



NINJA BURGER: THE RPG
— 2ND EDITION —

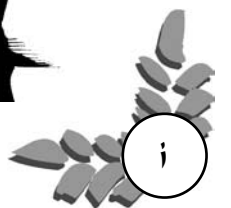


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*“This city is a point upon a map of fog...
Like us, it doesn’t quite exist.”
— Ambrose Bierce*



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NINJA BURGER: THE RPG — 2ND EDITION —

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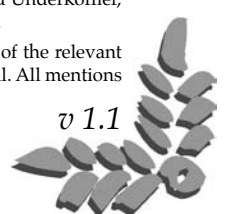
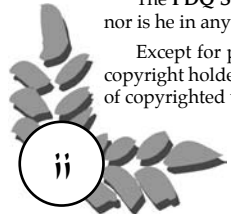
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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Michael Fiegel, aka “æon,” is a writer and graphic designer best known as the primary force behind Ninja Burger. He is the founding member of æthereal FORGE, a loose coalition of artists and writers responsible collectively for Ninja Burger and several other RPG projects. He was an early member of Fark.com and created many of that site’s graphics during its fledgling years, including the logo. From 2002 to 2006 he was the Lead Columns Editor for RPG.net. He has written extensively for a variety of Roleplaying Game companies, including Dog Soul, Khepera, P.I.G., and R. Talsorian. He is also a regular book reviewer for Slashdot.org and writes for *Dragon Magazine*. He was born in Buffalo, New York and resides in San Francisco, California, where he is employed as a technical writer.

ABOUT ÆTHEREAL FORGE

<http://www.aeforge.com/>

æthereal FORGE is a loosely aligned group of artists, writers and other individuals working primarily in the areas of online content and RPG design and development. Aside from Ninja Burger, projects include: Darkpark.com, Gamegrene.com, Decay, Iconoclast, Sacour, and *Power Grrrl*.

ABOUT NINJA BURGER

<http://www.ninjaburger.com/>

Ninja Burger was founded in 1954, and soon became the world’s predominant underground ninja-run fast food delivery service. The Ninja Burger Web site was developed in 1999 by the honorable Kenshiro Aette-san and Miyoko Aenomi-san in the traditions of their honorable ancestors. Their solemn mission: to defend the downtrodden, fight for the honor of Ninja Burger, and to deliver hot and fresh food to Ninja Burger’s customers. The website debuted in 2000, and in 2001 was turned into an RPG by 9th Level Games; three supplements followed. In 2003 it was also turned into a card game by Steve Jackson Games, with a supplement following in 2004. In 2005, the *Ninja Burger Honorable Employee Handbook* was published as a Print-On-Demand PDF; in 2006 it will be published in print form by Citadel Press, an imprint of Kensington Books.

ABOUT THE PDQ SYSTEM

The **Prose Descriptive Qualities (PDQ) System** has been designed for evocative simplicity, speed, and flexibility in play, with three levels of resolution, suitable for any type of situation. It currently serves as the core game mechanics for *Dead Inside: the Roleplaying Game of Loss & Redemption (DI)*; *Ninja Burger: The Roleplaying Game*; *Monkey, Ninja, Pirate, Robot: the Roleplaying Game (MNPR:RPG)*; and *Truth & Justice (T&J)*. PDQ Core is available as a free download from the following URLs:

<http://www.atomicsockmonkey.com/freebies/di/pdq-core.pdf>

http://www.rpgnow.com/product_info.php?products_id=4175&

<http://e23.sjgames.com/item.html?id=ASM-000>

ABOUT ATOMIC SOCK MONKEY PRESS

<http://www.atomicsockmonkey.com/>

Atomic Sock Monkey Press is dedicated to high-quality, off-kilter, imaginative fun. Currently, that means tabletop games of both the “beer & pretzels” and roleplaying game (RPG) varieties. In the future, they may expand into other areas, but for now Atomic Sock Monkey Press is concentrating on games.

ABOUT CHAD UNDERKOFFLER

Chad Underkoffler is an editor for a telecommunications standards body by day and a freelance game writer by night. He’s been gaming since 1981, to the confusion of his family. His column “Campaign in a Box” appears in Pyramid Online at <http://www.sjgames.com/pyramid/>; he has written material for *Gamma World* (Sword & Sorcery), *GURPS* (Steve Jackson Games), and *Unknown Armies* (Atlas Games); and he is the author and publisher of *Dead Inside*, *Monkey, Ninja, Pirate, Robot: the RPG*, and *Truth & Justice*. Chad currently lives in Alexandria, VA, with his wife Beth and their two black cats.

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1. INTRODUCTION

“Life is a fragile thing. One minute you’re chewin’ on a burger, the next minute you’re dead meat.” – Dumb & Dumber

Welcome to the second edition of the *Ninja Burger Roleplaying Game*, the world’s only RPG featuring ninja who deliver fast food. At least, we hope so. Really, one is plenty.

If you’re reading this, chances are good that you’re familiar with *Ninja Burger*, but in case it’s new to you, don’t worry – aside from knowing what “ninja” and “burger” mean, there’s little to learn. If you can picture a ninja delivering a hamburger (never mind why, for now), then you’ve got an idea of what this game is about: fast-paced ninja action, a really ridiculous plot, and a whole lot of fun for all concerned.

If you’ve played the original *Ninja Burger RPG*, you’ll find this new edition keeps to the spirit of the first edition, offering a freewheeling, wacky way to pass an hour or two between sessions of your regularly scheduled game. In fact, if you can grasp the basic concept (and you’re running a quick one-shot game), you can skip to Chapter 2 to create a ninja character.

For those of you looking for a bit more burger – say, a triple cheeseburger with extra bacon – read on, because this new edition takes ninja fast food delivery to a whole new level. Not only does it introduce a completely new game engine – Atomic Sock Monkey Press’s PDQ System – but it gives you the opportunity to go beyond “Beer and Pretzels,” if you choose. You can still play the game as a one-shot here and there, but you can also develop characters that gain honor, advance over time, and aspire to greatness and domination of the fast food industry.

Assuming they survive, of course.

WHAT YOU NEED TO PLAY

To fully and completely enjoy the *Ninja Burger RPG*, you’ll need the following:

- This rulebook (duh)
- Two (or more) 6-sided dice
- Two (or more) friends
- Something to write on (paper, whiteboard, chalkboard, the table, friends, etc.)
- Something to write with (pens, crayons, markers, pencils, condiments, etc.)
- **Optional:** Ninja costumes, ninja masks, paper shuriken, fast food, plastic swords
- **Not Recommended:** Real swords

OTHER NINJA BURGER MATERIAL

If you already own other *Ninja Burger* material (and we hope you do), you will find many opportunities to incorporate it into your gaming sessions.

Here are some examples:

- **Ninja Burger: The RPG** (*9th Level Games*), and supplements – Delivery maps, lists of weapons, and enemies can be converted easily for use with the PDQ game engine. Other items such as House Rules, *Ninja Magic*, etc. can be used too.
- **Ninja Burger Card Game** (*Steve Jackson Games*), and **Sumo-Size Me** supplement – Delivery cards can be used to randomly generate missions for characters. Character cards can be quickly translated to create viable RPG characters. Item cards can represent actual items in inventory, or played to modify rolls.
- **Ninja Burger Honorable Employee Handbook** (*Citadel Press*) – Keep a copy or two around to enhance the atmosphere of silliness and act as a prop. Threaten characters with *Seppuku* if they don’t adhere to every rule. Use as a coaster.
- **Ninja Burger T-shirts** (*Warehouse 23*) – Tie around your head as a *Ninja Mask* (see *Ninja Burger Handbook* or website for instructions). Or you can even wear it as (gasp) a T-shirt! Imagine that – the mind positively boggles!
- **Ninja Burger “My First Shuriken” Action Playset** – See product recall info on website.



ABOUT ROLEPLAYING AS A NINJA

“Ninja? What the hell are ninja?”

– *American Ninja 2: The Confrontation*

Like many games, Roleplaying Games can involve boards, cards, paper, dice, score sheets, plastic or metal markers, etc. However, unlike most traditional games, RPGs don't necessarily require any of those things. Instead, most of the action in an RPG takes place in the imaginations of the players, as they take on the role of a make-believe character, describing the actions that character is performing in certain situations.

Because they focus on intangibles, Roleplaying Games seem unnatural to some people, but in fact they're probably more natural than other games. In fact, you've been doing it your whole life. You started roleplaying when you were just a toddler, by “playing pretend” or “make-believe,” making mud pies and playing house. Then you got older, and moved on to toy dolls or soldiers, and “Cops and Robbers” with plastic guns. A bit older, and you threw away your toys in favor of computer games – playing them, you might have pretended to be a Warrior, or a Race Car Driver, or a Plumber. And then in high school or college maybe, just maybe, you got involved with real acting, and got to be Hamlet, or King Lear, or Othello.

And in the midst of all that, chances are that at some point, you picked up a piece of wood – a broom handle, a tree branch, a 2x4 – and “crossed swords” in a mock sword fight. Chances are, you once said “Hi-yah!” and feigned a karate chop at a friend, or did your best impression of a flying kick. Chances are, you played hide-and-seek, and for a moment imagined you were invisible, hidden in the shadows. Chances are, you climbed a tree or a fence, and believed for a moment that you were something more than just an ordinary little kid. You were a *ninja*.

People like to think they have a pretty good idea of what a ninja is supposed to act like, and if you ask someone to pretend to be a ninja they'll probably be able to pull something off without giving it much thought. But the truth is that everyone's got a little bit different idea of what “ninja” means. Consider:

- The bumbling slapstick of **Beverly Hills Ninja**
- The “chop-socky” Kung-Fu of the **Mighty Morphin' Power Rangers**
- The pizza-loving **Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles**
- The katana-wielding hacker Hiro Protagonist in Neal Stephenson's novel **Snow Crash**
- The ninja who flip out and “wail on guitars” on the **Real Ultimate Power** website

Quite obviously, there's a lot of difference between such popular notions of the ninja, and all of them are equally “true.” Which is to say, they're not “true” at all. Even the basic things that people agree on – that “real” ninja were assassins who wore black costumes, for example – are not wholly historically correct.

In actual point of fact, most “real” ninja were neither assassins nor spies, instead serving as a sort of Special Forces team, with a focus on surveillance and information gathering – things that samurai and other foot soldiers didn't have the time, skill or inclination to deal with. These “real ninja” were not cruel demons with magical powers, but rather close cousins of the samurai, following a *Bushido*-like code of conduct called *Ninpo*. They were not treacherous backstabbers, but honorable servants and bodyguards of their *Daimyos*.

Ninja also didn't wear black all of the time. That idea probably came from Japanese theater, where stagehands would wear black so they blended in with the backdrop on theater sets; as plays began to feature the “invisible ninja,” the obvious costume to choose was the “all-black” outfit the stagehands wore. In reality, ninja wore much more appropriate clothing. Generally they either dressed in disguise as peasants, monks or enemy forces, or wore clothing composed of dark red, dark blue, dark green, or some other dark, non-black fabric – totally black clothes actually stand out at night because night is not truly black.

The infamous weapons associated with the ninja – the *shuriken*, the *caltrop* or *tetsubishi*, and the *ninja-to* – are closer to the truth, but still carry with them misconceptions as to their use. *Shuriken*, for example, are generally not capable of killing an enemy in a single hit. Along with *tetsubishi*, they were more often used as a painful distraction while a ninja fled capture. The famous short-bladed *ninja-to* is mostly a modern invention; while short-bladed swords might have been used at times, “real” ninja would have used whatever was at hand, favoring the higher-quality *wakizashi* and *katana* when they were available, or using farming implements or common tools when they were better suited to the mission at hand.

The point in mentioning all this is to demonstrate that no matter what ideas about ninja that your players bring to the table – fictional, historical, or somewhere in between – any and all such preconceptions are equally valid (or invalid, as the case may be). There's plenty of room within the Ninja Burger world for broad interpretation of the ninja concept, and the first thing your group needs to do in order to enjoy this game is to never say “a ninja would NEVER do THAT.” Ninja Burger ninja can do whatever you imagine they might do – the aura of mystery is a major part of what makes them truly ninja.

ABOUT NINJA BURGER

"I work for a Japanese company planning a farewell party for one of our staff. Are you coming in Ninja costume? Then I have to contact building security before you come, so you won't be arrested." – Actual Email

Ninja Burger was founded in the 1950s, during the dawn of the fast food era. The key difference between Ninja Burger and those other chains was, of course, that Ninja Burger employed real ninja. This gave them the opportunity to cater to a clientele that other chains were ignoring – powerful people in impossible situations who needed food delivered. Presidents in the midst of high-pressure negotiations in secret chambers. Wealthy elite in remote chateaus atop distant mountains. Soldiers pinned down behind enemy lines. Chances are, if there was a major turning point in history, Ninja Burger was there. So why does nobody remember them then? Because they're ninja.

As the years went by, Ninja Burger saw a need to branch out and expand their operations; while catering to the elite in secrecy was lucrative, it greatly limited Ninja Burger's customer base. And so as the Internet boomed in the late 1990s, Ninja Burger hired a company called æthereal FORGE to give them a web presence, and soon attained international notoriety.

Now, as the world plunges into the 21st Century, they serve not only the wealthy and powerful, but anyone who is hungry and in need of food within 30 minutes, no matter who or where they are. Computer engineers on all-nighters on the top floor of a locked building. Hungry submarine navigators prowling hundreds of feet below the ocean. Scared grandmothers hunkered down inside their homes in bad neighborhoods. Etc.

JUSTIFIABLE INSANITY

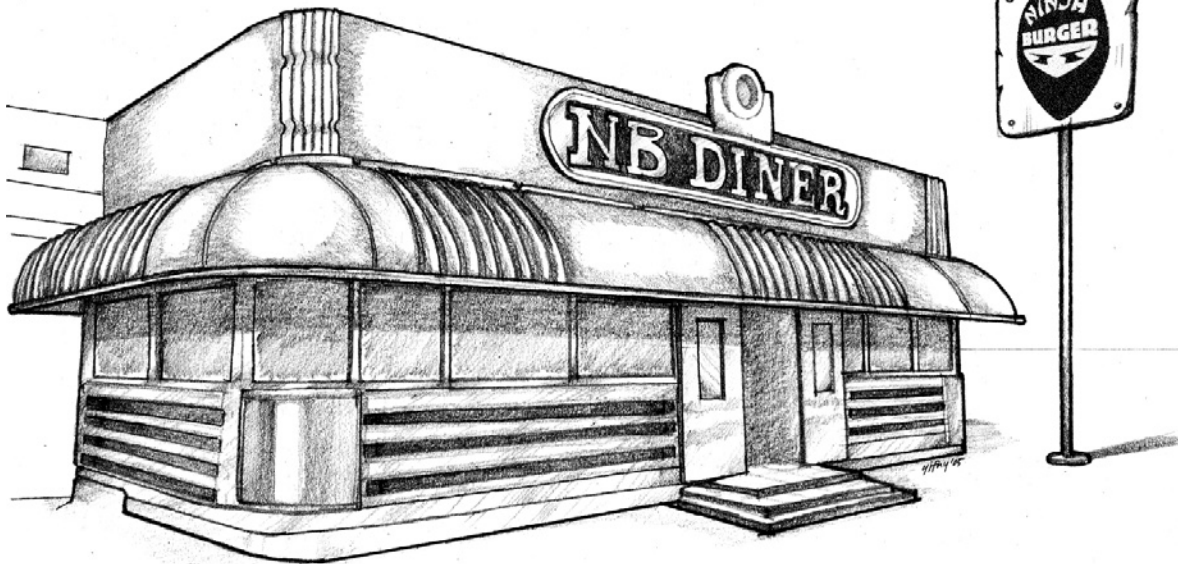
Ninja Burger is not just about ninja, of course. It's also about delivering burgers, as the name suggests. And while on the surface those two concepts might seem to have nothing whatsoever to do with one another, when you take a moment to think about it, it's not so crazy...

OK, so it's crazy. We admit it. Still, it's completely justifiable, on a number of levels.

1. Ninja were honorable servants. Fast food workers serve customers. And if there's any industry that could use a little more honor and respect, it's the fast food industry. Seriously.
2. Ninja need jobs too. While there are some modern ninja who find work in assassination and infiltration, nowadays there are more ninja than there are ninja-like jobs. Everyone needs to work.
3. It's a good cover for other ninja-like activity. Nobody suspects a mere fast food chain of being involved in undercover operations.

Ninja Burger's first location was in San Francisco, California, deep in the heart of Chinatown. Over the years, that original franchise has been expanded and become Ninja Burger's international headquarters. It not only serves the city of San Francisco, but – with a Dispatch center that rivals some Air Traffic Control towers – handles calls from other countries too. Thus, while every franchise has its own Dispatch center for local calls, the San Francisco facility directs the most crucial deliveries around the world in times of crisis.

Later in these rules you'll find more about the Ninja Burger San Francisco franchise. But first we'll look at how Ninja Burger does what it does, and why it does it so darn well.



HOW NINJA BURGER DOES IT

"Calm down, baby. This is what I do."
 – *Strange Days*

Legend says that ninja of old could walk through walls, turn invisible, kill their enemies with a single touch, and breathe underwater for hours at a time. The truth, of course, is that they used a combination of skill, technology and trickery to accomplish all those feats, and others like them. The modern day ninja who work for Ninja Burger use the same basic tools, albeit with a 21st century angle. Let's look at each in turn.

SKILL

Ninja Burger hires an incredibly wide variety of people, including those who are already skilled as ninja, those who have similar skill sets (e.g., Navy SEALs), those who show great skill in other areas (e.g., Cab Drivers), and even those who show no skill whatsoever – sometimes you can find a cherry blossom under the dung heap, as the saying goes.

Regardless of background, all new employees are put through a training program that tests their skill in over twenty areas, ranging from classical ninja skills with certain weapons to modern applications of old skills (such as computer use, modern weaponry, etc.) This intensive training program weeds out weaker candidates; everyone who ends up working for Ninja Burger is at the top of their game.

With only the best of the best out on the street, it's easy to see how Ninja Burger's employees can do what they do. They're not just fast food workers – they're fast food workers who are truly ninja.

TECHNOLOGY

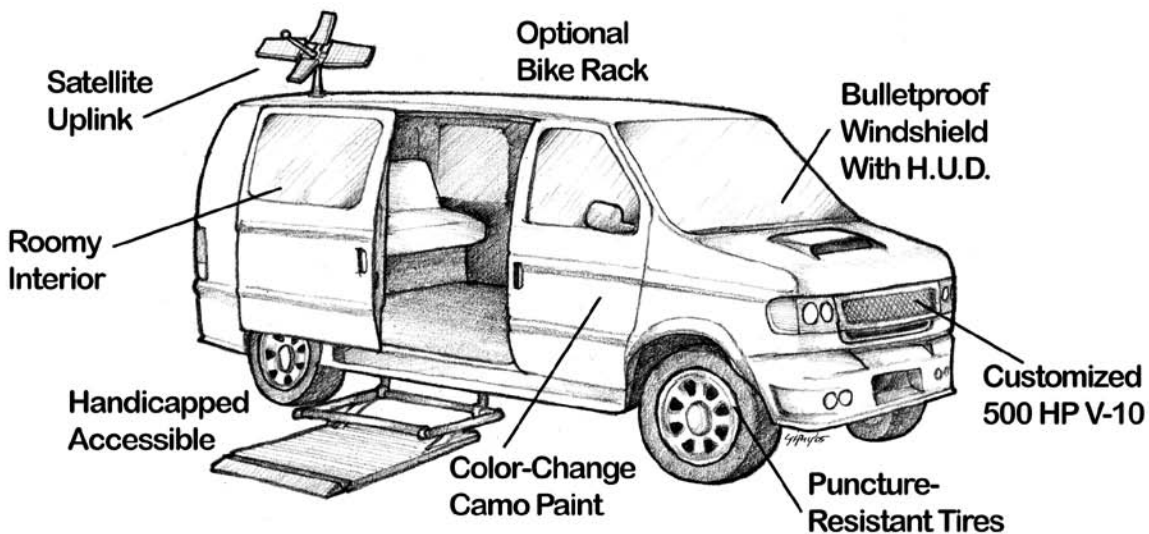
Classical ninja threw eggshells filled with blinding powder, breathed through hollow scabbards, and clambered up walls with spiked hands and split-toed tabi boots. They had the advantage of both cutting-edge weapons technology (*katana*, *ninja-to*) as well as customized weapons made from farm implements.

Ninja Burger has much more to offer its employees. Not only do they have access to classical ninja tools and weapons, but also a wide array of new technological devices. These range from fire-retardant uniforms made from a custom blend of threads that are "blacker than black," to electronic lockpicks and GPS tracking devices, to customized vehicles such as motorcycles, sports sedans and vans (see below), that incorporate camouflage paint, armor plating, puncture-resistant tires, custom engines and the like. Teams who need a way to get around also have access to specialized vehicles like boats, helicopters and jet planes.

Much of this technology is shared through military or private sector company arrangements; in some cases, tech was given freely to Ninja Burger; other times it was the other way around.

TRICKERY

Much of the ninja's "mystical" abilities rely on the fact that many people are gullible, stupid, or both. Since this fact has not changed over the centuries, modern ninja rely on the same social engineering tricks that served their predecessors. Often, Ninja Burger ninja don't dress like ninja at all. Costumes, disguises, fake identification, and the like can make it easier to "vanish" in a crowd than a set of black pajamas. You'd be amazed where a clipboard, a cell phone and a pair of brown shorts will get you.



Schematic of a typical Ninja Burger delivery van



ESTABLISHING YOUR NINJA WORLD

“We need to analyze that burger to find out if it used to be people.”
 – Buffy the Vampire Slayer

There are two ways to run *Ninja Burger*: as a one-shot game, or as part of a campaign. The first option is called “Beer & Pretzels,” a name implying a casual attitude and “snack-sized” experience that begins and ends in one night (and often as little as an hour). The original *Ninja Burger RPG* focused on this style of play, and this version can easily be played that way if you so choose, with one session of gaming focusing on one single delivery. While it’s possible to string together a number of bite-sized games into a storyline, generally Beer & Pretzels-style gamers aren’t focused on plot.

NinjaBurger can also be a Seven Course Meal, played out over the course of years (though that exceeds the life expectancy of a Ninja Burger employee). In this case, each session may expand to include multiple deliveries within an 8-hour-long work shift (or even an entire 40-hour week) possibly exploring characters’ lives outside of work. To use an analogy, Beer & Pretzels is like the old *Aeon Flux* shorts on MTV; each was three minutes long and ended with a death. Seven Course Meal gaming is more like the half-hour *Aeon Flux* series, or the recent film; characters still died, but they survived long enough to develop personalities.

VR RATING

Although you may choose to develop your own Ninja Burger setting from scratch, a number of example settings are described on the following pages. Each has a VR rating (V stands for Violence, and R for Realism) which establishes a baseline of what’s “normal” for that setting. These ratings are scored as “-2,” “0,” or “+2,” as indicated in the chart at the bottom of this page. Throughout this book, you will find “VR Factor” callouts which indicate **optional** uses for this rating in your game – others are left to the imagination.

| Rating | Violence Factor | Realism Factor |
|--------|--|---|
| -2 | “Saturday Morning Cartoon.” There’s no threat of death; characters might lose honor, or a finger, but probably won’t ever actually permanently die (although they might think they’re going to, every now and then). No Seppuku Rule. | “Cinéma Vérité.” The world is completely and absolutely real within its own baseline setting. Ninja Burger might have weird enemies (samurai, pirates, etc.) but there is nothing that couldn’t really exist (e.g. talking trees). Weird things don’t happen without explanation. |
| 0 | “Hollywood Action Film.” Characters have a good chance of dying if they break the rules (or the laws of physics) or are incredibly stupid, but most of the time is spent avoiding violence. The Seppuku Rule is self-enforced, on an honor system. | “Speculative Fiction.” Mutants, zombies, robots, pirates, etc., all exist, and it might involve gamma radiation or spiders, but it’s there. Magic is real. Demons and aliens and such live in the sewers. Time travel? Perhaps. The truth is out there, but it might take some effort to find it. |
| +2 | “Wuxia Bloodsport.” The world is quite violent and deadly. Every mission involves a threat of death, and the Seppuku Rule is strictly enforced. Combat is frequent and furious, people die in very realistic ways, and it’s pretty easy to get hurt or killed. | “Loony Toony.” The world’s baseline logic is only a thin veneer. The laws of physics can be bent and broken. Plots often drift into the realm of wacky and silly, and there is little internal consistency from session to session. Players never know what to expect. Sense? What sense? |

NINJA BURGER 101

“AAA Service: Anyone, Anytime, Anywhere.”

VR Rating – V0, R-2

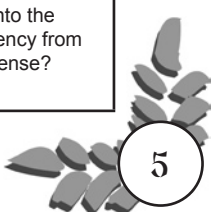
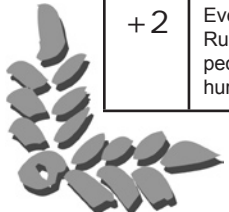
The Basics – It is the present day. Ninja Burger has been around since the 1950s, delivering to high-profile customers in extreme situations who require ultimate discretion – Presidents, Movie Stars, Political Fugitives, etc. With the rise of the Internet, Ninja Burger has begun to branch out and spread the word, and their customer base includes everyone from Navy SEALs in enemy territory to game designers in locked offices. Now, with secret bases across the country and around the world, they prepare for world domination of the fast food industry. All who work for them must walk the fine line between secrecy and publicity; Ninja Burger must attract and deliver to customers without anyone knowing they really exist.

Known Enemies – Samurai Burger, a competing chain run by (you guessed it) modern day samurai; Clan of the White Scorpion, a rogue clan of enemy ninja; other fast food chains run by pirates, etc. (or at least people pretending to be those things).

Typical Deliveries – Mrs. Smith has ordered two burgers and a large cola; watch out for her poodle, and avoid the runaway ostrich on the Golden Gate Bridge. Mr. Johnson has ordered twelve Combo #2 meals for his son’s birthday party, but his wife has already ordered from Samurai Burger; deliver the burgers and defeat the enemy without getting arrested. The President, who is flying on Air Force One, has ordered a Combo #2 with extra cheese; deliver to him in-flight as he passes over San Francisco airspace.

Plot Possibility – With a customer database that includes the real names, phone numbers, present locations and security details of the world’s most powerful people, most of the world’s governments and corporations will do just about anything to infiltrate Ninja Burger. Anything.

For Inspiration – Austin Powers, Harold & Kumar Go to White Castle, Stripes, Super Troopers



CROUCHING MONKEY, HIDDEN ROBOT

“It’s alive! ALIVE! At least, I think it’s alive.”

VR Rating – V-2, R+2

The Basics – It is 1954. The world is struggling with the aftermath of World War II, and a prolonged Korean Conflict. Nuclear blasts have created mutants and zombies, while aliens have taken advantage of the situation to experiment on unsuspecting rural folk. Communism has spread across Eastern Europe, and pockets of Nazism exist in European strongholds and South America. The world is divided and on alert, and the potential for danger and adventure is high. Into the midst of this comes Ninja Burger. They deliver food to people in dangerous situations, and do their best to cope with evil madmen, armies of strange creatures and political paranoia gone wild, in a world that never was. Can they ensure a future for Capitalism?

Known Enemies – Monkeys, Pirates and Robots, for starters, not to mention samurai, mutants, aliens, Nazis, zombies... The list goes on and on.

Typical Deliveries – A group of scientists investigating seismic activity off the coast of San Francisco have placed an order for six Combo #1 meals; deliver to them before the mutant Dogzilla rises from the depths to destroy them. A submarine crew deep beneath San Francisco Bay has run aground and has placed an order for burgers, fries and an emergency air supply. A plane crash in the middle of San Francisco’s City Hall has released a quantity of radiation that turned the neighbors into zombie mutants; don’t let that stop you from delivering a burger to the Mayor.

Plot Possibility – You’re drafted! You’re getting shipped overseas to serve in a support unit, providing hot meals to troops behind enemy lines and besieged by Nazi zombies. If ninja can’t do it, who can?

For Inspiration – A Fistful of Yen, The Curse of Monkey Island, Monkey Ninja Pirate Robot, Raiders of the Lost Ark, Shaun of the Dead, Weird Wars

BIGGIE-SIZED TROUBLE IN CHINATOWN

“Ancient Chinese demons, hunh?”

VR Rating – V0, R0

The Basics – The year is 1985. Ninja Burger operates from a hidden restaurant in the center of Chinatown. As fate would have it, this restaurant is at the crux of a mystical nexus of powerful ancient forces threatening to tear the city – and the world – apart. Sorcerers are raising armies of demons, samurai, ninja, and more, using outposts hidden in basements and sewers. Of course, the authorities don’t believe that any of this is really happening, so it’s up to Ninja Burger to save the day, using much more than their ninja skills. They’ll wield powerful ancient Ninja Magic that only they can fully understand. Not only must they keep their day jobs, delivering burgers to pay the bills, but in their spare time they’ll be heading below the city to keep customers safe. Why exactly are ninja operating out of Chinatown? It’s the last place people would look.

Known Enemies – Powerful Chinese sorcerers: Lo Pan, Pei Mei, Dim Sum, Wang Chung, etc.; evil demons and monsters; dragons, likely; scads of evil ninja.

Typical Deliveries – Charles Wing Wong, the head of the Wing Wong Trading Company, has requested two burgers delivered by a girl with purple eyes; make the delivery and escape with your life. Brawny Jack, a biker who dresses like a cowboy and fights evil in the sewers, is trapped by a water dragon; he could really use a burger and a hand fighting the beast. The city is under siege by an army of evil ghosts and poltergeists, and Ninja Burger is drawn into it when one of the spirits places an order for a burger and fries; how do you deliver to a ghost?

Plot Possibility – Ninja Burger’s franchise is located right on the door to the underworld, which explains all the strangeness. Everyone from cultists to criminal cronies will be trying to get access to the restaurant, so they can crack the gates wide open and let the Hells pour forth. Guess who gets to stop them?

For Inspiration – Big Trouble in Little China, Buckaroo Bonzai, Ghostbusters, The Goonies



DEFINING NORMALCY

Keep in mind that the VR rating for any setting is intended as a means of defining what’s considered by most people to be “normal” for that particular world. You can still include things that drift outside of your base VR rating – for example, magic exists in a futuristic setting, or zombies lumber into a modern day setting. It’s just that those things will be considered uber-weird and wild by everyone in that world, including the ninja characters, who are used to weirdness.

BURGER WARS, INC.

"The sky above the port was the color of a burger, cooked to an internal temperature of 71° C."

VR Rating – V+2, R-2

The Basics – It is the year 20(2d6+10) – in other words, the near future. The world is divided into corporate-controlled zones, and software pirates, street gangs, heavily armed police SWAT teams and other factions war with one another openly. Ninja Burger is a multinational corporation that is openly engaged in fast-food wars with a number of other similarly-themed outlets, including their noteworthy nemesis, Samurai Burger. The team's job is to increase Ninja Burger's market share while battling evil cybernetic samurai, android ninja, genetically modified primates, killer security robots, and worse. Ninja Burger's crew may not be heroes – after all, they're in it for the money – but they've got a personal sense of honor and duty that keeps them in the game. And they play to win.

Known Enemies – Samurai Burger, other fast food chains, corporate police, enemy ninja, street gangs, road warriors, angry mutant cyborg monkeys, etc.

Typical Deliveries – You are catering a lunch for the Ineptech Corporation, who are coincidentally demo-ing their new security robot in the conference room next door; you must serve every employee and survive the crazy droid. A woman with silver eyes drops a disc in your lap, along with a note to deliver it, hidden inside a cheeseburger, to a warehouse on the edge of town; is it a setup, or the cure for cancer? You have ten minutes to deliver a Combo #3 to an address that is 12 miles away, and MafiaCorp is on your tail.

Plot Possibility – USCorp has seized control of the government. This corporate entity soon controls everything people hear, see and eat. In their eyes, fast food is unhealthy, and their citizens are only allowed to eat pale, bland nutritive paste that supplies the daily allowance of vitamins, minerals and mind-control substances. Ninja Burger is about to be terminated.

For Inspiration – Aeon Flux, Falling Down, Jennifer Government, Market Forces, Serenity, Snow Crash

SPACE NINJA

All of the settings described here assume that your ninja will be keeping their feet on the ground of mother Earth (or at least inside the atmosphere). However, should you choose, and if your group is up for it, feel free to take things a bit higher. Deliveries in space carry their own risks and challenges, and can be fun whether you're dealing with the early exploration of space or some far-flung future setting with space pirates, laser cannons and evil Empires.

R.U.N. (REAL ULTIMATE NINJA)

"The ninja's job is to flip burgers and kill people."

VR Rating – V+2, R+2

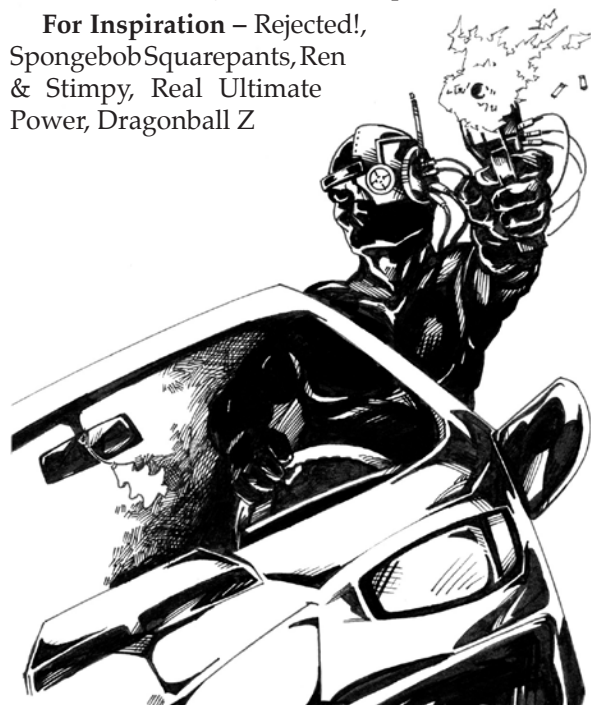
The Basics – The year is... oh, who cares? All bets are off in this setting. This is a weird trip, a dreamlike game where nothing needs to make sense. The characters are all ninja who work for Ninja Burger, and their goal remains the same – to deliver hot and tasty burgers to customers. But everything else is up for grabs. Wailing on guitars to kill enemy pirates. Hippos who lend a helping hand. Elvis and Time Travel. Amazons from Outer Space and furry things from beyond the grave. Living Vegetables, etc. As one might expect, such a crazy, no-holds-barred setting can be quite violent, and ninja delivery people will be hard-pressed to survive when everything from poison artichokes to heat-seeking Scorpedos (that's half scorpion, half torpedo) is coming their way.

Known Enemies – Pirates, of course. Plus monkeys, mecha, aliens, killer robots, clowns, zombies, eggplant, the color orange, and anything else you can imagine.

Typical Deliveries – Pirates have stolen all the gold from a sweet king in a flying castle made of paper towels and frozen water (i.e., pykrete); little do they know that the king has called Ninja Burger, who send their finest ninja guitarists to wail on them. A bunch of robots are eating food from Samurai Burger; Ninja Burger's ninja must flip out and destroy the robots and the samurai together, with help from a hippo. Ninja must deliver to a huge super-rich house, but inside is a secret half-ninja/half-pirate babe and a giant evil robot tomato who wants to destroy them.

Plot Possibility – Plot? What plot?

For Inspiration – Rejected!, Spongebob Squarepants, Ren & Stimpy, Real Ultimate Power, Dragonball Z



ABOUT NINJA BURGER EMPLOYEES

*"You guys must be studying the abridged book of ninja fighting."
– Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles*

Ninja Burger employees are primarily modeled after what is believed to be the "really-real" ninja, ones more focused on stealth and information gathering; who followed a code of honor; and who used disguises and tools appropriate to the job at hand. To that end, those who work for Ninja Burger are expected to follow a code of behavior and conduct that is focused on providing excellent customer service while protecting the private interests of the company, not unlike any fast food establishment.

Like any other company, Ninja Burger has an *Employee Handbook* (available Summer of 2006 – for details, visit the Ninja Burger website at <http://www.ninjaburger.com>). However, like most employees, nobody who works for Ninja Burger actually bothers to read the darn thing. Luckily, all employees need to remember are these four basic concepts:

1. Ninja Burger delivers to Anyone, Anytime, Anywhere. Ninja Burger has no particular affiliations or allegiances and delivers to whomever they are chosen to serve at any given time, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. With certain exceptions, Ninja Burger ninja must deliver to whoever places an order, even if they don't particularly like that customer. Everyone else is a potential customer, so endangering the public in any way is viewed by the company as impacting future revenue growth, and will result in a loss of honor and paycheck deductions. "Anytime" and "Anywhere" refer to the fact that Ninja Burger will deliver anywhere in the world, whether it's on top of a mountain, the middle of a war zone, or simply an apartment down the street.

2. Ninja Burger's sole mission is to provide "Guaranteed delivery in 30 minutes or less, or we commit Seppuku." Seppuku is, of course, ritual suicide, meaning that ninja delivery people who fail to deliver on time must kill themselves for their dishonor. There is much debate in public circles as to whether or not this slogan should be taken literally (or if this "Seppuku Rule" is even enforced), and it is left to individual franchise owners (and Dispatchers) to interpret it as broadly or narrowly as they see fit. Regardless, Ninja Burger strives for quick, accurate service, and failing to deliver within a 30-minute window is, at the very least, a serious blow to a ninja's personal honor (and his paycheck).

3. Company Honor before Personal Honor. Delivering to customers is the primary goal of any ninja, and defending the company from competitors is a secondary goal. Whatever a ninja's personal hang-ups, he should always place the company's market share and reputation above his own needs and desires, for the good of the team and the company. This means, in part, that each employee must strive to eliminate competitors to Ninja Burger whenever possible. It also means exercising all due discretion during a delivery – if crashing a helicopter into the side of a building is necessary to make a delivery, so be it, but it looks really bad and it'll come out of your paycheck.

4. Ninja Burger employees do not exist. Ninja sneak around and break into buildings in order to deliver to customers, so guards, police and other law enforcement personnel are generally unfriendly towards them. Ninja Burger also has enemies, including competing fast food chains, who will do whatever it takes to gain market share by harming Ninja Burger. This is to say nothing of the Public, full of curious onlookers, nosy reporters, and other bothersome folk. Thus, it behooves employees to be stealthy at all times, sneaking and hiding when possible, wearing disguises, and otherwise acting independently as they see fit to get the job done. Ninja Burger cannot operate as a company without a public face, but they will publicly deny knowledge of any employee who is captured, killed, caught on camera, etc. Ninja are free to talk with customers, etc., but it's at their own discretion and risk, and is best avoided.



Sometimes, Seppuku is a welcome option...

2. CHARACTER CREATION

"I'll have three burgers, three French fries and three cherry pies. What do you guys want?" – Charlie's Angels

CREATING PDQ CHARACTERS

The *Ninja Burger RPG* uses an engine called the Prose Descriptive Qualities (PDQ) System. The specific mechanics of the PDQ system are described in more detail in Chapter 3; this section includes only that information needed to create a character.

At its most basic, every Ninja Burger character is described via four categories, which basically follow in line with the sort of information you'd see on a résumé or hear in a job interview:

- **Name** – What is your name?
- **Job Title** – What job are you applying for?
- **Qualities** – What makes you qualified to work for Ninja Burger?
- **Background** – Tell us a little bit about yourself. This includes four subcategories named **Element**, **Clan**, **Honor**, and **Honor Score**, each explained in more detail later.

NAME

Of course, a **real** ninja should never reveal his or her true name, even if Ninja Burger already knows what it is. Therefore, players should pick an appropriate pseudonym for their character, or roll on the accompanying chart to generate a Japanese-sounding Ninja Name, using two 6-sided dice.

Rather than add the dice, treat each result separately, in order, with the first die representing the D1 column, and the second representing the D2 column. Roll twice for each ninja, first selecting a male or female first name (as appropriate), and then selecting a family name.

Example: I roll 3 and a 5, so my ninja (a guy) is named Kyuzo. I then roll 2 and 6, so his family name is Kato.

Japanese naming convention puts the family name first when referring to the person, so my ninja would be referred to as Kato Kyuzo. It is also common to add “-san” to the person’s family name in a casual context, or “-sama” in a formal context, so my ninja would be called “Kato-san” by his co-workers.

Of course, not all ninja are Japanese, but since most people associate ninja with Japan, these sorts of names work well on the job. Also note that your “ninja name” is not necessarily how other ninja will refer to you; it’s just how Ninja Burger knows you.



| D1 | D2 | Male Name | Female Name | Family Name |
|----|----|------------|-------------|-------------|
| 1 | 1 | Akira | Akemi | Chiaki |
| 1 | 2 | Bokuzen | Aoi | Chieko |
| 1 | 3 | Daisuke | Chiyo | Fujita |
| 1 | 4 | Gisaku | Chiyoko | Fujiwara |
| 1 | 5 | Gorobei | Fumiko | Futaba |
| 1 | 6 | Hansuke | Haruka | Hidari |
| 2 | 1 | Haruko | Hiroko | Higuchi |
| 2 | 2 | Hideko | Hisako | Hiroshi |
| 2 | 3 | Inokichi | Kana | Ichikawa |
| 2 | 4 | Izumi | Kaori | Inaba |
| 2 | 5 | Jinjiro | Kazuko | Katayama |
| 2 | 6 | Kamatari | Keiko | Kato |
| 3 | 1 | Katsushiro | Kiyo | Kimura |
| 3 | 2 | Kazuko | Kumiko | Kiyokawa |
| 3 | 3 | Kinjiro | Kyuko | Kodo |
| 3 | 4 | Kiyoshi | Mai | Kosugi |
| 3 | 5 | Kyuzo | Mami | Kurosawa |
| 3 | 6 | Manzo | Mayumi | Makabe |
| 4 | 1 | Matakishi | Megumi | Mano |
| 4 | 2 | Mosuke | Misaki | Mifune |
| 4 | 3 | Nakadai | Mitsuki | Mitsui |
| 4 | 4 | Naosuke | Miu | Miyoshi |
| 4 | 5 | Rinsaku | Miyoko | Nagakura |
| 4 | 6 | Sadao | Miyu | Nakamaru |
| 5 | 1 | Sanjiuro | Moe | Ohashi |
| 5 | 2 | Seibei | Nanami | Sakamoto |
| 5 | 3 | Seiji | Natsuki | Sawamura |
| 5 | 4 | Setsuko | Riko | Shimada |
| 5 | 5 | Susumu | Rin | Tadokoro |
| 5 | 6 | Tachikawa | Sachiko | Tatsuya |
| 6 | 1 | Tadao | Sakura | Toyama |
| 6 | 2 | Takeshi | Setsuko | Tsuchiya |
| 6 | 3 | Toshiro | Shizuko | Tsukasa |
| 6 | 4 | Unosuke | Tomoko | Uehara |
| 6 | 5 | Ushitora | Yoshiko | Yamada |
| 6 | 6 | Yoshio | Yumiko | Yamashita |

Ninja Burger teammates often come up with radio handles to refer to each other. Often these are based on their Job Title (Skid, Four-Eyes), physical features (Fat Man, Little Boy) or characters from *Top Gun* (Maverick, Iceman). Anything goes; there are no rules.

JOB TITLE

*“Really? And what about the ninja babysitters? Real or hot dog dream?”
– The Simpsons*

Yes, we know you’re a ninja. That’s nice. But what can you do for us? Everyone who works for Ninja Burger has a special talent, and if you expect to get hired, you’ll need to describe what sort of function you want to fill. In an organization like Ninja Burger, there are many possibilities, but the most common are discussed on the pages that follow.

Ninja Burger organizes ninja into 3–6 person teams, ideally with ninja of different Job Titles (including a Dispatcher; see below). However, there’s no reason a team can’t be smaller, or have multiple ninja filling the same jobs. Whether a team has two Drivers and no Deliverators, or three Cooks and a Spotter, they’ll all have the same delivery missions to accomplish.

Note that your Job Title may (at your option) have an impact on what your character can do in the game. This is discussed a bit later, under Qualities.

THE DISPATCHER

In many ways, the Dispatcher is just another word for Game Master. But the Dispatcher’s function in a Ninja Burger game is a bit different; the Dispatcher is also considered to be a member of the team (albeit a remote one), with skills like observation, surveillance, etc. More details on Dispatching are in Chapter 4; for now, it’s just important to decide who’s going to do it, and have him choose Dispatcher as his job. In all other aspects, they make a character like everyone else.

Inspiration: *Bruce Wayne in Batman Beyond, Theora Jones in Max Headroom, “Tank” in The Matrix, “God” in Navy SEALs, “Lt. Gorman” in Aliens*



NINJA CHEF

You prepare, cook, assemble and package all of Ninja Burger’s food. It all starts with you. The delivery can be on time, and the Dispatcher can be friendly, but if the food doesn’t taste good, it’s all your fault. You are the backbone of Ninja Burger.

In the kitchen, you’re a whiz. You can tweak recipes to improve flavor, taste small doses of poison in food, quickly prepare a burger at the very last minute, crack two eggs at the same time, split a burger bun in midair with a katana, and pretty much chop everything from onions to enemies. Let’s just say you like knives.

Of course, many of those skills also apply outside of the kitchen too – not only are there always enemies around that need slicing and dicing, but you never know when a team is going to drop the food, and require your quick assistance in whipping up a new Combo Meal for a customer.

Inspiration: *Beverly Hills Ninja, Iron Chef, Of Cooks and Kung Fu, Tampopo, Under Siege*

ALTERNATE CAREER PATHS

Depending on your setting, the following job titles are also possibilities to consider:

- **Kunoichi** – Female ninja specializing in assassination. Skills include: seduction, emotional manipulation, and carrying concealed weaponry. You could get past a metal detector into a private nightclub, seduce the owner and dispatch him without raising alarm.
- **Mahoutsukai** – Specialist in the arts of Ninja Magic (Kuji-in and Kuji-kiri), but only if your setting uses Ninja Magic (ask your Dispatcher). You can summon the powers of the elements, achieve oneness with the universe, heal wounds, and slay your enemies from afar.

- **Saboteur** – One who sabotages competitors in order to help Ninja Burger. Skills include: demolitions, engineering, and guerilla tactics. You can demolish a competing franchise without even getting dust on the windows across the street.

- **Shikaku** – You are all about assassination, and nothing but. Skills include: backstabbing, poisons, and a strong stomach. You can kill a man with chewing gum, a straw, a paperclip, a small cup of water, or a length of dental floss.

- **Sales & Marketing** – The most feared and ruthless of all ninja. Other ninja in the company probably avoid talking to you. Skills unknown. You can negotiate prime time advertising on all the major network for prices you’d normally only get on weekend radio. Pure evil!



NINJA DELIVERATOR

Although everyone pitches in during a delivery, you do most of the actual breaking and ent-er... delivering. You are the public face of Ninja Burger, insofar as it has one. This means that your performance – or lack thereof – reflects directly upon everyone else in your team, and the entire company.

