fight by telling the huge bruiser that he shouldn’t waste his time pounding a smaller man (no matter what you said) because big people shouldn’t hit little ones or you’re not worth the effort.

Recruit: This is the ability to make the target rally to you. You are exerting a force of personality and trying to come out as a leader and as someone to be taken seriously. Attempts to Recruit are often:

- Leading frightened people or calming crowds.
- Making a compelling speech to get people to “pitch in” or “change their misguided ways.”
- Convincing someone to join or give to the cause.
- Making someone respect you by appearing stalwart and forthright.

Skills Affecting Interaction

Some skills can affect Interaction attempts, usually by adding bonuses to your scores. For a skill to add to your Interaction score, the GM must rule that the skill is applicable to the situation and the skill roll must be successful. The most common skills affecting Interaction are:

Con Artist: At Levels 3 / 4, it can add +1 / +3 to Persuade rolls.

Actor: Levels 3 and 4 can add +1 / +3 to Persuade rolls but only when trying to persuade using emotions or emotional arguments.

Diplomat:

Recruit:

Ex1: You might try convincing the Duke that his war is wrong and he should hand over the battle plans . . . but that isn't going to work well.

Ex2: You need help with a task you can't complete all by yourself: you find four co-workers and make a Recruitment roll to get their help.

Ex3: You can't really recruit your way out of a fight if you insulted someone—but if someone's going to beat you up for “being on the wrong side” you can try to recruit them to your side. Make a speech and impress them with your courage, strength of character, and general worthiness (roll well!)

First Impressions (Passive Interaction)

The above rules cover attempts to manipulate other people, but what if you're just being you? Really likeable people can pick up friends without even trying. Scary people don't have to stare down passersby in order to be unmolested on the streets. The above attempts are "active" but interaction can be passive as well.

These are called for when the GM says they are. When you walk into a tough, seedy bar, the GM can say "Make an Intimidation roll." If you make it, you exude presence . . . if not, you might get spotted as a victim.

Usually passive rolls are called for when you just meet someone and the GM wants to determine what their first impression will be. They are made against either your highest Interaction score or against the one the GM deems is appropriate. The results of a successful roll aren't always good. Here are some guidelines.

Intimidation: If an Intimidation roll is made by 4+ in a "normal" establishment, the patrons may believe the character to be a dangerous person and might even summon the authorities. A roll made by 0-3 will often result in some distrust (but usually the character will get respect).

Charm: If the GM calls for a Charm roll, a success may mean that the target is enamored with you. This could range from like to lust.

Persuade: There is no "passive" roll for Persuasion. The GM can have you make a roll any time you're trying to convince someone to do something whether you thought to ask for one or not, though.

Recruitment: Any time the character is in a leadership position (even for a short time) the GM can check for Recruitment. Good results (4+) will mean the underlings have good morale and believe in him. Extremely good results (10+) will result in a high degree of loyalty so long as its not abused.

First Impressions:

This is an open rule. The GM should call for rolls whenever it seems appropriate. If a character is intentionally trying to "turn down" his charisma (trying to appear as less of a threat, for example) the GM can make the character roll at -2.

Acting, Con Artist, Diplomacy, Revelry, and other skills may help a character fit in or otherwise make a good first impression (at a formal affair, the GM will call for an Etiquette roll).

Common Modifiers:

- Well dressed: +1 Charm, -1 Intimidate.
- Polite Manner: -2 Intimidate.
- Wild clothes, revealing attire, etc. +1 to charm for purposes of attraction.

Persuasion Chart

Roll Made By	Effect	Notes
-5 or less	Complete Failure	Target will evaluate the offer on its logical merits only. If a skill was employed the target will probably be angered.
-1 to -4	Failure	The target evaluates the offer on its logical merits only.
0 to +4	Success	The target will be motivated to do what the character asked. The target will trust and like the persuader.
+5 to +9	Great Success	Target greatly trusts the character. This level will sway even moderately hostile targets or juries.
+10	Critical Success	Target is persuaded to do almost anything the character asks. The target is devoted in a lasting fashion to the character.

Recruitment Chart

Roll Made By	Effect	Notes
-5 or less	Complete Failure	Target is of unchanged loyalty (disloyal characters remain disloyal). Target feels manipulated.
-1 to -4	Failure	As above but the target does not feel manipulated.
0 to +4	Success	Troops led get +2 to WIL rolls to avoid running. Somewhat friendly crowds will act as directed. Neutral parties strongly joining the character's side or cause.
+5 to +9	Great Success	Troops rally to the character's side. Crowds are impressed and formerly neutral characters join. Troops get +4 WIL.
+10	Critical Success	Troops are fanatic (+8 WIL). Crowds are totally under the character's command. Double agents switch sides again.

Charm Chart

Roll Made By	Effect	Notes
-5 or less	Complete Failure	All but the most naïve of targets will realize they are being manipulated.
-1 to -4	Failure	The target is not particularly attracted to the character. If the character is a knockout, tone or actions have put the target off
0 to +4	Success	Target is very attracted. Any RES rolls to notice deception are at -1 and perception rolls (for things other than the attacker) are at -2. The target may exercise poor judgment.
+5 to +9	Great Success	The target is infatuated. RES rolls are at -4 and perception rolls are at -6. The target may do very unusual things.
+10	Critical Success	The target thinks he/she is in love. The effects are fairly temporary but RES rolls are at -8 and perception at -6.

Intimidation Chart

Roll Made By	Effect	Notes
-5 or less	Complete Failure	Target is no more intimidated than is logical. Psychologically the target feels he has the edge (even if he doesn't).
-1 to -4	Failure	Target is not intimidated more than is logical.
0 to +4	Success	Target gets -2 to Initiative rolls for the first attack round if operating against the attacker. Target is at -1 RES or WIL to avoid pressure or deception. Target may try to deal.
+5 to +9	Great Success	Target is scared: -4 to the first initiative roll and -2 to hit on the first attack against the character.
+10	Critical Success	Target is terrified and will try to run/cooperate. Rolls are at -6 for the first initiative roll and -4 for the first attack on the character

Collisions

Collisions happen often in role-playing games, whether a character flies his space ship into the enemy battle cruiser or someone steps out in front a car which just is not stopping for anything. Other common forms of collision are the flying tackle (sometimes assisted by paranormally fast speed) and falling (where the character collides with the ground). The following rules tell how to work it all out.

Damage in JAGS is proportional to momentum (mass times velocity). The type of collision which occurs is important too--if the moving object collides with something which then moves the damage is much less than if the collision brings the moving object to a stop. In cases where two moving objects collide head on, the damage will be severe as the velocities are added.

Mass: The mass of an object is its BLD / 5 (where BLD is 15 lbs. for an inanimate object). A car weighing 1.2 tons (2400 lbs.) has a Mass number of 32. A man with a BLD of 13 has a Mass number of 2.6 or 3. Round normally (1.5 rounds to 2, less rounds to 1). The minimum an object can have is a Mass number of 1 (except for really small objects less than a pound that may, at the GM's discretion, have a 0 mass number doing no damage (e.g. a feather).

Velocity: Velocity is measured in yards per second.

Collision Type: The basic type of collision determines the next modification to the damage. If the target of the collision is stationary or moving very slowly in comparison to the colliding object and the target is a moveable object the collision is elastic. A good example of this is a pool ball collision where the pool balls move freely when hit. Another example is a car hitting a man--the car may not stop but the man will move. An inelastic collision is one where the struck object will not move (a man falling to earth--the man strikes the ground and the ground does not move). Collisions where the party impacted is trapped against a wall may be treated as inelastic. This type of collision is much more serious (and more difficult to arrange in combat). If two characters of even roughly even size run into each other the collision is inelastic and the velocities are added. Knockback is figured and if one is knocked back and the other doesn't the one who didn't continues moving 'over' the one that did move. If both would have been knocked back, they simply stop where they hit.