In addition to your many ninja skills, which come in handy while you're actually delivering, you also have an assortment of tricks that you've picked up over the years, perhaps in a previous life as a con man or bike messenger. You can pick a lock like no tomorrow, get inside a building without breaking a window, and make exact change even if someone tries to pay with a two-dollar bill.

You know that taking the stairs is faster than taking the elevator, and you know that sometimes the quickest way up is to start at the top. And when it comes to the physical endurance necessary to either run up 50 flights of stairs or rappel down the side of a skyscraper, you've got a better chance than anyone else on your team of pulling it off without dying.

You've also got a good number of "people skills," which mean that customers sort of trust you, whether you're pretending to be someone else, or just acting the role of a ninja delivery person. Carry a clipboard and everyone assumes you're supposed to be there. Shove a piece of paper in the receptionist's face and she'll sign it just to get rid of you. And so on.

If you remember one thing, remember this: it's all about the delivery. Traffic, enemies, nuclear war... let the others worry about that stuff. You just deliver.

Inspiration: *Die Hard*, *Leon*, *Loverboy*, *Kiki's Delivery Service*, *The Postman*, *Samurai Pizza Cats*

OVERDRIVE

If your ninja characters spend a lot of time on the road, you might want to check out page 42 of *Monkey, Ninja, Pirate, Robot: The RPG*, which contains detailed vehicle design rules that can be used in the *Ninja Burger RPG* quite easily.

NINJA DRIVER

Ninja Burger may be all about the destination, but for you, getting there is half the fun. You are responsible for seeing that your team gets to the delivery location as fast as possible, giving them the maximum amount of time at the delivery location to actually make the final insertion. And of course, when it's all over, it's up to you to get everyone out again safely.

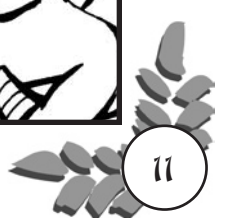
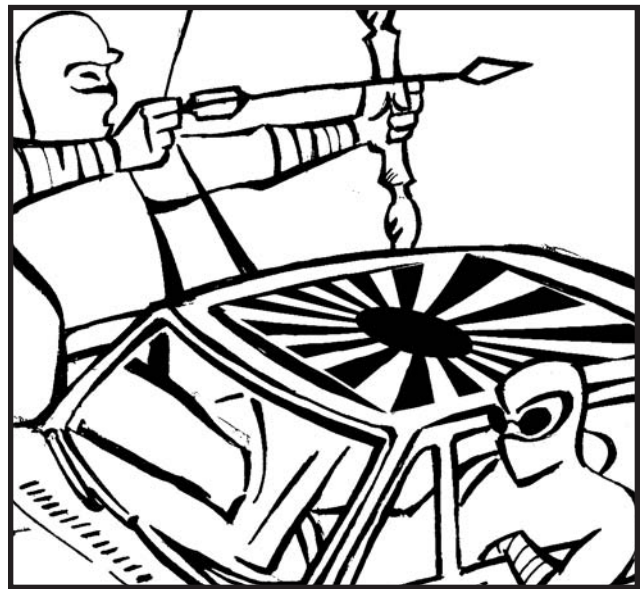
In a former career, you were probably a professional driver – cab driver, ambulance driver, stunt driver – or possibly even a pilot. Regardless, those skills have carried over, making you a demon on wheels. You can take off-ramps at highway speeds, pull off a four-wheel glide or controlled skid without dropping speed, and take a vehicle up on two wheels – or the sidewalk – without losing control.

Of course, your skills extend beyond actual hardcore driving. You can find parking downtown in the middle of the day, avoid speed traps and other obstacles, and parallel park uphill into oncoming traffic at night in a fog bank. With your eyes closed. Your vehicle is not just your baby – it's an extension of yourself.

This is not to say that you're completely useless once the car is parked and the delivery has begun. You're quite capable of leaving the vehicle and assisting with the delivery. You just don't necessarily like doing it if you can avoid it. Who will watch the car?

As the driver, of course, you also get to pick the music in the car (or van). Hopefully you have a good musical selection (not to mention good taste).

Inspiration: *Big Trouble in Little China*, *Convoy*, *The Dukes of Hazzard* (TV series, not film), *Megaforce*, *The Road Warrior*, *Ronin*, *Smokey & The Bandit*, *Snow Crash*, *The Transporter*



NINJA NAVIGATOR



You are like Chewbacca to Han Solo. Chekov to James T. Kirk. "Goose" to "Maverick." You're not the guy driving, and you're not the one in control, but you are the one who makes sure you get to where you're going. Nobody calls "shotgun" when you're around. You got dibs.

You are at home in the passenger seat, surrounded by computers, GPS devices and radio transceivers, a headset over your ninja mask, and a compass tucked in your pocket (just in case). There are maps of the city in the glove compartment, and printouts of common delivery locations in the sun visor. You don't have Google Maps bookmarked, but that's because it's your homepage. You live, eat, sleep, and breathe maps.

Of course, most of what matters isn't on paper or a computer monitor – it's in your head. Anyone can read a map, but not anyone can tell the driver that Fillmore is closed because of a ski jump or an escaped emu, or that there's a war protest that's blocking traffic ten blocks up and he really needs to take the next left. And if it came down to it, you could probably give directions blindfolded, locked in the trunk, without any sleep. And in your line of work, that's far more likely to happen than most people might think.

Of course, you don't need to be in the car to be of assistance to the team. You've got an internal compass and sense of direction beyond compare, a mental map of the entire city, and the knowhow to keep an eye on situations as they develop. You're almost as valuable on the ground as you are in the car. Almost.

Inspiration: *The Core, Death Race 2000, The Hunt For Red October, One Piece, Star Wars*

NINJA SPOTTER

When you're doing your job, nobody notices you. Not even your teammates. The other members of the team are much more flamboyant than you, and that's saying a lot considering they're also ninja. But it's OK, because they are who they are, and your job is making sure that they stay alive to do their jobs.

Primarily, you keep an eye out for things. What things? Enemies, obstacles, traps... things like that. You've got excellent night vision, and you're a creative problem solver and quick thinker. At times, it seems you have a sort of "sixth sense" that warns you of danger. Problem is, it's on most of the time. You are a ninja, after all. Learning to tune out the static and focus on the real problems... now that takes skill.

If you were on a space ship, you'd be in front of the weapons console, but since you're not, you'll have to settle for whatever's around. You probably favor long-distance weapons – whether it's shuriken, a bow and arrows, or even a sniper rifle. What's more important than how much damage it does is how effective it is at keeping problems away from the team, and making sure you don't blow your cover in the process.

But you're no pushover. After all, your primary job is to back up the main delivery ninja, keeping an eye out for trouble while she focuses on delivery, and solving any "problems" that arise. Mostly you track problems, spot trouble, and get the team out without a fight. But if it comes down to a battle, you're going to be the first one in, and the last one out.

Inspiration: *Brotherhood of the Wolf, Hunted, Last of the Mohicans, Mack Bolan, Navy SEALs, Silent Warrior, Sniper*



QUALITIES

“Hamburgers. The cornerstone of any nutritious breakfast.” – Pulp Fiction

The core element of the **PDQ** system is the concept of a **Prose, Descriptive**, do-it-yourself, wide-ranging **Quality**, which stands in as attribute, advantage, merit, flaw, skill, etc. Qualities help further describe your character’s particular talents, skills, and flaw(s). They also provide mechanics for how those abilities or disabilities work in play (see Chapter 3). Qualities should grow out of the character concept and setting.

Qualities represent a broad skill or field of knowledge; if a particular Quality is relevant at all to an action or topic, the character may apply that Quality when attempting that action or understanding that topic. In ninja-like fashion, this is called the penumbra (or “shadow”) of the Quality. Therefore, a player shouldn’t choose Qualities that are too narrow or its penumbra will cast too narrow a shadow; too broad, and identifying the sorts of things that should fall under the penumbra becomes pointless. The parameters for what’s “too broad” or “too narrow” are up to the individual Dispatcher.

Example: Consider a “Driver” Quality. For many games, it will be fine; for some it may be too broad. The Dispatcher might ask the player to refine the Quality, to give a better idea of the sorts of things that will fall under the Driver Quality’s penumbra. “Driver” could be “Van Driver” “Cab Driver,” or “Stunt Driver.” While all would cover the basic concept, each will bring different skills under the Quality penumbra – not just their fields of interest, but also supplementary knowledge: the Van Driver would have experience with vans, the Cab Driver would know shortcuts, and the Stunt Driver would make you want to take the bus.

Example 2: “Swordplay.” This Quality would be useful not just in slicing things, but also in polishing and sharpening swords, knowing the history of sword making, etc. If the player had instead selected a Quality of “Kendo,” the Quality would only be useful in that specific style of swordplay (i.e., using Katanas).

QUALITY EXAMPLES

Physical: Swordplay, Kung Fu, Roguishly Handsome, Sumo Wrestling, Perseverance.

Mental: Zen Philosophy, Haiku, Tea Ceremony, Local Trivia, Speed-reading, Computer Hacking.

Social: Wu-Shen Monks, MI6, Gang Member, Conversationalist, Intimidating Guy, Seduction.

Professional: Driver, Martial Artist, Chef, MarCom Writer, Bounty Hunter, Mad Scientist.

Other: Ninja Magic (if allowed).

TYPES OF QUALITIES

Qualities are often drawn from five general areas:

- **Physical.** Having to do with the body, athleticism, or natural talents;
- **Mental.** Areas of study, intellectual acuity, wisdom, or education;
- **Social.** Groups the character is a member of, or associates with, “people skills,” or a character’s “Ninja Clan,” if they opt to spend points on it;
- **Professional.** Knowledge and skills picked up on the job; and
- **Other.** Esoteric skills, psychic talents, physical resources, or superpowers.

QUALITY RANKS

All Qualities have Ranks, indicating increasing proficiency. From lowest to highest, the Ranks are:

- **Poor** [-2]
- **Average** [0]
- **Good** [+2]
- **Expert** [+4]
- **Master** [+6]

The numbers in square brackets following the Rank of the Quality show the Rank’s Modifier – how much is added to or subtracted from a 2d6 dice roll (see below). Characters have some things going for them (**Strengths**), and at least one thing working against them (a **Weakness**). At everything else, characters are neither noteworthy nor inept – they’re Average [0].

THE NINJA QUALITY

As a ninja, your character will start with the Average [+0] Ninja quality, which lets him do all the sorts of things a ninja will do. Normally you wouldn’t take a Quality at Average [+0], but since everyone will be a ninja this serves as a balancing factor.

As an Average Ninja, you may refer to yourself as a Genin, the ninja word for a junior ninja of your skill level. The full list of all five ninja ranks is as follows:

Kusa – Newbie ninja who have little or no training; literally, “weeds.” (Poor [-2] Ninja)

Genin – Average, but junior, ninja who go on general duty missions. (Average [+0] Ninja)

Chunin – Mid-level ninja who act as supervisors and crew trainers. (Good [+2] Ninja)

Jenin – High-ranking elite ninja managers who go on special missions. (Expert [+4] Ninja)

Kage – Highest-ranking ninja, supervising entire districts; literally, “shadow”. (Master [+6] Ninja)

STRENGTHS & WEAKNESSES

A **Strength** is an inherent positive aspect (benefit, skill, talent, attribute, or power) of a character. If you can, come up with a word or a pithy phrase to sum up the Strength.

Examples: Fighting, Credit Rating, Find Bargains, Good Looking, and Running Away.

A **Weakness** is an inherent negative aspect of the character, stemming from ignorance, flawed understanding, physical or mental incapability, or some other vulnerability. A word of advice: pick something that will be fun or entertaining (for you the player, not necessarily you the character) to flub at! As above, try and come up with a word or a pithy phrase to sum up the Weakness. Weaknesses are always taken at Poor [-2] Rank.

Examples: Glass Jaw, Bad Credit Rating, Slow As Molasses, and Wallflower.

Depending upon what your character is like, any Quality can be a Strength or a Weakness. The Ninja Quality, however, is a special case. While your “ninja-ness” can be increased over time, for starters every character is on an even playing field (granted, it’s a matte black field with razor-sharp goalposts and toxic paint, but it’s an even field nevertheless).

Example: Suppose a character has “Katana Use” as a Quality. If it’s ranked Average [0] or above, it’s a Strength: the character can use his katana to deflect bullets (in physical conflicts) or as a threat (in social conflicts) – or even wackier things such as picking a lock or scratching someone’s back – with an increased chance of success. But if he has “Poor [-2] Katana Use,” this is a Weakness: the character keeps getting his katana stuck into things, forgets to polish and maintain it, and even has trouble cutting a sandwich in half. It’s all in the way you spin it.

Important Note: If a PC wants to be particularly better at some Quality that might normally fall under the penumbra of another Quality (for example, taking “Ninja” and “Stealth” separately), it’s perfectly okay to do so, provided that the player realizes that in exchange for a benefit up-front, their character generation choice will affect future Improvement (see page 18 for more on that and other issues of Honor).

Also Note: While it is probably a good idea for characters to have their Job Title listed as a Quality, it is Not Required. Simply because you are employed as a Driver does not necessarily mean you are any good at it, as anyone who’s ridden public transit knows. To reiterate: your Job Title may be reflected as a Quality, but it does not have to be.

STARTING RANKS

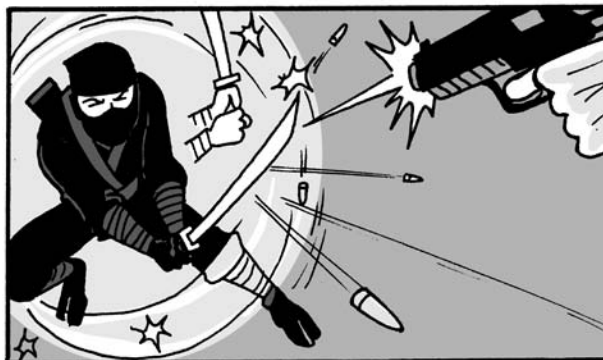
Players have several options when designing the Qualities of their character. They may choose between having more Qualities at a lower level of competency, or having fewer Qualities at a higher level of competency.

As explained earlier, starting Ninja Burger characters automatically get the Ninja Quality (which must be taken at Average [+0]). This reflects the fact that while they are ninja, and can do ninja things (most people can’t), they are still relatively new at the game, and they have to first work at their skills before they can call themselves Good, Expert and Master Ninja.

In addition to the Ninja Quality, all characters may take 6 Ranks of Strengths and 1 Rank of Weakness, which may (at their option) include a Quality based on their Job Title. There are three possible ways to divvy up these Quality Ranks:

- A. 3 Good [+2] Strengths, 1 Poor [-2] Weakness.
- B. 1 Expert [+4] Strength, 1 Good [+2] Strength, 1 Poor [-2] Weakness.
- C. 1 Master [+6] Strength, 1 Poor [-2] Weakness.

Never fear: If after gameplay begins, a particular Quality sees no use and doesn’t really add to the characterization of a PC, a player should feel free to change it to something that fits better – but only after talking to the Dispatcher.



Strength or Weakness? It’s how you spin it.

SO WHAT CAN A NINJA DO?

Your ninja can do anything a ninja can do. Running, jumping, climbing, stabbing, all that stealth stuff... But if that's too broad, a good place to start thinking about ninja is with the Ninja Burger training program, wherein all ninja receive basic training in the "20 Ninja Juhakkei." All Ninja Burger ninja are assumed to have somehow survived this training. As such, all ninja are also assumed to have the ability to perform to some reasonable degree in the following areas, all under the basic auspices of their Average [+0] Ninja Quality:

- **Taijutsu** – Unarmed Combat
- **Kendo / Ninja Ken** – Swordsmanship
- **Bojutsu** – Staff/club fighting
- **Shurikenjutsu** – Blade/shuriken throwing
- **Kusarigama** – Sickle and chain fighting
- **Yari** – Spear fighting
- **Naginata** – Halberd/axe fighting
- **Bajutsu** – Horsemanship
- **Suiren** – Swimming techniques
- **Kayakujutsu** – Use of gunpowder
- **Bo Ryaku** – Strategies
- **Choho** – Espionage
- **Shinobi Iri** – Infiltration
- **Intonjutsu** – Lying low
- **Hensojutsu** – Disguise
- **Tenmon** – Meteorology
- **Chimon** – Geography
- **Seishin Teki Kyoyo** – Spiritual refinement
- **Kyojitsu Tenkan Ho** – Philosophy
- **Makudonarudo** – Fast food

Note that some of the more archaic-sounding skills above actually have alternate modern day applications in addition to their traditional usage. Horsemanship, for example, might very well include the ability to stay on the back of a motorcycle, and Geography would include not just knowing where Mt. Fuji is, but being able to navigate around downtown San Francisco based on the location of the various hills it's built on.

The degree to which the Ninja Quality applies to these skills is up to the Dispatcher. In general, as long as the player can defend why his ninja can do it, the Dispatcher can allow it. In the aforementioned examples, Horsemanship would not allow a PC to be able to repair a motorcycle (horses don't have wheels), and Geography wouldn't tell a PC whether or not he could make a legal left turn off Market St. onto 10th.

Also note that the list does NOT include things like picking pockets, detecting traps, tracking enemies, and the like. Ninja are ninja, not thieves or rangers! If a player wants those skills, he'll have to take them as part of another Quality (e.g., perhaps as a Job Title).

NOT A NINJA?

The *Ninja Burger RPG* makes the bold default assumption that players will want to have ninja characters. Go figure. However, in the event that you want to mix things up, any character concept that fits into the world you've established is fine.

In fact, one interesting option worth considering is that the characters are **not** trained ninja, but rather brand new recruits who were either selected by Ninja Burger for their skills, or applied for a job with the company. In this case, these ninja trainees don't get the Average [+0] Ninja Quality, but instead get Poor [-2] Ninja as a Weakness. They can either use this as their existing starting Weakness, or take it as a second Weakness, in which case they also get another 2 Ranks of Strengths to balance things out (for a total of 8).

It's also possible that the characters aren't normal people at all, but some other strange thing. Want to play a monkey that delivers for Ninja Burger? Take Average [+0] Monkey instead of Ninja. Want to play a robot that delivers for Ninja Burger? Take Average [+0] Robot. Want to play a pirate that delivers for Ninja Burger? ARE YOU INSANE? Pirates and ninja are totally mortal enemies. That would never fly. No pirates! Anything else is probably OK, though it's always up to the Dispatcher.

QUICK PICKS

If you're in a hurry to get started, or if you're running a Beer & Pretzels style game, feel free to use one of the following templates for your character type, which offer a good balance of standard Qualities based on the main job titles.

Chef: Average [+0] Ninja, Good [+2] Chef, Good [+2] at Using Sharp Things, Good [+2] at Handling Stress, Poor [-2] Personal Hygiene.

Deliverator: Average [+0] Ninja, Good [+2] Deliverator, Good [+2] at Fleeing, Good [+2] Dirty Fighter, Poor [-2] at Following Orders.

Driver: Average [+0] Ninja, Good [+2] Driver, Good [+2] at Karaoke, Good [+2] at Multitasking While Driving, Poor [-2] at Customer Service.

Navigator: Average [+0] Ninja, Good [+2] Navigator, Good [+2] at Speed Reading, Good [+2] at Auto Repairs, Poor [-2] Driver.

Spotter: Average [+0] Ninja, Good [+2] Spotter, Good [+2] at Causing a Distraction, Good [+2] Snappy Dresser, Poor [-2] Impulse Control.

Dispatcher: Average [+0] Ninja, Master [+6] Dispatcher, Poor [-2] Sense of Humor.

BACKGROUND

"Isn't that color a little bright for a ninja?"
 – Pokémon

If you're playing a quick one-shot, you can skip this part, but if you're in the mood to flesh out a character then you should come up with a story about where he or she came from. This can be as long as several pages or as short as a sentence or two, but a paragraph is probably more than plenty. Describe your character's upbringing, family, schooling, martial arts training, military experience, etc. If they weren't always a ninja (or aren't a ninja – see "Not A Ninja?" on page 15), be sure to explain what their previous career was, and why they decided to take the plunge into ninjatude.

Additionally (or alternately), players may wish to determine their character's Element, Clan and Honor. Combined, these three things form the acronym ECH, which is an apt description of the sound most Dispatchers utter when they read character background ideas. Of the three, Honor is perhaps the most relevant, and although all three are encouraged, Honor should not be overlooked even if the other two details are skipped.

ELEMENT

Numerous Eastern philosophies, religions and martial arts disciplines split the elemental world up into various facets. Differing systems (including Godai and Gogyo) have different sets of four or five, with different elements associated with different colors.

The Ninja Burger system fuses the two and comes out with six. These are Air (Yellow), Earth (Green), Water (Blue), Fire (Red), Darkness (Black), and Light (White). These elements are linked to all aspects of a ninja's life, and may reflect everything from their personality and color preferences to the type of job they'd be good at. Players may choose one of these elements, or simply roll 1d6 to randomly pick a color.

1. **Air (Fu)** – Yellow, ESP, Willpower, Wisdom, Cleverness, Electricity, Wind, Movement.
2. **Earth (Chi)** – Green, Touch, Strength, Substance, Stubbornness, Dependability, Reliability.
3. **Water (Sui)** – Blue, Taste, Power, Defense, Adaptability, Flexibility, Magnetism (Social).
4. **Fire (Ka)** – Red, Smell, Energy, Offense, Passion, Anger, Aggression, Heat.
5. **Darkness (Kage/In/Yin)** – Black, Hearing, Shadow, Moon, Absorption, Night.
6. **Light (Ku/Yo/Yang)** – White, Sight, Creativity, Communication, Sun, Void, Energy, Metal.

In terms of gameplay, the Dispatcher is encouraged to reward players with Honor and Upshifts (discussed later) if characters adhere to an Element in terms of behavior in game, or apply that behavior explicitly to certain situations (at the Dispatcher's discretion).

The Dispatcher is also encouraged to penalize players if everyone takes Darkness as their element.

CLAN

Any ninja character might hail from a Ninja Clan, and even a character that is not a ninja might have ninja ancestors who were in a Clan. In either case, players may wish to choose a Clan name. This can be anything at all – a good start is to look at the Randomization Charts that follow this page, using the one appropriate for your setting. Players may combine any Color or Action Word (their choice) with an Animal Name to create a Clan, or roll as indicated below to randomly generate a Clan.

Quick-Play Option: Roll two 6-sided dice, reading each result in the order it falls. Consult the line on the chart corresponding to that result, and use the results from that line. *E.g. The player rolls a 3 and a 5. His character belongs to the Praying Mantis Clan, his color is Coral, and his Matter of Honor is that he may never reveal his identity.*

Advanced Option: For each column on the chart, roll two 6-sided dice, reading each result in the order it falls. For each result, consult the corresponding line on the chart, and roll again. *E.g. For his first roll, the player rolls a 3 and a 5. He writes down "Coral" and rolls three more times, getting 2 and 4 ("Stinging"), 5 and 1 ("Fox") and 6 and 3 ("I will always carry a sword"). His character is in the Stinging Fox Clan, his color is Coral, and his Matter of Honor is that he must always carry a sword.*

Optional Option: Remember, a player may opt to use the **Color** in place of the **Action Verb**. In the above examples, this would make his character a member of the Coral Mantis or Coral Fox Clan.

In-game, the Dispatcher is encouraged to give an occasional Upshift (again, discussed later) to characters from the same Clan who cooperate to overcome challenges. Characters may also be able to seek assistance (financial, medical, legal, etc.) from ninja of their Clan that they run into. Ninja from different Clans often taunt one another and engage in the occasional duel, but this is generally not lethal combat. However, ninja who do not take any clan at all will be considered Clanless Dogs by most ninja, and may be subject to extreme harassment from every other ninja the character runs into.

Slightly Serious Settings – Use this chart if your Ninja Burger World is more serious than silly.

| D1 | D2 | Color | Action Verb | Animal | Matter of Honor |
|----|----|-----------|-------------|-----------|---|
| 1 | 1 | Yellow | Leaping | Rat | I will never harm a (child/woman/etc.). |
| 1 | 2 | Green | Crouching | Tiger | I will never remove my mask if others can see me. |
| 1 | 3 | Blue | Patient | Ox | I will never hurt an animal. |
| 1 | 4 | Red | Drunken | Monkey | I will never shoot a firearm. |
| 1 | 5 | Black | Hidden | Dragon | I will never let anyone see me cry. |
| 1 | 6 | White | Biting | Snake | I will never let anyone hear me laugh. |
| 2 | 1 | Silver | Running | Bear | I will always kill any (pirate/monkey/etc.) I see. |
| 2 | 2 | Gold | Stalking | Panther | I will always pray towards Mecca five times a day. |
| 2 | 3 | Bronze | Soaring | Raven | I will always go to (church/temple/etc.) on holy days. |
| 2 | 4 | Copper | Stinging | Wasp | I will always be the last one out in times of danger. |
| 2 | 5 | Platinum | Dancing | Crane | I will always be the first to charge into combat. |
| 2 | 6 | Brass | Circling | Scorpion | I will always give (10%/half/all) my salary to charity. |
| 3 | 1 | Ivory | Roaring | Lion | I will never draw an enemy's blood. |
| 3 | 2 | Obsidian | Snapping | Turtle | I will never leave an enemy alive. |
| 3 | 3 | Mahogany | Angry | Shark | I will never take the elevator if stairs are available. |
| 3 | 4 | Bamboo | Prowling | Leopard | I will never fly in any aircraft. |
| 3 | 5 | Coral | Praying | Mantis | I will never reveal my true identity. |
| 3 | 6 | Jade | Snapping | Crocodile | I will never turn down a dare. |
| 4 | 1 | Gray | Weaving | Spider | I will always hold doors open for other people. |
| 4 | 2 | Brown | Buzzing | Hornet | I will always address others as Sir or Ma'am. |
| 4 | 3 | Orange | Diving | Hawk | I will always obey my elders. |
| 4 | 4 | Purple | Bolting | Sparrow | I will always turn enemies over to the police, alive. |
| 4 | 5 | Azure | Laughing | Hyena | I will always observe all traffic laws and speed limits. |
| 4 | 6 | Crimson | Racing | Cheetah | I will always fight fair (I.e., enemy uses fists, so do I). |
| 5 | 1 | Sapphire | Clever | Fox | I will never be taken alive. |
| 5 | 2 | Ruby | Howling | Wolf | I will never show fear. |
| 5 | 3 | Emerald | Proud | Stag | I will never drink alcohol or do drugs of any kind. |
| 5 | 4 | Diamond | Bleating | Goat | I will never eat meat. |
| 5 | 5 | Pearl | Galloping | Horse | I will never lie, cheat or steal. |
| 5 | 6 | Opal | Goring | Ram | I will never allow myself to be photographed or filmed. |
| 6 | 1 | Garnet | Gentle | Sheep | I will always give money to needy beggars. |
| 6 | 2 | Turquoise | Fertile | Rabbit | I will always speak respectfully and in a soft, calm voice. |
| 6 | 3 | Aqua | Crowing | Rooster | I will always carry a sword. |
| 6 | 4 | Teal | Singing | Dog | I will always try to return lost items to their owners. |
| 6 | 5 | Cyan | Wallowing | Pig | I will always obey an officer of the law. |
| 6 | 6 | Octarine | Ponderous | Elephant | I will always let foes take the first (punch/swing/etc.). |

Seriously Silly Settings – Use this chart if your Ninja Burger World is more silly than serious.

| D1 | D2 | Color | Action Verb | Animal | Matter of Honor |
|----|----|--------------|--------------|-------------|--|
| 1 | 1 | Tan | Hopping | Kangaroo | I will never wear the color (yellow/orange/etc.). |
| 1 | 2 | Khaki | Flatulent | Barracuda | I will never bathe. |
| 1 | 3 | Beige | Belching | Hippo | I will never watch television. |
| 1 | 4 | Fuchsia | Tasty | Trout | I will never make a (left/right)-hand turn. |
| 1 | 5 | Hazel | Bashful | Badger | I will never touch another person with my hands. |
| 1 | 6 | Chartreuse | Impertinent | Hedgehog | I will never wear white between Labor Day and Memorial Day. |
| 2 | 1 | Magenta | Impatient | Goose | I will always brush and floss twice a day. |
| 2 | 2 | Maroon | Nervous | Chinchilla | I will always try to conserve electricity. |
| 2 | 3 | Salmon | Licking | Anteater | I will always speak of myself in the third person. |
| 2 | 4 | Pink | Swinging | Panda | I will always watch (Lost/Price is Right/etc.) on TV. |
| 2 | 5 | Indigo | Cuddly | Okapi | I will always support the (Democrats/Republicans/etc.). |
| 2 | 6 | Mauve | Talking | Parrot | I will always use public transit whenever possible. |
| 3 | 1 | Asparagus | Swollen | Koala | I will never miss a chance to make a bad pun. |
| 3 | 2 | Burnt Sienna | Twisted | Zebra | I will never eat anything with (preservatives/corn syrup/etc.). |
| 3 | 3 | Celadon | Crooked | Hamster | I will never tip the (waiter/waitress/bellhop/etc.). |
| 3 | 4 | Denim | Elongated | Ferret | I will never kiss a (girl/boy/baby/animal/etc.). |
| 3 | 5 | Viridian | Shrunken | Sea Bass | I will never wear pants. |
| 3 | 6 | Orchid | Spiteful | Duck | I will never pay for anything. |
| 4 | 1 | Strawberry | Cocky | Stinkbug | I will always pet any animals I come across. |
| 4 | 2 | Lemon | Pretentious | Meerkat | I will always speak in rhyming couplets. |
| 4 | 3 | Saffron | Gibbering | Mockingbird | I will always fight anyone who mentions my (name/big nose/etc.). |
| 4 | 4 | Chestnut | Loquacious | Cockroach | I will always write in my (diary/journal/blog/etc.) every night. |
| 4 | 5 | Raspberrry | Spasmatic | Gerbil | I will always drink with a crazy straw. |
| 4 | 6 | Chocolate | Asthmatic | Prairie Dog | I will always chew bubble gum (kicking ass optional). |
| 5 | 1 | Olive | Industrious | Beaver | I will never turn down a chance to defend Star (Trek/Wars). |
| 5 | 2 | Lavender | Mischievous | Squirrel | I will never become romantically involved with a customer. |
| 5 | 3 | Marigold | Scampering | Chipmunk | I will never say "(Dude/Dudette/etc.)." |
| 5 | 4 | Dandelion | Naked | Molerat | I will never tell the truth. |
| 5 | 5 | Mustard | Sucking | Leech | I will never admit when I am wrong. |
| 5 | 6 | Periwinkle | Tipping | Cow | I will never ask for directions. |
| 6 | 1 | Plaid | Crazy | Platypus | I will always return (DVDs/library books/etc.) on time. |
| 6 | 2 | Checkered | Hungry | Seagull | I will always carry a towel with me at all times. |
| 6 | 3 | Striped | Ill-tempered | Halibut | I will always put (catsup/ketchup/etc.) on everything I eat. |
| 6 | 4 | Spotted | Slothful | Sloth | I will always try to look for lost animals. |
| 6 | 5 | Mottled | Boring | Barnacle | I will always play down my own accomplishments. |
| 6 | 6 | Paisley | Wacky | Penguin | I will always speak using monklike aphorisms and Zen koans. |

A MATTER OF HONOR

“You are my enemy. If you have seen my face, then you must die. But I don’t like to kill a woman.” – Russian Terminator

Those who insist that ninja have no honor are either dead, wrong, or dead wrong. The truth is that ninja are among the most honorable people around – far more honorable than pirates! Honor forms the basis for everything a Ninja Burger ninja is supposed to do, from serving a customer to honoring his ancestors, and transgressing the rules can be a serious blow to a ninja’s standing, not to mention his paycheck.

There are two sets of rules every ninja must follow. The first affects all ninja equally – these are the rules laid down by Ninja Burger itself. Explained in more detail earlier (see page 8) and in yet MORE detail in the *Ninja Burger Honorable Employee Handbook*, these can be summarized as follows:

- **We deliver to Anyone, Anytime, Anywhere.**
- **Guaranteed Delivery, or we commit Seppuku.**
- **Company Honor before Personal Honor.**
- **Ninja Burger employees do not exist.**

In addition, Ninja Burger employees are *strongly encouraged* to establish for themselves a personal Matter of Honor, by choosing from or rolling randomly on one of the Charts from the previous page (or making up their own, at Dispatcher discretion). Ninja characters may have only one Matter of Honor at a time.

WHAT IS THAT WORD, HONOR?

Each ninja also starts out with an Honor Score between 2 and 12 (roll 2d6). This score will fluctuate through the game and there is no absolute maximum or minimum; generally speaking, though, the higher your Honor Score, the better off you are.

A character’s Honor Score has (at least) four game effects that players need to be aware of.

First of all, it affects how other people treat your character in the game; a ninja with a high Honor Score might be a target when the enemy attacks, or might have their life spared at the last moment for the same reason (depending on the enemy). The specifics of how this functions are up to the Dispatcher, and are discussed in that section. See page 40.

Second, players may spend honor during the course of gameplay to do something dishonorable in order to gain an Upshift during a time of crisis. See page 23.

Third, honor may be used between games in order to improve a character’s stats. See page 19.

Finally, your Honor Score is impacted by the results of any Challenges that come up during gameplay.

I OBJECT, YOUR HONOR!

If, after choosing, a player feels that a Matter of Honor is hindering his character, he may take a 1d6 Honor penalty to choose another, or roll randomly with no Honor penalty on the Seriously Silly chart, accepting whatever result may come.

At Dispatcher discretion, a player may take the “**Honorless Dog**” option, choosing no Matter of Honor and starting at -5 Honor. For more information, see page 40.

CHALLENGES OF HONOR

When a ninja character is placed with a situation that challenges his honor – whether corporate or personal – he faces an aptly-named Challenge Of Honor. Ninja who overcome a Challenge Of Honor may increase their Honor Score, depending on the difficulty of the challenge. However, ninja who violate a Ninja Burger rule or Matter of Honor may also lose Honor.

Example: Kato is traveling to Japan for an annual Ninja Burger conference when he realizes that he has to pass through a metal detector. Unfortunately, Kato’s Matter of Honor dictates that he must always carry his sword. If he manages to get the sword on board, he will have passed the challenge, and might gain Honor; if he can’t get it on board, he fails, and may lose Honor.

Example 2: Toshiro is stopped by a female guard. His personal honor says that he must not harm a woman, and his Ninja Burger code reminds him that he has 90 seconds to complete his delivery. If he successfully evades the guard without harming her and completes the delivery, he might gain Honor; if he hurts the guard and fails to deliver, he might lose Honor.

It is left up to the Dispatcher’s discretion what constitutes a violation or a failure in a Challenge. See page 40 of the Dispatcher section for more details.

YOU HAVE NO HONOR

As explained earlier, higher Honor Scores generally mean good things. With a score of over 50, you are honoring your ancestors, and with a score of over 100, your ancestors honor YOU! But don’t get cocky – rumor has it that the CEO of Ninja Burger has an Honor Score in the thousands!

However, as you might expect, negative honor has negative impacts. The downside of having a low or negative Honor Score – aside from roleplaying repercussions – is that a ninja will start to feel Really Bad about herself. If the Seppuku Rule is being enforced, this can be bad. Bad meaning “fatal.”

More on this and other issues relating to Honor is available in the Dispatcher section on page 40.

IMPROVEMENT

Between game sessions, players can spend Honor Points for improvement, reflecting increases in skill based on their ninja's feats, accomplishments and growing personal sense of worth.

To Improve a Quality, a character must spend 5 Honor Points per Rank improved. A character can only increase a Quality by one Rank per game session, and when a character reaches Master Rank in a Quality, it cannot be improved further.

Thus, to turn a Weakness into a powerful Strength:

- Raising Poor [-2] Rank Driver to Average [0] Rank Driver costs 5 Honor Points.
- Raising Poor [-2] Rank Driver to Good [+2] Rank Driver costs 10 Honor Points (5 for Poor to Average and 5 for Average to Good).
- Raising Poor [-2] Rank Driver to Expert [+4] Rank Driver costs 15 Honor Points (5 for Poor to Average, etc.).
- Raising Poor [-2] Rank Driver to Master [+6] Rank Driver costs 20 Honor Points (5 for Poor to Average, etc.).

If a character wants a new Quality, they can get it by spending 5 Honor to gain it at Good [+2] Rank.

Note: Spending time focusing on self-perfection, while worthy, means spending less time devoting every waking moment to Ninja Burger. Thus, Honor spent on Improvement is deducted permanently from your Honor Score, and must be regained normally. In this way, all ninja characters must carefully balance their Qualities and their Honor, attempting to keep both high enough to succeed, and survive.

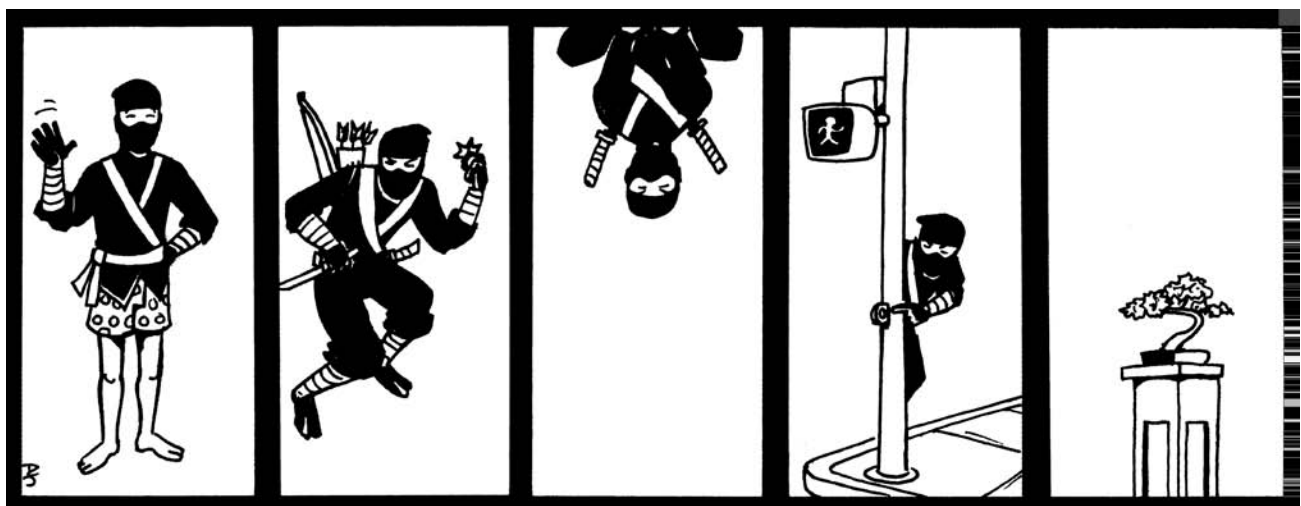
BECOMING MORE NINJA (OPTIONAL)

The quick and easy way to allow characters to increase their Ninja Quality is to let them buy it up with Honor points, like any other skill. Another way to do it is to force ninja characters to actually demonstrate the use of each of their ninja talents in order to improve.

With this option, the only way for a ninja to raise their Ninja Quality to the next Rank is to "check off" such usage of each one of the 20 Ninja Juhakkei mentioned earlier (the character sheet on page 95 makes this easy). When all twenty skills have been successfully and appropriately used, the character's Ninja Quality goes up one Rank, and the character starts from scratch keeping track of skills.

Note the phrase "successful and appropriate." This indicates that the dice rolled while using that particular Juhakkei come up in favor of the character, and that the circumstances are appropriate to the skill. So, for example, a ninja could not demonstrate skill with **Hensojutsu** (Disguise) merely by wearing a false nose in the delivery van; said disguise would have to be used in the field to trick someone. Some of the skills listed (Philosophy and Spiritual Refinement, in particular) will require creative interpretation.

If you are using the "Not A Ninja?" option (see page 15), and your characters are trainees with Ninja Qualities of Poor [-2], then you should give them a leg up; allow each player to check off any ten of the twenty Juhakkei, to represent what they learned during their training period. Having these checked off does not increase a ninja's skill in using them, but it does cut in half the time it takes to reach the Rank of Average [0] Ninja.



The Five Levels of the Ninja Quality. From left to right: Kusa (Poor [-2]), Genin (Average [+0]), Chunin (Good [+2]), Jenin (Expert [+4]), Kage (Master [+6])

SAMPLE CHARACTER CREATION

Jeff has been coerced by his “friends” into playing a game of Ninja Burger. Now he’s got to create a ninja character, so he goes through the steps:

• **Name – What is your name?**

Jeff has no idea what he wants his ninja to be called, so he decides to use the Ninja Name chart to come up with a ninja name. He rolls 2d6 twice. His first result is a (1,6) and his second roll is a (3,2). His ninja’s name is *Hansuke Kiyokawa*. He writes this down because he has a bad memory.

• **Job Title – What job are you applying for?**

Jeff decides to play it safe and just go with a standard ninja deliveryperson, so he chooses the *Deliverator* option and writes that down.

• **Qualities – What makes you qualified?**

Jeff decides to use the Quick Pick option for his career path to get things moving along quickly. He writes down the following under Qualities:

Average [+0] Ninja; Good [+2] Deliverator; Good [+2] at Fleeing; Good [+2] Dirty Fighter; Poor [-2] at Following Orders

• **Background – Tell us a little about yourself.**

Jeff writes down the following information for his character background:

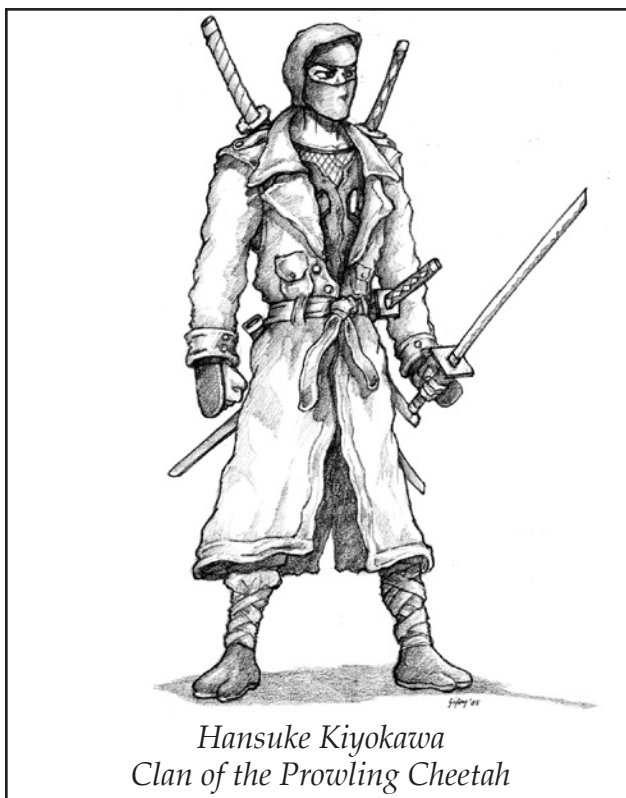
“Hansuke was a normal guy named Jeff until one day his friends made him play a stupid game named Ninja Burger. Then he turned into a ninja and they put him to work. He has a trench coat and four katanas.”

• **Element, Clan, Honor/Honor Score**

Jeff rolls 1d6 to pick an element, and comes up with 5, for *Darkness*. He thinks that’s pretty cool so he sticks with it. Next, he rolls on the “Slightly Serious” chart to generate information about his Clan and Matter of Honor. He rolls 2d6 three times and gets the following results: (3,4), (4,6) and (2,4).

The first result (3,4) means that his Clan Name begins with either Bamboo or Prowling, and he chooses Prowling because it sounds cooler. The second result (4,6) is Cheetah, so his character is from the *Clan of the Prowling Cheetah*, which is pretty badass. The final result (2,4) selects his Matter of Honor, so he writes down *“I will always be the last one out in times of danger.”* Yeah, right, he says to himself.

Finally, Jeff rolls 2d6 to set his Honor Score, and gets a result of (4,5) for a total of 9. Not bad.



*Hansuke Kiyokawa
Clan of the Prowling Cheetah*

FINISHED CHARACTER SHEET

Name: Hansuke Kiyokawa

Job Title: Deliverator

Qualities: Average [+0] Ninja (Genin)

Good [+2] Deliverator

Good [+2] at Fleeing

Good [+2] Dirty Fighter

Poor [-2] at Following Orders

Background: *“Hansuke was a normal guy named Jeff until one day his friends made him play a stupid game named Ninja Burger. Then he turned into a ninja and they put him to work. He has a trench coat and four katanas.”*

Element: Darkness

Clan: Prowling Cheetah

Matter of Honor: *“I will always be the last one out in times of danger. (Yeah, right.)”*

Honor Score: 9

“Hey, what about equipment and money?” asks Jeff. “My guy doesn’t have any stuff.”

“You work for Ninja Burger,” says the Dispatcher. “Your character has whatever gear he needs to get the job done. Anything a ninja would have.”

“Oh,” he replies. “So how’s this game work?”

“Look on the next page,” says the Dispatcher.

3. PDQ CORE RULES

"They have just given the Deliverator a twenty-minute-old pizza. He checks the address; it is twelve miles away."

– Snow Crash

TASK RESOLUTION

Like a ninja, PDQ is designed with simplicity, speed, and flexibility in mind. However, unlike a ninja, the PDQ System also has three levels of resolution, suitable for any type of situation. Whenever a character tries to do something, the Dispatcher will determine if the situation is Simple, Complicated, or a Conflict.

SIMPLE SITUATIONS

"Double bacon cheeseburger. It's for a cop."
– Super Troopers

In simple situations, the task is clear-cut, there are no outstanding issues interfering with the attempted action, or randomness would bog down the game. In this case the Dispatcher looks at the Master Chart (see below), and determines the Difficulty Rank of the task. Then, the Dispatcher compares that Difficulty Rank to the character's most appropriate Quality Rank. The higher Rank of the two "wins." If the Difficulty Rank of the task is equal to or higher than the character's relevant Quality Rank, the task becomes a complicated situation (see below).

Examples: Sanjuro and Toshiro are Average [+0] Ninja who want to climb a wall. Sanjuro adds his Good [+2] Outdoorsman Quality (he convinces the Dispatcher that climbing a cliff is similar enough to climbing a wall), so he'll automatically succeed in scaling Poor [5] and Average [7] Difficulty walls.

But Toshiro has no applicable Quality, and so would have the default Quality Rank of Average [0]. This means he can only automatically succeed in climbing Poor [5] Difficulty walls.

For Sanjuro, Good [9] or higher Difficulty Rank walls are complicated; for Toshiro, Average [7] or higher Difficulty Rank walls are complicated.

COMPLICATED SITUATIONS

"What, did you forget your French fries, to go with the soda?" – Reservoir Dogs

Dice rolls are made in complicated situations where comparisons of Rank are inconclusive, or when randomness is desired. Complicated situations arise when Quality and Difficulty Ranks are tied, or when a PC's Quality Rank is lower than the action's Difficulty Rank. To attempt a complicated situation, the PC rolls two regular six-sided dice (2d6), and adds the Modifier for their Quality Rank. To succeed, the PC must match or roll higher than the Target Number of the task's Difficulty Rank.