DN1: Obviously this is physically bogus--the collision type should be determined by the outcome. If the target moves (eg. knockback was done or the mass of the target was simply insufficient to stop the moving object) the impact was elastic. On the other hand, this common sense way of handling it (the GM determines before hand what will happen in a general sense or what is likely to happen) is much simpler and helps the reality of the results.

Collision Table

Type	Base Damage	Knockback
Inelastic	Mass x Velocity / 2	Yes
Elastic	Mass x Velocity / 6	No
Partial	Mass x Velocity / 12	No

The Uses of Mass:

In JAGS, Mass (a character's BLD divided by 5) is often used more than his BLD statistic itself. There are several reasons for this:

- 1 point of Mass accelerated at 1 yard per second does 1 point of damage (usually). This is used to determine how far things can be thrown, how far people go when hit by super strong characters, etc.
- For paranormal abilities like Flight, a character's acceleration is the power of the ability divided by the Mass he's lifting (heavier guys go slower).
- Each point of Strength (STR) above 10 allows the character to bench press one point of Mass. Not coincidentally, that point of STR also does 1 point of damage.
- It should also be noted that each (approx.) 75 pounds (1 Mass) of weight a character has above normal adds a point of damage in hand to hand combat. The extra point of Mass acts a bit like an extra point of STR.

Collision Examples:

Examples of Inelastic collisions are characters falling and hitting the ground, a person running into a wall, two cars colliding head on.

Examples of Elastic Collisions are: Cars hitting people, a football player tackling someone, a really mad barbarian running over/through a smaller but presumably more civilized guy.

Examples of Partial collisions may be gained by watching a teenager on a skateboard, rollerblades, etc.

NOTE: A Partial Collision is a “wipe out” in which the character falls and rolls. It does half the damage of an Elastic Collision. For high speeds (motorcycle spills) the GM should require an Acrobatics or Jujitsu roll at Level 2.

Strength Addition: If the attacker (usually a character) strikes the target with, say, an elbow as the impact occurs, STR damage may be added to the collision damage. This could also apply to a mechanized hammer on the front of a vehicle or similar situations. Spikes on a vehicle will act as though they were being wielded by a user of base damage STR (thus increasing the penetration they would do). Penetrating damage of a blade may at most be doubled this way.

Roll For Damage Modification: Once the final base damage has been determined, the GM or player rolls for damage modification on the impact damage table. In the case of penetrating damage, it may be better to handle the penetrating damage separately from the impact (treat as two separate hits but apply the total to the wound type check). In the case of a flying tackle, the character may add the amount hit by, otherwise, as in the case of vehicular collisions, there is no 'to-hit' modifier to the roll. Use the rules for 'blind shots.'

O1: Intentional Collisions. If a character drives a car into someone intentionally they must make a Vehicle Operations skill roll (or a COR roll at -2). Combat Vehicle Operations is treated no differently for these purposes (most vehicles aren't designed for ramming people).

Damage Assignment: Determining what hit what is usually very simple but in some cases it may require some GM tinkering to get right. When a bus hits a person it is generally counted as though the multi-ton bus runs into the light person but when a character hits the ground he does not take damage based on the earth's mass.

In a collision both targets take equal damage. If the collision was intentional the target's damage modification roll is based on what he was hit by. If the collision was unintentional the roll is random. The character who causes the impact always gets a randomly modified damage roll unless both people in the collision intentionally ran into each other (in which case the damage for each is modified by each other's to-hit roll).

Intentional Collisions—Ramming: Characters with paranormally enhanced speed may choose to ram targets. If this is done these rules apply (this can be considered an excerpt from the combat section). A character ramming is always considered a long action--unless much faster than the target, the target will get a chance to attack an incoming character. The attacker must make an AGI vs. AGI roll to hit.

Damage is almost always elastic and the ramming character may add normal STR damage to such an attack. The attacker takes damage proportional to what is inflicted. The damage to the charging character is usually If the attack produces NO knock back the character takes damage EQUAL to what was inflicted.

If the character simply 'clothes lines' the target then damage is simply +1 per 4 yards a second after the first 4, plus normal STR damage. A

* * *

Jay-Nine eased the small orbital transport out of the guidance window. He exhaled when the alarms failed to sound.