Examples: Sanjuro is trying to climb a Good [9] Difficulty wall using his Good [+2] Outdoorsman Quality. The Target Number of Good [9] Difficulty – as noted in the brackets – is 9. Sanjuro must roll 2d6 and add his Modifier of +2, trying to match or beat a 9. He rolls a 3 and a 5, giving him 3+5+2 = 10! He succeeds in climbing the wall.

Toshiro wants to follow Sanjuro up that Good [9] Difficulty wall: he has no applicable Quality, and so must use the default Quality Rank of Average [0]. He must match or beat a 9 when rolling 2d6. He rolls exactly the same thing that Sanjuro did: a 3 and a 5, and since Average Rank Qualities have no Modifier, that's a total of 8. This is below the Target Number of the wall, so Toshiro fails.

NOTE – Some failures – like attempting to walk a skinny building ledge – may carry the chance of getting hurt. For more on that topic, see "Environmental Damage" on page 26.

When a character's Qualities are set against the Qualities of other characters, this isn't just complicated; it's a conflict situation (see next page).

MAGICAL SITUATIONS

If you're using it, Ninja Magic (see page 44) is always treated as at least a Complicated Situation (that is, it's never Simple, but it can be a Conflict (described on the next page). The base difficulty for Ninja Magic is 7, with situational modifiers as the Dispatcher sees fit.

| Level | As Quality Rank | Modifier to 2d6 Roll | As Difficulty Rank | Target Number |
|----------------|--|----------------------|---|---------------|
| Poor | Notably Inept. | -2 | A trivial task. | 5 |
| Average | Typical human capability. | 0 | Straightforward task. | 7 |
| Good | Better than usual; most professionals or talented newcomers. | 2 | Complex task, requiring attention to detail. | 9 |
| Expert | Noted/famed professional; talent with skill to back it up. | 4 | Intricate task, requiring sharp concentration, hard for a typical untrained person (Average). | 11 |
| Master | Acclaimed genius: talent with substantial skill behind it. | 6 | Extremely difficult task, hard for most professionals in the field (Good). | 13 |

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CONFLICT SITUATIONS

"I'm gonna keep the coke and the fries but I'm gonna send this burger back. And if you put any mayonnaise on it, I'm gonna come over to your house; I'll chop your legs off."
 – *The Whole Nine Yards*

Conflict situations involve two parties: the person trying to do something, and someone trying to stop them – imagine trying to punch a pirate, out-thinking a chess player, running a race, or convincing a cop you weren't really speeding. Conflict situations in PDQ include more than just the immediate success or failure of an attempted action; here, conflict includes the back and forth of an active contest, out-maneuvering the competition, and wearing down an opponent's resistance. Examples of conflict situations include: combat, seduction, haggling, debating, and so on. (Note that some groups won't want to use the conflict situation mechanics to resolve social interactions, and will want to rely on pure roleplaying; this is fine – the rules structure is there if a group wishes to use it.)

In conflicts, the characters involved compare the results of 2d6 plus Modifier rolls; the highest successful result wins. However, there are a few refinements of conflict requiring closer attention: Initiative; Moment of Truth; Upshifts and Downshifts; and Damage.

NOTE – In addition to the in-line examples in each section, a detailed example of a Conflict situation appears at the end of this chapter.

INITIATIVE

First, figure out who goes first – that is, who has Initiative. Most of the time, the flow of the situation will indicate who acts first, but in some cases, this order may need to be determined. Here's how:

1. If a character attacks without warning – taking a victim by surprise – the attacker automatically goes first. (At Dispatcher discretion, he might get a free turn, if the target is totally unawares.)
2. The character with the highest Rank in a "speed" or "reaction time" Quality relevant to the situation (Fastest Sword in the East, Jumpy, Quick Wits) goes first, followed in order by those with relevant Qualities of lower Ranks.
3. The character with the highest Rank in a Quality not relevant to the situation goes next, followed by those of lower Ranks.

Ties (which are inevitable) can be broken in one of two ways: by stating that tied characters resolve their actions simultaneously or by rolling 2d6, with the highest total winning Initiative.

Once Initiative is determined, conflict resolution can proceed. Characters with a higher Initiative may "hold their actions" for as long as they want, but after the last character has done something, they need to take that held action or lose it. After everyone involved in the conflict situation has taken an action (or chosen not to), the characters can act again, in the same order. Lather, rinse, repeat.

Example: *Kenshiro and Salty Dave face off. Ken is using his Expert [+4] Sumo Wrestling Quality here, while Salty Dave is using his Good [+2] Cutlass Quality. Kenshiro's Rank is higher, so he goes first.*

Elsewhere, Sakura tries to get a jump on Sanjuro. Sakura is using her Expert [+4] Marketing Executive Quality here (a truly dangerous Quality) and Sanjuro's using his Expert [+4] Biker Dude Quality (he's used to intimidating people). Sakura and Sanjuro are both at Expert Rank, and thus tied. The Dispatcher decides that Initiative will be determined with a die roll. Sakura rolls a 3 and Sanjuro rolls a 4. Sanjuro has Initiative.

MOMENT OF TRUTH

"Do I sound like I'm ordering a pizza?"
 – *Die Hard*

The character whose turn it is will be called the attacker; the character that is the target of the attacker's action is called the defender. The attacker explains what his action is, and the defender explains how he'd try to counter that action. Then, the attacker rolls 2d6 for his relevant Quality and adds the appropriate Modifier for Quality Rank. The defender does the same. The character with the higher total wins.

If the attack is successful, damage (see page 25) is applied to the defender; if the attacker fails, no damage is done. A tie is just that – nobody wins, nobody loses... but they both muss each other up a bit.

Example: *Kenshiro is the attacker and Salty Dave is the defender. Kenshiro is going to grapple the Pirate using his Expert [+4] Sumo Wrestling and Average [0] Ninja Qualities, and Salty Dave decides to try and hold him off using his Good [+2] Cutlass and Average [0] Pirate Qualities. Ken rolls 2d6+4+0 for a result of 10, Salty Dave rolls 2d6+2+0 for a result of 8. Thus, Ken does damage to Salty Dave this turn – see page 25 – and has grabbed the scurvy dog. (If Salty Dave had been a better Pirate, this would give a different result: if he were a Good [+2] Pirate, the characters would have tied and done each other damage; if he were an Expert [+4] Pirate, Ken's attack would fail and he'd take no damage.) On his action, Salty Dave wants to escape from Ken's Sumo grip. He gets a result of 11, while the ninja gets a result of 6. Salty Dave does a lot of damage to Ken in getting free – must be that cutlass!*

VR FACTOR - REALITY BITES! (OPTIONAL)

At your discretion, apply a shift equal to the Realism Rating to any roll that stretches the boundaries of reality (basically, anything that makes someone say "That makes no sense!" or "That's crazy!") Settings with a -2 Realism rating discourage lunacy; settings with a +2 Realism rating encourage insanity.

UPSHIFTS (ACTING NINJA)

"Come on, let's do it! Let's be ninjas!"
– Ninja Bachelor Party

This is how ninja characters get more Yin for their Yang. If the player describes his character's attempt to perform an action in a way that explicitly and intentionally adheres to their Element, Clan or Matter of Honor, the Dispatcher can give them an Upshift. An Upshift means that for that particular action, the PC rolls as if their Quality were one level higher (essentially giving him an additional +2 to their roll).

Example: The van's radar tells Toshiro a Samurai Burger truck is headed straight for him. Oh, it's a game of Chicken? Fine. He grits his teeth and hits the gas. As this stubborn show of fortitude is in keeping with Toshiro's Element (Earth), the Dispatcher offers Toshiro an Upshift on his Driver roll (which goes from 2d6+2 to 2d6+4, as if he were Expert [+4] Rank) and 1 point of Honor (possibly to be awarded posthumously).

The Dispatcher may also give Upshifts if PCs describe actions in a graphic, ninja-like and entertaining fashion. So, rather than "I hit the pirate" (or "I seduce the secretary"), the player says "I grab the pirate's shirt with one hand and pull him closer to punch him in the face with my other fist – arr, matey-san!" (or says, in character, "Yes, beautiful. Not only is that is a sword in my pocket, but I am also happy to see you!"). If the PC had a Good [+2] Pirate (or Seduction) Quality, this would change his roll in attempting to hit the pirate (or seduce the secretary) from 2d6+2 to 2d6+4.

NOTE – Upshifts above Master Rank add an extra die to the character's roll (i.e., instead of rolling 2d6+6+2, the character rolls 3d6+6).

ACTING NINJA VS. BEING NINJA

In a game where everyone is a ninja, it can be hard to distinguish between "Acting Ninja" and just "being a ninja." In general, actions that are merely in keeping with the standard ninja archetype (that is, actions that use the Ninja Quality) should not get Upshifts, as they are expected of any ninja. However, actions related to other Qualities can and should draw Upshifts if the action is truly ninja-like in complexity and coolness.

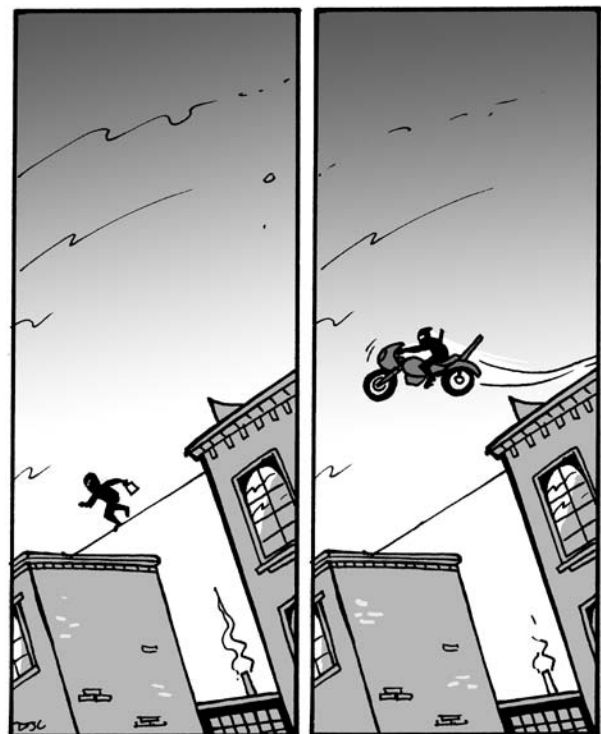
Example: With time running out, Toshiro (a Driver) says he's going to take a corner at full tilt, doing a four-wheel glide to maintain speed. The Dispatcher gives him an Upshift on the attempt.

BEING DISHONORABLE

Normally it's better to try and use one's Element, Clan and Honor to try and earn an Upshift, but if the Dispatcher is being stingy there's always the dishonorable route. Going over to the "Dark Side" is much simpler, but it's also more costly. If the player wishes to do this, the Dispatcher rolls 1d6, and the character subtracts that much Honor from their score.

Example: Sanjuro is surrounded. If he can do a ninja leap up 50 feet to grab a chandelier, he can swing to safety, but as ninja as he is, it's just not going to be enough. His player opts to spend Honor to give Sanjuro an Upshift; the Dispatcher rolls 1d6, and Sanjuro loses 3 points of Honor. Planting his foot on the face of a Buddha statue (how dishonorable!), he grabs the chandelier. He is safe, but at what cost? Poor Buddha!

Note that actions performed in this way do not incur any other Honor losses, even if the character violates his personal Matter of Honor. Also note that since there is no such thing as a minimum Honor Score, ninja characters can do this as often as they wish, racking up (or down, as the case may be) an Honor Score in the negative hundreds. The problems that result from this – including the threat of Seppuku – are discussed in more depth in the Dispatcher section.



Being Ninja vs Acting Ninja

DOWNSHIFTS

While functionally the same thing as an Upshift (a -2 to a 2d6 roll, plus Modifiers), the reasons behind having a Weakness, or incurring Downshifts, are different from those with Upshifts.

Example: Sanjuro has a Weakness of Poor [-2] Reader. If he needs to do a really complicated and unusual repair on his Kawasaki Ninja, requiring reading the bike's manual, this Weakness will affect his overall competence (Expert [+4] Biker Dude) in the repair. Instead of rolling 2d6+4, Sanjuro will be rolling 2d6+2 (which is really 2d6+4-2). That's just par for the course, an effect of his Strength and Weakness interacting in that particular situation.

A Downshift means that for the action in question, the PC rolls as if his Quality were one level lower (essentially giving him a -2 to his roll). Downshifts can come from a number of sources, such as a combatant trying to Play It Caggy (see page 28, "Conflict Jazz"), the effects of Failure or Damage Ranks (see page 26, "Taking It On the Chin"), or if a character is acting way out of line with their Element, Clan or Honor.

While judicious use of Downshifts to reflect a sudden or unexpected change in the complexity of a situation can work very well, Dispatchers should resist the temptation to overuse Downshifts as situational modifiers. PDQ games tend to run smoother if the Dispatcher simply sets the Difficulty Rank (and thus, Target Number) of a task appropriately.

Example: If the PCs are trying to climb an Average [7] Difficulty wall and it begins to rain, a Downshift to each of their relevant Qualities makes sense. However, if it's already raining when they begin, simply make the wall Good [9] Difficulty from the get-go.

NOTE – Downshifts below Poor Rank mean automatic failure in the use of that Quality.

SHIFT ACCUMULATION

In the PDQ system, Upshifts, Downshifts, and bonus dice are cumulative – thus, if a ninja is Acting Ninja and Flipping Out (see page 28), he would get 2 Upshifts (a Modifier of +4) on the attack and damage; if the starting Quality was of Average [0] Rank (2d6), it would temporarily become Expert (2d6+4); if the Quality was Good [+2], the roll would be 2d6+6, and if the Quality was Expert [+4], the roll would be 3d6+6, because one of the Upshifts takes the Rank above Master and translates into an extra die.

Upshift stacking like this can bog down a game as players try to Rules Lawyer their way out of tough situations. The Dispatcher is encouraged to keep the following guidelines in mind:

PLAYING PIRATE

Playing Pirate is – in some ways – the opposite of Acting Ninja. Boring, cliché, chaotic, or disruptive roleplaying (in other words, behaving like a scurvy pirate, and not like an honorable ninja) can ruin everybody else's fun, and after all, the point of roleplaying is to have a good time. If a player is reading, refusing to pay attention, watching TV, rules-lawyering, not acting like a ninja, being pointlessly abusive or distracting to other players, or – Buddha preserve us! – sleeping at the gaming table, they are working against the overall good time. In these cases, the Dispatcher **could** give the offending PC a Downshift based on the player's behavior... but what's the point? If the player's not interested enough in the game to even pay attention, penalizing his character will probably have little effect on his behavior.

Try to discover the cause of the player's Playing Pirate. Maybe it's something about the focus or subject matter of the campaign, a difference of roleplaying style, or even an unrelated personal issue that's bugging the player. The answer to Playing Pirate is to discuss the situation outside of the game – either by taking a break or talking between sessions – and try to work through it like grown-ups. A little bit of open communication can do wonders for these sorts of issues.

If the problem persists, it might be that your players are looking for a different style of play. You might be trying to play in a serious fashion, and they might be looking for wacky. In this case, let them have it with both barrels. Sometimes turning up the level of Dispatcher cruelty can enliven a game. Enforce arbitrary rules like "Everyone must refer to everyone else with '-san' at the end of their name" or "No one will use the word 'ninja' as a plural; the plural of 'ninja' is 'ninja'." Deduct points of honor if these rules are not followed. Enforce the Seppuku rule. Up the body count. You may be surprised how much fun it is.

- Only one of ECH (Element, Clan, Honor) may be used by a character for Upshifts in a turn. Thus, if a character acts in accordance with his Element, he may not use his Clan or Matter of Honor to gain further Upshifts.
- If a ninja is granted an Upshift for an action, he may not also Be Dishonorable in order to gain a further Upshift. Either he's acting like a proper ninja or he isn't; he can't have it both ways.
- When in doubt, don't. It's easier to keep rolling with the basic mechanics than to try and think about Upshifts every turn. If it isn't obvious to everyone concerned, then don't apply it.

DAMAGE

"...We'd have to do some work on his central nervous system. I'll need some tweezers and shoelaces. Pooh. But what if he becomes some kind of olfactory Ninja? This is very difficult. I mean, we can't kill him – a kid needs a dad."
– Johnny the Homicidal Maniac

Damage (be it physical, mental, emotional, or social) is the loss of capability. As a character takes damage, he is less likely to be able to perform at peak efficiency. This is shown by a temporary Downshift applied to the character's listed Qualities, called either a Failure Rank or a Damage Rank, depending on the conflict.

In mental, social, and some physical conflicts – a chess match, witty repartee, a race – loss of capability is temporary, and is represented by Failure Ranks. In many physical conflicts (and some physical situations), loss of capability is enduring and involves Damage Ranks – examples include combat, running through fire, or falling off of a wall. The key difference is that Failure can't kill; Damage can. If someone breaks a heart, it's Failure; if they break an arm, it's Damage.

DISHING IT OUT

In a successful attack, the difference between the attacking and defending rolls determines how many Failure or Damage Ranks are done to the defender. If the attacker has any Upshifts or Downshifts on their successful attack, that shift will carry through to damage resolution. If the roll results are tied, both characters take a single Downshift.

NOTE – Qualities Upshifted above Master Rank provide an additional Rank of Damage to be applied.

Example: On Kenshiro's action, the difference between his roll and Salty Dave's was 2, so he does 2 Damage Ranks. The Pirate chooses to reduce his Good [+2] Accountant and Good [+2] Climbing Rigging Qualities, placing them both temporarily at Average [0] Rank. On Salty Dave's action, he did 5 Damage Ranks. Kenshiro chooses to drop his Good [+2] Chef to Poor [-2] Chef (2 Damage Ranks) and his Good [+2] Clambering to Poor [-2] Clambering (2 more Damage Ranks). This leaves one more Damage Rank to be accounted for, so Kenshiro is drops his Expert [+4] Sumo Wrestling to Good [+2] Sumo Wrestling.

CONFLICT ABSTRACTION

In any conflict, some of a character's Qualities can be thought of as useful for either "attack," "defense," or "absorption."

Let's say a character has Good [+2] Rank in the Qualities of Kung Fu, Debating, and Accountant. In combat (a physical conflict), the character will probably opt to keep Kung Fu at Good [+2], and apply Damage Ranks to Debating and Accountant. In an argument (a social conflict), the character will want to keep Debating high for as long as possible, and take Failure Ranks on Kung Fu and Accountant first. If being audited by the IRS (could be a mental, a social, or even a professional conflict, depending on how the Dispatcher spins the situation), the character would protect Accountant, try to keep Debating at Good [+2] as long as he could, and sacrifice Kung Fu.

This abstraction of how Failure or Damage Ranks are applied isn't meant to be a one-to-one relationship ("Hey, why does getting punched in the face lower my Florist Quality?"), but amusing justifications can be made up anyway ("Well, your black eye makes it hard to trim your bonsai...").

KNOCKOUT

When any one of a character's Qualities drops below Poor Rank, the character is out of the Scene – that could mean they've totally flubbed their seduction attempt, been knocked unconscious (or killed) in combat, etc. The Dispatcher describes how and why the PC is out of the Scene, and lets the player know if/when they can return (see page 27, Recovering from Damage).

Example: As you recall, Kenshiro did 2 Damage Ranks to Salty Dave, and then Salty Dave slammed Kenshiro for 5 Damage Ranks.

If Salty Dave had somehow used a chocolate bar in his action, Kenshiro's Weakness of Poor [-2] Chocoholic would have made things much, much worse for our ninja. If so, Salty Dave would have done 7 Damage Ranks to Kenshiro, instead of just 5, bringing the ninja closer to losing the conflict. He would have been forced to drop his Good [+2] Sumo Wrestling by two more Damage Ranks, to Poor [-2] Sumo Wrestling.

At this point, all his Qualities would be at [-2] Poor, and one more Damage Rank would result in a Knockout for poor old Ken.

VR FACTOR - BLOODY THINGIES! (OPTIONAL)

The Dispatcher may apply a default modifier equal to the world's Violence Rating to all damage within the game. Thus with a -2 Violence Rating all damage takes a -2 modifier, and with a +2 Violence Rating all damage gets a +2 modifier. This can make a game either VERY short or VERY long, so use with caution!

ENVIRONMENTAL DAMAGE

“Another urban legend dispelled. Ninjas don’t bounce.” – The Tick

Environmental damage – such as that taken from falling, jumping through a fire, drowning, or other complicated situations – works by comparing the Target Number of the task against the total of the character’s failed roll. The difference between roll and Target Number is the Damage Ranks taken.

Example: Assume that in the example from the *Complicated Situations* section, where Toshiro wants to follow Sanjuro up a Good [9] Difficulty wall, our ninja is instead trying to follow him down the wall. As he has no applicable Quality, he must use the default Rank of Average [0], and match or beat a 9 when rolling 2d6. He rolls a 3 and a 5, for a total of 8. This is below the Target Number of the wall, so Toshiro fails, falls, and takes 1 Damage Rank from the sudden stop.



A ninja suffers from a severe case of Environmental Damage

TAKING IT ON THE CHIN

Firstly, if – in the Dispatcher’s opinion – a character has relevant Qualities of Good [+2] Rank or better that could feasibly allow him to ignore or resist damage in the situation (like Armor-Plating, Iron Will, True Love, or Impeccable Pedigree), the character can not only add it to his reaction rolls (to dodge, parry, block, evade, etc.), but he can choose to sacrifice a Rank of this protection in order to ignore Failure or Damage Ranks.

In each Scene (not per turn or reaction; see **Time in Conflict**), a character can choose to Downshift the Quality; by doing so, the character can ignore all Failure or Damage Ranks from one action. The player chooses if and when to use these freebies. That means that if somebody is trying to pry a donation out of a PC who has Expert [+4] Rank Iron Will, the PC can in theory ignore 2 turns of Failure Ranks over the course of the conflict by reducing his Iron Will once for each attack against him that is successful. However, once a Quality reaches Average [0] Rank (through Downshifting to ignore or resist or from taking Failure or Damage Ranks), it can no longer be used in this fashion.

Secondly, any character that has a Weakness related to the type of conflict (for example, Glass Jaw in a combat, or Can’t Say No to a Pretty Face in a seduction attempt), will have to take two extra Damage Ranks the first time – and only the first time – they get tagged in a relevant situation. (That’s why it’s a Weakness; if they have an offsetting Strength that allows them to ignore or resist as above, they can use that to ameliorate the badness.)

NOTE – Qualities reduced to Poor [-2] Rank during a conflict situation by Failure or Damage Ranks are not Weaknesses; Weaknesses are character flaws decided upon at character generation. There’s a difference between a Weakness of Poor [-2] Athlete (the character’s never been that into sports) versus someone in a race who’s Good [+2] Athlete has been temporarily reduced to Poor [-2] Rank by accumulating Failure Ranks (he’s out of breath and feeling the burn).

Lastly, if a defender is caught totally and utterly by surprise by an attacker – to the extent that the attacker gets a free turn (see page 22, “Initiative”) – or makes not the slightest effort to defend himself, that could add an additional Rank to what he Takes On the Chin.

On the positive side, the player of the defending PC decides where to apply the Damage Ranks (see page 25, “Conflict Abstraction”). They may only be applied to those Qualities listed on the character’s sheet (that is, not any one of the character’s infinite number of “default” Average Qualities).

VR FACTOR - FINISHING MOVES & RUBBER BONES (OPTIONAL)

Violence Rating can help tweak the outcome of combats within your game world! If your setting has a Violence Rating of -2, subtract two ranks of damage from any "lethal" blow in combat; like a cartoon coyote, you somehow manage to avoid death. If you're working with a +2 Violence Rating, add +2 ranks of damage in like fashion; with your foe on the ground, helpless, you rip out his spine and toss it aside.

Note that this is a less intense version of the VR Factor on page 25, which applies to ALL damage rolls.

OUT FOR BLOOD?

"My friend, a ninja doesn't kill. He eliminates, and only for defensive purposes." – Enter the Ninja

For physical conflicts, the default assumption in the PDQ system is that characters can only be killed once they are unconscious or otherwise helpless. This requires no roll, check, or action – simply a statement on the attacker's next turn that he wishes to kill the victim. Dispatchers should feel free to change this rule if they desire. Perhaps characters pick whether they are doing "bruising" damage (treated as Failure Ranks) or "killing" damage (treated as Damage Ranks) at the beginning of a conflict situation.

RECOVERING FROM DAMAGE

Once a **Scene** ends, all injured characters will begin to recover lost Ranks. How many they each get back depends upon whether they were in momentary danger or are still in continuing danger.

Momentary Danger. If nothing else is going on, and the character is otherwise safe, relaxed, and lacking any time constraints. Examples of momentary danger include playing Go Fish with a six year old, a car chase (though some Environmental Damage could happen...), or a seduction attempt. At the end of the Scene, all Failure or Damage Ranks are removed, restoring Qualities to their appropriate levels.

Continuing Danger. Danger is continuing if the overarching situation that the conflict happened in is risky, stressful, or under deadline. An example of continuing danger would be playing poker in a seedy dive bar with three Mafiosi, or most Ninja Burger deliveries where the clock is still running. Characters will recover 1d6 lost Ranks of Quality for free at the end of the conflict Scene. The player selects which Qualities' Ranks are restored. However, the character will not recover any more Ranks until the Dispatcher tells them to roll again.

NOTE – A Strength like "Quick Healer" should allow the character to gain back the standard 1d6 roll, plus their Modifier. A Weakness like "Slow Healer" would mean that the character rolls 1d6-2 (the Modifier for Poor), with a minimum of zero Ranks regained.



Example: Sanjuro's been stuffed in a garbage can by a Mutant Garbageman. At the end of the conflict, all of his Qualities were Downshifted to Poor, except for Ninja, which he had dropped below Poor.

Since this happened in a bad part of town, he's in continuing danger. He rolls for damage recovery and gets a 3. He puts 1 Rank into bringing Ninja to Poor [-2] (now he's conscious), and uses the remaining 2 to get Toughness back to Good [+2], since he figures it'll be the most useful when the Garbageman returns.

INCREASING DAMAGE (OPTIONAL)

PDQ assumes that one is using an appropriate tool alongside a Quality – a katana with Ninja, a sexy dress with Seduction, etc. If the Dispatcher chooses, this assumption can be changed such that special equipment provides 1 Upshift, limited to Damage Rank determination only. Under this rule, if a character with Good [+2] Kung-Fu uses nunchaku when breaking heads, while he'd be rolling for success at Good [+2] Rank, but when comparing roll results for damage, he'd treat his Kung-Fu as if it were Expert [+4] Rank. (This boils down to an extra 2 Failure or Damage Ranks.)

TIME IN CONFLICT

The terms used in PDQ for identifying the passage of time:

Scenes are the entire conflict; starting with Initiative and ending with someone winning, losing, surrendering, or leaving the situation.

Each character takes a **turn** or **action**: that's when they make their move, throw a punch, etc. (If **Turn** is capitalized, it generally means the set of all characters' actions and reactions.)

Others **react** during a character's turn – saying something back or defending, usually – but their reactions can only be in response to the actions of the character whose turn it currently is. They cannot initiate actions until their turn.

RANGE IN CONFLICT

In general, Dispatchers can be really flexible with distance in a PDQ game. Ranges are either Near (can punch it), Middling (can run up and punch it), Far (can throw or shoot at it), or Too Far (out of range). If one really wants to connect numbers to this, Near would be any distance up to a yard, Middling would be between 1 and 3 yards, Far would be between 3 and 60 yards, and Too Far is anything over 60 yards.

MOVEMENT IN CONFLICT

While PDQ tends to leave movement rates for characters abstract and up to the discretion of the Dispatcher (like by requiring a character to make a roll using a speed or movement Quality vs. a reasonable Difficulty Rank), some folks like a concrete movement rate. So here it is: characters have a movement rate equal to 2 yards plus twice the sum of all involved Qualities per turn. Half of this (i.e., the sum of their Qualities being used) is taken on their action of their Turn, and the other half is taken during their reactions. This means that a Good [+2] Robot with Qualities of Expert [+4] Hover-Jets and Good [+2] Fast would have a movement rate of 10 yards per Turn (base 2, +2+4+2); they can move up to 5 yards on their action and 5 yards on their reactions.

TIME OUTSIDE OF CONFLICT

This topic is dealt with in detail in the Dispatcher section. Suffice to say here that outside of conflict situations, time is a lot more flexible. Characters are on the clock, with a 30-minute time limit to adhere to, but the Dispatcher has a lot of leeway, and not every moment is treated as a Turn.

CONFLICT JAZZ

"I think I've changed my mind. I wanna have some lunch, uh... could I have a double Whammy Burger with cheese...are you getting this?" – Falling Down

Here are some methods to get even more of your tactical or strategic impulses out. Any character can choose to use them in the course of their conflicts.

CONFLICT STRATEGIES

There are three additional strategies that a character can use in conflicts, depending upon if he wants to specifically concentrate on attack or defense, or cooperate with other team members on a coordinated attack or defense. One can only be used by an attacker, one only by a defender, and one only if an entire team cooperates. If a PC (or an entire ninja team) wishes to utilize any of these strategies, they must announce it at the beginning of their turn. They cannot be used on the same turn.

Flip Out. The attacker flips out all over the target, making strong attacks (physical, mental, or social) without much heed to defense. A Flip-Out grants an Upshift for the attack (and any subsequent damage) and a Downshift on all defensive reactions and other non-conflict-related actions until his next turn.

Play It Cagey. The defender opts for safety by not taking any chances, holding back in the conflict. Playing It Cagey grants an Upshift for all defensive reactions and a Downshift on all the character's non-conflict-related actions until their next turn; unfortunately, Playing It Cagey means that the character's next attack action will suffer from this Downshift.

Go Team! The entire ninja team (requiring at least three characters) channels their energy and power through one chosen member, and decides whether to Flip Out or Play It Cagey en masse. The chosen ninja then attacks or defends normally, but he receives one Upshift on the attack (if Flipping Out) or defense (if Playing It Cagey) for each ninja who is pitching in. All ninja in the team must agree to join in or this doesn't work, and all ninja other than the chosen one lose their actions for the turn. No Downshifts are suffered, however – the loss of all those turns is bad enough! See page 24 for more on stacking above Master [+6].

Example: *A team of four ninja is facing off against a Super Cyborg Samurai who they can't beat alone. They declare that the next turn they will Go Team! They choose Sanjuro to lead the attack with his Good [+2] Katana Quality. Since there are three additional ninja pitching in, Sanjuro receives three Upshifts, taking him from 2d6+2 up to 3d6+6 for the attack.*

USING MULTIPLE QUALITIES

If the Dispatcher agrees that more than one Quality can be brought to bear on a task, combine Modifiers for the relevant Qualities. (If a player spent one of their choices in character generation on buying something under their penumbra as a separate Quality – for example, taking Katana on top of already having Ninja – this is where they reap the benefit.) Furthermore, this case includes not just the Qualities of a single character, but also if multiple characters team-up – as with Go Team! on the previous page. If multiple characters are joining forces, only one of them needs to roll, and that's the character with the higher Initiative.

Example 1: *Sakamura sees some Pirates attacking his buddy Kenshiro. He decides to join the fray, and grabs a decorative garland to swing down all Errol Flynn-like while slicing with his katana. Sakamura can combine his Good [+2] Katana and Good [+2] Swinging Qualities (as well as his Average [0] Ninja Quality) in his attack on one of the Pirates. He'll be rolling $2d6+2+2+0$, or $2d6+4$, for this ninja maneuver.*

Example 2: *Sakura (Expert [+4] Marketing) and Toshiro (Good [+2] Forgery) decide to work together to convince an Expert [+4] Bouncer to let them backstage. Sakura will roll $2d6+4+2$; the Dispatcher rolls for the Bouncer. She rolls a 4 and a 6, for a total of 16, and the Dispatcher rolls a 4 and a 6 for a total of 14. Sakura and Toshiro successfully convince the NPC that their fake Backstage Passes are legitimate!*

MULTIPLE TARGETS

If it's necessary for a character to take on multiple targets simultaneously in a single action, he can split his attentions (and relevant Quality Ranks) between them. Of course, this leads to a commensurate decrease in effective skill. For each additional target selected, apply a Downshift to the Quality Rank.

Example: *Say that Kenshiro (Expert [+4] Sumo Wrestling) is fighting two Pirate Bikers. If he tries to take them both on, he'll only be at an effective Rank of Good [+2] for his attacks on each. If there were 3 Pirate Bikers, he'd have an effective Rank of Average [0]; if 4, Poor [-2]. If there were 5 Pirate Bikers, he'd automatically fail all five attacks, since his split Rank would bottom out with another Downshift. Better to take them on one or two at a time.*

But Kenshiro has Chef at Good [+2] Rank. If the melee took place in a kitchen, the Dispatcher might agree that Ken could add his culinary know-how (grabbing cleavers, throwing pots, creative use of the Fryolator, etc.). This would allow Kenshiro to take on 2 Pirates at Expert [+4], 3 Pirates at Good [+2], 4 Pirates at Average [0], 5 Pirates at Poor [-2], and auto-fail only when facing 6 Pirates in the kitchen at once.

ABSTRACTING FURTHER (OPTIONAL)

You could streamline conflict situations further by treating them as complicated situations. That is, instead of having characters roll using their Qualities against each other to determine success, simply treat their Quality Rank as a Difficulty Rank. Then, the attacker uses the Target Number of that Difficulty Rank to roll against for success; as with Environmental Damage, the difference between roll result and Target Number gives the Damage Rank. No fuss, no muss (especially for faceless henchmen, if your PDQ game is in the cinematic idiom).

Example: *Sakamura has infiltrated the headquarters of the evil upstart pizza delivery chain, Ninja Hut. His path is blocked by a Henchman Ninja (Average [0] Henchman). Sakamura rolls his Good [+2] Kendo Quality against the henchman's Target Number of 7. He rolls a 3 and a 6, plus 2 from Good [+2] Katana, giving him a total of 11: Eleven easily beats 7, so Sakamura slices the henchman's head right off, causing it to fly into the pizza oven.*



A ninja combines his Masonry, Coffee Making and Soccer Playing Qualities.

CONFLICT EXAMPLE

Two Ninja Burger recruits get into a fight in the kitchen – Toshiro (Good [+2] Using Sharp Things) and Sanjuro (Good [+2] Dirty Fighter). Since they are in a kitchen, Toshiro has an edge, since he also adds in his Good [+2] Chef Quality, making his total fighting-relevant Quality Ranks higher than Toshiro's.

SANJURO TERIAKI, Ninja Chef

Qualities: Average [+0] Ninja, Good [+2] Chef, Good [+2] at Using Sharp Things, Good [+2] at Handling Stress, Poor [-2] Personal Hygiene.

Background: Recruited from a local restaurant after an appearance on *Ironic Chefs*, Sanjuro has embraced the life of the ninja only insofar as it allows him to keep cooking.

ECH: Element: Fire; **Clan:** Drunken Spider; **Matter of Honor:** "I will never turn down a dare"; **Honor:** 7

TOSHIRO SUZUKI, Ninja Deliverator

Qualities: Average [+0] Ninja, Good [+2] Deliverator, Good [+2] at Running Away, Good [+2] Dirty Fighter, Poor [-2] at Following Orders.

Background: A scoundrel through and through, Toshiro joined Ninja Burger because it gave him a chance to kill people legally. Well, not legally. But still. You know.

ECH: Element: Air; **Clan:** Dancing Hawk; **Matter of Honor:** "Honorless Dog"; **Honor:** -5

Sanjuro: "You insult my burger? You die! You die now! I skewer you with very big chef's knife!"

Toshiro: "Aiyi the cook's gone insane! I'll try to duck under the Fryolater."

Sanjuro (rolls 2d6+4; he rolls a 3 and a 1 for a total of 8): "Eight!"

Toshiro (rolls 2d6+2; he rolls a 4 and a 5 for a total of 11): "Eleven! Ha!"

Dispatcher: "Toshiro hits the deck, and Sanjuro's knife misses the mark. Toshiro's turn."

Toshiro: "I try to kick him in the meatballs!"

Sanjuro: "Ooooooh, not honorable, kemo sabe. Why do you always go for the low-blow?"

Toshiro: "My Quality is Dirty Fighter, sport. I got no honor."

Sanjuro: "Well, I'll try to parry his kick away from my groin with a cleaver."

Toshiro (rolls 2d6+2, he rolls a 4 and a 5 for a total of 11): "This one goes to eleven! Heh!"

Sanjuro (rolls 2d6+4; he rolls a 6 and a 3 for a total of 13): "Thirteen. Guess it's not your lucky day!"

Dispatcher: "Sanjuro swats Toshiro's kick aside with a big heavy cleaver."

Sanjuro: "Grandfather always say, 'If you can't take the heat, go into the cellar and cool off.'"

Toshiro: "That's not how it goes. Your Grandfather got it wrong."

Sanjuro: "Now you insult my ancestors? Prepare to die!" (to Dispatcher) "I'm gonna grab his tabi-booted foot, flip him onto the table, and stuff his toes into the meat grinder."

Toshiro: "Hey, that's more than one action!" (looks at Dispatcher)

Sanjuro: "Nope, it's Acting Ninja."

Dispatcher (ponders): "Yeah, that's pretty darn ninja. Sanjuro gets an Upshift on the attack."

Toshiro (closes his eyes): "This is gonna hurt."

Dispatcher: "What's your reaction going to be?"

Toshiro (thinks): "I'm gonna Play It Cagey."

Dispatcher: "That'll screw up your next attack..."

Toshiro (ponders): "Nah, it's not worth it. I need to tag this guy a couple times, and I'll need all the bonuses I can get. I won't Play it Cagey."

Dispatcher: "Alright, Sanjuro's rolling against an effective Master [+6] Using Sharp Things for this attack, or 2d6+6. Go for it."

Sanjuro (rolls 2d6+6; he rolls two 5s for a total of 16): "Sweet sixteen, baby!"

Toshiro (rolls 2d6+2; he rolls a 2 and a 4 for a total of 8): "Dammit. No go."

Dispatcher (calculating, 16 minus 8 is a total of 8): "Sanjuro drops Toshiro onto the table and stuffs his foot in the meat grinder, which grinds away for 8 Damage Ranks."

Sanjuro: "Take that, little buddy. Should've Played It Cagey."

Toshiro (glumly looking at his character sheet): "Well, I could drop all my Goods to Averages, that's 3 Damage Ranks. Drop them all to Pooors, that's another 3. Two more... okay, I drop my Average Ninja to Poor. That leaves one Damage Rank, and everything I got is at Poor now. Crap. I'll take it on Dirty Fighter and bottom out. I'm unconscious."

Dispatcher (to Toshiro): After a couple seconds, you come around. You're still in continuing danger because Sanjuro could cleave your foot off. Roll 1d6 for Damage Recovery."

Toshiro (rolls 1d6; he rolls a 4): "Four Ranks back... Hmm, I'll put Dirty Fighter back to Good, that's 1 to hit Poor and 2 more to get to Good, total of 3. Ninja back to Average, that's 1. There, that should do it."

Sanjuro (to Toshiro): "Apologize or die!"

Toshiro: "I'd rather die!"

Dispatcher: "Might I remind both of you that you now have only 10 minutes left to deliver those burgers? Better get moving or you're BOTH dead!"

4. THE DISPATCHER

“Rat? This is a ratburger? Not bad. As a matter of fact, it’s the best burger I’ve had in years.” – Demolition Man

This section of the rules is intended for Dispatchers, those who intend to run *Ninja Burger* (in addition to playing as a character). If you have no intention of running a game, read no further – doing so may hamper your enjoyment of the game by revealing secrets your Dispatcher wishes to keep, well, secret.

Turn back NOW! Lasciate Agni Speranza. Shoo!

Ok, are they gone? Good. That bit about secrets was all nonsense. There’s nothing your players could read here that could *possibly* spoil the game, because you have something they can’t get their dirty little fingers on – improvisation. Oh, sure, they might read the pages that follow and get an *idea* of what you might throw at them, but they’ll never know exactly what’s in store. Letting your players read the stuff that follows is like taking someone to where you bought their Christmas presents; they’ll see everything they’re getting, but in truth you’re revealing nothing, since they don’t know what *specifically* they’re getting. Unless they’re rotten, in which case a trip to the coal mine is a giveaway.

DISPATCHER VS. GAME MASTER

In the real world, the Dispatcher is the person who tells the other players what they see, hear, etc. as they go about their delivery. He gives them their deliveries, rewards them for honorable behavior, punishes them for dishonorable deeds, and wraps things up at the end by giving everyone any salary and bonuses they may have earned. In this respect, he’s the same as any other Game Master in any other game.

But in the game world, the Dispatcher is “Dispatch,” the guy at the other end of the two-way satellite radio link that connects *Ninja Burger* with a delivery team. Out-of-game, he may be omniscient, but within the context of the game he can only tell players what might reasonably be seen or heard by the other characters, using any number of surveillance devices to “follow the action” and “report to the team” what they see.

The basic assumption is that you (as the Dispatcher) can see and hear anything that any *Ninja Burger* character can see or hear, as well as anything within sight or earshot of any *Ninja Burger* vehicle. However, this is *Ninja Burger* after all – you don’t need to tell them where you are; they already know – and so your potential reach extends further. Consider GPS devices, ATMs, store cameras, surveillance cameras, helicopters, cell phones, radar guns... If it’s electronic, chances are *Ninja Burger* can tap into it somehow.

In a fantasy RPG, a rogue might listen at a door and ask, “What’s behind this door?” The GM in that game, acting as an omniscient being, might very well say that the rogue hears a noise. In *Ninja Burger*, a PC asking, “What’s on the other side of this door?,” would get a reply from Dispatch not in terms of what



the ninja hears, but in terms of what Dispatch is able to perceive under the circumstances:

“The mic in your lapel is picking up a hum, maybe a machine. Let me see... I tapped into a camera on the other side. Looks like we got a laser grid. I’m pulling down schematics now, and I’ll have ‘em in a sec.”

In both cases, the effect is the same – the player asks, and gets an answer. But the Dispatcher is drawn closer into the team, becoming more of an actual character. (For some specific examples of how to play a Dispatcher-as-character, see the sidebar on page 81).

WE, NOT YOU

One way to cement the concept of Dispatcher as team member is to use the words “We” or “I” when possible, instead of “You.” Doing so consistently will convey the idea that the in-game “You” is right there with the other characters, even if it’s only as a little voice in their heads. And keep in mind you’re a radio Dispatcher – talk like one, and sprinkle your words with slang and military lingo. Consider the following, with “You”s on the left, and “We”s on the right:

| | |
|--|--|
| “You guys had better get moving. Time’s wasting.” | “Countdown shows T-minus five. We’re nearly outta time.” |
| “You see three security guards holding large guns.” | “Radar’s showing three goons with M-16s at ten o’clock.” |
| “There’s a loud hiss. You see gas filling the room.” | “Guys, I just heard a hissing noise. Anyone smell gas?” |

Using language that places You at the scene won’t always be appropriate or possible. For example, in the conflict example on the previous page, where the action involved two player characters scuffling, the Dispatcher was probably correct to fade back into the background, only inserting the necessary mechanical and numerical descriptions of the action. As you get a feel for your play group, you’ll also get a better idea of when to insert yourself as a character, and when to drop off into the distance. Just because you can see and hear everything that’s going on doesn’t mean you (the character “you”) always need to comment.

DEUS EX MACHINA

Another fun option is to give yourself – as the Dispatcher character, a ninja with hook-ups to all sorts of technology – the ability to manipulate things in the world to assist the team: twiddle an electronic lock, call an elevator at the right moment, make a phone ring as a distraction, etc. Done properly, it will help the players feel that you are there alongside them – especially if you occasionally call the elevator to the wrong floor, or set off all the alarms in the building.

You should ideally put many of these checks up to dice rolls, with failure as a possibility. Part of the fun is surprising yourself along with all the other players. Nothing is quite as fun as when it all goes to Hell. Be careful, however, not to be too obvious. The trick here is to assist, not railroad. Don't do anything the team should be able to do on their own, but do feel free to do things that move the plot along, especially if the players seem stuck. Opening a locked door after three characters have all failed their checks to open it will only make them all feel less capable, but having the door click open just as they reach it will have the entire team thanking "Dispatch" for the helpful assist.

TICK TICK TICK

Obviously, the Ninja Burger setting places a great deal of importance on the clock. Ninja are supposed to deliver within 30 minutes, so every single action they take – driving down the street, waiting for an elevator, etc. – impacts their overall mission.

One way to handle time is to assume that every action a player describes has a specific amount of time attached to it: driving ten city blocks might take one minute (assuming there are no lights or stop signs), and taunting an enemy might take 30 seconds. This can build up a sense of suspense as everyone literally watches the seconds tick off on a sheet of paper (provided the Dispatcher keeps good track), and the players appreciate the impact of every one of their actions. Nothing is more disappointing than missing a deadline six times in a row because someone forgot to add in the three minutes it took to park the car.

Another option is to use Relativity, in which actions take variable amounts of time as befits the situation at hand. With this option, there's no keeping track of each second gone by, so nobody has to worry about the clock too much on the way to the delivery. But when it gets close to the end, actions become relatively more important, and the Dispatcher reminds everyone of the deadline by carving off a relatively appropriate chunk of time – 1d6 minutes, perhaps. There's a reason that movie bombs are always defused with 1 second left on them; it's much more fun and dramatic and exciting.

NIGHT AT THE IMPROV

While Dispatchers are encouraged to plan out detailed deliveries for characters to complete, it's also easy to improvise. After all, when you strip out the police, guards, dogs, pirates, samurai, robots, laser-guided monkeys and all that nonsense, every delivery mission is pretty much the same thing. *Deliver Food to Customer*. There's no carrying a magical ring to a volcano, no stopping the Nazis from resurrecting Zombie Cyborg Hitler, and no preventing the future destruction of the human race by destroying a time-traveling robot bent on killing your mother.

Of course, all those things will no doubt be intruding into the course of each night's deliveries at some point or another, and if you like, that's where you can feel free to let your imagination run wild. Or, if you're not in the mood for thinking, you can let your dice run wild, using the charts on the pages that follow to help you design your deliveries. Allowing fate to dictate the events that unfold has at least two obvious benefits: first, it takes some of the design burden off your plate, which is a big help when you're running a short playing session in between longer games; secondly, it makes it more interesting for you, as Dispatcher, to insert yourself into the story when you're as surprised by unfolding events as the players are.

You might also consider letting some of your in-game description rely on dice rolls, using either your character's Dispatcher Quality or applicable Qualities from the other characters on the team. In this way, you can maintain a sense of fun and randomness while still retaining control over the action; you, the Dispatcher, know what will happen, but you, the Dispatcher character, never knows what the characters are going to see until it's right on top of them. This can be used for an excellent advantage to surprise, trick or confuse players through misinformation.

Example: In our earlier example, a ninja character listens at a door and asks, "What's on the other side of this door?" This time, the Dispatcher makes a Complicated Situation Check for himself and decides that he (the Dispatcher character) doesn't know, saying "Well, I don't hear anything, and there's no cameras... looks clear to me. Get in there!" Of course, when the poor ninja opens the door and sets off the laser defenses, and alarm bells start sounding, Dispatch suddenly has more information to share. "Oops, didn't see that! That's a Mark 7 laser defense grid! Get out of there!"