“It worked,” he said, “we’re free flying now. We can dock anywhere on the orbital we want—not that it’ll do us any good.”

“Just get us to the heat fins,” the woman said. “There’s a dorsal data-line I need access to. As for getting in, he’ll take care of that.”

“Yeah,” Jay-Nine said. “I’ve been meaning to ask about tall dark and dumb back there. Where the hell’d you find him?”

“Him?” she asked, “I bought him. Call him Romeo.”

Jay-Nine arced the craft and the light-studded steel-grillwork constellation of the heat ducts rose above the curve of the orbital. “How we gonna mate with the data line?” he asked.

“Oh that,” she said, slotting a clip of gyro-jet ammunition into a plastic rifle, “the hull here’s low impact ceramic—doesn’t interfere with the magnetics. Brace for impact, we’re gonna ram it.”

* * *

Turning (Advanced Movement)

normal to-hit roll is needed to hit the target and the attack counts as a normal medium action.

JAGS may be played as a strategy game on a tabletop using maps and markers (or figures) to represent the characters and their opponents. If this is done, the best possible way is to use a hex map (a sheet of paper marked off in interlocking hexagons) and to treat each hexagon as a 'square yard' for game purposes. If the metric system is desired, yards may be converted to meters and feet to 33 cm (the measurements are approximate and not all that important, anyway). The point of all this is that some rules need to be employed in a game where tactical movement is used. The most important is turn modes or 'movement restrictions.'

Turn radius is a measure of how maneuverable a character is. The two factors are how fast the character is going and how maneuverable the character's movement form is. The number is expressed as a fraction. This fraction is the number of yards ('hexes') the character must travel in a straight line before making a 60 degree turn (one hex face). If a more abstract movement form is being used, half this number is the distance the character must travel in a straight line before making a 30 degree turn, etc.

A turn radius is a fraction. The fraction comes from the type of movement being employed (so a car would have a higher fraction than a motorcycle because a car handles worse and takes wider corners). This is multiplied by the character's speed and the result is the number of yards the character travels forwards.

Transportation Mode	Turn Radius
Walking/Running/Sprinting	1/8
Assisted Flight	1/3
Powered Flight	1/5
Truck	1/2
Car (Luxury)	1/3
Car (Normal)	1/4
Car (Sports)	1/5
Motorcycle	1/6
Skateboard	1/7

Ex1: A character is moving at 6 yards per second running. The character wants to turn to avoid hitting a wall. The character's turn radius is 1/8 [turn radius] x 6 [current speed] = .75. The character must move less than 1 hex forward before making a 60 degree turn.

Ex2: A motorcycle is moving at 50 yards/sec. Its turn radius is 8.3 hexes. If the rider rounds a corner and sees a wall 7 hexes in front of her, she's out of luck unless she can ditch it, make a great driving roll, decelerate, or survive the crash.

* * *

Behind Martin, the cycles were chewing up the distance he'd gained on the straightway. He punched the gas hard into a turn and kissed the thin aluminum guardrail between him and the cliff.

Nothing but sky, he thought randomly, like lyrics from a song. He heard the low, bass roar of a cycle behind him. They weren't firing—they wanted the car in one piece and that meant they needed a head shot.

Damn! Ahead the road twisted crazily. He cranked back on the wheel. In the mirror, the biker smiled—the black rod of a 9-millimeter flashed above the curve of the cycle's handlebars.

Martin slammed on the brakes.

With the biker three yards behind him he felt the car fishtail and smelled rubber burn as the distance closed like a lightning bolt.

The biker was still smiling when he slammed under Martin's back fender. He made a wet sound before the bike caught the rear axle and muffler. Martin, fearing the worst, mashed the accelerator.

The cycles were on him then, like a school of piranha, rushing in behind him. Too fast to escape, and too maneuverable to grossly overrun him they closed the distance.

He ducked low and prayed in the quick instants while the car seemed frozen or mired in the speeds below eighty miles per hour.