As mentioned earlier, the effect here is the same as our rogue listening at a door in a fantasy game – a detection roll is botched, and the character fails to perceive something – but the overall atmosphere within the game is markedly different.



DELIVERY DESIGN

The following randomizer will help you create custom deliveries on the fly. With just a bit of creativity and a pair of dice you can keep your ninja characters scurrying all over the city for hours on end. For a quick delivery, simply roll 2d6 and find the line with that result, reading across. For a slightly more customized delivery, roll 2d6 for each column (five times) and combine the results.

Note that the “Neighborhood” column on the chart below lists neighborhoods from San Francisco, which is described later in these rules (starting on page 59). If you’re setting your game in a different city, feel free to swap in other neighborhoods. Also note that “When” only describes how long the ninja have to complete the delivery; it has nothing to do with how long it will *actually* take to get there (see page 56).

| D1 | D2 | Who | What | Where | Neighborhood | When |
|----|----|---------------|-------------------------------|-------------------|--------------------------------|------------|
| 1 | 1 | Celebrity | Small Cola | Restaurant | R1. Marina/Pacific Heights | 20 Minutes |
| 1 | 2 | Tourist | Double Ninja Burger | Hotel Room | R2. Fisherman’s Wharf/N.Beach | 30 Minutes |
| 1 | 3 | Driver | Samurai Chicken Sandwich | Bank | R3. Chinatown/Nob Hill | 6 Minutes |
| 1 | 4 | Accountant | Ninja Burger | Office Building | R4. Downtown | 29 Minutes |
| 1 | 5 | Politician | 2 Double Ninja Burgers | Courtroom | R5. Civic Center | 25 Minutes |
| 1 | 6 | Programmer | 2 Junior Ninja Burgers | Apartment | R6. The Tenderloin | 30 Minutes |
| 2 | 1 | Policeman | 2 Ninja Burgers | Crime Scene | R7. SOMA (South of Market) | 9 Minutes |
| 2 | 2 | Engineer | 2 Samurai Chicken Sandwiches | Parking Garage | R8. South Beach/Mission Bay | 10 Minutes |
| 2 | 3 | Housekeeper | Large Cola | Large House | R9. Hayes Valley | 30 Minutes |
| 2 | 4 | Hit Man | Onion Death Blossom | Alley | R10. Western Addition | 11 Minutes |
| 2 | 5 | Lawyer | 2 Combo #2s | Studio | R11. Treasure Island | 20 Minutes |
| 2 | 6 | Policeman | 2 Samurai Chicken Sandwiches | Crime Scene | R12. Alcatraz | 12 Minutes |
| 3 | 1 | Dancer | 3 Junior Ninja Burgers | On Stage | Y1. The Castro | 30 Minutes |
| 3 | 2 | Musician | French Fries of Our Ancestors | Back Stage | Y2. The Mission | 27 Minutes |
| 3 | 3 | Housekeeper | Large Cola | Large House | Y3. Noe Valley | 22 Minutes |
| 3 | 4 | Doctor | 2 Onion Death Blossoms | Hospital | Y4. Potrero Hill | 13 Minutes |
| 3 | 5 | Parent | 2 Ninja Little Human Meals | Small House | Y5. Bernal Heights | 20 Minutes |
| 3 | 6 | Salesman | 2 Small Colas | Dive Bar | Y6. Portola/Silver Terrace | 14 Minutes |
| 4 | 1 | Fireman | Combo #2 | In Moving Vehicle | Y7. Bayview/Hunter’s Point | 20 Minutes |
| 4 | 2 | Priest/Clergy | French Fries of Our Ancestors | Church | Y8. Excelsior | 15 Minutes |
| 4 | 3 | Biker | Extra Napkins | Street Corner | Y9. Visitacion/Candlestick Pt. | 8 Minutes |
| 4 | 4 | Hiker | Junior Ninja Burger | Under a Bridge | G1. Presidio | 21 Minutes |
| 4 | 5 | Artist | 3 Samurai Chicken Sandwiches | Laboratory | G2. The Richmond | 16 Minutes |
| 4 | 6 | Judge | 2 Combo #1s | On a Bus | G3. Inner Richmond | 17 Minutes |
| 5 | 1 | Editor | 3 Double Ninja Burgers | Large Apartment | G4. Laurel Heights | 30 Minutes |
| 5 | 2 | Writer | Combo #1 | Apartment | G5. Haight-Ashbury | 7 Minutes |
| 5 | 3 | Jogger | French Fries of Our Ancestors | Park | G6. Golden Gate Park | 18 Minutes |
| 5 | 4 | Manager | 3 Combo #1s | Beach | B1. The Sunset | 28 Minutes |
| 5 | 5 | Technician | 3 Combo #2s | Secure Building | B2. Inner Sunset/UCSF | 19 Minutes |
| 5 | 6 | Reporter | 3 Ninja Burgers | Shopping Plaza | B3. Twin Peaks/Laguna Honda | 26 Minutes |
| 6 | 1 | Competitor | Extra Straws | Shopping Mall | B4. Stonestown | 20 Minutes |
| 6 | 2 | Teacher | 3 Ninja Little Human Meals | Library | B5. West Portal/SFSU | 24 Minutes |
| 6 | 3 | Clown | Ninja Little Human Meal | Shack | B6. Mt. Davidson | 20 Minutes |
| 6 | 4 | Chef | 3 Small Colas | Bus Stop | B7. Ingleside/City College | 5 Minutes |
| 6 | 5 | Hacker | 3 Onion Death Blossoms | Small Apartment | B8. Merced Heights | 23 Minutes |
| 6 | 6 | Athlete | 3 Large Colas | Sports Arena | B9. Lake Merced | 30 Minutes |

Example Delivery 1 – Quick Pick: *The Dispatcher rolls 2d6 once, getting a (5,3) and thus generating the following: A Jogger has ordered French Fries of Our Ancestors, to be delivered to a Park in Golden Gate Park in 18 Minutes. This is a fairly straightforward delivery, although finding a moving jogger inside a large park will probably be a challenge.*

Example Delivery 2 – Detailed: *The Dispatcher rolls 2d6 five times, generating the following: A Policeman (2,1) has ordered 2 Combo #2s (2,5) to be delivered to an Office Building (1,4) in the SOMA/ South of Market area (1,7) in 28 Minutes (5,4). The Dispatcher decides that the delivery is to a cop and his partner staking out an office in an adjacent building. He adds a bit of further detail, rolling 2d6 and multiplying the result (3,6) to put the delivery on the 18th floor.*



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WHEN ANIMALS ATTACK C.O.P.S.

If everything went smoothly all the time, the world wouldn't need Ninja Burger. It's pretty much guaranteed that something is going to go wrong during a delivery – either on the way there, or while the team is at the actual location. Whenever things seem to be going too smoothly, the Dispatcher is encouraged to throw an obstacle in the team's way – whether it's bad weather, traffic, some newsworthy event, an enemy attack, or something weird.

If you're winging it, you can also roll randomly on the following chart to generate an obstacle. For a quick obstacle, simply roll 2d6 and find the line with that result. For a slightly more customized obstacle, roll 2d6 twice and combine the results.

In either case, the dice rolled can also be used to determine the amount of time the ninja are delayed by the event, as described in the table headers.

| D1 | D2 | Type | Obstacle/Event (first die = delay in minutes) | Optional Complication (add two dice = delay in minutes) |
|----|----|---------|---|---|
| 1 | 1 | News | A news crew is filming a story, with lots of cameras. | There's a crew filming a story about Ninja Burger. They see you. |
| 1 | 2 | Traffic | There's a bus in your way, moving very slowly. | There's a school bus in front of you, full of kids. |
| 1 | 3 | Weather | Heavy fog is rolling in from the ocean. | Your fog lights/night goggles aren't working; streetlights are out. |
| 1 | 4 | Sports | Kids in the street are taking their time moving. | A child's parent comes out of a house to scold you. |
| 1 | 5 | Enemy | A dog attacks. Dogs eat meat. Ninja are made of it. | The angry dog that attacks you is foaming at the mouth. |
| 1 | 6 | Weird | There's an eclipse. Could it foreshadow some event? | Amateur astronomers fill the area to stare at an event in the sky. |
| 2 | 1 | News | A scuffle breaks out between 2d6 individuals. | A scuffle threatens to become a riot as 2d6x10 people get into it. |
| 2 | 2 | Traffic | Utility crews have closed off the street. | You spot an enemy in disguise. What could they be up to? |
| 2 | 3 | Weather | Rain starts to fall, making everything a bit slick. | Heavy rain starts to fall, obscuring vision and other activity. |
| 2 | 4 | Sports | A ball from a sports field flies out and hits you. | Fans in search of autographs swarm around you. |
| 2 | 5 | Enemy | Enemy ninja spot you and rush in to attack. | Another Ninja Burger team mistakes you for enemy and attacks. |
| 2 | 6 | Weird | A construction crane drops a heavy I-beam. | Shouts fill the air as someone is pinned beneath a fallen object. |
| 3 | 1 | News | A politician is doing a neighborhood meet and greet. | Your customer is on camera at the moment, talking to someone. |
| 3 | 2 | Traffic | Road construction has traffic all snarled up. | Police officers are directing traffic ahead. They eye you suspiciously. |
| 3 | 3 | Weather | A heat wave has struck, and you're all in black. | The air-conditioning is broken, making life uncomfortable. |
| 3 | 4 | Sports | A game is scheduled to start. Crowds fill the area. | Someone has fireworks. Sparklers, smoke bombs, explosives, etc. |
| 3 | 5 | Enemy | A robot gone haywire starts to attack everything. | An innocent bystander (and customer) is threatened. Save them! |
| 3 | 6 | Weird | Alarms go off as bank robbers rush out of a bank. | Masked men start firing guns as a gun battle erupts in front of you. |
| 4 | 1 | News | A new business opening has drawn crowds. | Someone in the crowd recognizes you and tries to say hello. |
| 4 | 2 | Traffic | A neighborhood street fair is being held. | The street fair includes food served by one of your competitors. |
| 4 | 3 | Weather | Strong winds rocking vehicles and down tree limbs. | Power lines are knocked down. Lights go out, live wires sizzle. |
| 4 | 4 | Sports | A sports star is holding a press conference. | A news reporter spots you and asks you to comment on camera. |
| 4 | 5 | Enemy | The man who killed your ancestor has found you. | Someone you least expect reveals that they are a long-lost relative. |
| 4 | 6 | Weird | A manhole blows into the air in a gout of flame. | The odor of gas is strong in the area. An explosion looms near. |
| 5 | 1 | News | A building is on fire! Smoke, fire trucks, crowds. | The delivery location is on fire, and your customer is still in there! |
| 5 | 2 | Traffic | Protestors fill the area, chanting and waving signs. | Police have closed off the area and begun to arrest people. |
| 5 | 3 | Weather | A wave/hydrant/water main has flooded the area. | Children are playing in the area. |
| 5 | 4 | Sports | A game lets out of a stadium; crowds fill the area. | Rowdy sports fans celebrate by rocking vehicles, throwing bottles. |
| 5 | 5 | Enemy | A competitor spots you and rushes in to attack. | A passing police car notices you and flips on the lights and siren. |
| 5 | 6 | Weird | Two men in black suits start asking you questions. | A black van pulls up and 2d6 men in black surround you. |
| 6 | 1 | News | A national politician is holding a public meeting. | A politician loudly makes an announcement about crime by ninjas. |
| 6 | 2 | Traffic | A tractor-trailer has jackknifed, spilling cargo. | An overturned tractor-trailer catches fire and threatens to explode. |
| 6 | 3 | Weather | A freak thunderstorm hits the area. | A freak storm brings huge hailstones, which break glass, etc. |
| 6 | 4 | Sports | A marathon is being run. Streets are closed. | Costumed marathon runners think you're part of the race. |
| 6 | 5 | Enemy | Police pull you over for speeding/loitering. | Police try to search/pat you down for acting suspiciously. |
| 6 | 6 | Weird | An earthquake hits. Traffic stops, buildings sway. | A major earthquake hits. Windows break, some buildings fall down. |

Example Obstacle 1 – Quick Pick: *The Dispatcher rolls 2d6 once, getting a (3,5) and thus generating an Enemy obstacle that causes a potential delay of 3 minutes. A robot has gone haywire and begun to attack everything in sight – this will include Ninja Burger personnel. If a complication is added, then the robot attacks an innocent bystander, and Ninja Burger is honor bound to save them; the delay increases to 8 minutes (3 + 5).*

Example Obstacle 2 – Detailed: *The Dispatcher rolls 2d6 twice, generating a Weather (4,3) obstacle and an Enemy (6,5) complication. Strong winds blow, rocking the Ninja Burger delivery van and making travel difficult as tree limbs fall in the street; this causes a delay of 4 minutes. Unfortunately, police have noticed the van swerving at high speeds in a wind storm, and the van is pulled over; police ask the ninja to leave the vehicle, and they attempt to pat everyone down to search for weapons. This complication results in an additional 5 minute delay.*

SUPER-SIZED BAD GUYS

"Never trust an evil space ninja!"
 – Power Rangers Ninja Storm

It's not easy being a ninja. Half the world thinks you're a sneaky, backstabbing assassin, and the other half thinks even less of you. Nobody trusts you, nobody likes you, and there's nothing you can do about it since technically you don't exist. Sucks. Yet somehow, despite the fact that ninjas are merely shadows in the wind, Ninja Burger has managed to run up a long list of enemies and obstacles.

Some of these bad guys will try to arrest or detain you, and others are merely annoyances that will just try to kill you – no questions asked.

All bad guys come in one of five sizes: Child-Sized, Small, Medium, Large and Super-Size. In the table to the right, each type has five bits of information associated with it. First, the number that appear in any particular group. Second, possible functions that type might fill in an organization. Third, the Rank that their defining Quality has. Fourth, the total number of Quality Ranks they possess. And Fifth, a sample of how their Qualities might break down; the Dispatcher should feel free to alter these as he sees fit.

Enemy Ninja – It has been said that only a ninja can kill a ninja. As many ex-Ninja Burger employees have proven, this is not at all the case. However, that doesn't change the fact that one of the deadliest foes a ninja can face is another ninja. After all, they have all the skills and knowledge that you do. Think about everything you can do as a ninja. Now imagine someone else doing all that to you. Scary, eh?

Ninja can crop up anywhere. They might be hired by a corporation that hates Ninja Burger. They might be members of the ancient Ninja Clan that killed your best friend's brother's second cousin. They might be freelance ninjas working for an evil mastermind who wants to rule the world. Or they might just hate the fact that you work for a fast food chain (something they view as dishonorable). But that's all a moot point – ninjas don't need a reason to kill you! They'll just swoop down when it's convenient for them and start stabbing things. Be wary, Ninja Burger employees!

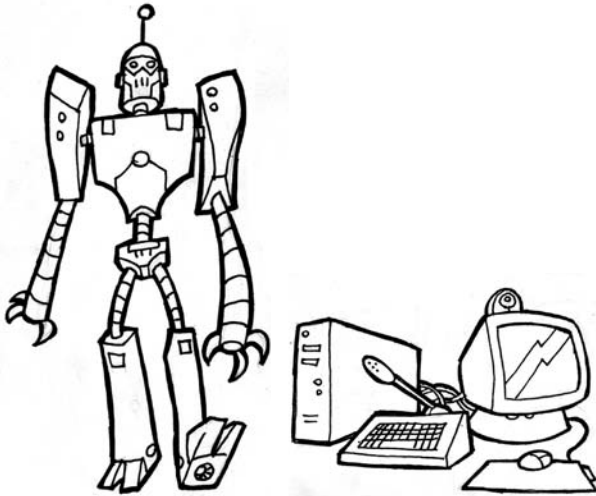
| Type | # In Group | Possible Functions | Key Quality | Total Ranks | Possible Breakdown |
|--------|------------|-----------------------------------|-------------|-------------|---|
| Child | 1d6 | Gopher, Sidekick, Evil Son, Pet | -2 | 2 | 1 Poor [-2], 1 Good [+2] |
| Small | 2d6 | Mall Guard, Rookie Cop, Henchman | 0 | 4 | 1 Poor [-2], 1 Average [+0], 2 Good [+2] |
| Medium | 1d6-3 | Sergeant, Alpha Dog, Trooper | 2 | 6 | 1 Poor [-2], 1 Good [+2], 1 Expert [+4] |
| Large | 1d6-4 | Number 2 Man, Enforcer, Assassin | 4 | 8 | 1 Poor [-2], 2 Good [+2], 1 Expert [+4] |
| Super | 1 | Evil genius, CEO, Mayor, Governor | 6 | 10 | 1 Poor [-2], 1 Expert [+4], 1 Master [+6] |



| Type | Sample Enemy Ninja Quality Breakdown |
|-------|---|
| Child | Poor [-2] Ninja, Good [+2] Enraging Foes With Cryptic Insults |
| Small | Poor [-2] or Good [-2] Fighting in Large Groups*, Average [+0] Ninja, Good [+2] Shuriken Use, Poor [-2] or Good [+2] Flipping Out |
| Med. | Poor [-2] Temper, Good [+2] Ninja, Expert [+4] Use Furniture/Props To Impede Enemies As He Escapes At The Last Minute |
| Large | Poor [-2] Following Orders, Good [+2] Demolitions, Good [+2] Dig Up Dirt on Player Characters, Expert [+4] Ninja |
| Super | Poor [-2] Overconfidence, Expert [+4] Helicopter Pilot, Master [+6] Ninja |

VR FACTOR - NINJA INVERSE SQUARE RULE (OPTIONAL)

In keeping with two vastly different modern portrayals, the Realism Rating can determine whether large groups of ninjas are deadly or inept. Every time a group of enemy ninjas doubles in size, the PCs get an Upshift or a Downshift when facing off against them in combat. With a Realism of -2, the PCs get a -2 penalty when facing two ninjas; -4 with four; -6 with eight, etc. With a Realism of +2, the PCs have the advantage: an enemy team of two ninjas gives them a +2 modifier; four ninjas give +4; eight give +6; etc. Note that this does NOT apply to the Ninja Burger team, who are trained to function as a team.

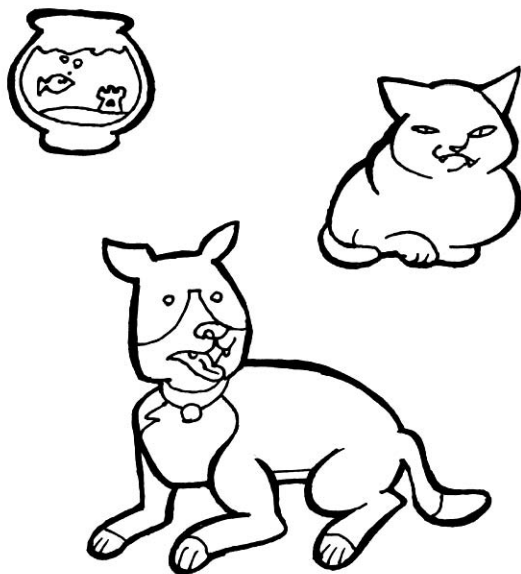


Computers & Robots – There are already quite a lot of robots around – they’re simply in the sorts of places normal people don’t ever go, like high-security laboratories, secret bunkers, and the like. Unfortunately, these are the sorts of places that ninja are required to go all the time. Of course, depending on the setting, robots might be even more common. Maybe traffic cameras are robots that automatically give tickets. Perhaps there’s an “Automat Fast Food” joint that’s all robotic. Even robot vacuums, robot dogs, or the AI controlling the security could go rogue.

Modern Day Warriors – Ninja aren’t the only modern warriors around who follow an ancient code of honor. The world is full of monks, samurai, Vikings, Gurkhas, and the like. Some of them are only playing pretend (of course), attending Ren Faires on the weekends or LARPing in the park on Tuesdays, but others take it quite seriously. Whether they’re playing out a role in service of a military organization, or working for a rival fast food chain (for more, see “Competition,” on page 38), the one thing they share in common is the ability to inflict pain.

| Type | Sample Computers & Robots Quality Breakdown |
|-------|---|
| Child | Poor [-2] Vacuum Cleaner, Good [+2] Scaring Pets and Small Children |
| Small | Poor [-2] Food Preparation, Average [+0] Automat, Good [+2] Irritating People, Good [+2] Standing Still |
| Med. | Poor [-2] Chronic Depression, Good [+2] Android, Expert [+4] Brain = Size of the Universe |
| Large | Poor [-2] Empathy, Good [+2] Governor, Good [+2] Find Sarah Connor, Expert [+4] HK-Robot |
| Super | Poor [-2] Self-Control, Expert [+4] Opening Pod Bay Doors, Master [+6] Artificial Intelligence |

| Type | Sample Modern Warriors Quality Breakdown |
|-------|--|
| Child | Poor [-2] Knight, Good [+2] Computer Programmer |
| Small | Poor [-2] Hygiene, Average [+0] Viking, Good [+2] Pillaging, Good [+2] Sailing |
| Med. | Poor [-2] Blending Into A Crowd, Good [+2] Samurai, Expert [+4] Getting Away With Murder |
| Large | Poor [-2] English Skills, Good [+2] Death Touch, Good [+2] Zen Aphorisms, Expert [+4] Monk |
| Super | Poor [-2] Short Stature, Expert [+4] Scaring the Crap Out Of People, Master [+6] Gurkha |



Pets & Companion Animals – Man’s best friend is often a ninja’s worst nightmare. Dogs come in all shapes and sizes, from the little yappy rat things that give away your location to the big nasty guard dogs with spiked collars that accompany police or hang out in back yards. Any other domestic animal could also turn into a foe – angry cats, talkative parrots, playful ferrets... This is to say nothing of exotic pets like venomous snakes, spiders, scorpions, etc.

| Type | Sample Pets & Animals Quality Breakdown |
|-------|---|
| Child | Poor [-2] Excuse for a Dog (aka Chihuahua), Good [+2] Yapping |
| Small | Poor [-2] Digestion, Average [+0] Housecat, Good [+2] Scratching, Good [+2] Get Underfoot |
| Med. | Poor [-2] Can’t Look Up, Good [+2] Guard Dog, Expert [+4] Smelling Things |
| Large | Poor [-2] Limbless, Good [+2] Snake, Good [+2] Scaring People, Expert [+4] Venomous Bite |
| Super | Poor [-2] Bumping Into Walls, Expert [+4] Getting Into Trouble, Master [+6] Ferret |



Evil Primates – Not only are they friends with pirates, but monkeys and other primates can do some things ninja can do – climbing, throwing, sneaking, etc. – and they’re cute! You might find monkeys at the zoo, in an pet shop, or on the shoulder of a bad guy. Imagine a world where Koko the Gorilla signs “Kitty Apple Koko Want Job Now” and the President signs a Simian Employment Act into law. Everyone has always said of some jobs that “a monkey could do it,” and now they’re going to show the world it’s true! Orangutan mail delivery, monkey cashiers, gorilla bodyguards... the only limit is how silly you get.

| Type | Sample Evil Primate Quality Breakdown |
|-------|---|
| Child | Poor [-2] Monkey, Good [+2] Throwing Feces |
| Small | Poor [-2] Sitting Still, Average [+0] Chimpanzee, Good [+2] Banana Use, Good [+2] Acting Cute |
| Med. | Poor [-2] Flatulence, Good [+2] Baboon, Expert [+4] Not Getting Back In That Cage |
| Large | Poor [-2] Temper, Good [+2] Librarian, Good [+2] Brawling, Expert [+4] Orangutan |
| Super | Poor [-2] Etiquette, Expert [+4] Sign Language, Master [+6] Gorilla |

Security Personnel – Police, bouncers, security guards, SWAT or mall rent-a-cops – those who protect other people’s things are always a thorn in the side of ninja. Even if you’re not doing something illegal, they usually see the mask and sword and assume you are anyway. Of course, delivering does often involve breaking and entering, and technically that is against the law, so much of the time they’re well within their rights to try and stop you.

| Type | Sample Security Personnel Quality Breakdown |
|-------|---|
| Child | Poor [-2] Rent-a-Cop, Good [+2] Acting More Important Than He Is |
| Small | Poor [-2] Temper, Average [+0] Security Guard, Good [+2] Brawling, Good [+2] Bowling |
| Med. | Poor [-2] Preachy, Good [+2] Police Officer, Expert [+4] Overzealous Taser Usage |
| Large | Poor [-2] Following Orders, Good [+2] Driving, Good [+2] Shenanigans, Expert [+4] Trooper |
| Super | Poor [-2] Itchy Trigger Finger, Expert [+4] Sniper, Master [+6] SWAT Team Member |

Pirates – Where ninja are quiet and introverted, pirates are loud, obnoxious and extroverted. Ninja wear black, pirates wear frilly purple lace coats and big hats. And most importantly, ninja follow a rigid code of honor, whereas pirates are full of betrayal and scoundrelousity. Little wonder that pirates are the enemies of ninja everywhere. But where do pirates fit into the modern day? More places than you’d think. There are software pirates, music pirates and cable TV pirates, though these sorts aren’t very dangerous. Far more insidious are the true pirates, like buccaneers and privateers (who, though they mostly attack other pirates, are known to engage in looting). And then there’s the Oakland Raiders, the infamous Pirates of the Caribbean, and Pirate Pizza, Ninja Burger’s rival.

| Type | Sample Pirates Quality Breakdown |
|-------|--|
| Child | Poor [-2] Music Pirate, Good [+2] MP3 Collection |
| Small | Poor [-2] Vocabulary, Average [+0] Pirate, Good [+2] Swilling Grog, Good [+2] Sing Dirty Songs |
| Med. | Poor [-2] Sense of Decency, Good [+2] Pirate Pizza Employee, Expert [+4] Carjacking |
| Large | Poor [-2] Twitchy, Good [+2] Bounty Hunt, Good [+2] Legal Paperwork, Expert [+4] Privateer |
| Super | Poor [-2] Fashion Sense, Expert [+4] Escaping At the Last Minute, Master [+6] Pirate Captain |



COMPETITION

“As a Burger Shack employee for the past three years, if there’s one thing I’ve learned, it’s that if you’re craving White Castle, the burgers here just don’t cut it...”

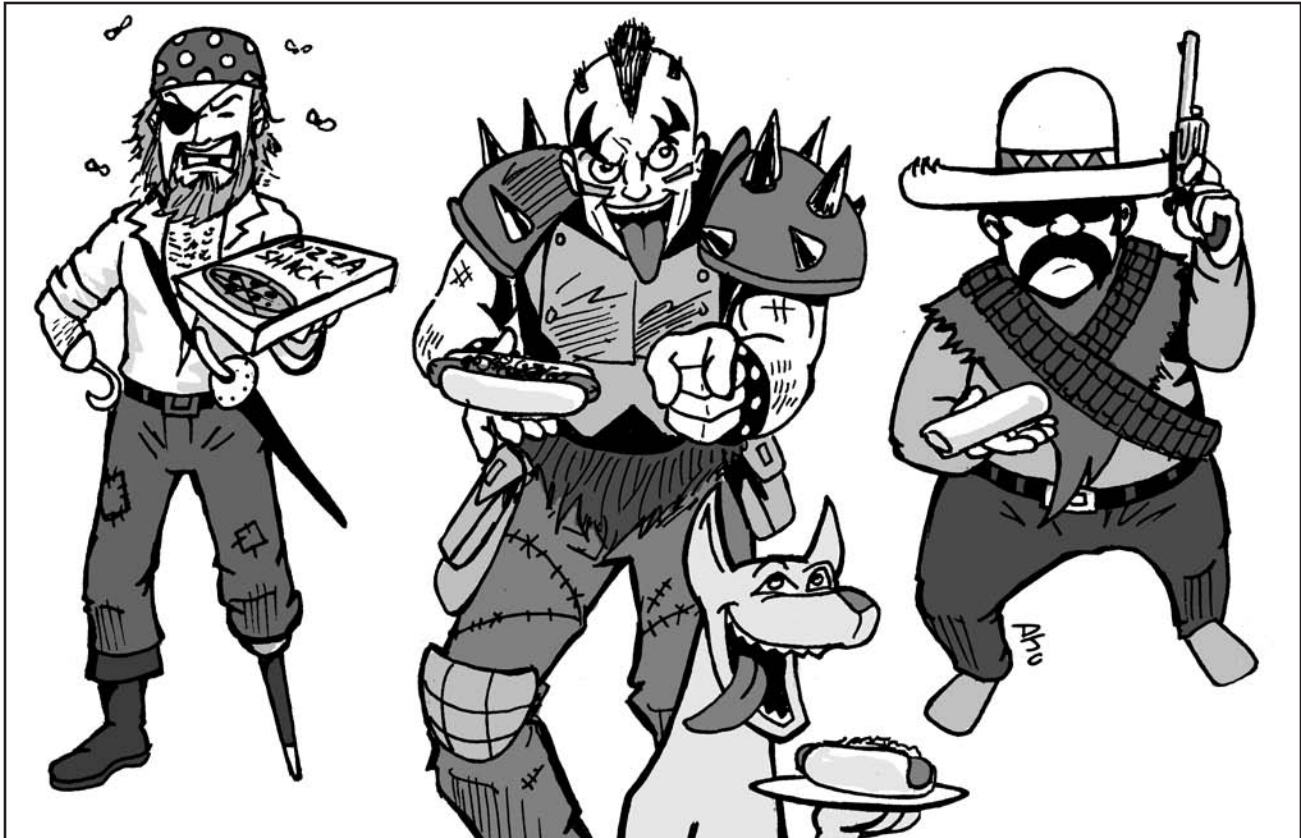
– Harold & Kumar Go to White Castle

Aside from the general enemies described earlier, Ninja Burger also has a number of competitors in the fast food arena. Many of these include the “normal” chains that you know (and perhaps love) from the real world, but others include competing chains that share a similar theme. That theme, of course, is the pairing of an ancient archetypal warrior with a type of food. Any warrior type (or other strange archetype) will do, as will any food – sushi, pizza, burgers, tacos, hot dogs, raw meat, bratwurst, nutrient shakes, etc.

Following are the top eleven enemies of Ninja Burger (numbered 2 through 12, to allow you to select one randomly with a 2d6 roll, with the two dice added together). To create enemies on the fly, simply use appropriate stats using stats from the previous pages, or merely assume that they can do anything their warrior archetype could do, at either Average [+0] or Good [+2] Rank. As with everything, if the Dispatcher thinks that a particular concept is too outrageous for the setting he’s established, he can ignore any result.

(2) Pirate Pizza – *“We don’t make pizza. We just deliver it.”* Pirate Pizza employees hijack other delivery vehicles, shanghai the delivery person, and complete the delivery, charging outrageous prices to the unwary customer and occasionally looting their house. They are disreputable, dangerous, and the primary enemies of Ninja Burger, a modern version of the age-old battle between the forces of ninja and pirate. Pirates are loud, rude, crude, flashy and dishonorable, and always eager to fight; they loathe the idea that ninjas are quiet, polite, refined, introverted and honorable. Any time these two meet, there’s going to be blood. They have a website – www.piratepizza.com

(3) Samurai Burger – *“The way of the burger.”* Samurai Burger’s menu is quite similar to Ninja Burger’s, although a rumor says they actually use pets for ingredients. They follow the code of Bushido (sort of), and they think ninjas are dishonorable and worthy of scorn. Until the rise of Pirate Pizza, Samurai Burger were the number one enemy of Ninja Burger, but in recent years their popularity has waned. This may be because they’ve begun to see the light about Ninja Burger’s honorable ways, and in the future a partnership or alliance against the pirates may be in order. For now, though, they remain a force to be reckoned with. Like Pirate Pizza, they too have a website – www.samuraiburger.com



Three of Ninja Burger’s Competitors: Pirate Pizza, Dingo Dogs, and Banditos Burritos

(4) **Burger ViKing** – *“Have it our way. Or else.”* Sort of a cross between Pirate Pizza and Samurai Burger, Burger ViKing raids other chains; the name is based on the particular chain they target most. Their employees are louts who can barely count, and their food is overcooked – but they retain market share through intimidation. Being seafaring folk with a penchant for looting, pillaging, etc., Burger ViKing often finds itself allied with Pirate Pizza, although the former tend to scoff at the Vikings’ lack of fashion sense.

(5) **Dingo Dogs** – *“Two hungry men enter, one man leaves.”* Home of Dingo Dogs, Dingo Fries and Dingo Berry Pies, this chain is run by outback mutant road warriors. With a “No Rules, Just Fight” policy, visitors are better off just walking away. Just walk away and there will be an end to the horror. At many locations, you can fill up with “guzzoline” if you order from the drive-thru, but one in every ten tanks is full of sand.

(6) **Gurkha Burger** – *“Mayo Gurkhali!”* Reputed to be the most fierce warriors in the world, many Gurkhas have become jobless as available military positions in the British army (where many are employed) dry up. Thus, many Gurkhas have brought their 18-inch kukri blades into use in preparing fast food with a Nepalese flair. They are quite honorable, and they are not the sort to lay in ambush or stab a ninja in the back. But if there’s a dispute over territory, things will get messy.

(7) **HunBurger** – *“Forget the bun – eat at Hun.”* Burgers here are done “the traditional way,” which means steak tartare (i.e., raw meat) tenderized under the saddles of Huns riding into battle, served warm and sticky without condiments, bun or even a napkin. HunBurger employees deliver on horseback, so their franchises have no permanent locations. This makes them less of a true competitor, but hard to predict.

(8) **Tiki Taco** – *“Turn your face to the taco, and the shadows fall behind you.”* Run by Maori warriors, Tiki Taco is an attempt to blend the popularity of tiki trappings with Mexican food (albeit with a Tiki twist – one menu item is a taco with beef, cheese, lettuce and pineapple). Tiki Taco’s employees are honorable, fierce warriors, but have a small market share, possibly due to their somewhat niche cuisine. They are gaining in strength, however, due to the fact that all their drinks come with little umbrellas in them.

(9) **Banditos Burritos** – *“Burgers? We don’t got no stinking burgers.”* Home of the Pancho Vanilla Shake, this chain is run by banditos with ponchos, sombreros, mustaches and bandoliers of bullets. When an order is served, they fire their pistolas into the ceiling. Banditos Burritos employees are notably gullible, and many a ninja has fooled them into thinking they were being attacked by an invisible swordsman.

(10) **Guerilla Republic** – *“Che Guevara ate here. Prove he didn’t.”* With a jungle motif, this chain’s restaurants are a hit with some, although the hit-and-run tactics employed by the servers make it difficult to order. Delivery is a more popular option, with sneaky tactics (similar to that of Ninja Burger) being used to deliver the restaurant’s banana-themed desserts.

(11) **Domo Antipasto** – *“010101.”* Run by robots, this chain offers automat-style “help yourself” buffets in-house, as well as home delivery by a variety of self-aware robots. Many of them have difficulty with stairs, so delivery is limited to first-floor homes, and many a spaghetti dinner has been left on the lawn if the porch is too high to climb. Customers have complained that the “special sauce” tastes like motor oil. Ninja Burger gets along well with this chain. Usually.

(12) **MonkeyDonald’s** – *“We’ll show you what a million monkeys can do.”* It’s oft been said that monkeys could run a register, and this bunch are out to prove it. Monkeys man the registers and kitchen, and larger primates provide “muscle” on deliveries. While health codes are violated on an hourly basis, the chain is popular because monkeys are SO CUTE. Ninja Burger has a particular dislike for this chain, mostly because pirates get along with them.



VR FACTOR - STOP THE INSANITY (OPTIONAL)

Your Realism Rating can help while generating competition for your PCs. Simply apply either a -2 or +2 (based on Realism) to the 2d6 roll above; a world with a Realism of -2 will thus have no MonkeyDonald’s or Domo Antipasto, whereas a wackier world with a +2 will have those results come up more often.

HONOR THY NINJA

"I may not be a great ninja. I may not be one with the universe. But I will say this: no one messes with my brother!"

– Beverly Hills Ninja

Much was said about Honor in the Characters chapter, but a few points warrant a more detailed look here, since you – the Dispatcher – will be responsible for seeing that the ninja characters follow the rules.

SEPPUKU - THE HONOR ROLL

Each time a character does something dishonorable he loses 1 point of Honor. If at any time he has a negative Honor score, you may (at your option, perhaps based on VR Rating) force him to make an Honor Roll. This is 2d6 plus a character's Ninja Quality bonus and current Honor Score (i.e., you subtract 1 per negative point), versus an equivalent Difficulty. So if a character is an Average [+0] Ninja, with a -5 Honor, his player rolls 2d6+0 and subtracts 5, and compares the result to a Difficulty of 7. If the result is higher, the ninja grits his teeth and stays alive. If he fails, he feels compelled to disembowel himself, after which point he dies.

Normally, a dead ninja is just *dead*. Theoretically, medical assistance can bring them back if people act fast enough (depending on your campaign setting). But nothing in any Ninja Burger campaign can bring a character back from the dead if they have died from Seppuku. It is the death of their body as well as their spirit, and they are gone forever.

Seppuku checks are typically made only once per gaming session, but the Dispatcher might rule that it is made every time the character's honor goes down further into negative numbers. Ninja who are busy performing some sacred duty – like delivering hamburgers, or avenging their ancestors – can postpone this final call to oblivion until they have fulfilled the task set before them. At that time, they may have regained enough honor (an Honor Score of at least 0) to allow themselves to live, or they might be "pardoned" by someone with an Honor Score of at least 25 (for instance, their sensei, or shift manager).

HONORLESS DOGS

"Honorless Dogs" (see page 18) gain and lose Honor like anyone – they just don't care, and can ignore a call to Seppuku. However, other ninja are innately aware of one another's Honor status, and an Honorless Dog running around with an Honor Score of -5 or below is going to draw the attention of other ninja who will be more than happy to dispatch the coward.

GIVING THE FINGER

Dispatchers might be inclined to offer PCs another option to help keep the body count down – fingers. Ancient tradition has always dictated that in cases where one has transgressed a rule, one can offer up a digit as atonement. Ninja Burger characters who are threatened with disembowelment can thus opt instead to sacrifice a finger. This sacrifice results in a gain of 1d6 Honor and staves off the threat of Seppuku for at least a day. You can only offer up one finger per session – you cannot cut off all ten fingers to gain 10d6 Honor – and you can only do so when you're already at a negative Honor Score, threatened with Seppuku.

Theoretically, this can be done ten times, after which the ninja is out of fingers; ex-pirates will obviously have fewer digits to work with. Note that the fingers sacrificed must be real and must remain absent; a ninja could replace a hand with a hook or claw, but using a prosthetic hand or anything with fingers results in the regained honor being immediately taken away again.

HONOR AS RANK

As is explained on the next page, a ninja's Honor Score has a direct correlation to his salary. As such, the Dispatcher may wish to signify that ninja who have higher honor "outrank" ninja with lower honor, with anyone who has a score of 25 or more being considered a Crew Trainer, and anyone with a score of 50 or more being considered a Manager. Of course, rank has nothing to do with one's skills, as anyone who's worked in the fast food industry can attest to.

KARMA CHAMELEON

Nobody likes when their character dies, but here's a way to make it more worthwhile and fun. If a player character is forced to make an Honor Roll, and fails, and he or she willingly submits to Seppuku and honorably allows his character to pass into the hereafter, you can award a Karma bonus of 2d6 Honor Points to that person's next character, as their actions in this life have benefited someone down the ninja food chain. This option is called the Karma Chameleon option due to the habit many players exhibit of making a new character that resembles the old character in every facet except their name. However, the Karma bonus can be awarded even on the odd chance they actually make a wholly original character.

Characters who abuse this option and repeatedly engage in dishonorable actions to draw Honor Rolls should instead get a penalty of 2d6 Honor to their next character. Dispatcher's discretion, of course.



EMPLOYEE SALARY & BONUSES

*"This magnificent feast here represents the *last* of the petty cash." – Ghostbusters*

At some point, the players are going to ask what they get paid (they're not just ninja – they're ninja with full time jobs). The answer is "it depends."

After taxes, benefits, fees, etc. are taken out, a Ninja Burger employee's base weekly take home pay equals \$1 per hour per point of honor. This means that at the end of each "game week," a ninja with an Honor Score of 5 will take home \$200 (\$1 times 5 times 40). This is issued in cash or as a direct deposit; Ninja Burger doesn't issue paychecks, as they're easily traceable.

Each player should keep track of his own money, but the Dispatcher is encouraged to keep a close eye on cashflow. Any funny stuff and the Ninja Accountants will come around, and, well, things will get ugly.

Obviously, ninja who have low honor will earn less, and ninja with an Honor Score of 0 have a base pay rate of \$0 (fortunately for them, ninja with a negative honor score do not owe Ninja Burger money – they have enough problems as it is). However, it is important to note that this is just a ninja's base pay rate. Various bonuses may be awarded for an exceptional service record, hazard pay, team performance, and the like.

Possible bonuses (Dispatcher discretion) include:

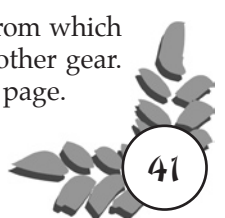
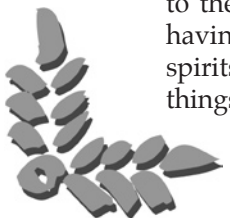
- **Team Bonus** – For good teamwork, an additional \$50 per person is awarded to each member of the team. This not only rewards larger groups (which often need more cash for their characters to chip in for equipment they all use), but also encourages more cooperative game play.
- **Hazard Pay** – 1d6 x \$100 per team, for a difficult mission that resulted in injury to at least one team member, or 2d6 x \$100 for a mission which resulted in injury to every single employee.
- **Employee of the Night** – A \$100 award given to the team member who best served the customer, his teammates, and Ninja Burger. The players vote on this award secretly; if everyone gets one vote (i.e., votes for himself), nobody gets it.
- **Gaining Market Share** – An award of \$25 per defeated enemy employee (death not necessary) is awarded to the team, to be divided as they see fit. This only applies to enemies from competing fast food chains, and not enemies in general.
- **Team Spirit Award** – An award of \$100, given to the employee voted by the other players as having been the "life of the party," keeping up spirits with jokes and witticisms even when things were looking grim.

EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

Ninja Burger offers a range of benefits, some like what other companies offer, and some far exceeding the norm. These benefits allow the Dispatcher to make some assumptions about what the PCs are capable of doing, both within a game and between sessions.

- **Training** – Ninja Burger provides full training facilities, including several dojos, classrooms, a library, and access to computers and any other equipment necessary. As such, ninja characters automatically have access to everything they need to justify Rank increases between games.
- **Food & Lodging** – Ninja Burger gives each employee three free meals per day, and also provides a dormitory in which ninja employees are welcome to sleep between shifts. They are also able to use the employee showers, sauna, hot tubs, exercise facilities and recreation room when not on shift. So, while ninja are free to live wherever they wish, they don't have to spend their cash on rent if they don't want to.
- **Health Care** – Ninja Burger does not offer health insurance, but they do maintain a medical facility which handles everything from basic first aid to major surgery. Any damage ninja employees take is considered healed when a team is done with deliveries for the night.
- **Equipment Package** – Ninja Burger provides all ninja with the basic equipment they require to get the job done, free of charge. Thus, in addition to the basic sundries of being an employee (ID card, handbook, security pass, etc.) every ninja is assumed to have the following at all times:
 - Ninja Burger uniform – Bullet-resistant, flame-retardant, and stain-resistant. Includes a ninja mask, tabi boots and fingerless gloves.
 - A pocket-sized GPS (Global Positioning System) or some setting-specific locator, allowing ninja to know where everyone is at all times.
 - A small wireless headset with built-in camera and microphone, allowing the Dispatcher to observe and communicate with the team, and the team to communicate with one another.
 - Job-specific items: 2 spatulas for a Chef, 2 weapons for a Deliverator, a vehicle for a Driver, a computer for a Navigator, and night vision goggles for a Spotter. Other career fields receive appropriate gear, at the Dispatcher's discretion.

Employees also have access to a store, from which they can purchase weapons, vehicles and other gear. This is described in more detail on the next page.



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NINJA BURGER STORE

"Honey, honey, I don't actually think that's a ninja. Ninjas usually wear capes, right?"
 – The O.C.

The Ninja Burger Store is open to all employees 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. Employees are able to purchase items from the store whether they are on or off shift.

The equipment shown on page 43 is not meant to be a comprehensive list of everything the Ninja Burger Store carries, but rather reflects the items that are most commonly requested by employees (i.e., those most likely to be of use during a delivery). And of course, both the items listed and the many things not shown may be obtained in other places (either through purchases or by stealing them), so the Dispatcher should let players acquire anything they might reasonably acquire in his game world. Note that depending on the setting (which may be in the past or the future), some of these items may not be available at all; the list assumes the present day, or thereabouts.

Since equipment has only optional impact on gameplay in the PDQ system, the Dispatcher is encouraged to show some leniency in allowing player characters to possess anything they might want. When in doubt, let reason dictate, and let events sort things out – carrying a backpack full of grenades up the side of a building may seem to be a good idea at first...

SPECIAL DELIVERY

The Ninja Burger Store realizes that sometimes spur-of-the moment events arise which require immediate off-site assistance, and if the Dispatcher allows it, they can deliver. After all, delivery is what Ninja Burger is all about. They will deliver any item, anywhere in the city limits, for a fee equal to twice the price of the item (thus effectively tripling the overall cost of the item).

Example: The team is pinned down in an alleyway and they could really use a grenade. Unfortunately, they can't just walk to the employee store, so one of them phones in an order for a grenade. Grenades usually cost \$100 each, but with the delivery fee of \$200, the total price goes up to \$300.

Once a character (or the entire team, if you're being democratic) has agreed to a delivery, the charge is deducted from their account, and the Dispatcher rolls 2d6 to see how long it takes for the item to be delivered, in minutes. Even if the item arrives too late to be of use to the team, the fee is nonrefundable, and the item is nonreturnable.

Example: The team agrees to pay \$300 for the grenade, and the Dispatcher rolls 2d6 to determine how long it takes to arrive. He determines it will take 7 minutes. That's a long time to hold off the enemy, especially since only 10 minutes remain on the delivery run, but the team has no choice now.





MELEE WEAPONS

- Ashiko/Shuko** – Spiked claws for feet/hands. \$50
- Bo Staff** – A 6' long hollow hardwood staff. \$100
- Bokken** – Wooden longsword. \$50
- Kakute** – Sharpened rings. Can be poisoned. \$100
- Kama** – Curved blade on a foot-long handle. \$125
- Katana** – Long single-edged sword. \$250
- Kusari-gama** – Kama on the end of a long chain. \$150
- Manriki-gusari** – Chain weighted at the ends. \$125
- Naginata** – Long staff with a blade on one end. \$350
- Nekode** – Steel claws fitted over the hands. \$125
- Nunchaku** – Two handles connected by a chain. \$75
- Sheath** – For any edged weapon. \$25
- Tanto** – Chisel-tipped knife. \$50
- Tessen** – Iron folding fan with sharp edges. \$100
- Tetsubishi** – Caltrops. \$5 each
- Tonfa** – That club that police carry. \$125
- Wakizashi** – Short single-edged sword. \$200

RANGED WEAPONS

- Ammunition** – A single arrow, bolt or dart. \$1 each
- Bandolier** – Chest strap that holds 10 shuriken. \$10.
- Bow** – A compound bow. Arrows extra. \$150
- Blowgun** – A hollow bamboo tube. Darts extra. \$50
- Crossbow** – A small crossbow. Bolts extra. \$250
- Quiver** – Holds up to 100 arrows, bolts or darts. \$25
- Shuriken** – Throwing stars and spikes. \$10 each

PORTABLE COOKING EQUIPMENT

- O.M.G.** – Oscillating Micro-Grill. \$250
- Ingredients** – Burger meat, potatoes, etc. \$5 each
- Spatula** – For flipping burgers or fighting. \$25
- S.T.F.U.** – Supplemental Thermo-Fry Unit. \$200

INFILTRATION & DISTRACTION

- Costume** – Uniform or other clothing (no mask). \$100
- Fake ID** – You are now Jebediah Gonzalez. \$500
- Flashpowder** – A nice little distraction. \$25
- Grenade** – Flashbang, not Bangouch. \$100
- Kaginawa** – Grappling hook with 15' rope. \$75
- Lockpicks** – For breaking and entering. \$300
- Lockpicks, Electronic** – For electronic locks. \$500
- Mask, Latex** – Look like someone else. \$150
- Makeup** – Blush, concealer, etc. \$75
- Metsubishi** – Eggshell full of blinding powder. \$15
- Smoke bomb** – Fills a room with smoke. \$50

ELECTRONICS & SURVEILLANCE

- Binoculars** – See things that are far away. \$150
- Bug** – Eavesdrop on conversations. \$175
- Cellphone** – Cloned and anonymous. \$250
- Geiger Counter** – Detect radiation. \$500
- G.P.S. Tracker** – Follow people from afar. \$275
- Laptop** – Linux, Mac or Windows, you choose. \$1,500
- Night Vision Goggles** – See in the dark, sort of. \$500
- P.D.A.** – Personal Digital Assistant. \$500

MISCELLANEOUS TOOLS

- Door Jam** – Jam a door open, or shut. \$10
- Duct Tape** – For taping everything (except ducts). \$10
- First Aid Kit** – For patching people up. \$75
- Flashlight** – Illuminate dark places. \$50
- Guitar** – For wailing. \$250
- Hand Tool** – Hammer, saw, screwdriver, etc. \$15
- Inflatable Raft** – 1' inflatable cube becomes raft. \$150
- Power Tool** – Power saw, power drill, etc. \$100
- Rope** – For climbing or tying things. \$1 per foot.

VEHICLES - PERSONAL

- Bicycle** – Pedal-powered locomotion. \$200
- Moped** – Not fashionable, but economical. \$500
- Motorcycle** – Sleek, black and oh so fast. \$4,000
- S.C.U.B.A.** – For breathing under water. \$500
- Skateboard** – Grind some ollies and stuff. \$100
- Skijet** – Personal watercraft. \$1,000

VEHICLES - TEAM

- Compact Car** – Good gas mileage. Holds 4. \$7,500
- Limousine** – Travel in style. Holds 10. \$25,000
- Pickup Truck** – Utilitarian styling. Holds 6. \$15,000
- Sports Car** – Speed, speed, speed. Holds 3. \$35,000
- SUV** – Built tough and sturdy. Holds 5. \$30,000
- Van** – The standard in delivery. Holds 6. \$10,000

VEHICLES - SPECIAL USE

- Hang Glider** – Fly like a bird. Holds 1. \$500
- Helicopter** – Unmarked helicopter. Holds 4. \$50,000
- Speedboat** – Skip across the water. Holds 6. \$20,000
- Submarine** – We all live in... Holds 10. \$100,000
- Surfboard** – Surf's up, dude. Holds 1. \$500

REMEMBER – This is just a partial list; ninja have a knack for getting their hands on what they need!



NINJA MAGIC

Each Ninja Burger Dispatcher needs to decide whether or not to include the use of Ninja Magic in her game. Although in part this decision can be based simply on the "VR" rating of the campaign world (a Realism rating of -2 likely means no magic, whereas a rating of 0 or +2 means it's possible) it is also worth considering the desires of your players, and the length of your gaming sessions. If you regularly run short 30-to-60 minute sessions, adding magic might unnecessarily complicate matters, but if you game for hours and have a storyline spanning weeks and months, then magic will probably be less disruptive overall, since there's more going on.

After deciding to use magic, the Dispatcher then decides to what degree it will be implemented. Each of the ninja hand signs that follow have two types of effects: Focus, and Flashy. Focus effects are meant to demonstrate deep meditation on the meaning of a particular hand sign, resulting in personal improvement (generally reflected by Upshifts), and are best suited for settings with lower-numbered Realism scores. Flashy effects are the sorts of things you see at the movies, with real-world effects that bend the laws of nature: fireballs, walking through walls, that sort of thing. Obviously these are best suited to worlds with higher-numbered Realism scores. Only one or the other will work; players don't get to choose.

Of course, there are many ways to integrate Ninja Magic into a campaign. A futuristic or cyberpunk campaign might have Ninja Magic stat-boosts being triggered by neural implants or nanotechnological tattoos. A modern world might appear to be without magic, yet actually have it there beneath the surface to be discovered – just because the elders say Ninja Magic isn't real doesn't mean you should believe them.

Ninja Magic is used like other Qualities (see page 21), taking the same amount of time and requiring the same sorts of rolls for success. However, a failed Ninja Magic roll during any Situational check means that the character has done something wrong, and results in a backlash. Roll 2d6 and consult the following chart, or pick any one that looks fun. At the Dispatcher's discretion, characters may choose to ignore any result by sacrificing 1d6 points of Honor (except for the first result, which would be nonsensical).

| Roll | Ninja Magic Backlash Result |
|------|--|
| 2 | "You have offended your ancestors!" Character takes -1d6 Honor. |
| 3 | "Ouch, that really hurt!" Character takes 1d6 Damage Ranks. |
| 4 | "Who am I?" Character gets temporary amnesia, losing their top-ranked Quality for the rest of the Scene. |
| 5 | "Look out!" The effect works, but it only affects one other person nearby, either friend or foe (roll randomly). |
| 6 | "Something bad is gonna happen." Paranoia! Character is Acting Cagey for the duration of the Scene. |
| 7 | "Fate has intervened." Player rolls 3 dice (not 2), keeping highest and lowest, for the duration of the Scene. |
| 8 | "You are filled with anger at your failure." Character is Flipping Out for the duration of the Scene. |
| 9 | "This could be bad." The effect works, but it also affects everyone else nearby, both friend and foe. |
| 10 | "Oops." The character has accidentally used a different sign. Add 1d6 to the sign's number (see below), wrapping if necessary. |
| 11 | "You feel really drained." The character cannot use any Ninja Magic for the duration of the Scene. |
| 12 | "The power has left you." The character cannot use any Ninja Magic for the duration of the Game Session. |

THE ELEMENTS OF MAGIC

One fun way to use a ninja's chosen Element is to have that element reflected in the way that particular ninja "casts spells." This is particularly appropriate when it comes to Flashy effects – a ninja who's directing external energy with Kyo might have that energy released as a ball of fire, a gout of water, a sudden wind gust, a dust storm, a bolt of light or a ball of shadow. Not only is this more fun for players, but if the bad guys are using magic too then it can give the team a good idea of what sort of person they're facing off against, allowing them to prepare an effective defense.

KUJI-IN

The basis for the use of Ninja Magic is the mastery of various ninja hand signs called Kuji-In. When the fingers are placed in specific arrangements, with the proper meditative state of mind and breathing techniques, a ninja can channel the release of Ki energy from within himself.

Derived from Buddhist practices, the Kuji-In were designed to allow ninja (and monks, samurai, etc.) to focus spiritually to build up their confidence and courage in stressful times. Some also believe that proper manipulation of these hand signs can do even more. At a more basic level a ninja focuses their senses, allowing them to perceive danger or even death. More advanced practices are reputed to involve the ability to ignore pain, exorcise demons, heal wounds, speak telepathically, walk through walls, turn invisible, and ultimately even achieve enlightenment, becoming one with the universe (although leaving one's material body is considered grounds for immediate dismissal from Ninja Burger).

It is believed that there are 81 different Kuji-In, each involving different combinations of the thumb and fingers, each representing a different element. However, in actual practice only nine hand signs have been found to have any power. In some cases, these nine are recited together as "Rin-Kyo-To-Sha-Kai-Jin-Retsu-Zai-Zen" – this is called the shingon, and though used as a means of meditative focus it has no other effect. Each of the nine hand signs has a specific focus, as described on the pages that follow.



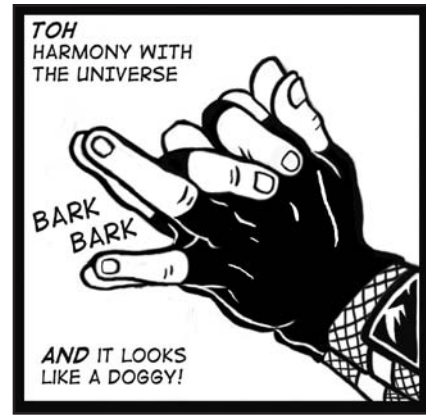
1. **Rin** – “Middle fingers extended, other fingers interlocked.” Represents strength (mind and body).

- **Focus:** The ninja gets an Upshift on his next Physical or Mental action.
- **Flashy:** The ninja temporarily gains the **Good [+2] Ubermensch** Quality. This Quality can be added to any checks involving Physical or Mental exertion (or used on its own). However, the character automatically fails any Social, Professional or Other checks (including the use of Ninja Magic), due to their single-minded focus on personal strength. This effect lasts for the duration of the scene.



2. **Kyo** – “Index fingers and thumbs extended. Middle fingers curled over index fingers. Other fingers interlocked.” Represents the channeling of a ninja’s internal energy for outward effect.

- **Focus:** The ninja’s next successful attack causes an extra Rank of damage.
- **Flashy:** The ninja launches an elemental burst from his fingertips, which is treated as a normal ranged effect in terms of range, damage, etc. The burst is based on the character’s own personal element. The effect is instantaneous, and has no duration.



3. **Toh** – “Pinky and ring fingers extended, tips touching. Thumbs extended. Other fingers interlocked.” Represents finding harmony with the universe and with oneself.

- **Focus:** The ninja gets an Upshift on his next Social check.
- **Flashy:** The ninja temporarily gains the **Good [+2] Buddha-like** Quality. This Quality can be added to any checks involving Social exertion (or used on its own), and is generally used to defuse a situation or end a fight with Zen-like wisdom. The character automatically fails any Physical or Other checks (including Ninja Magic), due to their single-minded focus on harmony. This effect lasts for the duration of the scene.



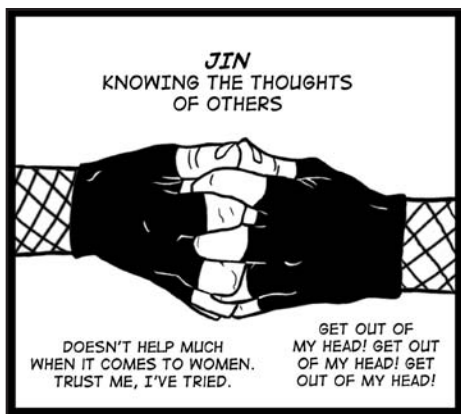
4. **Sha** – “Index fingers and thumbs extended. Other fingers interlocked.” Represents healing.

- **Focus:** The ninja recovers one Rank of damage. This can be done once per Scene.
- **Flashy:** The ninja temporarily gains the **Good [+2] Supernatural Healing** Quality. This Quality can be added to any rolls involving the recovery of Damage Ranks, and can be applied to either the character or someone he touches. This effect can be used only once per Scene. In addition, the character can use this Quality to purge diseases, viruses and poisons from the body (his own or someone else’s), though this is treated as a Complicated Situation and requires a roll.



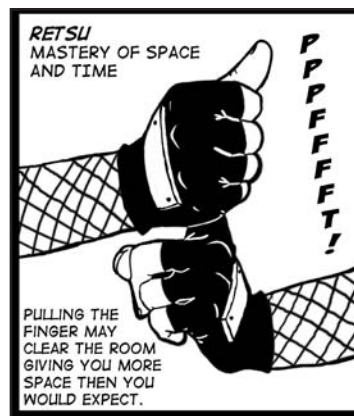
5. **Kai** – “All fingers interlocked.” Represents complete focus on surroundings, and premonition of danger.

- **Focus:** The ninja gains Initiative next turn.
- **Flashy:** The ninja drops into a coma as their heart slows, and their mind leaves their body. They are aware of all other living things within a mile, as well as any individuals that seek to cause them harm. While in this state, the character cannot act; he can only perceive. However, his body is protected, and he takes no more than 1 Rank of damage from any single source of damage (melee attack, gunshot, raging inferno, extreme cold, etc.) This effect lasts up to the duration of the scene, or until the ninja chooses to end it.



6. **Jin** – “All fingers interlocked inwards.” Represents psychic perception.

- **Focus:** The ninja gains the positive Upshift effect of **Playing it Cagey** without the Downshift effect, for their next turn.
- **Flashy:** The ninja temporarily gains the **Good [+2] Psychic Quality**, which can be used to read the thoughts of others, one per turn, and may be added to appropriate Social or Professional rolls (Dispatcher discretion). The ninja automatically fails any Physical or Other checks (including Ninja Magic), due to their focus on reading minds. This effect lasts up to the duration of the scene, or until the ninja chooses to end it.



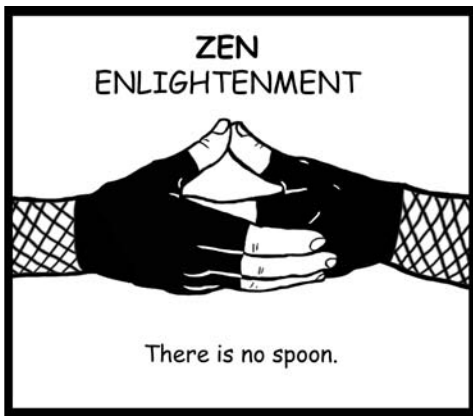
7. **Retsu** – “Left index finger up. Right fingers curling around it. Right thumb pressed on the outside edge of the left index finger.” Represents control over space/time.

- **Focus:** The ninja gains the positive Upshift effect of **Flipping Out** without the Downshift effect, for their next turn.
- **Flashy:** The ninja is removed from the action, stepping out of time and space. All others take actions as normal. If the ninja wishes, they can re-enter time and space at any time to intercede in any action taking place (e.g., block a blow, trip someone, etc.), provided they do so immediately after the effect. The effect lasts up to the duration of the scene, or until the ninja intercedes.



8. **Zai** – “All fingers spread, palms outward, index fingers and thumbs touch.” Represents control over nature.

- **Focus:** The ninja can “swap” an element for a single action, treating an element as if it were another (e.g., plunging his hand into a fire as if it were light, walking on water as if stone, etc.)
- **Flashy:** The ninja can swap (as above) or ignore an element of choice, (e.g., shaping a fire so it does not burn him, passing through a wall, breathing under water, etc.). If the element is aligned with the ninja’s own, no damage is taken; if a different element is chosen, 1 Rank of damage is taken per turn. The effect lasts up to the duration of the scene, or until the ninja chooses to end it.



9. **Zen** – “Right hand covers the left hand. Thumb tips touch.” Represents enlightenment and self-awareness.

- **Focus:** The ninja automatically succeeds in his next Complicated Situation.
- **Flashy:** The ninja becomes so aware of her place in the Universe that she can manipulate her own Qualities, understanding that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. The player may move her character’s Quality Ranks around between Qualities as she sees fit. This effect lasts up to the duration of the scene, or until the character chooses to end it, at which time all the Qualities snap back to normal. During this time, no Upshifts or Downshifts can affect her – she is what she is, and nothing more.

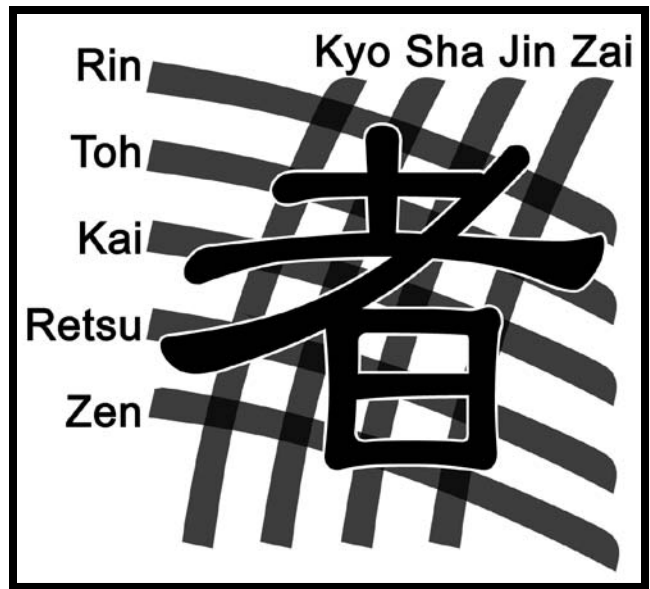
WHAT NINJA KNOW

Just because your ninja PCs know that magic is real doesn’t mean they can just start wagging their fingers at each other. Well, they can – but it’s unlikely that anything’s going to happen, unless you allow them to get away with it.

A better option is to restrict the Kuji-in that the employees know in some fashion. For example, you might only allow them to know a number of hand signs equal to their current Ninja Quality Rank, plus 3 (in other words, they’d know 1 sign at Poor [-2], 3 signs at Average [+0] and so on until mastering all 9 signs at Master [+6].

Of course, if a PC is a Mahoutsukai (see page 10) who specializes in this sort of thing, you might consider allowing them access to all 9 hand signs right off the bat.

Whether they specialize or not, one fun way to incorporate Ninja Magic into your game is to require the players to actually make the ninja hand signs successfully before the magic works. If you’re doing this, they shouldn’t be allowed to look at the pictures during the game – they’ll have to practice and memorize them.



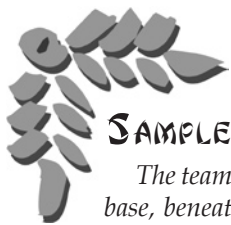
KUJI-KIRI

Although the nine hand signs listed here are typically shaped instantaneously, they may also be inscribed via “Kuji-Kiri,” or “cutting.” In this method, a cross-hatched symbol of nine lines (four vertical, and five horizontal) is drawn, each representing one of the nine signs. The symbol may be literally drawn, as with ink on paper, or it may be “cut” or “traced” in the air or on the skin with the index and middle fingers of the right hand extended, as if they were a sword. The lines must be drawn in the proper order for the grid to work, alternating horizontal and vertical until all nine are drawn. When the grid is complete, a special tenth character is drawn on the grid, representing the particular effect that the ninja wishes to happen.

Generally the final tenth character is a kanji symbol representing healing, either drawn on the flesh of a sick patient or drawn on cloth or paper and then burned (the fumes being inhaled) or rubbed on the skin. As the PDQ system used by this game allows for relatively quick healing in between Scenes and game sessions, such magical healing is unnecessary, but may be allowed by the Dispatcher if the setting and style of gameplay warrants additional roleplaying possibilities. In any case, Kuji-Kiri is a particularly advanced form of magic, with unlimited possibilities (protection, speed, strength, etc.), and so other uses are up to the characters to discover, and the Dispatcher to allow or disallow.

For more about Ninja Magic, visit these links:

- <http://www.entertheNinja.com>
- <http://www.ninja.com/kuji2.htm>
- <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kuji-in>



SAMPLE OF GAMEPLAY

The team has arrived at the delivery spot – an old military base, beneath which is a hidden lab – and are standing at a staircase that the Spotter has found. The team includes a Driver, Chef, Deliverator, Spotter and Navigator (as well as the Dispatcher). Each is identified by their Job Title.

Spotter: "Next time I choose the driving music."

Driver: "What, you don't like *The Who*?"

Spotter: "I don't want to hear 'Baba O'Riley' every time we get in the van. I swear, you play that song again... I have a sword. Remember that."

Dispatcher: "So what's the plan?"

Spotter: "We go down the steps!"

Dispatcher: "Brilliant idea. You get a gold star. Now how about you GET YOUR BUTTS MOVING. We've got twelve minutes to get this delivery delivered, and I for one like my guts where they are."

Spotter: "Fine, fine. I'll head down first. Hanzo will follow with the delivery bag. Cookie, Maps, you come down behind us. Wheels, stay with the van."

Driver: "Oh, leave the cripple behind? Just because I'm in a wheelchair I can't handle stairs, is that it?"

Spotter: "No, but you..."

Driver: "Screw that. I take my chair over to the stairs and roll myself down."

Dispatcher: "You're gonna make a lot of noise going down those stairs, you know."

Driver: "I don't care. He insulted my honor."

Spotter: "I totally didn't. I was just..."

Dispatcher: "Too late. He wheels over to the stairs and heads on down. Looks pretty steep. Roll 2d6."

Driver: "Here I go." (Rolls) "I got an 8."

Dispatcher: "Ok, this isn't exactly easy. Target of 9..."

Driver: "But I'm going to do it at the SAME TIME as I berate the team for discriminating against me..."

Dispatcher: "Hah! Ok, sure, you make it down."

Deliverator: "What? How'd he do that?"

Driver: "I've got a +2 at Multitasking While Driving, thanks to my training as a Driver. So 8+2 is 10."

Deliverator: "There's no penalty for the wheelchair?"

Dispatcher: "Nope. He didn't take that as a Weakness so there's no penalty."

Driver: "I'm not disabled, I'm differently abled. Not to mention, I'm a ninja. Hooooahhhh..."

Spotter: "So, how you gonna get back UPstairs, eh?"

Driver: "Uhhh... Lemme think about that one."

Spotter: "Brilliant... So, any alarms? Guards firing laser beams? Rabid dogs shooting bees at us?"

Dispatcher: (Rolls) "Nothing I can see. The area looks clean to me. Proceed accordingly."

Spotter: "Ok, we head down after Wheels, and from now on let's stick to the plan. Me and Hanzo up front, you guys cover the rear and keep watch."

Dispatcher: "I've got you on the camera in the corner. Wave hello. Room looks about 30 feet square, two passages east and west, about 10 feet across, and another hallway heading to the south."

Spotter: "What else do you see?"

Dispatcher: "Nothing you guys can't see. The floor's a bit damp. Overhead there's some cobwebs, and in the corner there's a pile of crates. Without infrared I can't see anything else. Looks all clear." (Rolls)

Spotter: "What was that?"

Dispatcher: "What was what?"

Spotter: "The rolling."

Dispatcher: "Nothing. Come on guys, let's get going. Ten minutes remaining."

Spotter: "Ok, fine. Hanzo, what's the details here?"

Deliverator: "White male, age 45, scientist, biological laboratory, access is via a hidden elevator under a warehouse at 147 South ..."

Spotter: "Right, right, we got that far. Let's spread out and look for an elevator. Any buttons or switches around here, Dispatch?"

Dispatcher: (Rolls) "Not as far as I can tell. The camera in the corner here's got kind of limited range, though, so there might be something just out of sight."

Spotter: "Got it. Wheels, check out the crates. Cookie, Maps, check out the corridors, see what's up. Hanzo, check the walls for hidden levers or something. I'll check out the south hallway."

Dispatcher: "Everything looks clear. I don't think there's going to OH NO WHEELS LOOK OUT!"

Driver: "Ahhhhhhh! What is it?"

Spotter: "Yeah, what the heck is going on?"

Dispatcher: "A huge mechanical spider just dropped on his shoulder from above and bit him. Roll some dice, Wheels." (Rolls)

Driver: (Rolls) "I got a 7. Not so good..."

Dispatcher: "Good enough. I'm picking up a mild toxin in your bloodstream, but your life signs are all stable, so I think you'll pull through. No damage."

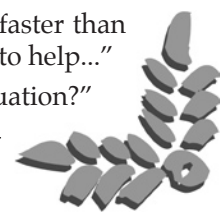
Driver: "Whew. OK, so I grab the spider and throw it off down the south hallway."

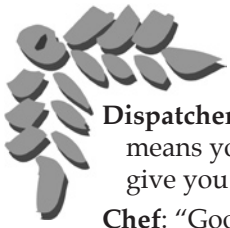
Spotter: "That's where I'm standing."

Driver: "Exactly."

Dispatcher: "Hang on. The spider moves faster than all of you, unless someone has a Quality to help..."

Chef: "Would you say this is a stressful situation?"





Dispatcher: "Hmmm..." (Rolls) "Sure, I'll say it is. That means you can use your Handling Stress Quality to give you an edge. You can act first."

Chef: "Good. I throw my chef's knife at the spider."

Driver: "It's on my back! Are you crazy?"

Chef: "Yes. But trust me." (Rolls) "OK, I got a 9, plus I'm adding in a +2 for my Using Sharp Things Quality. Do I add in anything for being a ninja?"

Dispatcher: "Nope. Ninja are expected to throw sharp things at each other. Besides, you're only an Average ninja, so you get no bonus. So that's a total of 11? Let's see here..." (Rolls) "That's a 7, plus the spider adds in its Robot Spider Quality of +2, for a total of 9. Eleven minus 9 is 2 Ranks of Damage you cause."

Chef: "Who's the man? I'm the man."

Dispatcher: "The knife plunges into the robot spider, showering the area with sparks." *The spider only has its Spider Quality, so it reduces Good to Average, and there's one Rank left, so it reduces Average to Poor.* "However, it's still active, and it tries to bite Wheels on the shoulder again." (Rolls) "Roll, Wheels."

Driver: "Ha-ha." (Rolls) "Oops. I got a 4."

Dispatcher: "The spider got an 8, but it's got -2 because it's at Poor, so that's 6. Take 2 Ranks of Damage."

Driver: "I reduce my Karaoke from Good to Poor. That's 2 Damage Ranks, right?"

Dispatcher: "Yep. The spider got you in the throat, so your voice is going to be a little raspy for a while."

Driver: "Yikes. Cookie, quick, go find me a first aid kit or something."

Chef: "Dammit Wheels, I'm a Chef, not a Doctor."

Spotter: "I'll finish it off. I run up, do a ninja flip over his wheelchair, close my eyes, and jam my katana in its weak spot." (Rolls) "Erk. I got a 5."

Dispatcher: (Rolls) "The spider got a 7, but it's at a -2, so that's 5. However, that flip move was pretty ninja of you, so you get a +2 Upshift. That means you do 2 Ranks of Damage, which is enough to shatter it into little smouldering pieces."

Spotter: "And I suppose the fire alarm goes off?"

Dispatcher: (Rolls) "Surprisingly, no."

Spotter: "OK, fine. Back to work. Anything interesting down these halls? We gotta find the elevator."

Dispatcher: "The east corridor heads about 30 feet in and then turns back north. The south one goes on as far as you can see, and the west passage ends in a door after about 20 feet or so."

Navigator: "This all seems familiar for some reason."

Spotter: "You've seen one secret lab, you've seen 'em all. Let's check out that door."

Dispatcher: "Looks like a door to me. Sorry, guys. Even I can't see through solid steel. Usually."

Spotter: "Hanzo, come listen at the door."

Deliverator: "Fine. I press my ear to the door."

Dispatcher: "Roll some dice."

Deliverator: "I got a 7. Good enough?"

Dispatcher: "Normally it would be, but you got a -2 Downshift there, so instead of just listening at the door, you opened it to hear a little bit better."

Deliverator: "What? Why... oh, yeah. I guess I did."

Spotter: "What? I specifically told you to..."

Deliverator: "My ninja's got a -2 to Following Orders. You shouldn't oughta told me to do it."

Spotter: "Doh! Any alarms?"

Dispatcher: "You have an alarms fetish, I swear." (Rolls) "No, there are no alarms going off."

Deliverator: "I walk into the room. What's inside?"

Dispatcher: "The room's a little dark, so it's hard to tell. You guys wanna turn the light on? There's a camera in the corner and I can..."

Spotter: "No! No lights."

Dispatcher: "Well then I can only see what you can. There's a soda machine across from the door, casting a glow halfway across the room, and a bulletin board by the door, covered in papers. Looks like a break room. Hasn't been open in a while, and the air is on, so it's cold as hell according to the thermostat."

Navigator: "I thought hell was warm."

Dispatcher: "Chinese have a lot of hells."

Navigator: "Hmmm. My ninja instinct tells me there's something more here. I read the bulletin board."

Dispatcher: "It will take several minutes to read it all, and you've only got like 7 minutes left to deliver."

Navigator: "Yeah, but I got the Speed Reading Quality." (Rolls) "Woot. I got a 10, plus 2 is 12."

Dispatcher: "Impressive. You quickly scan the bulletin board and you manage to pick out a safety bulletin mentioning that the freight elevator is currently undergoing maintenance and should not be used. It's dated from like six months ago, though."

Spotter: "Good job. Is there a map or something?"

Dispatcher: "Give me a roll to see if you spot one."

Spotter: (Rolls) "I got a 9, plus 2 for my Spotter Quality, so total of 11."

Dispatcher: "Nice job. You spot an emergency escape map behind several layers of old papers. The freight elevator is down the south hallway."

Spotter: "Fine. Let's roll guys. Hanzo and me up front. Cookie and Maps, you guys make it like we were never in this room. Wheels keep a look out."

Dispatcher: "No disagreement? Fine, you all do as he says. The two of you head down the south hallway. It ends in a large dark room, about 50 feet across."

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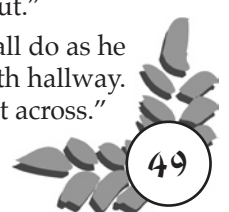
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Navigator: "I still say this all seems familiar."

Deliverator: "What do you mean?"

Dispatcher: "Hey, how are you guys talking to each other between rooms?"

Deliverator: "Over our wireless headsets. How else?"

Dispatcher: "For all I know you two were shouting. But since you're talking over the headsets, allow me to interject that you need to keep down the chatter and get delivering. We're running out of time."

Deliverator: "Fine. What's up in the big room?"

Dispatcher: "No working cameras in here, so I'm a bit limited. I'm pulling up schematics now..." (Rolls) "Oops, computer crashed. Heh. Let me reboot..."

Spotter: "No time. Hanzo takes the left, I take the right, and we search for doors, buttons, levers, etc."

Dispatcher: (Rolls) "You can't find anything."

Navigator: "Are me and Cookie done cleaning up the evidence from the break room?"

Dispatcher: "Yeah. You join the others in this big room to search for the elevator. Wheels, you coming too?"

Driver: "Depends. Anything to see out here?"

Dispatcher: "Nah. Coast is clear, and besides, I got a camera in that room. I'll see if anyone follows you in. Better get in there and help 'em out."

Driver: "Got it. I head on in."

Dispatcher: "So all five of you are in the room now. I've got that schematic back up. The elevator is definitely there. Look around for a button or something."

Spotter: "We already looked. There's nothing here."

Navigator: "I got it! We're looking at ground level. Maybe it's above ground level. Is there anything above our heads? Any curious holes in the wall? Ladders or some such?..."

Deliverator: "Maybe we missed something. Wheels, head back out into the hallway there and look for a control panel or something."

The team looks around for several minutes, but fails to find anything. The Dispatcher takes pity on the group, and decides to aid them with Dispatcher knowledge.

Dispatcher: "Look, guys. There's no holes or buttons or anything, but... ah hah. I see a square panel in the south wall, about 15 feet up."

Spotter: "I thought you couldn't see in here."

Dispatcher: "I got the schematics downloaded. It's labeled on the blueprints for the lab. You guys have been looking for an elevator, when in fact you're already in one. The entire room is one big elevator."

Spotter: "Then what's the hatch... oh, I see. that's to get into the elevator shaft. Like an access panel?"

Dispatcher: "Looks like. How are you guys gonna get up there?"

Spotter: "We'll form a ninja pyramid. Wheels on the bottom, of course, with Cookie, since you two are the heaviest. Then me and Hanzo, with Maps on top, since he's the lightest."

Dispatcher: "Sounds good. Maps climbs up and..."

Navigator: "We don't have to roll?"

Dispatcher: "Nah. Ninja do this sort of thing all the time. Come on, what do you do? Clock's ticking."

Navigator: "Hmmm. This really seems familiar..."

Spotter: "Just open the panel, Maps."

Navigator: "Ok, fine. I open it. What do I see?"

Dispatcher: "Darkness. It's pitch black nothingness."

Navigator: "There's nothing in there? No robots? No mutants? No long grey rending gobbling things?"

Dispatcher: "What are you on about?"

Navigator: "You sure there's nothing there?"

Dispatcher: "Well you can't see too well. The ninja pyramid is kind of close to the wall."

Driver: "Can I roll us all back?"

Dispatcher: (Rolls) "No good. You can't maneuver."

Everyone: "Stay on target."

Navigator: "We're too close?"

Everyone: "Stay on target."

Navigator: "OK, fine, if I can't see anything in there, I pull myself up into the hatch and flip through."

Dispatcher: "Are you sure about that?"

Navigator: "Yes. I flip through in a ninja kick. I'm attacking the darkness."

Dispatcher: "OK, if you say so..." (Rolls) "The rest of you see Maps vanish from sight with a startled yell. Maps, you flip through the hatch and begin to fall."

Navigator: "What?"

Dispatcher: "I said there was nothing there. I meant it. That's just an open hatch into the elevator shaft."

Navigator: "Well that's just great. I grab whatever's handy to try and slow my fall, ninja-like."

Dispatcher: "There are some cables there, but we'll deal with that in a second. Back in the elevator, an alarm starts to go off. Some sort of motion detector in the elevator shaft, triggered by a falling ninja."

Spotter: "I knew it! I knew there'd be an alarm!"

Will the Navigator stop his fall before he splats at the bottom? Will the Spotter be able to disable the alarm before guards show up? Will the Deliverator get the food to the customer on time? Will the Driver be able to get into that hatch? Will the Chef murder them all for incompetence? Or will they all be forced to commit Seppuku?

Find out in another exciting session of the Ninja Burger RPG next week, same Ninja time, same Ninja channel!



5. THE CITY BY THE BAY

"Everyone is odd in San Francisco.
That's why we fit in so well." – Charmed



San Francisco Skyline



Golden Gate Bridge



Hilly Streets



Marina View



Telegraph Hill

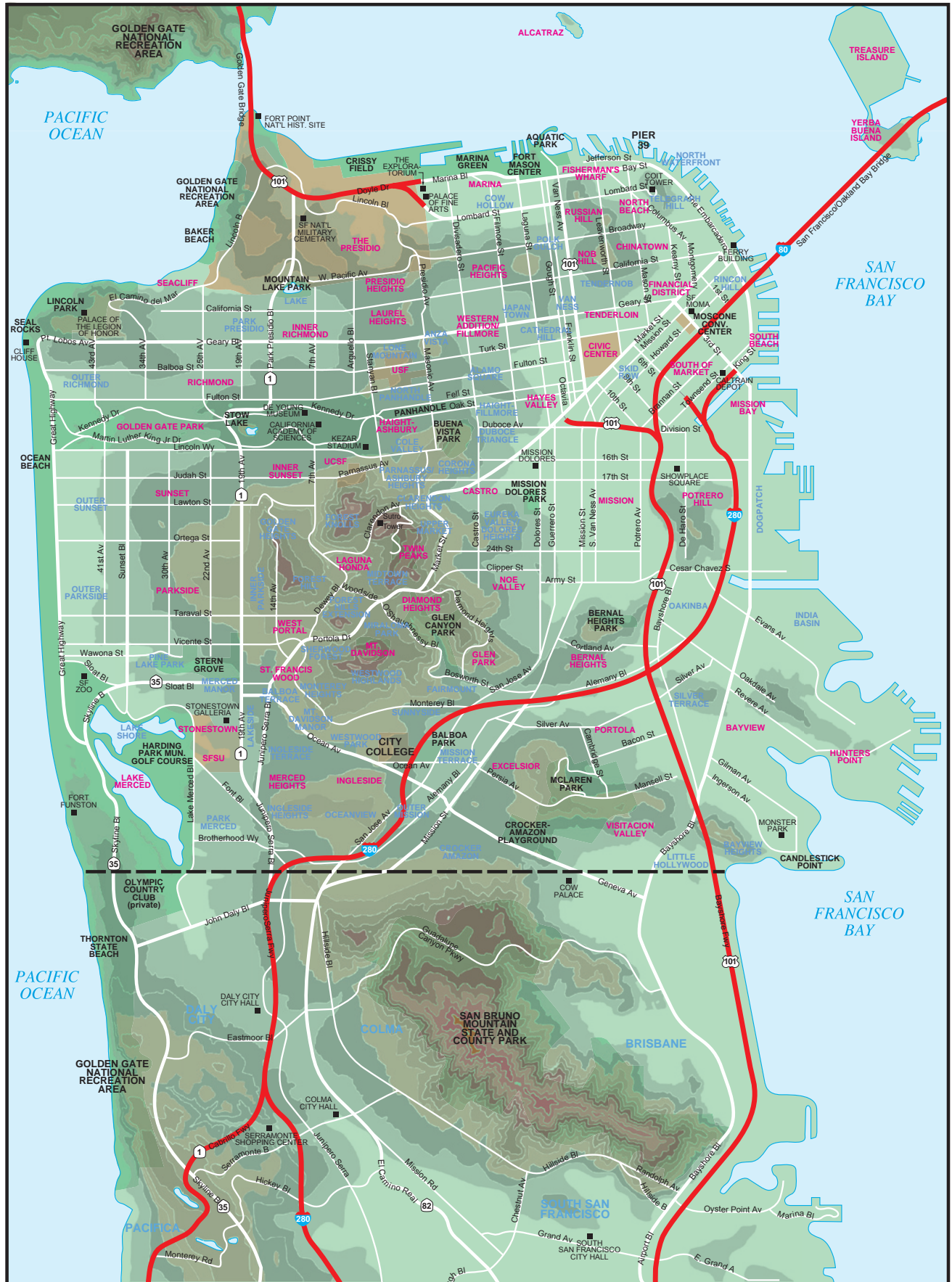


Downtown San Francisco

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NINJA BURGER



SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

With about 750,000 residents in 46.7 sq. miles, San Francisco (aka "The City" or "SF," but never "Frisco") is the second most densely populated city in the U.S. (after New York City), and one of the most culturally diverse, with large Russian, Mexican, Italian and Japanese communities. The median income is higher than the national average, but the cost of living is high, and about two-thirds of all residents are renters. It is a city of great diversity, with latte-drinking engineers driving SUVs past homeless transients, upscale sushi restaurants and two-dollar tacquerias, rowdy gay bars and upscale night clubs. Anything, and everything.

Including, of course, Ninja Burger.

Although Ninja Burger has locations around the world – San Francisco is its original home, and for good reasons (which will be discussed on the following pages). Of course, if you wish to set your Ninja Burger campaign in your own hometown, or some other city, please feel free to do so. Much of the material that follows is San Francisco-focused, but can be easily adapted for use elsewhere with a little imagination.

HISTORY

In 1776, Spanish explorers established military fortifications and a mission, named for Saint Francis, in an area that would soon become home to a village named "Yerba Buena," a trading post for Russian furriers and explorers. In 1847 during the Mexican-American War the area was claimed in the name of the United States and renamed "San Francisco."

During the gold rush, population increased 25-fold over a 12-month period. The decades that followed were chaotic, lawless and full of corruption. Yet it was during this period that many of the city's well-known fixtures appeared, such as Chinatown, Nob Hill, Levi Strauss, Wells Fargo and others. Much of the city's modern street grid was also laid down.

As the 20th Century dawned, San Francisco was hit by two tragedies – the bubonic plague (which led to a ban on burials), and the earthquake of 1906, which not only destroyed buildings but ruptured water mains, allowing fires to destroy over 80% of the city.

However, this led to a renaissance of sorts, with the city hosting the 1915 Panama-Pacific Expo to celebrate the opening of the Panama Canal. In the years that followed, both the Golden Gate and Bay Bridge were built, firmly establishing the City of San Francisco as an important hub.

After World War II, the city was host to the signing of the UN Charter in 1945, as well as the Treaty of San Francisco that ended war with Japan. This period saw a major boom in population, with soldiers returning home from war to new homes in the Sunset District. Parts of the city were taken via eminent domain, and residents were displaced from the Fillmore and other areas to Bayview-Hunter's Point to make way for the Embarcadero Center and Yerba Buena Gardens.

In the 1960s, the area became home to the nation's countercultural movements, and since then has had several neighborhoods become indelibly associated with both gays (The Castro) and hippies (Haight-Ashbury). The city's downtown area was built up significantly in the 1970s and 80s, with a number of skyscrapers and high-rise condominiums springing up seemingly overnight; this increasing urbanization was accompanied by an increase in the city's homeless population, a problem which persists to this day.

The 1990s saw San Francisco (and the greater Bay Area) playing host to the epicenter of the "dot-com" boom, leading to an even greater disconnect between the rich and the poor, some becoming millionaires overnight, others losing everything they owned. With skyrocketing housing costs, this forced tens of thousands of people to leave the city when they lost their jobs. Today, San Francisco is host to a new Internet boom, newly energized left-wing, anti-war, and gay rights movements, and a ninja delivery service. That's where you come in.

For more about San Francisco, visit the following:

- <http://www.sfgate.com/>
- <http://www.craigslist.org/>
- <http://www.transitinfo.org/>
- <http://www.sfvisitor.org/>
- <http://www.ci.sf.ca.us/>



MOTHER NATURE

Though Mark Twain joked that the coldest winter he spent was a summer in San Francisco, in actual point of fact the average temperature is about 60 degrees Fahrenheit, year round, rarely going above 70 or below 40. The climate means that there's many a foggy afternoon (especially on the coast), but winters are rainy – no snow – so you can run around in pajamas year-round, which is good since ninja don't wear mittens. When it does rain, it's mostly just misty, and thunderstorms are a rarity worth talking about.

The hottest days are in autumn, when "Indian Summer" brings the best weather of the year just in time for Halloween, after all the tourists have gone home. The sunniest month? October.

San Francisco is also full of "micro-climates," which are pockets of distinct weather patterns within the city. It can be foggy and cold on the coast in the Sunset District, but you travel a mile into the city and it's warm and sunny in The Mission. This is even more extreme on an area-wide scale. On the coast, it can be in the 50s, but 25 to 30 miles inland it might be in the high 90s.

EARTHQUAKES

Truth is, big earthquakes don't happen all that often, despite the threat that the "Big One" is coming in the future, so nobody in San Francisco really worries about it. But imagine for a moment that a big earthquake *does* hit the city. Roads are blocked, power is out, restaurants and grocery stores are closed... who do you think would be needed at a time like that? Ninja Burger!

Want to whip up an earthquake? Roll 2d6 and read the dice in order for your Richter Scale reading (e.g., 1.5, 2.3, etc.). If that first die is under 4, it's likely nobody even notices it. If it's about a 5, the earthquake is felt but doesn't cause any noticeable damage. If it's a 6, you got yourself something to talk about. But if you want a BIG one, bump it up to 7; the 1989 "Loma Prieta earthquake" that caused roads to collapse was a 7.1.

Areas along the coasts – especially the northeast part of the city – would suffer the most during an earthquake like that, since many of them are built on land dredged up out of the Bay. San Francisco's high hills, however, are mostly safe, since they're on solid bedrock. Even if a huge tsunami came and flooded the city, many neighborhoods would be left intact, albeit isolated, since they're hundreds of feet above sea level. Not that you would ever think of sending a tsunami at your characters.

TRAFFIC ON THE TENS

The San Francisco area is crisscrossed by major highways and long bridges. However, a concerted "Freeway Revolt" by city residents has kept San Francisco itself free of major expressways, meaning that travel within the city is anything but speedy.

The four main roads in The City are Hwy 101, Route 1, and Interstates 80 and 280. Hwy 101 enters the city's SE corner and runs north to merge with I-80, which goes across the Bay Bridge. 101 technically continues through the city, but much of the journey is on surface streets until it meets the Golden Gate Bridge and heads north into Marin. I-280 covers slightly more ground, entering the city's SW corner and twisting through the southern half of the city across 101, paralleling it until coming to an end just a few blocks from the 101-80 merge. Route 1 enters the city at the same point, though it heads due north along surface streets until it meets up with 101 near the Golden Gate Bridge.

Route 1, I-280 and 101 take similar paths down The Peninsula, with Route 1 hugging the ocean, 101 following the Bay, and 280 running about halfway in between. Several other highways run through East and South Bay; most of these are spurs of I-80, including 580 (which runs from Marin through the East Bay) and 880, which runs along the east side of the Bay, linked to 101 via the San Mateo and Dumbarton bridges. These are slower during morning and afternoon commutes (averaging 25-30 MPH), but some of them – especially the I-80 and 101 approaches to the Bay Bridge – are perpetually slow (it takes 1d6x10 minutes to cross).

A few other driving tips that ninja should know:

- Numbered streets are on the east side of The City, numbered avenues on the west. If you're aiming for 10th Ave. and you're on 10th St., you're in trouble. In the avenues, north-south streets are alphabetical, so it's easy to find 10th and Judah.
- Similar-sounding things are not always adjacent. Golden Gate Park and Golden Gate Bridge do not touch. The Richmond and The Castro are neighborhoods, but Richmond and Castro Valley are places in the East Bay.
- San Francisco's not all cable cars. MUNI operates buses and subways in The City, with BART operating between San Francisco and other cities, and Caltrain operating down The Peninsula.
- Parking is a huge problem in San Francisco – there are allegedly more cars than there are parking spots. People have been known to pave over their front lawns just to create a parking spot.
- A rough estimate is to say it takes 1d6x10 minutes of *legal* driving (speed limits, stop signs, etc.) to get to a delivery if ninja start a run in The City. If they start outside San Francisco, double it.

THE BAY AREA

San Francisco is at the northern tip of a 25-mile long peninsula (known simply as The Peninsula to locals). Roughly square (about 7 miles by 7 miles), it's boxed in on the north and east by San Francisco Bay, the west by the Pacific Ocean, and the south by the county line (San Francisco is both a city and a county unto itself).

North over the Golden Gate is Marin County, with cities like Sausalito, San Rafael and Tiburon. This is one of the wealthiest areas of the entire country (and possibly the world), with many rich families living here so they can be close to San Francisco (with great views of the city's skyline), and yet far enough away from the hustle and bustle to feel removed from it all at the end of the day. The area also features many beautiful stretches of relatively untouched coastline, making it an excellent place for a day trip.