He heard the first crack of a pistol—terrifyingly close.

One trick left: with the road ahead wrapped around the

Modifications To Turning: The turn modes are fairly simple to work out but there are some additional rules. If a character has a fractional turn mode (.75, 8.3, etc.) the GM should round normally (4.5 rounds to 5, 4.4 rounds to 4). If this gives the character a 0 turn radius (radius of .4 or less) the character can make 1 60 degree turn each yard of movement and two such turns every other yard of movement. This indicates a character who can turn at right angles whenever wished.

Turning in Place: If a character does not move and tactical combat is being used (tactical combat can be in effect without a map if the GM simply keeps general track of where everyone is) it takes 'moves' to turn one's body. A character gets a 'free' 1 hex face turn when he gets to act. Any others take medium actions. A character can turn a hex face with a short action if responding to an attack or someone's movement but this represents turning one's torso and may not be compounded to make two shifts in one direction.

Ex1: A character is facing 'north' down a row of hexes. Someone makes a medium move and steps into the hex to the character's rear right. The character takes a short action and shifts her torso to face the front right. That rear right hex can now be seen so that when the attack comes, she can block it. When the attacker declares another attack action, she might want to declare another short action shift to the right again to directly face the attacker (although why she might want to do this instead of block would be a mystery). It isn't legal anyway. Her feet are still facing north and she can't make the full turn (unless she's an alien with a super flexible spine).

Acceleration and Deceleration: Characters usually declare acceleration and deceleration between rounds (they may wish to do this secretly if two PCs are sparring). The change in movement takes place immediately during that turn. The amount character's may decelerate by is dependent on their movement types, stall speeds of vehicles, etc.

NOTE: As a general rule, a character may decelerate by double whatever his normal acceleration is.

Ex1: A character who is moving at 30 yards/sec has an acceleration of 10 yards/sec (Assisted flight--see the ability description). At the beginning of a round of combat the character declares a deceleration of 10 yards/sec (to get her turn radius from 10 to 7). At the very beginning of the round the deceleration happens. Anyone attacking the character attacks at the character's lower speed.

Other Turning Rules: This section does not purport to be a full vehicular combat system. Nor does it claim to be a war game. There are many possible modifications to the above rules--icy roads, a character running through the bushes or grabbing hold of something immobile, etc. Generally it is a short action to 'ditch' a vehicle or cut flight power and begin falling (but still moving forward). In a speeding car there may be nothing the character can do which will stop the vehicle. Even if the object cannot turn, though, the GM may allow it to move 'sideways' every other move still heading forward (the player moves it to the front right or left hex instead of directly ahead). This represents turning the wheel before the car (or speeding character) actually turns. Generally the character should be forced to move sideways in the direction he is trying to turn.

*mountains like a coiled snake
his fingers found the switch—
Nitrous Oxide.*

*Time to burn, the voice in his
brain said coolly like he was
hearing somebody else.*

*In a cold panic, he pictured the
road ahead and pressed down
hard.*

*He heard the crack of another
shot—like a slap in the face—
echo off the basalt wall of rock
to his right. A fist of
acceleration drove him back
into the leather and his
knuckles went white on the
wheel.*

*Frozen, he raced towards the
hairpin turn that dipped steeply
to the right. Then he
screamed.*

*The cycle to his right, just
against the back door—the
owner's pistol over the rear
seats—caught metal and spun
out in a fatal, rolling, meat-
grinder of a crash.*

*There's no way—Martin
thought. His muscles were like
ice under his skin: immobile . . .
rigid.*

*Then he decided he wanted to
live after all and swung out. He
felt the left half of his wheels
bite air over the edge of the
roadway before he pulled it
back. Riding the slide, he
folded yards of ancient guard
rail into his car while the
cycles—their ranks broken by
the spill—erupted in a sparkle
of badly aimed muzzle flashes.*

*Martin screamed in victory—
audible even over the engine—
when the car crossed back
over the yellow line and onto
the straightway at the mountain
bridge . . .*

* * *

Experience

The method by which characters progress is the experience system. By convention, the GM awards 'experience points' at the end of each scenario or play session which the players spend (as per normal character points) to enhance their abilities. The guidelines here cover the assignment and expenditure of experience points.