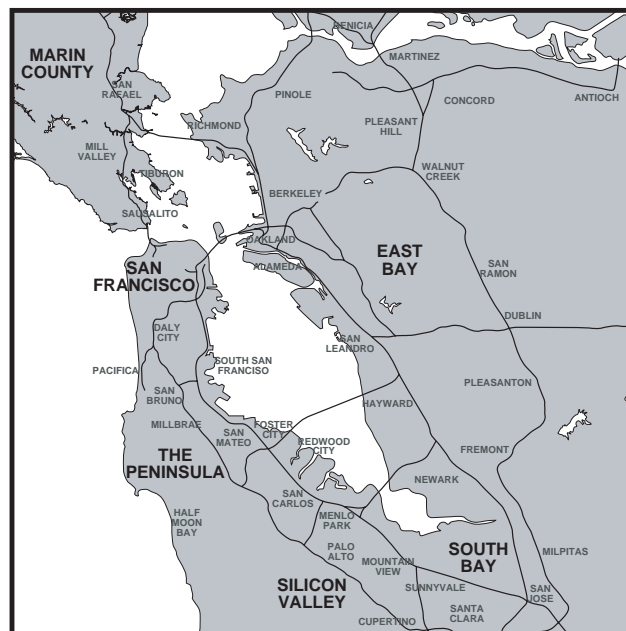
East of San Francisco and over the Bay Bridge are the cities of Emeryville, Oakland and Berkeley, the northern reaches of what's collectively called the "East Bay." The area extends south along the bay through several industrial and commercial areas, including San Leandro, Hayward and Fremont. Further east are more remote (and gentrified) communities like Walnut Creek, Pleasant Hill and Livermore. Many residents here commute to San Francisco and The Peninsula, in order to save on rent.

Directly south of San Francisco is San Mateo County, home to smaller cities like Daly City, Brisbane, Burlingame, San Mateo, Foster City and South San Francisco, quaintly known as "South City" to locals. Further south are Menlo Park, Palo Alto, Sunnyvale and others, which make up Silicon Valley – the epicenter of the computer industry. Somewhere around here (the lines are not clear), The Peninsula becomes the South Bay, anchored by San Jose but also includes cities like Campbell, Milpitas and Los Altos.

NOW ARRIVING

There are three major airports in the Bay Area, in Oakland, San Jose and South San Francisco (aka SFO). The South San Francisco airport is most convenient to The City and The Peninsula, but prices are cheaper at the other two airports. Several smaller airports also serve the area, including one in San Carlos and a military field in Sunnyvale.

San Francisco is also a major port of call, and in addition to ferries traveling between local areas there are several docks for large passenger liners heading in from overseas destinations. Intrastate travelers often choose to take a car or bus, and almost all of those coming from other parts of California or neighboring states will likely arrive via I-80 or I-580, by way of the I-5 corridor.



ROAD TRIP

Since even ninja get time off, there's a good chance the characters will start roaming about. Here are just a few adventure threads to get your juices flowing:

- **Colma**, a small town just south of San Francisco (near Daly City), is full of cemeteries; this is where San Francisco buries its dead. It is a necropolis, containing more than 100 dead people for every living one. It's creepy even in the real world, and if you add in magic, who knows what might arise. Literally.
- **Moffett Field** is a military air base alongside the bay, near Mountain View and Sunnyvale. The complex includes the NASA Ames Research Center, one of the country's three Space Camps, and a number of impressive hangers and wind tunnels. It's also where the President lands Air Force One when he visits the area.
- **Silicon Valley** is home to many big tech companies, including Apple, Google, Ebay and Sun. Who knows what cutting-edge technology is being developed there now? Perhaps the PCs are at lunch when enemy ninja sent from a company in Redmond, Washington are sent to infiltrate a competitor (who happens to be a customer).
- As anyone who's watched *Sneakers* knows, there are **four main bridges** that connect The Peninsula to parts east and north. Crowded with traffic on a good day, imagine the chaos that would ensue if one of them collapsed due to an earthquake, explosion, satellite-guided laser beam, etc.
- San Francisco's surrounded by water. Who knows when a **three-hour boat tour** on the Bay might turn nasty if the weather starts getting rough...

FINDING ADVENTURE AT HOME

At first glance, it may seem that a city only 7 miles across has limited potential for real ninja-style antics, but in fact nothing could be further from the truth. San Francisco is full of potential situations that could have your player characters on the verge of certain death with a little imagination.

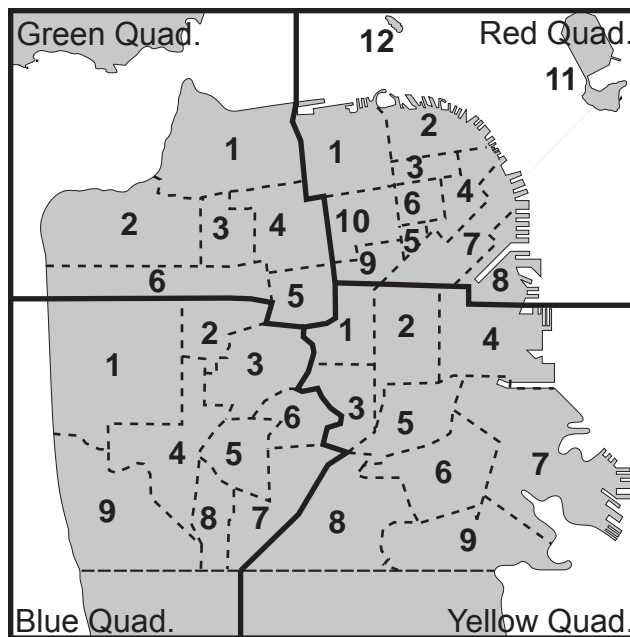
For starters, San Francisco has quite a diverse range of terrain to work with, all located inside the county lines. Where else can you find soaring hills, curving hillside roads, sheer cliffs, broad expanses of beach, heavily forested parkland, several lakes and access to both the Pacific Ocean and San Francisco Bay – replete with several islands – all within city limits? You can go from sea level to over 900 feet up without entering a single skyscraper.

And speaking of tall buildings, the city’s many interesting man-made structures offer plenty of opportunity for exciting deliveries. Imagine dangling off the Golden Gate Bridge at sundown, scaling the side of the soaring Transamerica Pyramid, searching through abandoned warehouses filled with unknown chemical agents, scampering through crowded alleys in Chinatown, or skipping across the rooftops of Victorian-era houses. A ninja might do all of that in the course of one single 8-hour shift.

Consider a team of ninja sent to deliver food to a poor trapped bridge worker high above San Francisco Bay, a crane threatening to collapse at any moment as a salesman on his cell phone plows his SUV into the back of a stopped car, causing a 10-car pileup during rush hour backing traffic up for miles, just as armed bank robbers making a getaway start a gun battle with police, and enemy ninja swoop in to attack the team. Just another day on the job.

Of course, it doesn’t even have to be extraordinary to be difficult. California has a reputation for being weird – this is the state that elected an actor to be governor not once, but twice – and San Francisco is at the epicenter of strangeness. On any given weekend, you might find: a techno love parade; an anti-war demonstration; a blues festival; a punk rock concert; a fetish festival; a street race; even naked people in the streets. On one sunny day in September, there was a ski jump competition in one of the city’s richest neighborhoods, complete with snow. Try delivering down that street without snow tires on your van.

Even San Francisco’s more mundane features can make for fun and exciting adventures. Imagine a ninja clinging to the top of a cable car as it makes its way down a steep hill, or making his way across a nude beach, or trying to keep up with a ferry halfway to Alcatraz. There’s no telling when or where a Ninja Burger order will come in, and the team must always be ready to tackle any job.



SLICING THINGS UP

“I’m gonna get us something from all four food groups: hamburgers, french fries, coffee and donuts.” – Red Heat

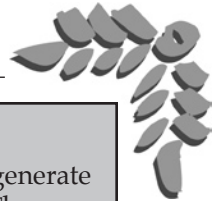
Ninja Burger has divided San Francisco up into four quadrants, subdivided into a total of 36 delivery zones, each of which includes one or more of the city’s neighborhoods. The color map on page 54 contains a closeup of the Red Quadrant, which is where most of Ninja Burger’s business is from (and most of your deliveries will probably take place).

The Northeast (or “Red”) Quadrant is split into 12 zones; the Southeast and Southwest (“Yellow” and “Blue,” respectively) are each divided into 9; the Northwest (or “Green”) is split up into 6. The number of zones in each quadrant is roughly analogous to the amount of business done in that part of the city, with each zone representing about 3% of overall revenue.

The pages that follow contain a Neighborhood Guide, with descriptions broken down by delivery quadrant and zones. Each zone description includes street names and delivery ideas for that area, to allow the Dispatcher to quickly come up with deliveries and encounters on the fly. The Dispatcher is encouraged to mix and match deliveries between zones to keep ninja characters on their tabi-booted toes.

For San Francisco maps and traffic information (including drive times), visit the following:

- <http://www.sfgate.com/maps/>
- <http://maps.google.com/>
- <http://traffic.511.org/sfgate/>



RED QUADRANT

San Francisco's "Red Quadrant" comprises the Northeast corner of the city, including the downtown area as well as the city's three islands: Alcatraz, Treasure Island and Yerba Buena Island (the latter two reachable by a bridge). The area is roughly bordered on the west by Divisadero St. and the south by the Central Freeway. The area as a whole accounts for about 35% of Ninja Burger's business within the city.

R1. Marina/Cow Hollow/Pacific Heights

Wealthy partygoers, yuppies in SUVs, rich writers, old mansions, rich "marina chicks" concerned with superficiality and appearance, shopping, and clubs.

| 2d6 | Customer or Encounter | Location | Street |
|-----|-----------------------|----------------|----------------|
| 2 | Famous novelist | Bus Stop | Chestnut St. |
| 3 | Famous actor | Bar | Fillmore St. |
| 4 | Dog walker | Park | Lombard St. |
| 5 | Confused tourist | Museum | Marina Blvd. |
| 6 | Partying yuppie | Nightclub | Washington St. |
| 7 | "Marina Chick" | Hotel | Gough St. |
| 8 | Man doing Tai Chi | Apartment | Pierce St. |
| 9 | Woman doing yoga | Private School | Sacramento St. |
| 10 | Wealthy shopper | Store | Union St. |
| 11 | Church/temple-goer | Church/temple | Franklin St. |
| 12 | San Francisco Mayor | Mansion | California St. |

The Marina sits in the middle of the waterfront area, between the touristy Fisherman's Wharf to the east and the parklike Presidio to the west. This affluent area is quite picturesque, sitting on the grounds of the 1915 Panama-Pacific International Exposition, a world fair literally created by filling in a former lagoon. Since then, all but one of the Expo's buildings – the Palace of Fine Arts – were demolished to create this wealthy neighborhood. The Fort Mason Center, part of the Golden Gate National Recreation Area, is found in the northeast part of the area, and is home to art galleries, theaters, museums and restaurants. More shopping can be found along Chestnut St., the hub of the party scene, and at Cow Hollow, an upper-class district at the intersection of Union & Fillmore.

South of the Marina District is Pacific Heights, one of the most scenic and wealthy areas in the entire city. Stretching from the Presidio to San Francisco's more urban downtown areas along Van Ness Avenue, the neighborhood is home to many of the city's oldest buildings, with the oldest dating back to 1853. Many of these mansions are decorated in classical Victorian or Edwardian style, making the area somewhat of a tourist attraction. In addition, the neighborhood is the home of many wealthy families, including the famous romance novelist Danielle Steele, who resides in a historical mansion. It is also home to two scenic parks: Lafayette Park anchors the eastern half of the Heights, and Alta Plaza sits near its western boundary.

ABOUT THE CHARTS

The charts below can be used to generate deliveries and encounters "on the fly." They are used in the same way as other charts in this RPG. For a "quick pick," roll 1 or 2d6 (as warranted by the chart), then consult the appropriate line. For a more random, detailed pick, roll 1 or 2d6 three times and use each result for a separate column.

R2. Fisherman's Wharf/North Beach/Russian Hill/Telegraph Hill/North Waterfront

Tourist traps, expensive restaurants, fresh fish and crab, souvenir stores, cheap snow globes, t-shirts, wax museums, and good coffee.

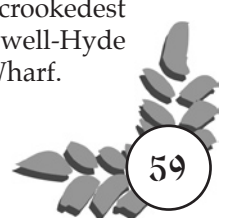
| 2d6 | Customer or Encounter | Location | Street |
|-----|-----------------------|---------------|---------------|
| 2 | Pharmaceutical dealer | Café | Jefferson St. |
| 3 | Pickpocket | Museum | Beach St. |
| 4 | Waiter/waitress | Souvenir Shop | Embarcadero |
| 5 | Street performer/mime | Public Plaza | Bay St. |
| 6 | Souvenir shop owner | Restaurant | Broadway St. |
| 7 | Confused tourist | Nightclub | Columbus Ave. |
| 8 | Jaded city resident | Bar | Lombard St. |
| 9 | Street musician | Strip Club | Stockton St. |
| 10 | Police officer | Church | Union St. |
| 11 | Fisherman | Boat/Pier | Powell St. |
| 12 | Lady of the evening | Street Corner | Grant Ave. |

San Francisco's northeastermost corner, the former "Barbary Coast" of days gone by, is home to its most tourist-friendly areas. Fisherman's Wharf is most often associated with tourism, encompassing the waterfront from Ghirardelli Square to Pier 35. Top sites include Pier 39, the Maritime Park, Ripley's Museum, ferry rides to Alcatraz and seafood restaurants.

Just below the waterfront, stretching south down Columbus into the heart of downtown, is the North Beach area, often referred to as "Little Italy." The neighborhood is home to many tourist-friendly restaurants and good coffee houses, especially on the northern end. Towards the south, the area becomes a little less family-friendly, especially on Broadway west of Columbus, where the city's red-light district is home to many strip clubs and adult theaters.

North Beach is bounded on the east by Telegraph Hill, a popular tourist location (and expensive neighborhood in its own right) that is topped by one of the city's landmarks, Coit Tower. Accessible via a long staircase, the tower is lit up at night with a white glow that can be seen for many miles.

The larger Russian Hill marks the neighborhood's western edge, and is a neighborhood unto itself. Filled with many steep streets, it is most famous for a portion of Lombard Street often referred to as "the crookedest street in the world." It also features the Powell-Hyde cable car line, which runs to Fisherman's Wharf.



R3. Chinatown/Nob Hill

Chinese food, parades, fireworks, souvenirs, ethnic grocers, rich folk, four star hotels, and cable cars.

| 2d6 | Customer or Encounter | Location | Street |
|-----|-----------------------|-----------------|----------------|
| 2 | Elderly Chinese man | Cookie Factory | Washington St. |
| 3 | Middle-aged banker | Bank | Taylor St. |
| 4 | Young Chinese woman | Cable Car | Mason St. |
| 5 | Grocery store owner | Open-Air Market | California St. |
| 6 | Lost tourist | Hotel | Grant St. |
| 7 | Noodle chef | Restaurant | Bush St. |
| 8 | Hungry enemy ninja | Alleyway | Stockton St. |
| 9 | Buddhist monk | Temple | Pine St. |
| 10 | Homeless vagrant | Museum | Sacramento St. |
| 11 | Hungry resident | Apartment | Powell St. |
| 12 | Priest | Cathedral | Kearney St. |

The main streets of Chinatown (roughly bordered by North Beach, the Financial District, Union Square and Nob Hill) are a tourist trap. This is especially true of Grant Avenue, which is filled with cheap souvenirs and ethnic groceries and always jam-packed with people taking photos of themselves in front of the Dragon gate at the corner of Bush & Grant.

The real Chinatown lies down side streets and alleyways, in which can be found great restaurants and architecture (not to mention Ninja Burger's secret Headquarters). Even Stockton Street, the area's second largest thoroughfare, has a more authentic feel than Grant, filled with produce markets and small shops.

Nob Hill (so named for the "nobs" who once lived there) is more upscale, with good views of downtown and some expensive hotels and restaurants up top. To the north of Union Square and the city's seedy Tenderloin District, and the West of Chinatown proper, it is home to a number of the city's "old money" families, as well as an assortment of high-priced restaurants and top-notch hotels. From the highest point within the city's downtown area (about 340 feet high), one can not only appreciate city landmarks such as Grace Cathedral and the Fairmont Hotel, but can also enjoy great views of the city's Financial District.



R4. Downtown/Financial District/Union Square/Theater District

Tall buildings, big banks, good shopping, expensive restaurants, corporate executives, shopping malls, small theaters, and tourists spending money.

| 2d6 | Customer or Encounter | Location | Street |
|-----|-----------------------|------------------|----------------|
| 2 | Transit cop | Subway Station | Bush St. |
| 3 | Theater-goer | Theater | Pine St. |
| 4 | Parking attendant | Parking Garage | California St. |
| 5 | Hotel bellboy | Hotel | Post St. |
| 6 | Office worker | Office Building | Powell St. |
| 7 | Shopper | Department Store | Geary St. |
| 8 | Hairdresser | Boutique | Stockton St. |
| 9 | Chef | Restaurant | Market St. |
| 10 | Bank teller | Bank | Montgomery St. |
| 11 | Tipsy wine lover | Wine Bar | Washington St. |
| 12 | Bus driver | Bus Stop | Clay St. |

Downtown San Francisco is marked by the cluster of tall buildings that make up its distinctive skyline. Though stretching south into the SOMA area as it grows, the bulk of the area is located in a triangle formed by Market, Montgomery & Washington Streets. The tall skyscrapers here include the Bank of America Tower, the Transamerica Pyramid and an assortment of financial institutions, law firms and corporate headquarters, as well as the 12th District of the US Federal Reserve and the Pacific Stock Exchange. The area also includes several shopping complexes, including the Crocker Galleria, the Ferry Building and the Embarcadero Center, a complex of four buildings which contains stores, restaurants and a theater.

Along the western edge of the Financial District, south of Chinatown, is the city's busiest shopping area: Union Square. Surrounded by first-class hotels, crowded restaurants and high-class stores such as Macy's, Neiman Marcus, Gucci and Saks Fifth Ave., the shopping district stretches over ten city blocks, and represents the single largest such commercial area in the West. A major tourist draw, it is also known for nightmarish traffic and sparse parking at all hours of the day and night. Several blocks west of Union Square is the city's theater district, anchored by two large off-Broadway theaters, the Curran and the Geary.

R5. Civic Center/Van Ness

City Hall, libraries, courthouses, opera house, symphony and concert halls, federal building, plazas, art galleries, and a complete lack of parking spaces.

| 1d6 | Customer or Encounter | Location | Street |
|-----|-----------------------|----------------|----------------|
| 1 | Police officer | Courthouse | Van Ness Ave. |
| 2 | Protester | Art Gallery | Polk St. |
| 3 | Politician | Govt. Building | McAllister St. |
| 4 | Theater-goer | Theater | Larkin St. |
| 5 | Lawyer | Plaza | Geary Blvd. |
| 6 | Performer | Museum | Taylor St. |

San Francisco's Civic Center is home not only to the ornate City Hall, but numerous other city, state and federal government buildings. Much of the architecture is quite ornate, particularly along Van Ness Ave., between Golden Gate Ave. and Market St., which mark the area's boundaries. The streets are also home to art galleries, museums and the city's main library branch.

The Civic Center area also contains several popular theaters and gathering places. Across from City Hall, on the opposite side of Van Ness Ave., are the War Memorial Opera House and Davies Symphony Hall, and across Grove St. is the Bill Graham Civic Auditorium. A number of nearby restaurants cater to their upper-class audiences.

It is worth noting that the Civic Center area – including City Hall itself – is widely used by the public for non-governmental events. City Hall is often rented out for large events (and especially for weddings), and a recent "love fest" had a rave taking place on the Green between City Hall and the Library, with a VIP area within City Hall itself.



R6. The Tenderloin/Little Saigon/Polk Gulch

Cheap hotels, prostitutes, drunks, panhandlers and trash, but also good, cheap restaurants, and a newly Christened "Little Saigon" Vietnamese community.

| 2d6 | Customer or Encounter | Location | Street |
|-----|-----------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| 2 | Drunken bum | Alleyway | Post St. |
| 3 | Coffee lover | Coffee Bar | Sutter St. |
| 4 | Hungry diner | Restaurant | Polk St. |
| 5 | Stoned resident | Apartment | Geary St. |
| 6 | Pharmaceutical dealer | Street Corner | Larkin St. |
| 7 | Lady of the evening | Bar | Hyde St. |
| 8 | Exotic dancer | Adult Theater | Turk St. |
| 9 | Liquor store owner | Liquor Store | O'Farrell St. |
| 10 | Lost tourist | Open-Air Market | Leavenworth St. |
| 11 | Hotel manager | Hotel | California St. |
| 12 | Cross dresser | Nightclub | Eddy St. |

The Tenderloin is crammed between the Civic Center, Nob Hill, Cathedral Hill and Union Square, placing it smack in between some of the best the city has to offer. So named because police walking the beat here were paid extra hazard pay (allowing them to buy good cuts of meat for dinner), it is a high-density area full of homelessness, crime, prostitution, strip clubs and over five dozen liquor stores. Obviously not a tourist-friendly neighborhood, it offers relatively cheap rent and is thus a haven for many starving artists. The northern part of the area, near Nob Hill, is often called "Tenderloin Heights" or "the Tendernob."

In 2004, San Francisco's Mayor dubbed a portion of the Tenderloin located between Larkin, Hyde, Turk and O'Farrell Streets as "Little Saigon," in honor of the large Vietnamese community residing there. These city blocks are filled with Vietnamese restaurants, open-air produce markets and the like, giving visitors an authentic experience that's a welcome escape from the squalor of the rest of the area. An official gateway, not unlike that leading into Chinatown, is expected to be constructed soon.

At the western edge of The Tenderloin, on Polk St. between O'Farrell and California Streets, is a small neighborhood called Polk Gulch by the locals. Long a gathering point for the city's transgender community, it has also been notorious for the number of prostitutes and adult theaters in the area. In recent years the area has been gentrified somewhat, and several decent nightclubs operate in the area, but it still maintains a reputation as one of the seediest parts of the city.



R7. SOMA/Skid Row/Rincon Hill

Large warehouses, loft apartments, museums, cafés, galleries, Internet companies past and present, many restaurants, and many crime-ridden streets.

| 2d6 | Customer or Encounter | Location | Street |
|-----|-----------------------|----------------|--------------|
| 2 | Angry drunk | Bar | Fremont St. |
| 3 | Shopper | Leather Shop | 8th St. |
| 4 | Dot-com entrepreneur | Warehouse | Harrison St. |
| 5 | Squatter | Empty Building | 7th St. |
| 6 | Movie-goer | Movie Theater | Mission St. |
| 7 | Frazzled waitress | Restaurant | 6th St. |
| 8 | Tourist | Hotel | Howard St. |
| 9 | Car thief | Parking Garage | 5th St. |
| 10 | Resident | Loft Apartment | Folsom St. |
| 11 | Bagger | Supermarket | 4th St. |
| 12 | Meter maid | Bus Stop | Beale St. |

“South Of Market Area” (or SOMA) was at the center of the Internet boom of the ‘90s, and its streets are littered with the corpses of companies gone bust. The area seems to undergo a continual renaissance; new loft apartments, new office buildings and many high-end restaurants can be found in the area, as well as museums, conference centers and a theater.

The name of the region is somewhat misleading, as many of the larger buildings that mark the Financial District spill over Market St. south into SOMA just to the east of 4th St. The main streets in this area – as well as I-80 and the Bay Bridge –run in an northeast/southwest direction, deviating from the overall grid.

A sizeable portion of SOMA – from 5th to 10th Streets between Market and I-80 – is referred to as Skid Row, or more colloquially, “6th and Homeless.” This area is full of boarded-up shops, homeless, prostitution, drug use, and sex shops. Nearby, an annual day-long bondage celebration called the Folsom Street Fair is held every September. Another development of note is Rincon Hill, a twelve-block area of apartments and shops currently being developed right alongside I-80, just before the Bay Bridge.

R8. South Beach/Mission Bay

High-end restaurants, a major league baseball park, a brand new UCSF Medical School extension, lots of new construction, and prime waterfront property.

| 2d6 | Customer or Encounter | Location | Street |
|-----|-----------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| 2 | Baseball umpire | Baseball Stadium | Willie Mays Plaza |
| 3 | Cat burglar | Apartment | Delancey St. |
| 4 | Shopper | Clothing Store | Brannan St. |
| 5 | Resident | Houseboat | Townsend St. |
| 6 | Tired student | School | 3rd St. |
| 7 | Construction worker | Construction Site | King St. |
| 8 | Busboy | Restaurant | Embarcadero |
| 9 | Businessman | Bus Stop | 2nd St. |
| 10 | Private detective | Warehouse | Varney Pl. |
| 11 | Street preacher | Street Corner | Berry St. |
| 12 | Security guard | Condominium | Bryant St. |

South Beach extends south of the Bay Bridge to Mission Creek. The area is growing quickly to keep up with the new demands of crowds visiting SBC Park (formerly Pac Bell Park, and soon to be AT&T Park), home of the San Francisco Giants major league baseball team. However, the area contains many restaurants, stores and apartments, with luxury condos slated to open in the near future.

The Mission Bay neighborhood lies between Townsend Street and 17th Street. It is currently home to an extension of the UCSF Medical School, as well as a notable community of houseboat-dwelling residents who live at the Mission Creek Marina, near the I-80 overpass. Once dubbed “Sh-t Creek” by inhabitants due to sewage problems, the area has been cleaned up in recent years. Mission Bay is also noteworthy for being one of the only places in the city where two numbered streets – 3rd St. and 16th St. – cross.

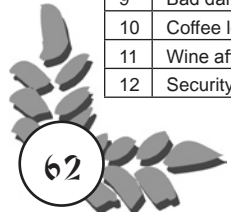
R9. Hayes Valley

Fine restaurants, upscale clientele, tiny art galleries, hot nightclubs, expensive apartments, and a brand new off-ramp from San Francisco’s Central Freeway.

| 2d6 | Customer or Encounter | Location | Street |
|-----|-----------------------|-------------------|---------------|
| 2 | Mugger | Alleyway | Duboce Ave. |
| 3 | Mom and 2 kids | Playground | Germania St. |
| 4 | Art lover | Art Gallery | Buchanan St. |
| 5 | Impatient diner | Restaurant | Waller St. |
| 6 | Local artist | Art Supply Store | Market St. |
| 7 | Resident | Apartment | Octavia Blvd. |
| 8 | Hotel owner | Hotel | Fillmore St. |
| 9 | Bad dancer | Nightclub | Steiner St. |
| 10 | Coffee lover | Café | Pierce St. |
| 11 | Wine aficionado | Wine Bar | Hermann St. |
| 12 | Security guard | Convenience Store | Webster St. |

Hayes Valley has a subtly higher class of character than the neighborhoods immediately around it. Catering to clientele spilling out of the nearby Opera House and Symphony Hall in the Civic Center, it is filled with expensive restaurants, cafés and galleries. Centered on Hayes Street, its boundaries are Alamo Square to the west, Van Ness Ave. to the east, Fulton St. to the north and Market St. to the south.

The Central Freeway once ran through the area, but after the 1989 earthquake it was demolished. Now, Hayes Valley is again at the center of activity, as the Central Freeway is being rebuilt and rerouted to exit at Market Street, with Octavia Boulevard stretching through the center of Hayes Valley, complete with plenty of green space, a playground for children, park benches, room for bicyclists, and traffic snarls.



**R10. Western Addition/Fillmore/Alamo Square/
Cathedral Hill/Lower Haight/Japantown**

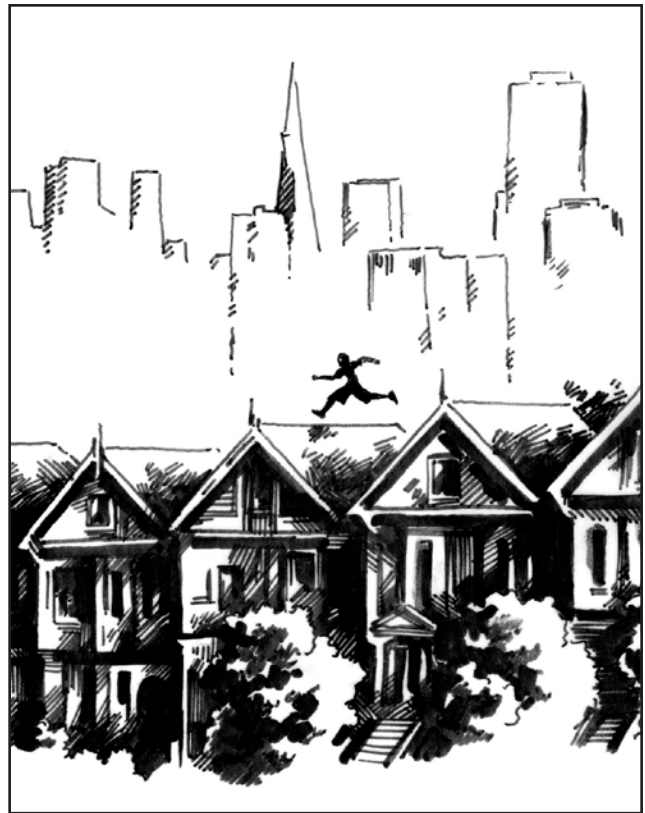
*Diverse neighborhoods, good views, ethnic cuisine,
great clubs, but crime and gangs in some areas.*

| 2d6 | Customer or Encounter | Location | Street |
|-----|-----------------------|-------------------|------------------|
| 2 | Deliveryman | Pizza Place | Post St. |
| 3 | Beggar | Street Corner | Laguna St. |
| 4 | Pharmaceutical dealer | Alleyway | Sutter St. |
| 5 | Security guard | Convenience Store | Webster St. |
| 6 | Creepy guy | Adult bookstore | Geary Blvd. |
| 7 | Diner | Restaurant | Divisadero St. |
| 8 | Robber | Liquor Store | Fulton St. |
| 9 | Lady of the evening | Bar | Fillmore St. |
| 10 | Lost tourist | Hotel | Golden Gate Ave. |
| 11 | Resident | Apartment | Turk St. |
| 12 | Thrifty shopper | Dollar Store | Steiner St. |

The Western Addition is the most eclectic and ethnically diverse area in the city, containing numerous smaller neighborhoods ranging from urban inner-city character, to postcard-perfect housing, to Asian-influenced architecture. The area is bounded by Van Ness Ave. on the east, Divisadero St. on the west, Pacific Heights to the north and Hayes Valley to the south. From block to block, the area goes from beautiful to blight – while Alamo Square and Cathedral Hill are among the most photographed areas of the city, just a few blocks walk places one in a ghetto, filled with drugs, violence and rough-and-tumble clubs.

As of 2005, San Francisco’s Mayor announced plans to install as many as a dozen bulletproof cameras at high-crime intersections. These cameras will record all activity for a period of 72 hours, and then self-erase unless police spot suspicious activity on them. Ninja deliverators, beware!

The Western Addition has long been home to San Francisco’s Japanese population, who mostly reside within a six square-block area around Post St. known as Little Osaka, J-Town or Japantown. About 12,000 Japanese residents live in the area, which is filled with Japanese, Korean and Chinese restaurants, indoor shopping centers, banks, hotels, and the like. The focal point of the area is Japan Center, which in addition to a number of Japanese-oriented stores is home to the distinctive 75-foot-high Peace Pagoda.



R11. Yerba Buena Island/Treasure Island

Twin islands, accessible by bridge, numerous parklands, many long-term residents, few services or stores, and extremely difficult to access.

| 1d6 | Customer or Encounter | Location | Street |
|-----|-----------------------|----------------|-------------------|
| 1 | Tourist | Park | Avenue D |
| 2 | Resident | Loft Apartment | Perimeter Rd. |
| 3 | Security Guard | Plaza | Avenue H. |
| 4 | Plumber | Apartment | Treasure Isl. Rd. |
| 5 | Burglar | House | Gateway Ave. |
| 6 | Stranded motorist | Off Ramp | California Ave. |

Yerba Buena Island (it means “Good Grass,” and is what San Francisco was once called) sits at the halfway point between the two spans of the Bay Bridge.

The tunnel that runs through the island is often a traffic bottleneck. Mostly devoted to parkland, the island is also home to a few residents who like living within city limits but prefer to be somewhat removed from the hustle and bustle.

To the north of Yerba Buena is Treasure Island, an artificial island created in 1939 for an International Exposition to celebrate the construction of the Golden Gate Bridge. Used as a naval base until 1996, it is now a home for many city residents, but suffers from a lack of resources: both it and Yerba Buena contain only one café and mini-market, and lack even a gas station.

R12. Alcatraz

"The Rock," tourists, empty cells, great views, remote location, difficult access, and a tendency to get taken over by bad guys intent on destroying the city.

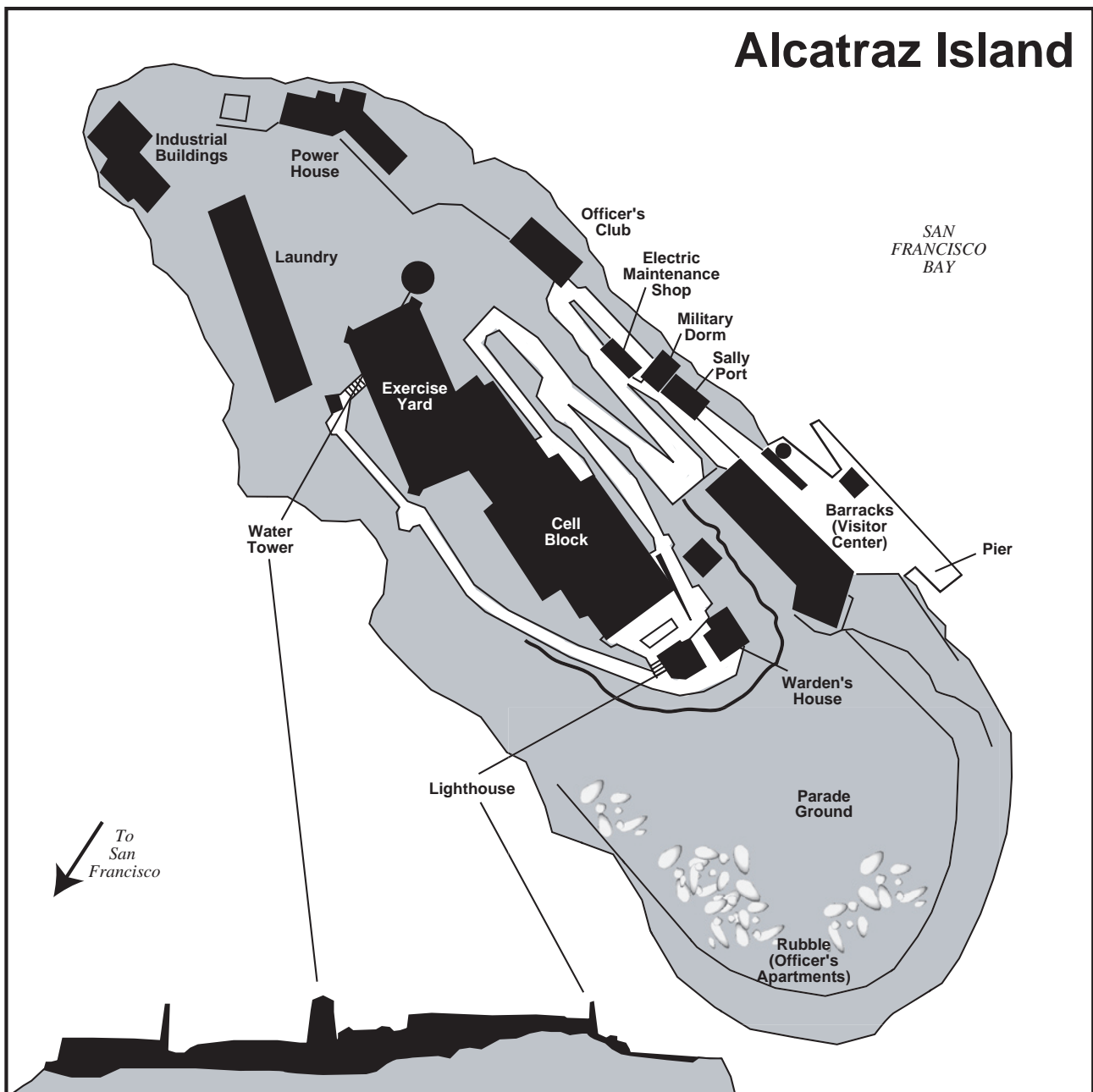
| 1d6 | Customer or Encounter | Location |
|-----|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| 1 | Tourist | Barracks (Visitor Center) |
| 2 | Security guard | Power House |
| 3 | Enemy ninja | Laundry |
| 4 | Criminal mastermind | Exercise Yard |
| 5 | Tour guide | Cell Block |
| 6 | Annoying child | Warden's House |

Located in the middle of San Francisco Bay, north of the city, Alcatraz Island was first used as a military stockade, and later (and most infamously) as a maximum security prison.

Alcatraz was long thought to have been inescapable due to the swift, shark-infested waters surrounding the island. At one point, three inmates allegedly escaped, but their bodies were never found. Ultimately the prison was deemed too expensive to run, and it was closed on March 21, 1963.

Today, Alcatraz is part of the Golden Gate National Recreation Area, and a destination for tourists. Ferries leave for the island from San Francisco's Fisherman's Wharf on a relatively frequent basis. It still contains the oldest operating lighthouse on the West Coast of the United States, and a flourishing colony of seabirds.

Of course, it's up to the Dispatcher to decide what's really going on behind the scenes. Your setting might call for an enemy's secret hideout, a prison for super samurai, or something even stranger. Go wild!





YELLOW QUADRANT

San Francisco's "Yellow Quadrant" is located in the Southeast corner of the city, which includes some of the oldest and most populous neighborhoods. It also includes many "low income" areas, which rank among the most dangerous in the city, as well as some of the most popular. It is roughly bordered by the city's central hills to the west and the Central Freeway to the north. The area accounts for about 25% of Ninja Burger's business in the city.

Y1. The Castro/Eureka Valley/Dolores Heights/Duboce Triangle

Sunny weather, great nightlife, gay bars, restaurants from cheap to expensive, great shopping, and plenty of houses in this mid-city residential area.

| 2d6 | Customer or Encounter | Location | Street |
|-----|-----------------------|---------------|-----------------|
| 2 | Resident | Apartment | Hancock St. |
| 3 | Family of four | House | Cumberland St. |
| 4 | Customer | Hairdresser | Diamond St. |
| 5 | Dishwasher | Restaurant | Noe St. |
| 6 | Employee | Video Store | 16th St. |
| 7 | Projectionist | Theater | Castro St. |
| 8 | DJ | Nightclub | Market St. |
| 9 | Weightlifter | Gym | 17th St. |
| 10 | Drag queen | Gay bar | 18th St. |
| 11 | Nervous bachelor | Jewelry Store | Liberty St. |
| 12 | Garage sale shopper | Garage | Collingwood St. |

Although Eureka Valley is the original term for the area at the center of San Francisco, the term has fallen out of use in favor of "The Castro," a name drawn from the main street that runs through the neighborhood. The heart of The Castro, where San Francisco's gay scene thrives, is between 18th St. and Market along Castro, and along Market St. north to Duboce. Within this area, a plethora of gay-friendly cafés, shops, clubs and restaurants can be found. However, the neighborhood itself stretches south to Dolores Heights (which peaks at Hill St.) and as far north as Duboce St., where Castro turns into Divisadero St., and despite its reputation as a party district it is overall primarily residential, the biggest downside being a generally continuous lack of parking spaces.

To the north is the Duboce Triangle, bounded by Waller St. to the north, Castro to the west, and Market to the southeast. The area contains many residential buildings and several parks (most notably, Duboce Park), as well as a prominent medical center, and it is quite a bit quieter than the flashy Castro District just a few blocks away. Along the long Market St. edge of the triangle can be found several higher-end shops, good restaurants and some of the city's best clubs. The neighborhood is well known as having remarkably good weather year round, as it is sheltered from the city's thick fogs by the peaks just to the west.

Y2. The Mission/Mission Dolores

Tacquerias, triple-decker "railroad car" apartments, a large Hispanic population, sunny and warm weather, tons of restaurants, and a great nightclub district.

| 2d6 | Customer or Encounter | Location | Street |
|-----|-----------------------|----------------|------------------|
| 2 | Writer | Loft Apartment | 18th St. |
| 3 | Artist | Warehouse | Harrison St. |
| 4 | Drunk dancer | Nightclub | 16th St. |
| 5 | Sleeping resident | Apartment | Guerrero St. |
| 6 | Hungry detective | Restaurant | Valencia St. |
| 7 | Cat burglar | House | Mission St. |
| 8 | Gang member | Post Office | Van Ness Ave. |
| 9 | Lady of the evening | Street Corner | Folsom St. |
| 10 | Mechanic | Gas Station | Cesar Chavez St. |
| 11 | Goth chick | Grocery Store | 24th St. |
| 12 | Sunbather | Park | Dolores St. |

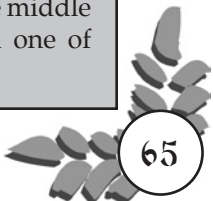
Highly residential, and heavily (though not exclusively) populated by Hispanic families, The Mission District (or just "The Mission") is a highly residential neighborhood, spanning the center of the city from Highway 101 to the north, Potrero Hill to the east, Bernal Heights to the south and Dolores St. to the west. It is well known as the best place to get authentic Mexican food in the city, and has several commercial strips featuring restaurants, nightclubs and theaters (e.g., near the intersection of 16th St. & Valencia Ave.). Technically, The Mission stretches the length of the city, following Mission St. past Bernal Heights to the city limits, but generally speaking it ends at Cesar Chavez St. (aka Army St.)

Worth noting: 826 Valencia is the home of the city's only official Pirate Supply store. Really.

Although the entire Mission is warmer and sunnier than other parts of the city, that portion called Mission Dolores is perhaps the most climactically stable. It is named for the fact that it's on the west side of Dolores St. (and thus technically not part of The Mission proper) as well as the prominently featured Spanish Mission that was established in 1776, making it arguably the oldest neighborhood in the entire city. Facing the Mission is Dolores Park, a popular mid-city hangout despite its rather steep incline.

HALLOWEEN IN THE CASTRO

Every Halloween, a large area of the central Castro neighborhood is shut down for one of the largest Halloween parties in the country. Hundreds of thousands of people fill the streets in costumes ranging from the obscene to the frightening, and everything in between. A delivery into the middle of all that chaos might seem easy, until one of Ninja Burger's hated enemies shows up!



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Y3. Noe Valley/Glen Park

Quiet, lots of babies and families, yuppies, cafés and boutiques on every corner, ethnically diverse restaurants, and a lack of traffic.

| 2d6 | Customer or Encounter | Location | Street |
|-----|-----------------------|-------------|---------------|
| 2 | Prankster kids | Playground | Diamond St. |
| 3 | Principal | School | Elizabeth St. |
| 4 | Electrician | House | 23rd St. |
| 5 | Resident | Apartment | Dolores St. |
| 6 | Pastor | Church | Church St. |
| 7 | Hungry diner | Restaurant | Noe St. |
| 8 | Customer | Hairdresser | Castro St. |
| 9 | Coffee lover | Café | Sanchez St. |
| 10 | Carjacker | Parking Lot | Clipper St. |
| 11 | Amorous couple | Treehouse | 29th St. |
| 12 | Weekend mechanic | Garage | Duncan St. |

Called “Noewhere Valley” by some locals (or “Snowy Valley” by those who wish to comment on the predominantly white makeup of the area’s residents), Noe Valley is a quiet little nook just to the southwest of the hustle and bustle of The Mission and The Castro. Spread out for several blocks on either side of Noe St. and Castro St., it is bordered on the north by Dolores Heights and on the south by Glen Park and San Jose Ave. Although primarily residential, there are several areas of commercial activity, including a strip of restaurants and cafés along Church St. and a strip of restaurants, small shops and outdoor cafés along 24th between Church and Castro.

Just to the south of Noe Valley, hugging the curves of the hills in the city’s center, is the neighborhood of Glen Park. Like its sister to the north, Glen Park is primarily residential, though it has a commercial strip along Chenery St. Unlike Noe Valley’s ruler-straight street grid, Glen Park’s streets follow the curves of the area’s hills, squiggling their way north into the highlands and following the curve of Glen Canyon Park along Bosworth St. The exact point at which the area becomes part of the “Blue Quadrant” is up for debate, but is generally considered to be anything west of Bosworth St. (which turns into O’Shaughnessy Blvd), or north of Portola Dr.

Y4. Potrero Hill

Great views of downtown, sunny weather, increasing yuppiehood, clean streets, lots of gardens and trees, but also several industrial areas, and a tendency to get very deserted and dangerous at night.

| 2d6 | Customer or Encounter | Location | Street |
|-----|-----------------------|------------------|---------------------|
| 2 | Handyman | Condominium | Littlefield Terrace |
| 3 | Gang member | Housing Project | Rhode Island St. |
| 4 | Elderly couple | Community Center | Carolina St. |
| 5 | Amorous drunk | Bar | Indiana St. |
| 6 | Yuppie diner | Restaurant | Mariposa St. |
| 7 | Burn patient | Hospital | Potrero Ave. |
| 8 | Counter person | Shopping Center | 16th St. |
| 9 | Dog walker | Park | Pennsylvania Ave. |
| 10 | Homeless vagrant | Under a Bridge | 18th St. |
| 11 | Plumber | House | Florida Ave. |
| 12 | Resident | Apartment | 20th St. |

Always one of the sunniest areas of the city, Potrero Hill anchors the city’s eastern edge, roughly occupying the space between Highway 280 and The Mission, from Mission Bay to the north to Cesar Chavez St. to the south. The western side of Potrero Hill, facing The Mission, is a clean neighborhood filled with many homeowners, restaurants, cafés and stores, with two main shopping strips along 16th Street and 18th Street. The neighborhood itself is divided by Highway 101, which runs across the hillside, splitting the mostly residential areas up the hill from the more commercial areas below. North-south streets on the hill itself generally have the names of states, while those running east-west are numbered. The boundary with The Mission is somewhat fuzzy, but Potrero St. is a fairly definitive marker.

In stark contrast, the eastern side of Potrero Hill is still escaping industrialization. Although condominiums are rising up on the hilltop, the area is strewn with cheap housing projects overlooking Third Street. This area, known as “Dogpatch,” is zoned for industry, and although it is busy during the day it is a ghost town at night. Another industrial zone sits to the north of the hill, between 16th and 17th Streets around De Haro St. Known as “Showplace Square,” the area is full of one-to-two story structures used by parts distributors, metal workers and breweries. Both it and Dogpatch are best avoided at night, unless you’re in the mood for potential danger.

Y5. Bernal Heights

High barren hillside, hundreds of dogs, a microwave tower, tall houses, great views, quiet streets, several commercial strips, quaint little restaurants, and an increasing problem with crime.

| 2d6 | Customer or Encounter | Location | Street |
|-----|-----------------------|----------------|----------------|
| 2 | Resident | House | Banks St. |
| 3 | Bad cook | Apartment | Crescent Ave. |
| 4 | Adult movie star | Video Store | Bennington St. |
| 5 | Student | Library | Andover St. |
| 6 | Protester | Liquor Store | Eugenia Ave. |
| 7 | Nail artist | Nail Salon | Cortland Ave. |
| 8 | Diner | Restaurant | Precita Ave. |
| 9 | Famous author | Loft Apartment | Peralta Ave. |
| 10 | Dog walker | Park | Bocana St. |
| 11 | Shopper | Supermarket | Mission St. |
| 12 | Confused burglar | Empty Store | Powhattan Ave. |

A haven for liberals in a city of even more liberals, Bernal Heights is home to many small restaurants and cafés (most along the main drag, Cortland Ave.) and a plethora of dogs, which enjoy the park at the top of the rocky hill that gives it its name. It is a very close-knit neighborhood, though there are subtle divides (and recent run-ins) between the “have-mores” near the top of the hill and the “have-nots” at the bottom, adjacent to Portola and The Mission.

Although Bernal Heights proper encompasses only Bernal Hill (between Cesar Chavez, Highway 101, Alemany St. and Mission St.), a portion of The Mission at the western foot of the hill is popularly referred to as the Bernal Cut. Running the length of the hill, it spans several streets, neatly filling in the gap between Bernal and Noe Valley. The area is filled with restaurants, small shops and new apartments.



Scoping out a delivery to Bernal Heights

Y6. Portola/Silver Terrace/Oakinba

Often forgotten areas of San Francisco, filled with a mix of affordable housing, ethnic diversity, and industrial areas on the verge of becoming new commercial zones.

| 2d6 | Customer or Encounter | Location | Street |
|-----|-----------------------|-----------------|----------------|
| 2 | Beggar | Gas Station | Oakdale Ave. |
| 3 | Family of four | House | Sweeney St. |
| 4 | Disgruntled worker | Fast Food Store | Bayshore Blvd. |
| 5 | Shopper | Corner Store | Cambridge St. |
| 6 | Hungry diner | Restaurant | San Bruno Ave. |
| 7 | Homeless squatter | Empty Store | Silver Ave. |
| 8 | Teacher | School | Bacon St. |
| 9 | Student | Playground | Felton St. |
| 10 | Resident | Apartment | University St. |
| 11 | Artist | Loft Apartment | Bridgeview Dr. |
| 12 | Mechanic | Warehouse | Industrial St. |

Often forgotten by residents and tourists alike, the Portola (or Portola Heights) district is crammed into a nook south of Bernal Hill, where Highways 280 and 101 briefly cross one another. The ethnically diverse area is mostly made up of single-family homes owned by working professionals and young families, and although it has a reputation for being a lower-income area it has more in common with Bernal Heights than Bayview. The area’s main street is San Bruno Avenue, which runs along the western edge of Highway 101. The site of the district’s annual San Bruno Community Festival, the area is also known as University Heights, as many streets in the area are named after famous Universities.

Across the highway from Portola are Silver Terrace and Oakinba (for Oakdale, Industrial, and Bayshore, the names of the three streets that surround it). The former is a residential hillside neighborhood, and the latter is a heavily industrial neighborhood on the verge of becoming a major new commercial zone for the city; a battle is currently brewing between Bernal and Bayview residents over a proposed “big box retail store” in the area. Their location – in between Highways 280 and 101 – makes them “pass-thru” areas for most city residents, but they each contain popular local businesses, and despite the reputation of the areas around them they seem to survive, if not exactly thrive.

Y7. Bayview/Hunter's Point

Generally considered to be the worst neighborhood in the city, a mix of gang violence, contaminated warehouses, liquor stores and a mix of citizens trying to make the best of it.

| 2d6 | Customer or Encounter | Location | Street |
|-----|-----------------------|---------------|--------------------|
| 2 | Musician | Apartment | Ingalls St. |
| 3 | Visual artist | Warehouse | Hunter's Pt. Blvd. |
| 4 | Pharmaceutical dealer | Vacant Lot | Revere Ave. |
| 5 | Drunk | Corner Store | Keith St. |
| 6 | Gang member | Empty Store | Palou Ave. |
| 7 | Would-be robber | Liquor Store | 3rd St. |
| 8 | Resident | House | Evans Ave. |
| 9 | Mugger | Alleyway | Innes Ave. |
| 10 | Lady of the evening | Street Corner | Newhall St. |
| 11 | Stranded motorist | Parking Lot | Thomas Ave. |
| 12 | Bartender | Bar | Griffith St. |

Ask anyone in San Francisco what the city's worst neighborhood is, and nine times out of 10 they'll say "Bayview/Hunter's Point." Conveniently cropped off the bottom of most city maps, it's easy to miss the neighborhood as you drive north on Highway 101; the large area represents most everything east of 101 and south of Cesar Chavez. The mostly minority-inhabited area is a mix of densely packed cheap housing, empty lots and liquor stores, the latter of which fill in for supermarkets in an area which has none of its own. Gang violence is quite prevalent. Of note to delivery personnel is the fact that the streets in the area are named in alphabetical order from north to south.

At the southeasternmost end of Bayview is the Hunter's Point Naval Shipyard, used in wartime to manufacture ships, and today inhabited by heavy metals (the toxic kind), a number of industrial and chemical manufacturers, and an artist's collective squatting there for the cheap rent the area offers. Heavily patrolled by a steady stream of San Francisco Police vehicles at all hours of the day, the area is a haven for nefarious and surreptitious activity, and is generally avoided by anyone who doesn't have business to do there (whether legal or illegal). Attempts have been made to clean the area up in the past, but thus far these have come to nothing but words on paper.

Y8. Excelsior/Crocker Amazon/Mission Terrace/Outer Mission

Ethnic diversity, good weather, affordable housing, and a tendency to get overlooked and cropped off of official maps of the city.

| 2d6 | Customer or Encounter | Location | Street |
|-----|-----------------------|-----------------|----------------|
| 2 | Grocery vendor | Open-Air Market | Madrid St. |
| 3 | Latte maker | Café | Rolph St. |
| 4 | Gas pumper | Gas Station | Athens St. |
| 5 | Amorous couple | Loft Apartment | Morse St. |
| 6 | House cat | Apartment | Alemanay Blvd. |
| 7 | Mischievous diner | Restaurant | Mission St. |
| 8 | Resident | House | Persia Ave. |
| 9 | Angry drunk | Bar | Geneva Ave. |
| 10 | Church-goer | Church | London St. |
| 11 | Teacher | School | Ellington Ave. |
| 12 | Student | Playground | Pope St. |

The Excelsior district occupies the area along Mission Street that lies south and east of Highway 280, which does a gentle curve as it heads south out of the city. The neighborhood is quite ethnically diverse, with Latinos, Chinese, Italians, and Filipinos sharing the area. It is characterized by streets named for European cities and countries. Along with Crocker-Amazon and Mission Terrace, Excelsior is part of the area known as the "Outer Mission."

The Crocker-Amazon neighborhood lies south of Excelsior, along the city's border with Daly City. It is named for nearby Crocker-Amazon Park, in turn named for a previous landholder (Charles Crocker) and a street in the Excelsior district (Amazon St.). A bit more affluent than Excelsior, the area features densely packed but affordable housing, and a surprisingly large Filipino community.



Delivering to Monster Park (see next page)

Y9. Visitation Valley/Little Hollywood/Bayview Heights/Candlestick Point

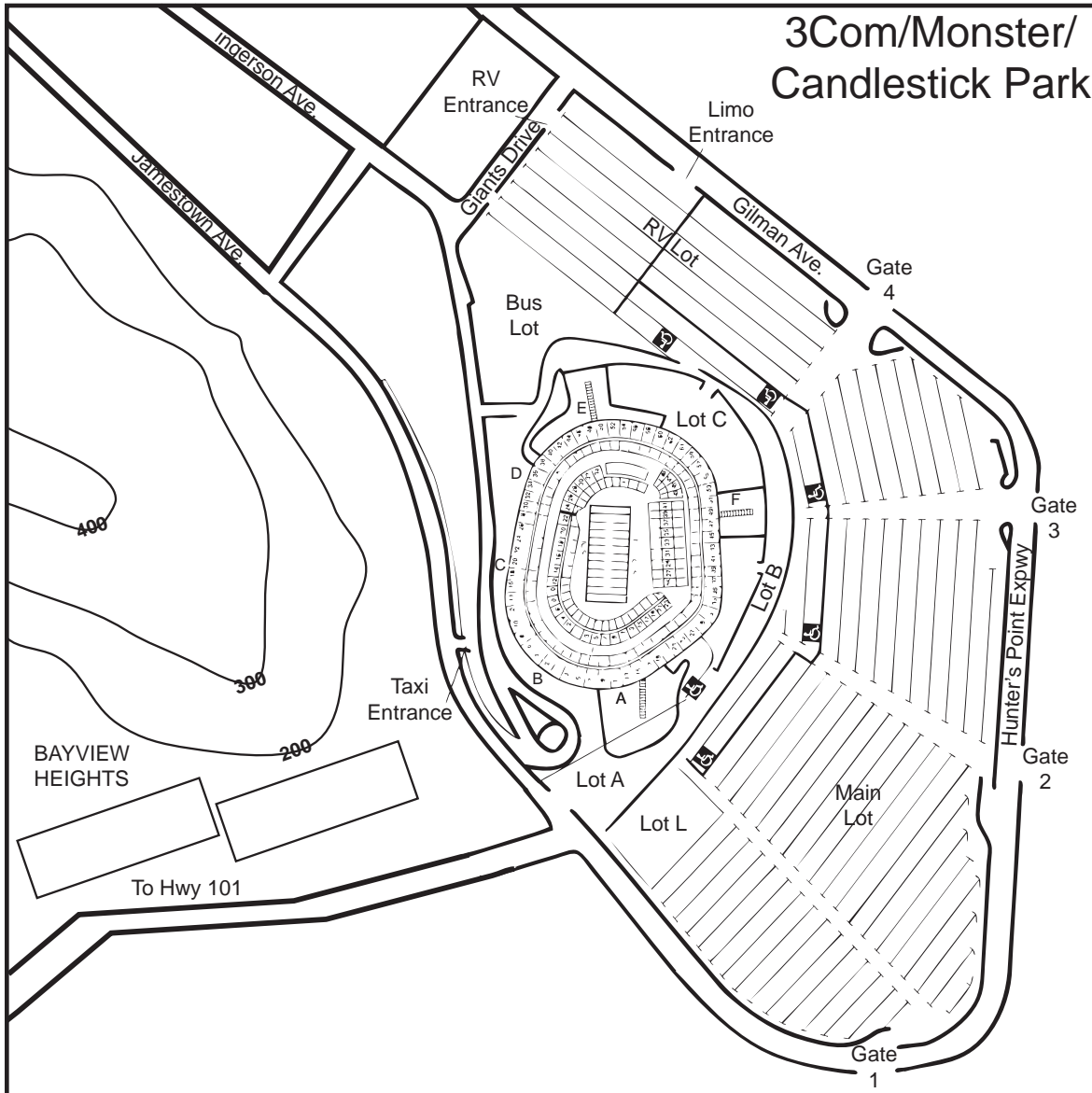
Forgotten neighborhoods reinventing themselves, as well as San Francisco's 3Com Park football stadium.

| 1d6 | Customer or Encounter | Location | Street |
|-----|-----------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| 1 | Resident | Apartment | Peninsula Ave. |
| 2 | Dishwasher | Restaurant | Harney Way |
| 3 | Store owner | Corner Store | Bayshore Blvd. |
| 4 | Football player | Football Stadium | Jamestown Ave. |
| 5 | Gardener | House | Visitation Ave. |
| 6 | Lady of the evening | Street Corner | Sunnydale Ave. |

Like Portola just to its north, the Visitation Valley neighborhood has a bad rep that's quite undeserved, especially with recent developments including a new community center and a "greenway" of open space cut through the center of the area. However, while the area is full of affordable housing, it lacks such basics as large grocery stores, small retail shops and the like, and its position makes it easily forgotten.

One area under dispute is an industrial plant on the eastern edge of the neighborhood, at the intersection of Bayshore and Leland. Vacant for years, at present it is a dividing wall between the Valley proper and the small Spanish-style enclave called Little Hollywood that lies just east of Bayshore. The area is close to what will become a major transit hub, where an extension of the city's Light Rail is being finished.

Across Highway 101, Bayview Heights (one of the city's newest "neighborhoods") offers several rows of new town homes and condos with views of the peninsula and easy access to nearby Candlestick Point, upon which lies the football stadium that the San Francisco 49ers call home. With seating for 70,000 fans, the stadium has always been a popular site for sporting events and concerts, and many residents still refer to the park as "Candlestick Park" or "The Stick" despite several name changes in recent years (3Com Park, Monster Park) reflecting the changing economy.



GREEN QUADRANT

San Francisco’s “Green Quadrant” comprises the Northwest corner of the city, including two large parks (Golden Gate and Presidio) and a few beaches. It also includes several big neighborhoods known for having a large Asian population. It is bordered roughly by Divisadero St. to the east and Judah St. to the south. The area accounts for about 15% of Ninja Burger’s business in the city.

G1. The Presidio/Crissy Field/Golden Gate National Recreation Area/Golden Gate Bridge

San Francisco’s northwesternmost point, featuring great views, old military property that’s been turned into parks, and the northern gateway to the city.

| 2d6 | Customer or Encounter | Location | Street |
|-----|------------------------|----------------|------------------|
| 2 | Nude sunbather | Beach | Washington Blvd. |
| 3 | Students on field trip | Art Museum | Doyle Dr. |
| 4 | Tourist | Science Museum | Funston Ave. |
| 5 | Stranded motorist | Toll Booth | Presidio Blvd. |
| 6 | Veteran | Cemetery | Marine Dr. |
| 7 | Kite flyer | Parade Ground | Arguello Blvd. |
| 8 | Maintenance worker | Visitor Center | Montgomery St. |
| 9 | Photographer | Old Fort | Mason St. |
| 10 | Caddy | Golf Course | Compton Rd. |
| 11 | Mugger | Under a Bridge | Pershing Dr. |
| 12 | Jogger | Field | Kobbe Ave. |

Used by the military for over 200 years, The Presidio of San Francisco has become a large park, part of the larger Golden Gate National Recreation Area and run by the National Park Service. It contains more than 500 historic buildings, the city’s only cemetery (for military use), a golf course, and many hiking trails, in addition to an impressive collection of old coastal fortifications. The Presidio’s terrain is quite diverse, ranging from forested areas, scenic hilly vistas, a saltwater marsh, and several popular “out of the way” beaches (including a notorious nude beach). Along the park’s northern edge is Crissy Field, once one of the country’s most renowned airfields, now a popular place to play Frisbee with dogs.

Overlooking it all is the Golden Gate Bridge, a suspension bridge spanning the strait that leads from the Pacific Ocean into San Francisco Bay. It connects the city with Marin County to the north, whose nearest city is the small town of Sausalito, which boasts great views of The City. The entire bridge is 1.7 miles long, with the main span stretching 4,200 feet and each of the bridge’s two towers soaring 746 feet into the air. It has six lanes of vehicle traffic, with walkways on both sides of the bridge open to pedestrians and bicyclists. The bridge is renowned for its maintenance workers, who climb the scaffolding to paint it, as well as the many suicidal people who have jumped off of it – over 1,300 have died and 26 have lived.

MAKING (NON)SENSE OF IT ALL

Anyone who’s ever lived in (or visited) San Francisco will be able to figure out that – as the encounter tables here suggest – there is no Toll Booth on Presidio Blvd., nor is there a Parade Ground on Arguello Blvd. All of the streets listed exist within the area shown, and all the locations indicate things that would likely be found within that same area, but the streets and locations don’t always match up. This goes for every area in this section of the rules, but is most notable here, since this portion of the city is not typically residential.

Chances are pretty good that your players won’t know the difference, so you can just go with it in most cases – who cares if there’s technically not a golf course on Compton Road?

However, if you’ve consulted maps or aerial shots (or you or your players are familiar with the area) and there’s a question as to whether a particular delivery makes sense, then bring that question into the gaming session. Maybe someone made a prank call, or perhaps some nefarious force is at work, busily building a golf course where a cemetery used to be. The game world need not mirror the real world.

Of course, you should keep in mind that you’ve always got the option to mix and match columns for these deliveries, too – they’re just suggestions. Feel free to move that field to Marine Drive; it’s your world to do with as you please.





G2. The Richmond/Outer Richmond/Seacliff

Peaceful, quiet residential neighborhood, many parks and beaches, good hiking, and some of the richest folk and largest mansions in the city.

| 2d6 | Customer or Encounter | Location | Street |
|-----|-----------------------|---------------|----------------|
| 2 | Lost tourist | Bus Stop | Camino Del Mar |
| 3 | Young thug | Street Corner | Lake St. |
| 4 | Artist | Apartment | 20th Ave. |
| 5 | Dog walker | Park | Anza St. |
| 6 | Altar boy | Church | Balboa St. |
| 7 | Maitre d' | Restaurant | Geary Blvd. |
| 8 | Resident | House | Fulton St. |
| 9 | Student | School | 25th Ave. |
| 10 | Surfer | Beach | Cabrillo St. |
| 11 | Butler | Mansion | 30th Ave. |
| 12 | Bored techie | Laundromat | Clement St. |

The Richmond District fills the space between the Presidio to its north, and Golden Gate Park to the south, running from Arguello St. all the way west to the Pacific Ocean. It is roughly divided into three sections (including "Inner" and "Outer") by major thoroughfares, but for all practical purposes most of the area is one large mostly residential area, with some commercial zones including Geary Boulevard, a major thoroughfare that runs the length of the neighborhood as well as the entire city and features restaurants, shops, banks and several theaters. The area features large Irish, Russian and Asian communities, a low-crime rate, and three-story Victorian homes.

Punching out the northwestern corner of the Richmond District is the wealthy neighborhood called Seacliff. It is renowned for its immense mansions, some of which resemble large estates that one would not expect within city limits. While Seacliff itself is not very tourist-friendly, directly west of it are several popular destinations. China Beach, a small offshoot of the larger Baker Beach to the north, is held by many to be the best beach in the city. Further west is Land's End, a rugged area of rock, trees, steep trails and deadly tides and waves that drown unwary hikers every year. Also nearby are: the Sutro Baths, now a ruin; the Lincoln Park golf course; the Palace of the Legion of Honor, an art museum; and the popular Cliff House, a historical building featuring a well-known restaurant and great views of the Pacific Ocean and the distant Farallon Islands.

G3. Inner Richmond/Lake

A swelling Asian population, many tea and noodle houses, the city's best bookstore, bars and restaurants galore, and a bit of history mixed in.

| 2d6 | Customer or Encounter | Location | Street |
|-----|-----------------------|---------------|----------------|
| 2 | Resident | House | 2nd Ave. |
| 3 | Local musician | Apartment | 4th Ave. |
| 4 | Book shopper | Bookstore | Anza St. |
| 5 | Frazzled mom | Laundromat | 10th Ave. |
| 6 | Grocery clerk | Grocery Store | Arguello Blvd. |
| 7 | Pastor | Church | Clement St. |
| 8 | Barnmaid | Bar | California St. |
| 9 | Hungry diner | Restaurant | 5th Ave. |
| 10 | Teacher | School | Geary Blvd. |
| 11 | Bookworm | Library | Lake St. |
| 12 | Jogger | Park | Veterans Blvd. |

That area of The Richmond located east of Park Presidio Boulevard is called the Inner Richmond, and although much of the area is indistinguishable from the rest of the district, the area around Clement Street sets it apart all on its own. Often called New Chinatown, the area is home to a third of the city's Chinese population, and the selection of food – both in produce markets and restaurants – proves it. The main commercial strip around Clement Street features a bar on every corner, many good stores and more restaurants than one would think could fit, many influenced by the area's large Danish, Russian, French and Irish inhabitants.

Between the Inner Richmond and The Presidio lies the small, oft forgotten neighborhood called "Mountain Lake," or merely "Lake," in honor (naturally) of the lake found there. One of only three natural lakes left in San Francisco, it marks the spot where the original Spanish settlers first set up camp before spreading out to build the Presidio and the Mission Dolores. Today, the shallow lake is mostly gone, built over in the 1930s to make way for the Park Presidio Boulevard, but much of it remains. The surrounding area is home to a playground and small golf course, and – despite the nearby traffic – the residents enjoy the shady groves of pine, fir, cypress and eucalyptus trees found within the park.

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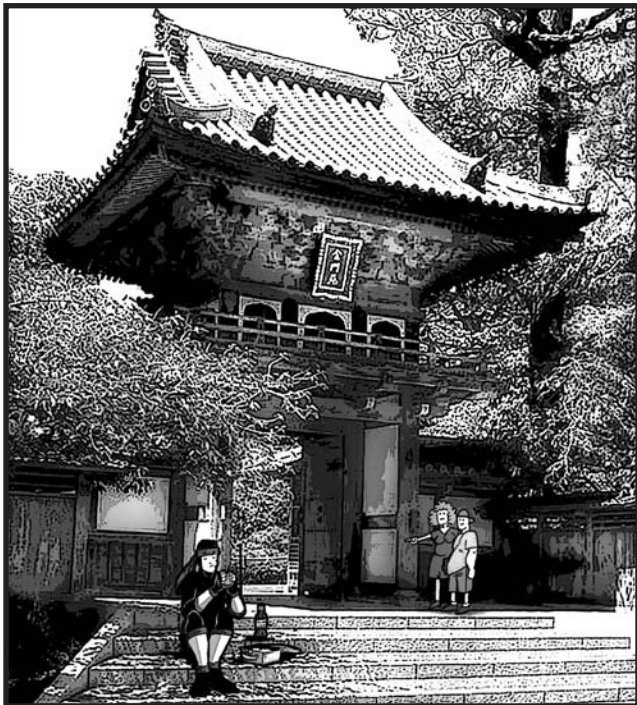
G4. Laurel Heights/Jordan Park/Presidio Hghts/ Anza Vista/Lone Mountain/USF/N. Panhandle

Similar-looking neighborhoods, a mixed economy, many homes, several decent shopping centers, and a hilltop University.

| 2d6 | Customer or Encounter | Location | Street |
|-----|-----------------------|---------------|------------------|
| 2 | Tired businessman | Bus Stop | O'Farrell St. |
| 3 | Wealthy resident | Mansion | Masonic Ave. |
| 4 | Landlord | Apartment | Parker Ave. |
| 5 | Lawyer | Condominium | Stanyan Ave. |
| 6 | Food critic | Restaurant | Geary Blvd. |
| 7 | Motorcyclist | Gas Station | Euclid Ave. |
| 8 | Law student | School | Bush St. |
| 9 | Shopper | Supermarket | Fulton St. |
| 10 | Resident | House | Fortuna Ave. |
| 11 | Projectionist | Movie Theater | Turk St. |
| 12 | Skateboarder | Park | Golden Gate Ave. |

Between The Richmond and the Western Addition are many small neighborhoods, distinguished by little else than the streets around them. The southern half of the area includes Anza Vista, Lone Mountain (which has at its peak the University of San Francisco) and the area known as North Panhandle, which is really a portion of the Haight that's separated by a thin strip of greenery some eight blocks long.

Further north, between Geary Blvd and The Presidio, are two extensions of the wealthy Pacific Heights area – the neighborhoods of Presidio Heights, Jordan Park and Laurel Heights. This area is filled with expensive houses (owned by some of the city's elite), expensive shopping districts, and the like. Quiet and removed from the bustle of city life, it's home to many Ninja Burger customers.



G5. Haight-Ashbury/Parnassus/Cole Valley/ Ashbury Heights/Corona Heights

Hippies, homeless people, drugs, peace, love and understanding, and some of the best and quirkiest shopping in town.

| 2d6 | Customer or Encounter | Location | Street |
|-----|-----------------------|----------------|----------------|
| 2 | Bicyclist | Park | Oak St. |
| 3 | Pickpocket | Bus Stop | Page St. |
| 4 | Shoe saleswoman | Shoe Store | Masonic Ave. |
| 5 | College student | Movie Theater | Belvedere St. |
| 6 | Resident | House | Vulcan St. |
| 7 | Homeless girl | Clothing Store | Haight St. |
| 8 | Aging hipster | Music Store | Ashbury St. |
| 9 | Local artist | Apartment | Waller St. |
| 10 | Dishwasher | Restaurant | Frederick St. |
| 11 | Worshipper | Church | Clayton St. |
| 12 | Pharmaceutical dealer | Street Corner | Parnassus Ave. |

"The Haight" is home to vintage clothing stores, cheap bars, good food, indie theaters, and homeless girls from Oregon looking for enlightenment and a free handout. Yet despite the thin veneer of "hippie," there's also a gentrified air, and the neighborhood as a whole has a somewhat suburban feel, with decent housing and friendly people; this is particularly true of Cole Valley, a small sub-neighborhood to the south of the area. The Upper Haight (the portion west of Divisadero, and "up" the hill) is much cleaner and tourist friendly than the Lower Haight, which lies east of Divisadero and is really part of the Western Addition; also bad is Buena Vista Park, which lies just west of Divisadero but is quite unsafe after dark.

Between The Haight and Twin Peaks, to the south, lie some more upscale neighborhoods with uppity-sounding names: Parnassus, Ashbury Heights, and Corona Heights (aka Planetary Heights due to the names of some of the streets nearby, including Uranus St. and Vulcan St.). A bit more gentrified, it's still a neighborly area, and feels comfortable and residential. The streets here are rather windy and twisty, and it's easy to get lost if you don't know where you're going, even though the entire neighborhood is only perhaps ten or so blocks across from end to end.

LONG-TERM PARKING

The northwest portion of the city is more than 50% parkland, and since these parks are often filled only with tourists (who don't know Ninja Burger is available) or lunch-packing residents, it's often a haven for ninja delivery crews who are looking for a break from the hustle of the daily grind. A popular hangout is the Japanese Tea Garden in Golden Gate Park, which offers a quiet place to reflect on life, or grab a quick bite to eat. Of course, the wide-open grassy areas of the park are also a great place to battle enemies...

G6. Golden Gate Park/Ocean Beach

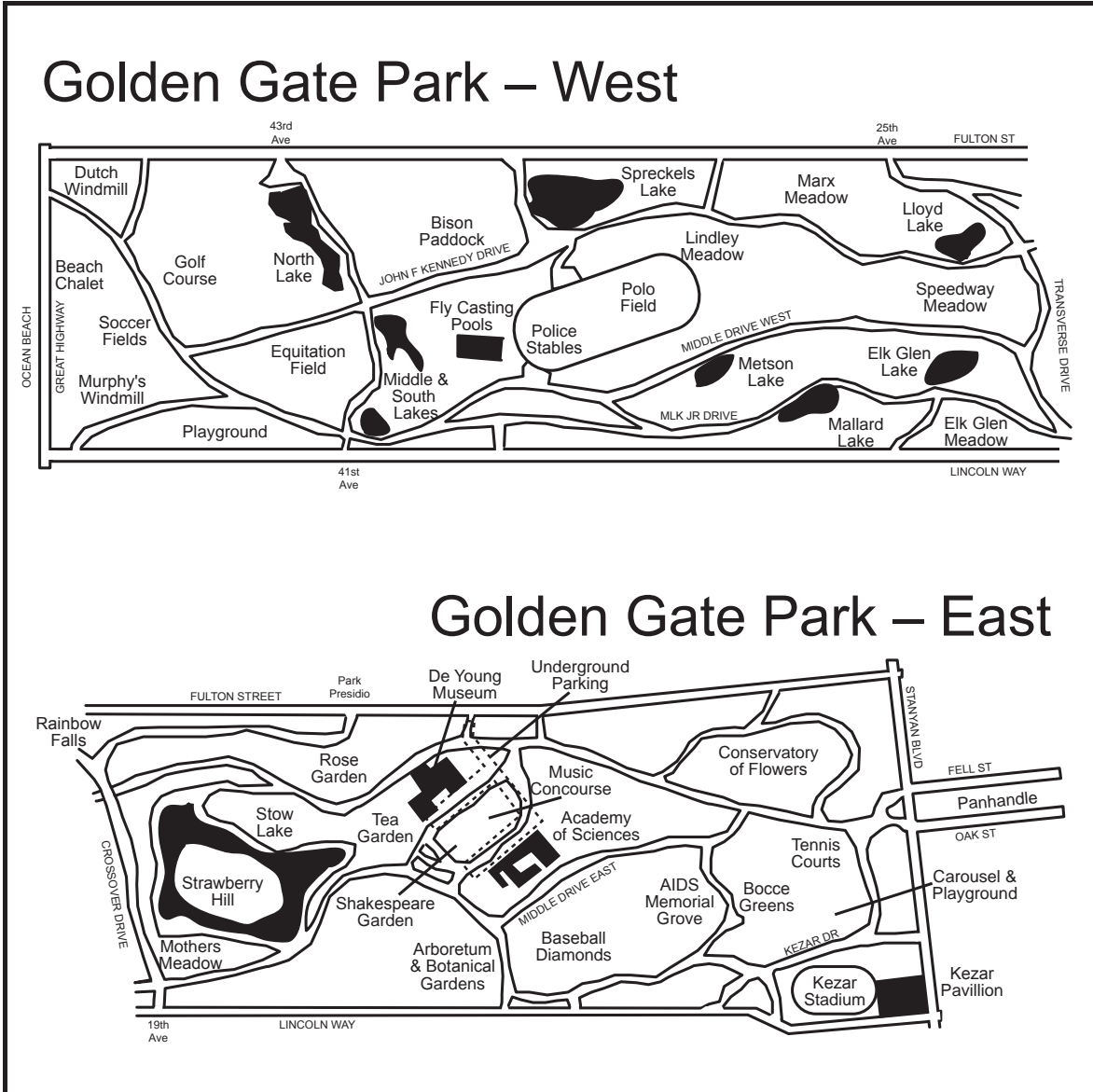
Long, narrow parkland, with stadiums, lakes, game fields, museums, a tea garden, two windmills, several flower gardens, picnic areas. But a bad place to park.

| 1d6 | Customer or Encounter | Location | Street |
|-----|-----------------------|--------------|-------------|
| 1 | Prankster | Restroom | Middle Dr. |
| 2 | Jogger | Lake | Fulton St. |
| 3 | Tourist | Garden | MLK Jr. Dr. |
| 4 | Security guard | Museum | Great Hwy. |
| 5 | Dog walker | Picnic Area | Lincoln Way |
| 6 | Soccer player | Sports Field | JFK Dr. |

An amazing expanse of greenery, Golden Gate Park stretches for several miles from east to west, yet is only ten blocks wide. The eastern half of the park is more tourist friendly and popular, and contains a lake with paddle boats, a Japanese Tea Garden, the Academy of Science, the DeYoung Museum, a botanical garden, an AIDS Memorial Grove and Kezar Stadium. Residents will often be found here hunting for parking.

The western half of the park is much more wide open and less touristy. It contains more lakes, including one devoted to radio-controlled boats, a large polo field, giant picnic areas, live bison, a golf course, a soccer field, and two windmills, one at either western corner of the park. City residents often prefer this end of the park for gathering with friends, walking their dogs or playing sports, as it's less crowded.

Directly west of the park, and stretching most of the length of the coast, is Ocean Beach. Adjacent to The Richmond, Golden Gate Park and The Sunset, it is part of the Golden Gate National Recreation Area, and is operated by the National Park Service. Residents often gather here at night to build bonfires and cook hot dogs, although the area has had a reputation in the past for gang activity after dark, which has led to a few shootings. It's generally safe during the day and until just after sunset, but when the temperature starts to drop and the stars begin to appear, most people scurry home.



BLUE QUADRANT

San Francisco’s “Blue Quadrant” comprises the Southwest corner of the city, an area marked by broad expanses of foggy oceanfront property, several large city schools and wooded highlands inhabited by wealthier citizens. It is bordered roughly by Golden Gate Park to the north and the city’s highest hills to the east. The area accounts for about 25% of Ninja Burger’s business in the city.

B1. The Sunset/Outer Sunset/Parkside

Two-story tract housing, heavy afternoon fog, playgrounds and parks, and horrible traffic along major thoroughfares.

| 2d6 | Customer or Encounter | Location | Street |
|-----|-----------------------|------------|--------------|
| 2 | Coffee lover | Café | Rivera St. |
| 3 | Resident | House | 40th Ave. |
| 4 | Teacher | Playground | Vicente St. |
| 5 | Local musician | Apartment | 48th Ave. |
| 6 | Waitress | Restaurant | Judah St. |
| 7 | Babysitter | House | 19th Ave. |
| 8 | Kung Fu teacher | Bus Stop | Sunset Blvd. |
| 9 | Painter | Apartment | Noriega St. |
| 10 | Policeman | Park | Taraval St. |
| 11 | Electrician | House | 30th Ave. |
| 12 | Jogger | Beach | Lawton St. |

The Sunset District is San Francisco’s version of the suburbs. Formerly nothing but sand dunes, the area was built up after World War II for returning soldiers, and has remained a family-friendly, mostly residential area ever since. The homes themselves are mostly identical, featuring two stories with a front living area over a garage, fronted by a large bay window. Two things, however, set the area apart. The first is the fog; San Francisco in general is known for its fog, but The Sunset is the foggiest of all. The second thing is the street layout. The Sunset features numbered avenues running north to south, and alphabetically named streets running east to west, ascending from L through Z as they march south.

Though the entire area can be collectively called “The Sunset,” residents and real estate agents have subdivided the large neighborhood. The northwestern part is generally referred to as “The Outer Sunset,” and the southern part – roughly between Quintara St. and Sloat Blvd. – is often called Parkside, a name which refers to Pine Lake Park and Stern Grove, which anchor it to the south. Like the portion to the north, the area is full of identical homes, though this southern slice contains more parklands and playgrounds, and is closer to the more commercial zones directly south of it. As one might expect from there being an “Outer Sunset,” there is also an “Inner Sunset,” which is dealt with separately.

B2. Inner Sunset/UCSF/Golden Gate Height

Steep streets, eucalyptus groves, ethnic cuisine, great views, expensive houses, and a world-famous teaching hospital and university.

| 2d6 | Customer or Encounter | Location | Street |
|-----|-----------------------|----------------|----------------|
| 2 | Yoga teacher | Yoga Studio | Arguello Blvd. |
| 3 | Latte maker | Café | Edgewood Ave. |
| 4 | Nurse | Bus Stop | Pacheco St. |
| 5 | Dog walker | Park | 7th Ave. |
| 6 | Doctor | Medical Center | Parnassus Ave. |
| 7 | Waiter | Restaurant | Judah St. |
| 8 | Resident | House | 11th Ave. |
| 9 | Student | School | Funston Ave. |
| 10 | Artist | Apartment | Kirkham St. |
| 11 | Priest | Church | Irving St. |
| 12 | Bookseller | Book Store | Lincoln Way |

That portion of the Sunset which narrows as it squeeze up in between Twin Peaks and Golden Gate Park is generally referred to as “The Inner Sunset.” Distinct from the neighborhood to the west by way of a more commercial character, as well as steeper hills, it’s home to a variety of top-notch restaurants, bakeries and pastry shops, and other niche businesses that draw residents from across the city. It’s also home to the University of California at San Francisco and the UCSF Medical Center, which rise impressively up the side of a steep hill covered in dense eucalyptus. From a navigational standpoint, it’s worth noting that the numbered avenues in this area skip over 13th St., which is called Funston St. instead.

Often referred to as “Moraga Park,” “Larsen Peak” or “Sunset Heights,” Golden Gate Heights is a park (and surrounding neighborhood) on the top of a long, steep, 725-foot-high hill, approached from all directions by steep roads, so twisty that 14th and 15th Avenues – which run parallel – actually intersect at one point. The hill itself is one of the remnants of the sand dunes that once filled the area, and as such it is slowly eroding as the years go by. At the moment though, the park is home to a number of endangered plants and great panoramic views of the ocean, which pleases the residents of the new, upscale houses spread throughout the area.

FOG, FOG, GO AWAY...

The Inner Sunset neighborhood suffers from some of the worst weather in all of San Francisco. Sheltered from the southern sun, and just a few miles from the ocean, the neighborhood is often shrouded in fog from dawn till dusk. In an ordinary setting, such fog might make driving and delivering difficult, hindering vision and carrying sound further. In a magical setting, who knows what might lurk inside The Fog...

B3. Twin Peaks/Laguna Honda/Forest Hill/Forest Knolls/Midtown Terrace/Clarendon/U. Market

Expensive houses, stunning panoramic views, wealthy neighbors, and the second-highest point in the city of San Francisco.

| 2d6 | Customer or Encounter | Location | Street |
|-----|-----------------------|---------------|------------------|
| 2 | Tourist | Vista Point | Twin Peaks Blvd. |
| 3 | Chauffeur | Mansion | Midcrest Way |
| 4 | Prankster teens | Playground | Clarendon Ave. |
| 5 | Dancer | Apartment | Warren Dr. |
| 6 | Young hoodlum | Reservoir | Laguna Honda |
| 7 | Lawyer | Condominium | Market St. |
| 8 | Valet | Restaurant | Portola Dr. |
| 9 | Surgeon | Hospital | Woodside Ave. |
| 10 | Devout worshipper | Church | Panorama Dr. |
| 11 | Resident | House | Gardenside Dr. |
| 12 | Bagger | Grocery Store | Dewey Blvd. |

Although slightly lower than Mt. Davidson, the Twin Peaks are probably the city's most prominent feature, rising about 920 feet near the geographical center of San Francisco. Christmas Tree Point, near the summit, offers some of the best views of the city, and is popular among residents and tourists alike. Just northwest of Twin Peaks is Mt. Sutro, notable for the three-legged Sutro Tower which rises from its crest. Along the eastern side of the hill, Market St. descends in a series of curves that give an excellent view of downtown as they snake along through expensive apartment houses on the way down.

To the southwest of Twin Peaks, the land flattens out a bit in a plateau of sorts, which is where Laguna Honda and Midtown Terrace are found. Marked by the presence of more commercial buildings, the Laguna Honda hospital and the Laguna Honda Reservoir, it offers a gateway of sorts to the western parts of the city. Just to its west, one finds Forest Hill, once part of a large ranch and now broken into single-family lots containing large, stately homes. The entire area is marked by extravagant landscaping, long curving lanes and a somewhat elite, exclusive air. Accessible by only a few roads and a noteworthy staircase, it makes for interesting deliveries.



B4. Stonestown/Pine Lake/Merced Manor/Inner Parkside/West Portal/Lakeside/SFSU/Galleria

A major university, an upscale shopping center, many homes with actual yards, and a tunnel to Eastern San Francisco.

| 2d6 | Customer or Encounter | Location | Street |
|-----|-----------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| 2 | Student | Bus Stop | Stratford Dr. |
| 3 | Musician | Apartment | Wawona St. |
| 4 | Yoga student | Yoga Studio | Forest View Dr. |
| 5 | Bicyclist | Park | Sloat Blvd. |
| 6 | Busy shopper | Shopping Center | 20th Ave. |
| 7 | Professor | University | 19th Ave. |
| 8 | Doctor | Mansion | Eucalyptus Dr. |
| 9 | Waitress | Restaurant | Ocean Ave. |
| 10 | Resident | House | Vicente St. |
| 11 | Book shopper | Bookstore | Winston Dr. |
| 12 | Mugger | Alleyway | Holloway Ave. |

West Portal is aptly named, for it is from this neighborhood that one can reach the eastern parts of San Francisco, either taking Portola Ave. over the hill, or the Muni Metro subway tunnel underneath it (which offers a 15-minute long ride to downtown). Though the neighborhood is distinct, it is somewhat grouped with the commercial strip running along the eastern side of 19th Avenue, from the Inner Parkside to the north to the Lakeside area further south. Most of the stores in the area are higher-end, non-chain stores that sell the sorts of things that appeal to the extremely uber-wealthy inhabitants of nearby neighborhoods. Those homes in the area are mostly single-family houses, with few apartments or condos to be found.

The western edge of 19th Avenue also contains a large commercial zone in the form of the Stonestown Galleria, the closest thing San Francisco has to a suburban-style shopping mall. Featuring high-end stores and a small movie theater, it's a shopping destination for residents from neighborhoods all over the city. North of the mall are stretches of single family homes that trickle down from the Sunset/Parkside areas, and to the south is the San Francisco State University campus, a sprawling affair that stretches from 19th Avenue almost to Lake Merced. Many of the students live in houses and apartments south of the campus, giving the area a more mixed character than it might otherwise have.

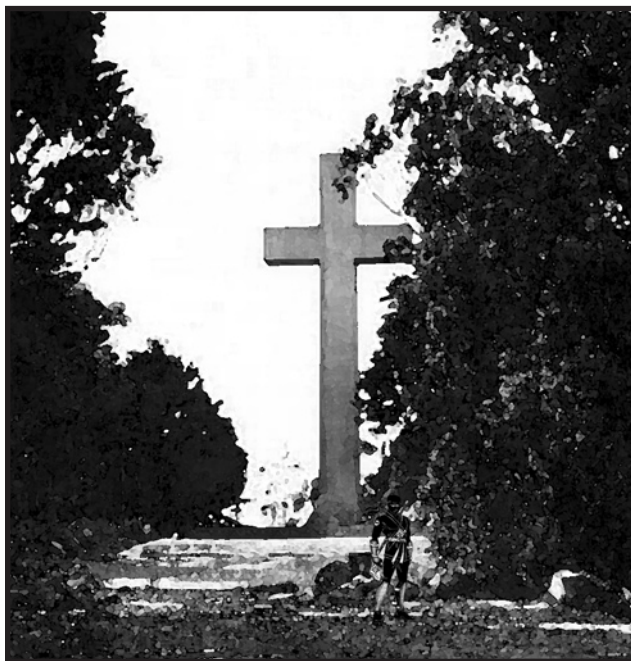
B5. Mt. Davidson/Sherwood Forest/St. Francis Wood/Monterey Hghts/Balboa Terrace/Westwood

Mansions and other homes, great views, exclusive neighborhoods, and the highest point in the city.

| 2d6 | Customer or Encounter | Location | Street |
|-----|-----------------------|----------|-------------------|
| 2 | Jogger | Park | St. Francis Blvd. |
| 3 | Doctor | Mansion | Jacinto Way |
| 4 | Electrician | House | Southwood Dr. |
| 5 | Lawyer | Mansion | Faxon Ave. |
| 6 | Resident | House | Darien Way |
| 7 | Butler | Mansion | Monterey Blvd. |
| 8 | Pool boy | House | Santa Clara Ave. |
| 9 | Maid | Mansion | Yerba Buena Ave. |
| 10 | Pastor | Church | Westwood Dr. |
| 11 | Gardener | Mansion | Westgate Dr. |
| 12 | Student | School | Aptos Ave. |

Mount Davidson stands about 930 feet high, and as such represents the tallest hill in the city. As Twin Peaks is between it and the downtown area, the view isn't quite panoramic, but the flat top does offer good views to the west and south. The hill's top, which features a large stone cross, is actually private property, and is visited by Christians every Easter at sunrise.

Mt. Davidson is surrounded by a number of affluent neighborhoods that, aside from perhaps Seacliff, represent the wealthiest areas in the city. These heavily-wooded highlands (recognizable by names that suggest those features) are one of the most densely-populated areas of the city, and features large mansions, gated estates, wide tree-lined streets, and classy architecture.



B6. Diamond Heights/Miraloma Park/Glen Canyon Park

Newer homes and apartments, shopping centers, schools, and a vast park within a canyon that is one of the city's best-kept secrets.

| 2d6 | Customer or Encounter | Location | Street |
|-----|-----------------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| 2 | Lawyer | Condominium | Moffitt St. |
| 3 | Student | Playground | Addison St. |
| 4 | Local artist | Apartment | Arbor Ave. |
| 5 | Baker | Bakery | Gold Mine Dr. |
| 6 | Jogger | Park | Bosworth St. |
| 7 | Shopper | Shopping Center | Diam. Hghts Blvd. |
| 8 | Bagger | Grocery Market | Portola Dr. |
| 9 | Hungry diner | Restaurant | Chenery Ave. |
| 10 | Resident | House | Topaz Way |
| 11 | Teacher | Nursery School | Duncan St. |
| 12 | Real estate agent | Real Estate Broker | Red Rock Way |

Diamond Heights is one of the quieter parts of the city, surrounded by dense pockets of forest. It is flanked by high hills on one side, and the quiet Noe Valley and Glen Park neighborhoods on the other. One of the last portions of the city to be developed, the neighborhood of several thousand homes, apartments, schools, and shopping centers was built up in the 1960s, combining a number of architectural styles. As such, it contains little of the traditional San Francisco trappings, such as overhead electrical lines for busses, Victorian homes or local groceries. It's a slice of quiet suburbia in the heart of a bustling city; because it's not close to any major thoroughfares it remains relatively undiscovered.

Smack in the middle of the area is Glen Canyon Park. Established in the 1920s, it is one of the largest parks in the city (and one of the least visited due to its somewhat difficult-to-access location). Only two major access points are available – off Diamond Heights Boulevard and Bosworth St.; many other areas are covered in dense undergrowth and poison oak that causes entry to be risky, difficult, and painful. Although there are baseball fields and recreational centers around the park, no such facilities exist within its borders, making it an oasis of nature. Bare outcroppings of rock formations, dense patches of willow trees, lizards, and other wild animals abound here as nowhere else in the city.

B7. Ingleside/Oceanview/City College/Balboa Park/Sunnyside

Long residential streets, single-family homes, working class residents, some rough spots and some bright spots as well.

| 2d6 | Customer or Encounter | Location | Street |
|-----|-----------------------|-------------|---------------|
| 2 | Bank robber | Bank | Grafton Ave. |
| 3 | Dancer | Studio | Lakeview St. |
| 4 | Student | Bus Stop | Jules Ave. |
| 5 | Church-goer | Church | Brighton Ave. |
| 6 | Amateur director | House | Miramar Ave. |
| 7 | Dishwasher | Restaurant | Ocean Ave. |
| 8 | Teacher | School | Phelan Ave. |
| 9 | Book lover | Book Store | Montana St. |
| 10 | Coffee drinker | Café | Capitol Ave. |
| 11 | Musician | Apartment | Holloway Ave. |
| 12 | Mechanic | Gas Station | Minerva St. |

Ingleside is a residential neighborhood just west of Highway 280, nestled in the nooks and crannies between the more luxurious mansions on the hillsides to the north and west, and the lower-income areas to the east and south. Tucked as it is in between two schools – San Francisco State University, and the City College of San Francisco – it is home to many students and young adults, many of whom share apartments to save money. Just south of Ingleside is the neighborhood of Oceanview, like Ingleside with – as the name suggests – a better view of the Pacific Ocean. Although Highway 280 acts as a divider, there is no real way to distinguish between this southernmost neighborhood and Daly City to the south.

The northeastern part of this area is anchored by the City College of S.F., which sits just north of the area’s main street – Ocean Ave. – and beside Balboa Park (which is both a park, and the name of the neighborhood surrounding the park). Located alongside a major commercial strip, both suffer from higher crime levels than nearby neighborhoods. Just north of Balboa Park is Sunnyside, which neatly fills the gap between the low-lying areas around Ocean and the hilly neighborhoods to the north. The area is a stark contrast to the homes just north in Westwood Highlands; those homes are separate, and have utility poles in back, while those in Sunnyside are all attached, with poles out front.