Assignment: The rate at which points are assigned by the GM is one of the most defining aspects of an ongoing campaign. The GM may opt to assign points very slowly and have basically static characters or give them quickly and have the characters change rapidly over the course of the campaign.

There is no 'official' system as each campaign may be different but a few suggestions are give and the GM may wish to adopt them, modify them, or use any other workable system.

Character Maturation: If this system is used the GM begins the game by giving out points rapidly but after a certain total (say 10 experience points) the rate becomes 'normal' or much slower. This creates a campaign where characters begin with significant flaws in areas where the character is intended to improve and then after the total, the character reaches the desired levels in those areas. This method is useful for campaigns where the characters start 'young' and then come of age by attaining the necessary skills for the character to function 'as designed.'

Standard Rate: The game is designed for players to receive 1 to 3 points of experience per 'adventure.' This system assumes that the adventure lasts about two nights of gaming. A single point is usually given for easy or failed adventures. Two points are given for most standard adventures, and three for very tough adventures. Thus if the game is played twice a week, the characters will have an average of 10 extra points after 5 weeks.

Fractional Rewards: Experience points can be given in fractions (usually quarter or half points). This can be done throughout the game (for the slaying of tough monsters, excellent roleplaying, figuring out a deadly trap, etc.) If this is being done, the GM can choose to only reward certain players (those who took part in slaying the monster) but in practice this has been found to cause conflict. It should be noted that if the 'standard rate' is being used then the rewards for a successful adventure should add up to two or three points.

PC Death: If the game is run in such a way that player characters rarely die then the GM may award a PC death point of during an encounter a player character dies due to the dangerousness of the scenario. The point can be awarded as a tribute to the character. This should not be awarded for suicides or characters who die through sheer, outright stupidity.

“Eeeps!”

In our group, experience points are known as “eeeps.” At the end of a night of gaming, piteous cries of “Eeeps! Eeeps!” can be heard from players who think they aren't getting enough.

Expenditure: The rate at which points are spent will govern how much characters change between play sessions. It is a general rule that points may only be spent between sessions and not during combat to prevent players from suddenly raising ability levels to compensate for difficulties during the gaming session.

Raising Skill Levels: There are two ways to do this: the real way and the balanced way. To get a level 3 skill is to get the equivalent of a Ph.D. in that area (in a physical skill, it's the attaining of pro-sports level ability). Level 4 skills never "just happen." A better way to do this is to let character place half of their points into improving skill levels over time. So a character with a Level 2 Difficult skill would need to put 16 character points into it to improve it to Level 4 if he were heroic (one half price Level 4 skill). If the half experience rule was in effect, he would have to receive 32 points of total experience before reaching Level 4—a good long time of gaming.

New Skills: New skills may only be bought with training. It usually takes 1 to 5 years to learn a Difficult skill to level 2 ability but again, most player characters are the dedicated sort and the GM is the final arbitrator. Normal skills vary wildly in the time necessary to learn them (Law is a Normal skill—so is Revelry). It is suggested that the character find an instructor (or pursue a self study course) and then the GM allow a single or fractional point to be invested in the skill. After an arbitrary amount of time and study (as determined by the GM) more points may be added. The intent is that the character be played for a time with the very low skill roll (under a 10-).

Modifying Statistics/Buying Enhancements: The GM makes the final decision as to what can be bought with experience points. It is suggested that some limits be placed on characteristic raising to prevent players from optimizing their character development by building their characters into physical and mental supermen. If the characters are below adult age then it is a general convention that two secondary statistics or one primary statistic may be raised for the once normal cost. If the characters are simply young adults then a general convention is that 1 secondary statistic may be raised once for normal cost. If the characters are fully mature adults then no statistics may be raised for normal cost. The GM may then wish to assign a 5 point penalty to all statistics raised after that cost and may even wish to disallow it all together.