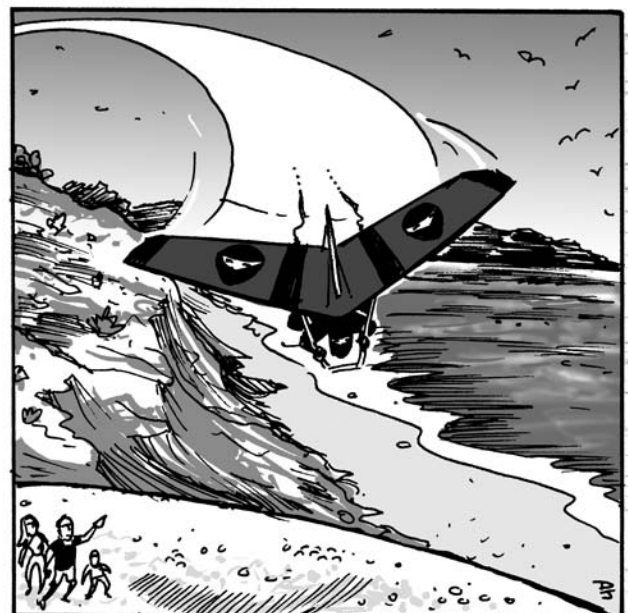
B8. Merced Heights/Ingleside Terrace/Ingleside Heights

Wealthier neighborhoods, steep sloping hills, sunny skies, nice homes, plenty of shops and restaurants, and great views from several areas.

| 2d6 | Customer or Encounter | Location | Street |
|-----|-----------------------|--------------|---------------|
| 2 | Clerk | Corner Store | Urbano Dr. |
| 3 | Babysitter | Day Care | Corona St. |
| 4 | Yoga teacher | Yoga Studio | De Soto St. |
| 5 | Artist | Studio | Byxbee St. |
| 6 | Waiter | Restaurant | Vernon St. |
| 7 | Resident | House | Holloway Ave. |
| 8 | Librarian | Library | Garfield St. |
| 9 | Student | Apartment | Shields St. |
| 10 | Dog walker | Park | Sargent St. |
| 11 | Amorous couple | Treehouse | Randolph St. |
| 12 | Mom and baby | Playground | Ralston St. |

Merced Heights is, as the name suggests, an extension of the Lake Merced and Park Merced areas across 19th Avenue to the west. It is sandwiched in between other similar neighborhoods – Ingleside Terrace and Ingleside Heights – with all three blending more or less seamlessly into one another, their names more of a marketing tactic than anything else.

Ingleside Terrace, the northernmost of the three, is closest to Ocean Ave., and as such is also close to the many shops and restaurants that line the area’s main thoroughfare. The area is noteworthy for a large 34-foot diameter sundial and a large rocky outcropping at the intersection of Shields St. and Orizaba St., from which one can see clear to Oakland and the Golden Gate Bridge on a clear day.



Delivery to Fort Funston (see next page)

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**B9. Lake Merced/Lake Shore/Park Merced/
Fort Funston/San Francisco Zoo**

Golf courses, green spaces, hidden beaches, historical landmarks, expensive housing, and the city's zoo.

| 1d6 | Customer or Encounter | Location | Street |
|-----|-----------------------|-------------|------------------|
| 1 | Resident | House | Brotherhood Way |
| 2 | Hungry diner | Restaurant | Lakeshore Dr. |
| 3 | Zookeeper | Zoo | Sloat Blvd. |
| 4 | Parking attendant | Parking Lot | John Muir Dr. |
| 5 | Golfer | Golf Course | Lake Merced Blvd |
| 6 | Tourist | Armory | Skyline Blvd. |

The Lake Merced/Lake Shore area is extremely exclusive, much of the area consisting of the Olympic Country Club and Harding Park Municipal Golf Courses. The eastern shore of Lake Merced is dotted with large houses, and a portion of the western shore covered with large apartments. The homes are ornate but affordable, with nicely manicured lawns.

Along the coast and to the west of Lake Merced is Fort Funston. Residents “in the know” flock here to walk their dogs along coastal trails, enjoy horseback riding or take hang gliders out over the steep cliffs that line the coast here. Numerous anti-aircraft batteries built in the early days of World War II dot the landscape, many having fallen from the cliffs – some 400 feet high – into the sand below.

North of Lake Merced, near the coast along Sloat Blvd., is the San Francisco Zoo, a popular place for tourists and residents alike. The zoo features African, American, Australian, and South American habitats, with a special emphasis on hooved animals and primates. Though more fun for children, adults also enjoy around between exhibits. Although three cafés service the zoo, there’s always room for Ninja Burger.



NINJA BURGER HEADQUARTERS

As one might expect from a global corporation, Ninja Burger has franchises everywhere around the world, with multiple stores in major cities. Many of these franchises – especially in newer markets – are run in public view, with real restaurants where people can dine in, take out or order drive-thru. Most of these (as well as all older franchises) also contain secret elements belowground, allowing Ninja Burger employees to operate more secretly.

San Francisco is a unique exception to the basic franchise rule, for while The City has many individual franchises where employees pick up food, it is also home to Ninja Burger's International Headquarters. As such, much of the city is linked by a network of hidden tunnels, making travel between distant areas easier when streets get crowded.

The main complex as a whole contains everything that Ninja Burger needs to operate a global corporation, including massive kitchen facilities, training areas and locker rooms, an underground garage and helipad, a central dispatch center and nearly 3,000 personnel, including chefs, deliverators, drivers, mechanics, physicians, marketing gurus, administrative staff, etc.

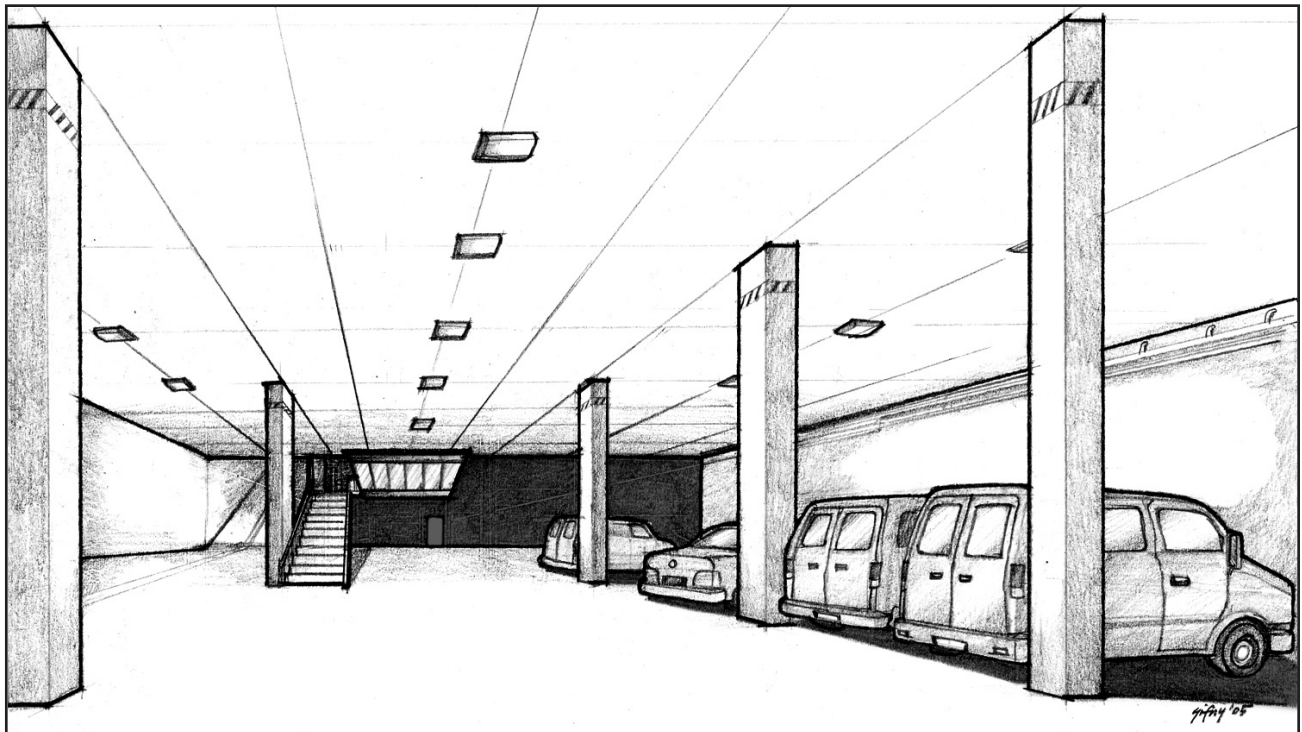
The base also acts as the core training facility for all of Ninja Burger. Between 600 and 1,000 ninja students are training at the facility in some regard at any given time, with about 5 percent "graduating" in any given year to official active duty. Obviously, not all personnel are on duty at all times – the above numbers assume a 24/7/365 operation, with numerous shifts, personnel in the field, etc.

WHAT THE...?

The information about Ninja Burger HQ on the pages that follow assumes you're using the basic campaign, as described earlier in these rules. If your Ninja Burger world calls for something different (such as just a single small "real" franchise), feel free to modify or ignore what you see here, at your discretion. If it all sounds a bit crazy, just stop for a moment and consider exactly what it would take for a single business entity to coordinate activities around the world on less than 30 minutes notice. Also, consider that they *are* ninja, and can pretty much get away with whatever they want.

There are at least four known "topside" physical locations that lead into Ninja Burger Headquarters:

- **Chinatown.** The main franchise entrance is down a side alley within a block of the Chinatown Gate, and resembles a 1950s era diner.
- **Yerba Buena Island.** Hidden docks give ninja access to boats and submarines should deliveries call for it. It is also connected by an underwater tunnel wide enough to fit a large truck.
- **Mt. Sutro.** Helipads and access to small aircraft such as hang gliders, as well as radio and satellite uplinks that allow the entire complex to run Dispatch operations for all of Ninja Burger.
- **Fort Funston.** Below the bunkers on the coast, dark tunnels stretch for miles. Sealed off with steel doors, they link up to docks that allow operatives from overseas to enter the complex.



Ninja Burger's San Francisco HQ contains many tunnels, sublevels and secret areas that many ninja never get to see. The main area contains the features:

Administration: One corner of the facility is taken up by the administrative departments of Ninja Burger. These include Admin & Finance, Employee Resources, Information Technology (IT), and Communications & Marketing. It is here that most new hires are first brought to fill out paperwork, and it is here that their records are kept by the Ninja Archive Division. The archives also contain Ninja Burger's global customer database, which means this area is always under heavy surveillance. Since it's a great place to dig up dirt on people, places and things, it's also a favorite hangout for Ninja Spotters when they're off work.

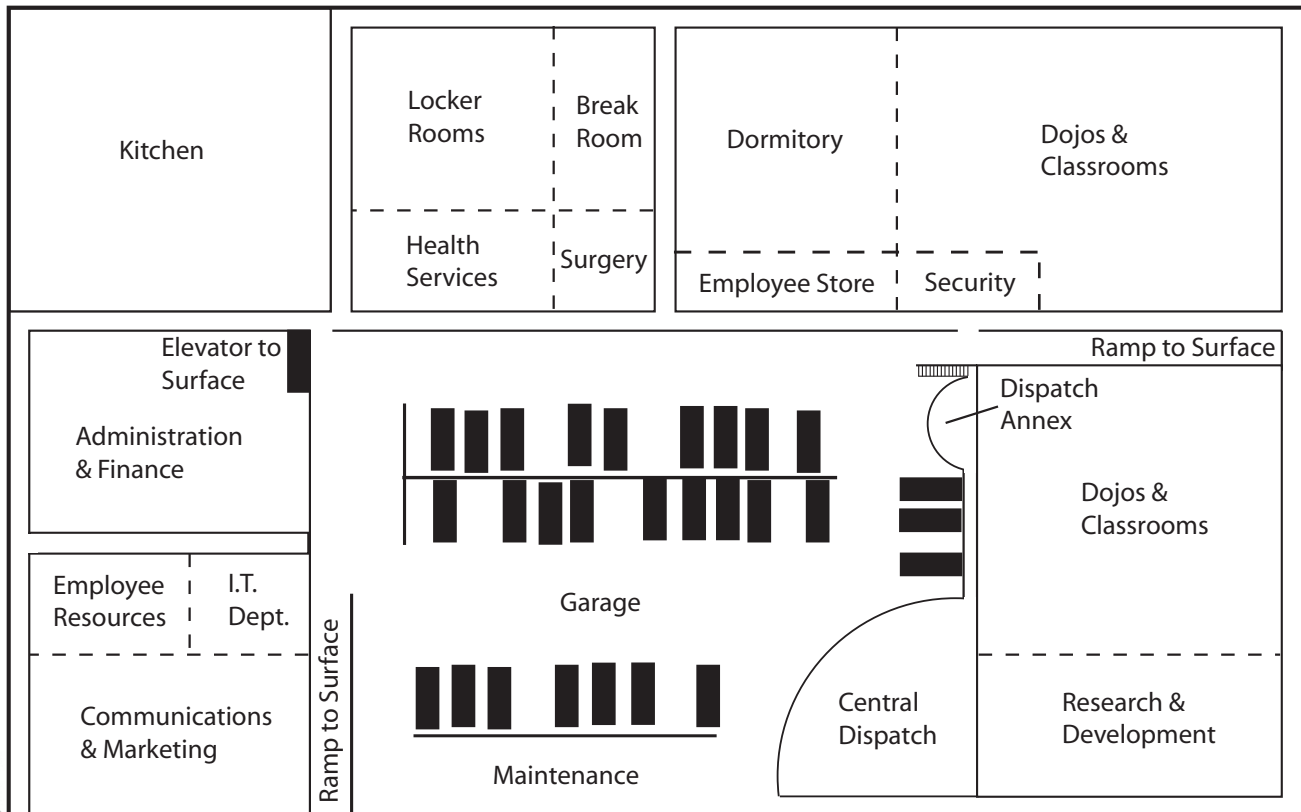
Dispatch: Central Dispatch is in a semicircular bubble on one side of the garage. The dispatchers within coordinate global activity, handling priority orders as needed. Across a catwalk is the Dispatch Annex, which hangs from the ceiling and looks out into the garage – this section of Dispatch is concerned with local traffic and deliveries. Both areas are always buzzing with chaotic activity, lights flashing, sirens blaring, dozens of dispatchers chattering to customers and delivery personnel. There is a high turnover rate, with many leaving to work in less stressful jobs, such as the Harriman Train Dispatching Center or Air Traffic Control towers.

Dojos & Classrooms: Two large areas are devoted to training, with small sections carved off as needed with bamboo screens and dividers. Generally, employees engaged in more mental studies train in the smaller area near R&D, and those engaged in more physical pursuits train with weapons in the area closer to the surgical facility, for obvious reasons.

Employee Services: A major portion of the facility is devoted to services that employees use on a daily basis, both on and off shift, including locker rooms and showers, the break room, Health Services and Surgery, and the employee dormitory and store. Ninja Burger employees need never leave the premises, which is precisely the point.

Garage: The garage in the center of the facility has room for some fifty vehicles of various shapes and sizes, most of them vans, motorcycles or sports cars (with special-use vehicles and aircraft located off site). The area also includes nearby sub-areas devoted to maintenance, security and research & development, which is often focused on improving vehicle efficiency and stealth. Two ramps lead to the surface.

Kitchen: The massive stadium-like kitchen here contains a wall of vats large enough to deep-fry an ox, grills spacious enough to sear a python, and more knives, cleavers and other sharp instruments than the rest of the facility combined.





*"Revenge is a dish best served cold.
Burgers, not so much." – Ninja Proverb*

THE SETUP

Being a ninja is hard work. Not everybody can leap from rooftop to rooftop. Few can disembowel three scurvy pirates with a single strike. Fewer still can do these things and still deliver piping hot burgers within thirty minutes.

But from time to time, some ninja – the chosen few – breeze through the basic training at Ninja Burger Headquarters. It is these ninja that will be considered for assistant manager posts; these ninja that will be relied upon to make the truly difficult deliveries. The PCs are precisely such ninja. But before their names become the stuff of fast food legend, or a curse spat from between the golden teeth of terror-stricken pirates, they must rise to their greatest challenge.

Bill.

The PCs are new Ninja Burger employees. Brought together from many walks of life, the one thing they have in common is their staggering success at basic training. The brass have certainly taken note, and Staff Trainer Bill is key among them. But Bill is a difficult man to impress, and he needs proof that the PCs are as skilled in the shadowy arts as they appear to be. His skepticism will consign the PCs to Bill's infamous gauntlet, pitting the PCs against disgraced ninja, a simian army, and a stealthy assault on Alcatraz.

No ninja has ever survived the tender ministrations of Bill's lackeys. Perhaps your group will be the first.

ABOUT THE LOCATIONS

Most of the big scenes in this adventure take place in areas that are well-mapped out in other parts of this rulebook (Alcatraz, Golden Gate Park, Monster Park/Candlestick Point, and the San Francisco Zoo). You will find those maps helpful when plotting out broad plans, but for detailed combats, you should either seek out more detailed maps online, or make stuff up.

THE ROLE OF THE DISPATCHER

Ninja Burger is unlike many RPGs in that the GM's role is that of a team member – and like every team member, the Dispatcher should have personality! Personal quirks and motivations can make the interaction between PCs and GM exciting, even tense. After all, if the PCs are dishonorable dogs and the Dispatcher is a stolid clan-loyal ninja, hilarity is bound to ensue!

A few sample Dispatcher personalities are presented here, but you are certainly encouraged to invent your own.

Have fun, dear Dispatcher. Ganbatte!

Steven McAfee

Your father was a dispatcher, before his... accident. His father was a dispatcher too. It's in the family... so why are you so terrified? I mean, sure, your dad's death was not that well explained, and sure, you have the sneaking suspicion that the Ninja Burger brass had him killed for incompetence. But it won't happen to you! You're GOOD, and your first assignment as a Dispatcher will let you prove it. You hope. No, wait - not hope. You K-N-O-W you can do this, like that self-help book says. No need for anxiety.

Gulp!

Kibagami Hanzo

In YOUR day, ninja had honor. They weren't all flash and rock-and-roll like the kids nowadays. Just look at Usagi and Paul – first they make a late delivery, then they're caught necking in the walk-in freezer. Yet still they draw breath, those shiftless dogs! It's an affront to civilized ninja society – any TRUE warrior would have spilled his own entrails in shame! And now you have to babysit your own group of whippersnappers? Bah! Well, at least you can teach them honor.

Sayonara, scumbags!

Tracy Sadowski

First in your class. First to work in the morning; last to leave. You've worked your way up the hierarchy, from lowly stock girl to cashier to full-blown ninja, every step guided by the Employee Handbook. You wash your hands every twenty minutes, your breaks last exactly as long as they should, and you spit when a pirate goes by. Finally, your hard work has been rewarded.

Today, a dispatcher. Tomorrow? Who knows. Ninja Burger's corporate office is starting to look mighty mighty plush...

Greed is good!

SCENE 1 - HEADQUARTERS

Ah, the first day on the job.

The PCs are asked to arrive at Ninja Burger at 6 PM sharp; tardiness is not advised. Ninja Burger, at first glance, looks like any themed fast food restaurant. In the lobby, plastic chairs and benches with ratty upholstery seat a dozen customers, and a Moppu (Japanese for mop, and a term for Ninja Burger's least glorified employees) absently cleans up a cola spill. Surly teenage would-be ninja, not yet trusted to make deliveries, attend to the customer from behind a counter dotted with cash registers.

Arriving PCs are greeted by Shift Manager Touji "the Terror," a garrulous old ninja striped by scars from a hundred deliveries. In his younger days, Touji was quite a firebrand, but old age has softened him. He welcomes new ninja with an easy smile, and leads them past the fry vat, burger grills, and a variety of heat lamps, to what employees imaginatively call "The Back." The Back is home to Ninja Burger's industrial cleaning unit, a sink with a high-pressure hose that sprays scalding water. The floor is wet, and a foul smell lingers. The Terror leads the PCs into a walk-in freezer and fumbles with a cunningly hidden lever. A false wall panel slides open to reveal an elevator.

The PCs are ushered in, and the elevator begins its long descent into a vast subterranean complex. This is the ninja training area. The PCs are led through a large garage, and into a large training room, separated by Japanese-style walls of wooden slats and stretched paper into training grounds for various ninja activities. Near the entrance, an employee throws shuriken at samurai-garbed burlap targets; further away, two ninja fight with staves while a third cheers them on. Touji starts to leave the PCs here, but then gets a phone call on his cell phone. After a moment, he hangs up and, somewhat surprised, leads the PCs down the hall to the break room, green with ferns and tiny bonsai trees, and tells them to await their Dispatcher.

After the PCs have had an opportunity to chat, the Dispatcher arrives and informs them that due to a sudden employee shortage ("We lost a team downtown. 31 minutes. So close!"), the team is being sent out sans training. After the Dispatcher has been introduced, his (or her - Ninja Burger is an equal opportunity employer) beeper will go off. It reads: "Bring two Ninja Burgers and a Large Cola to Bill, at a beat-up trailer in Lot 7, Monster Park." The Dispatcher is somewhat taken aback by the mention of Bill's name, but will wave away any of the PCs' questions.

Tonight, Monster Park will be buzzing, as the 49ers play host to the Arizona Cardinals. Bill wants his food before the 7 PM kickoff, and Ninja Burger explodes into motion. The PCs have, at most, a few minutes before a paper bag full of food is thrust upon them and

they are rushed into the underground parking garage where their van awaits. These scant moments may allow the PCs time to gossip with fellow employees - the mention of Bill's name has made most of them quite talkative. The dispatcher will have nothing to say about Bill, and otherwise talkative Touji will fall silent when his name is mentioned. PCs who bend an ear to the grapevine may hear any (or all) of the following rumors - choose one, or roll 1d6.

1. *Bill was once an honored Ninja Burger employee, but was disgraced and too bereft of honor to kill himself. Every year, he orders a Ninja Burger meal to mark the anniversary of his expulsion.*
2. *Be careful. It's a trap! We've had "Bill" order food before. The delivery ninja never come back.*
3. *They say Touji and Bill were part of the same delivery team, but the Terror will never admit it. There was a woman, and well, you know how these things end.*
4. *Bill is a master swordsman. He orders food from us AND our competitors so that he can test who is truly the most fearsome purveyor of fast food.*
5. *It's funny how scared everyone is. Bill was a tough cookie, sure, but he's dead. Samurai got him last year. Be careful - this new Bill could be an evil Samurai!*
6. *Bill? Please. There's an urban legend about him being dangerous, but c'mon. You know how many Bills there are in The City? Stop gossiping and get to work.*

If your PCs are too overwhelmed by the rush and sizzle of a fast food assembly line to inquire about their job, not to worry. There will be plenty of opportunity to thrust some (mis)information upon them later.



This is not Bill. This is Bob. Bill is scarier.

SCENE 2 - THE TRAILER

Monster Park is humming. Kickoff is mere minutes away. Discarded beer bottles and cooling grills are all that is left of the tailgate parties; the parking area has emptied, save for a scalper looking to sell two last tickets (he will incessantly hound any ninja who gets close), and a weasely-looking man selling T-shirts. PCs who get too close to the shirt vendor will notice that he stocks pirated Ninja Burger merchandise stitched together in Saigon! Honor is at stake!

The trailer the PCs are looking for is in the southeast corner of Lot 7. The first player to the door is jerked into the trailer by a hard-looking kunoichi in a yellow jumpsuit. This is Patches, a deadly ninja assassin with eye-patches over both eyes and a sword in hand. She's as blind as she is evil, but ninja powers allow her to fight and carry herself every bit as effectively as she did before the tragic loss of her eyes. Robert Malley, shaggy and disreputable, has sunk into a chair at the far end of the trailer. He points a shotgun at the PCs.

Patches will deny having ordered anything. Any attempts to link her to Bill or explain the delivery will be met with a scathing "Bill? I don't know any Bill!" She will unleash a tirade of ninja insults and tough talk, trying to incite the PCs to combat, but will not attack the PCs unless they draw their weapons. Robert will not converse with the PCs at all; questions addressed to him will meet with a shrug.

The PCs can try to defuse the situation with discourse, like sophisticated, rational adults. That's bound to fail. If they obstinately refuse to give Patches and Robert the satisfaction of combat, sirens will sound and four police officers will arrive to check out reports of a domestic disturbance. They will quite obviously not be thrilled to find a number of well-armed and angry-looking folk, and will try to haul the PCs, Patches and Robert in to the precinct. Explaining ninja fast food delivery to the police should roughly be as fruitful as screaming at a wall. Arrests don't look good on a ninja's record – if the PCs are not murderously inclined, they may attempt to run and hide. Either way, the Dispatcher should hint that going with the police would be bad, and that Ninja Burger will disavow knowledge of captured employees. If the PCs violently confront the police, Patches and Robert will attack immediately after. If they hide, they may elude the police – but not Patches.

If combat is joined inside the trailer, it will be in very cramped quarters – any attack roll that shows the same result on both dice (from snake eyes to double sixes), will hit someone other than the intended target (assign each combatant a number, and roll randomly). Robert will not fire his shotgun inside the trailer, but he will throw darts that have a -2 to damage; he and Patches will both try to push the fight outside.

Patches: Average [+0] Ninja, Good [+2] Blind-yet-sighted Swordsgirl, Good [+2] Infuriating Insults, Poor [-2] Complete Lack of Restraint; Element: Fire.

You've always been better than those around you; a better sword, a fouler mouth. But did they ever make you a manager? Nooooo. Did they send you a "Get Well" card when a parrot put out your left eye? Nooooo. When you lost your second eye to a scalding jet of water from the hose in The Back, would it really have been such a difficult thing to give you a few weeks off and some workman's comp? Well, too bad. You didn't get it, so you told management exactly what you thought of them. Maybe that wasn't so bright. Bill heard about your little rebellion; next thing you knew, you were stuck in a trailer with a simpering idiot. Maybe a fight will make you feel better.

Robert Malley: Average [+0] Ninja, Good [+2] Dart Champion, Good [+2] Guns! Guns! GUNS!, Poor [-2] Slow Trigger; Element: Earth

It was all so rosy then. The respect of your peers. The Fox & Whistle's Darts Challenge gold medalist, three years running. A job as a delivery ninja. Regular pay, enough to buy a gun every few months. But tragedy was just a charging Viking away. You had a shuriken ready, but it slipped out of your hand in mid-release, gravely wounding your driver. The berserker did the rest – of your entire team, only you survived. Bill wasn't thrilled. But you'll never let that happen again. Not ever.

If the fight moves outside, Robert will stand in the doorway and take shots at the PCs. He has a bit of a history with misfires, so under no circumstances will he fire at any ninja attacking Patches, and he will take so much time aiming that he will always be the last to act. PCs can take cover from Robert behind cars, but if they do so they will not be able to fight them unless they have brought shuriken or other missiles.

In the aftermath of the fight, just seconds from a failed delivery (and a bad start to the PCs' careers), Bill will call in and cancel his order. *Nobody* cancels on Ninja Burger. The Dispatcher will receive orders to hunt Bill down. The PCs' jobs depend on it.

The PCs should be able to find a letter from Bill on Patches' person, stating they'll meet for a round of darts once "the business is done." A cursory search of the trailer will reveal a number of dart championship trophies in Robert's name, every last one from the Fox & Whistle. If the PCs have trouble connecting the dots, don't forget that the Dispatcher can follow along through electronic means. Ninja Burger vans have cameras – if necessary, a Dispatcher can control them to peer into Patches' trailer.

GAME ON!

If they are so inclined, PCs can try their hand at karaoke, poker, drinking or darts to pass time.

Darts: The dart player will readily play Cricket with a PC, but the Dispatcher should tell them they don't have time. They may also play one round, with the top score after three darts winning. The bet is \$100, and the dart player adds +4 (Jill) or +6 (Jack) to their roll, as is appropriate. Roll 3d6 and add in the relevant Quality (if any) to reflect the number hit. A total of 21 or higher is a bullseye, and two or three of the same number on a roll doubles or triples the number hit (e.g., 3,3,6 is double 12; 6,6,5 [+4] is double bullseye).

Drinking: The Dispatcher should discourage the PCs from drinking on the job; anyone who does so incurs a -1 Honor Penalty. However, if they do decide to drink, Busy Jack or Constable Jill will goad them on into a contest (Jack adds +4 from Pirate, Jill +2 from Tough As Nails). If a ninja wins the contest, they gain +1d6 Honor; if they lose, they are at a -2 to all rolls for the remainder of the session, since they are blisteringly drunk.

Karaoke: A PC brave enough to get up onstage and belt one out is entitled to a shot at the bar's prize of \$500 for the person who can sing better than the champ, a pudgy man with sideburns calling himself "The King," who has Master [+6] Karaoke Skills. This is an extremely difficult task, modified only by an appropriate Quality (Singing in the Shower, etc.). Players may, however, get a +2 modifier if they really sing at least a verse and chorus of any song. This is increased to +4 if they sing a Kenny Loggins tune, like "Danger Zone."

Poker: PCs might be able to roleplay their way into a hand or two of poker, especially if they have a lot of money to lay on the table (at least \$100). If they do, you can either play out a hand or two of 5-Card Draw with a deck of cards, or have them treat it as a Conflict Situation, where the criminals will use their Good [+2] Pokerface Quality. These criminals have up to \$1,000 to gamble with, and they will lose graciously unless a PC takes them for all they're worth, in which case they will show up at a later time, when the PCs least expect it...

If the Dispatcher is a serious sort, the PCs are encouraged not to have too much fun. After all, while they don't have any responsibilities aside from finding Bill at the moment, they may well be expected to pick up the slack if an unrelated delivery emergency pops up.

SCENE 3 - THE FOX & WHISTLE

The Fox is a faux-English pub, without any of the cheer. Flickering lamps hang from a low ceiling and locals crowd the place, cheering on a slender white-haired man or woman – you can't tell – throwing darts between swigs from a foaming mug of dark beer. A woman's voice is screeching something that sounds like "My Way" at a karaoke machine tucked into the bar's far corner. A quartet of beady-eyed ruffians glower at one another over a poker table. One man sits at the bar, studying a tourist map of San Francisco hanging above the cash register.

Ultimately, the PCs will need to mingle with the locals to pick up Bill's trail. The poker PCs are criminals furtively discussing their latest heist. They will clam up the moment they notice a player sidling up to their table. They know nothing of Bill, but they know a good deal about fleecing the innocent, and have no moral objection to selling incorrect information.

If the PCs ran afoul of police in the previous scene, the dart player is Constable Jill Whiteley (see page 87), a deep-cover operative convinced that the Fox is a criminal hotbed. She suspects everyone who enters the bar, and will pay special attention to the PCs, especially if they behave strangely. However, she will generally not approach them without evidence of wrongdoing, and she has none. She will later learn that the PCs have been obstructing justice, and will try to pick up their trail. She knows nothing of Bill.

If the PCs had no problems with the police, the dart player is Busy Jack, an Assistant Manager at Pirate Pizza (see page 87). His crew is mutinous 'cuz they haven't taken any lubbers in much too long. Busy Jack matches Bill's description, and PCs might assume they are one and the same. Worse still, he has heard of Bill. Although he doesn't have all the details, Busy Jack knows Bill is important to Ninja Burger. And he knows that nothing satisfies bloodlust like ninjacide.

The bartender knows nothing of Bill, but Twitch, the man studying the map, does. Twitch has just about finished a steak, and he toys with a serrated knife, gracefully enough that observant ninja may realize he is one of them. If the PCs mention Bill in his earshot, Twitch will cackle, point at his knife and gibber, "I got your Bill right here!" He throws the knife, which whistles just a hair's breadth from the petrified bartender's ear before burying itself in the hanging map. A smoke bomb explodes in a flash of light and billowing fog. When it clears, Twitch is gone. All that's left of him is a knife, still quivering, right where the San Francisco zoo should be.

If the clue proves too subtle, or the PCs decide to leave the bar and attempt to run Twitch down, a new delivery is precisely what they need to get back on track! Even zookeepers need a snack now and then...

SCENE 4 - THE ZOO

The sun went down a good hour or two ago, and the San Francisco zoo is all locked up. Nocturnal animals pad restlessly around their cages, and the night's quiet is pierced from time to time by a hooting owl or screeching bat. If Busy Jack is following along, PCs with keen ears may hear the squawk of his parrot, Camilla. Canny ninja will know that parrots are not nocturnal, and will certainly know of their association with pirates. Nevertheless, Busy Jack will not be found... yet.

Neither Bill nor Twitch is anywhere to be seen. Were it not for a handful of half-asleep zoo custodians and security guards staggering across the grounds; the zoo may well be deserted. As the PCs search – fruitlessly – they may well begin to believe that they were fed misinformation. But eventually, they will come across Gorilla World and the Primate Discovery Center. And they'll notice some of the cages are open and empty.

With a screech like a thousand flaming cats, a simian army bursts from concealment, followed by the whip-wielding Zookeeper. They haven't come to talk.

The army is composed of 99 Monkey Grunts, four Gorilla Guerillas, and the Zookeeper. The Monkey Grunts are armed with cudgels – a select few carry knives – and attack en masse. The Gorilla Guerillas remain hidden. Only when the monkey horde is half-way defeated will they make their entrance, flinging feces and leaping from the trees above. When the gorillas are defeated, the Monkey Grunts will lose their will to fight, and the Zookeeper himself will go on the attack.



99 Monkey Grunts: *Poor to Good [-2 to +2] Swarming Horde, Poor [-2] Morale*

Treat the entire Horde as one combatant, but with the capacity to attack every player ninja in each round. Each damage point the PCs cause in the course of combat results in the death of one monkey – if Toshiro does 5 damage to the 99 grunts, five monkeys meet their maker.

Swarming Horde is the Monkey Grunts' combat skill, and it decreases over time based on how many Monkeys remain. When 50 Grunts remain, the Horde's combat score decreases to 0. When 25 or fewer Grunts remain, the Horde's combat score decreases to -2.

When the fight begins, the Grunts are a Good combatant. However, as soon as 10 monkeys have died, panic strikes. The Horde screech and mill about, confused and disorganized, and their combat rating suffers a -2 Downshift for one full round, while the Zookeeper whips and threatens them back into fighting form.

Once the number of monkeys decreases to 50, the Horde panics once again, and the Gorilla Guerillas attack. Once the Guerillas are on the scene, the Monkey Grunts will no longer panic – unless the Gorilla Guerillas are defeated, in which case all remaining Monkey Grunts faint dead away from fear.

Four Gorilla Guerillas: *Expert [+4] Fists of Feral Fury, Average [0] Fling Feces*

The Gorilla Guerillas will open with a salvo of flung feces, then leap from the trees to strike with their powerful arms. Fling Feces does not cause any damage, but a successful attack surprises and distracts the victim, causing their combat skill to decrease by one grade during the next round. Their initial leap attack does +2 damage if it is successful.

The Zookeeper: *Good [+2] Ninja, Good [+2] Evasion, Poor [-2] Hygiene. Element: Fire*

They said you were crazy. Technically, they were right. But it's not like any other fast food place is rat-free. So you brought a few pets into the store. So they freaked out some old lady. So Bill didn't like it. So what? Still, bum rap though it is, you made out pretty well. Now you deal with animals all day long, and all you have to do to keep your post is kill a few wet-behind-the-ears ninja-in-training? Sweet.

SCENE 5 - CHASE, CATCH, DUEL!

As the PCs gloat over the Zookeeper's corpse, or rifle through his pockets for any clue that might link him to Bill, an engine sputters to life in a nearby bush. Out leaps a dirt bike driven by a frantic-looking Monkey Scout. Three more bikes are hidden here – the Gorilla Guerillas to whom they originally belonged certainly will not need them. Each bike seats only one ninja, which may well mean that a few PCs will need to run back to their delivery car and try to head the others off on Sunset Boulevard.

With the Dispatcher screaming, "Follow that APE!" the chase is on.

The monkey will try to lose the PCs or lead them into obstacles at every opportunity. Agility or driving rolls may be called for throughout the chase; failure means the player has been thrown from his bike, and will need to Drive Recklessly to keep up (-2 to subsequent skill tests without an appropriate talent). A second failure results in a -4 penalty to subsequent tests. After a third failure, that player is no longer in the running – he may as well stop, have a coffee, and wait until his friends radio in with a meeting spot.

At first, the monkey will simply wend his way between cages, making some sharp turns that are relatively easy to follow. When that fails to lose pursuit, the monkey will drive directly into a pen belonging to Jersey, an angry rhinoceros. Avoiding a charging rhino is no easy task, even on a dirt bike. However, Jersey only has enough time to charge a single player (chosen randomly). On failure, the player takes significant damage, and is now forced to fight off a rhinoceros, or at least evade it long enough to get back on his bike.

Sunset Boulevard, a long tree-lined avenue, is the next challenge. The monkey will try to weave his way through traffic all the way north to Golden Gate Park. At this point, any PCs that ran to the delivery car can join the pursuit, but it is much easier to weave around cars on a bike than in a van. Any driving tests made here should be of average difficulty for motorcyclists, but fairly tough for the Ninja Burger van.

Golden Gate Park is the monkey's final destination. If any of the PCs are still hot on his heels, they will clearly witness the monkey head inside a gated-in Japanese-style pavilion that ninjas may recognize as the Japanese Tea Garden, gibbering frantically all the while. Once the monkey's message has been delivered, he flees and attempts to unwind from the day's stressful events.

THE JAPANESE TEA GARDEN

The Tea Garden is a pavilion in the midst of a lovely water garden. Small stone bridges stretch over rivers dotted with floating lilies. By day, tea is served here. By night, it is prowled by Hinagami Asuka, Bill's right-hand lady and master spearwoman. When the PCs enter the pavilion, Asuka sits before a serene golden Buddha, clad in mourning robes of white. She congratulates the PCs on their progress, and lights sticks of incense in their honor.

Asuka proposes a simple bargain. If any of the PCs can defeat her in a combat to the death, she will reveal Bill's hiding place with her dying breath. The catch? Asuka's an old-fashioned type – she will only fight one-on-one. The PCs must choose a champion. If that champion is defeated, they must choose another. The duel will continue until Asuka lies defeated, or there are no ninjas left to oppose her. If the PCs are victorious, Asuka is true to her word, and reveals that Bill is hiding out in a set of tunnels under the cell blocks in Alcatraz. If the PCs win by nefarious means, Asuka will curse them with her last breath, but a search of the Tea Garden will turn up a photo of a smiling Bill in Alcatraz, signed "Wish you were here."



Hinagami Asuka, Beacon of Light and stuff

Hinagami Asuka: Average [+0] Ninja, Expert [+4] Spearwoman, Good [+2] Judge of Character, Poor [-2] Guileless, Element: Light.

You are the shining beacon of all that is good, a diamond among coal. You always tell the truth and you always fight honorably. That can make life a bit difficult, since you're so often surrounded by "the others" - disgraced ninjas, scum, toadies trying to curry favor with Bill. Little do they know you'll always be Bill's favorite. Unlike the others, you volunteered for training duty.

SCENE 6 - A TRAP IS SPRUNG

It's now a little ways past midnight, and the PCs have quite a task ahead of them. To infiltrate Alcatraz, the group will need a stealth boat. The Dispatcher requisitions one, which will be prepared in an hour.

This is a breath of fresh air after a hectic night. Allow the PCs some downtime – they can plan their attack on the Rock, talk amongst themselves or with the Dispatcher, pray before the Tea Garden's Buddha, eat, play kickball, meditate or do whatever else comes naturally. Don't begrudge them the opportunity – after all, this may be their characters' last night on the green earth. If the PCs focus on work, and attempt to steal their own boat, so much the better! Ninja Burger smiles upon the proactive. Truly masochistic ninja may very well decide to swim across the Bay. This is not advised, as it will put them at a serious disadvantage for the coming combat; in that event, the Dispatcher should "find" a boat post-haste!

The boat, when prepared, will be moored at San Francisco's docks, in Fisherman's Wharf. At this hour of night the docks are mostly deserted, except for rats aplenty and the occasional cat. In fact, the PCs are not alone. Busy Jack (or Constable Jill) is skulking about the shadows, with company. If Jack has followed the PCs, the pursuit has made him cranky, and he's spoiling for a fight. He, along with a cadre of six loyal Ovenboys, intends to follow the PCs to Bill and assassinate him, but the prospect of a good old-fashioned piratical battle at sea overwhelms his judgment. Once the PCs are half-way to Alcatraz, two speedboats flying the Jolly Roger overtake them, and the still night air is pierced by the "ARRRs" of angry pirates!

Jack and his Ovenboys will swiftly overtake the Stealth Boat. Each of the pirate speedboats will try to ram the PCs, and agility checks might be called for to determine if the PCs can stay on their boat, or if they will need to swim back to it (a process requiring two combat rounds). The pirates will board and attack. If the battle turns on Busy Jack, he will make a scurvy, lily-livered escape, covered by his screeching parrot. If the PCs should kill Camilla, Busy Jack will vow bloody pirate vengeance. If, of course, he can keep his crew from stringing him up the yardarm.

If Constable Jill has followed the PCs, she too will make an ambush at sea. She has brought six lesser constables with her, and two police boats. Jill knows the PCs are deadly ninja, and does not want them to have an easy means of escape. However, unlike Busy Jack and his scurvy ilk, police officers do not close in for melee. Instead, Jill will ask the ninja to submit peacefully; when this fails, the police will open fire while remaining well away from boarding range. The PCs can answer their fire only with missile weapons of their own.

Busy Jack: Expert [+4] Pirate; Good [+2] Aim; Poor [-2] Wooden Leg

Ye've been a good assistant manager, y'have. But times are hard, oh aye. Yer crew are a pack of scurvy dogs who don't know their jab from a jib, and then they blame YOU, the mutinous dogs, when they can't take a doubloon from a babe. Drives a man to drink! If it weren't for Camilla's soothing song, ye'd be pushin' 'em off the plank

During battle, Busy Jack stands back and fires a flintlock at the PCs, sending Camilla to attack and distract his opponents. He will sacrifice his crew if it means success over ninja, but would prefer not to. The Ovenboys are his most loyal supporters, and he relies on them to ward off mutiny.

Camilla: Good [+2] Annoying Squawk; Expert [+4] Evasion; Poor [-2] Peck

Squawk! Busy Jack's a salty sea dog! Camilla's role is distraction. She will rarely (and ineffectively) attack, preferring to squawk annoyingly. A ninja so affected will be forced to attack the bird.

Ovenboys: Good [+2] Fist-fighter; Good [+2] Strength; Good [+2] Armor; Poor [-2] Slow-Witted.

Ovenboys are thick-skulled and slow, but powerful. Any pirate can knock a pizza delivery man on the head and steal his delivery, but only Ovenboys are strong enough and dull enough to break into competing restaurants and steal pizza directly from their competitor's ovens. As a mark of pride, the Ovenboys wear uniforms cobbled together from the aprons of a dozen pizzerias, which provide them with a hefty armor plating that also leaves them largely immune to the effects of heat and fire. Ovenboys attack last, but they hit hard and can take a good deal of punishment.

Constable Jill Whiteley: Expert [+4] Crack Shot; Good [+2] Tough As Nails; Poor [-2] Sense of Humor

Something weird is stirring in The City, and only you seem to be aware. Evidence is everywhere. Slit throats, delivery men in pajamas with a katana in one hand and a fast food bag in the other. "There's no such thing as ninja!" they say. You know better. And you're going to prove it.

Officers of the LAW! Good [+2] Cops, Good [+2] Aim, Poor [-2] Understanding of Disobedience

Officers of the LAW! are fond of phrases like "Stop! I'm an officer of the LAW!" and are equally interested in preventing expressions of dissent. Refusal to comply with requests will confuse them, but they recover quickly and start shooting.

SCENE 7 - FINAL CONFRONTATION

Nobody's used Alcatraz as a prison for a while. That's why it's a bit odd that security officers prowl the grounds. Combat is probably unwise; thankfully, most of the guards are professional security officers. That is, small middle-aged men armed with rheumatism and a flashlight. No big deal for a ninja.

Near the cell block, however, things get trickier. Three doors lead into the Big House, and two of them are almost directly in front of a lighthouse manned by a sniper and a swiveling spotlight. The last is a bit further away, near the prison's large exercise yard but it, too, is watched. A water tower stands a few dozen yards away; the sniper sitting atop it is not so kind as to advertise his presence with a spotlight.

When the PCs find a way into the cell block, dark secrets will see the light of day. Alcatraz is seeing use as a prison once more, a fact known only to the highest-placed police officers, a secret cabal well aware of the fast food wars. Samurai languish in cells here, begging for blades, that they might eviscerate themselves. A trio of Gurkhas glowers balefully at passersby. A Viking dozes in another cell, sucking a meaty thumb.

Security is more prevalent here, and a few of them are actually Bill's ninja in disguise; they have infiltrated the regular guards to keep tabs on the situation (and, in the process, freeing any Ninja Burger employees that fall into the Rock's grasp). However, they are not that friendly at the moment – Bill has ordered them to attack any interlopers, regardless of affiliation.

If the PCs are revealed, security's first instinct will be to run to a nearby panel and sound a full-scale alarm. If this happens, the prison will be crawling with guards – far too many to fight. In this event, PCs may wish to hide, or free their fast-food enemies. There are enough imprisoned warriors here to fight off the security officers while the PCs hunt for Bill.

Bill's tunnel is on the bottom floor of the cell block, in a cell marked 4E. Suspiciously enough, it is the only empty cell on that entire floor. If the PCs have trouble finding Bill's trail, don't forget that the Dispatcher can fiddle with security cameras. The tunnel looks like something from the Great Escape, as though it was dug with a spoon and years of effort. The tunnel is narrow enough that the PCs will need to crawl through on all fours. It leads into a sumptuous room full of art and souvenirs of a thousand travels. Bill is here, and Twitch (from Act 2), is sitting nearby.

When the PCs confront Bill about his cancelled order, Bill will laugh and tell them the truth – that it was all an elaborate training exercise. And that no ninja has ever achieved what the PCs just did – no other ninja has ever defeated Asuka, much less found Bill's hiding place. Congratulations are in order. Your group are the Ninja Burger Employees of the Month...



This is Bill.

Bill: Master [+6] Ninja; Good [+2] Death Touch; Poor [-2] Tolerance For Dishonor; Element: Shadow.

You are Bill. Everyone who knows you, fears you. Most of the people who don't know you fear you too. There are more skilled ninja who work for Ninja Burger, but most of them avoid you. Or maybe you're the one avoiding them, actually.

OR MAYBE NOT...

See, Bill has something of a temper. If the PCs have been anything less than entirely honorable, he may very well demand that they commit Seppuku to cleanse their sins. If the PCs have tried to take the peaceful route and avoid combat as much as possible, Bill may require that they prove their bloodlust in combat. Worse yet, he may volunteer to be their target – and Bill is one of the most feared ninja ever to don the mask. He's far from a weakling.

Cathartic though they may be, adventures where everyone dies during the final battle work best if the adventure is being run as a one-shot.

However, if you're running a longer campaign, there are many ends to tie up for ninja who wish to walk the Path of the Burger a while longer. A disgraced pirate captain seeks revenge. An undercover cop wishes to expose the fast food wars, unaware that her superiors already know all about them. An escaped Monkey Scout mourns the loss of his simian comrades.

Besides, each and every day, Ninja Burger makes hundreds of juicy, char-broiled burgers smeared with ketchup and stacked with onions, pickles, tomatoes – even bacon. They certainly won't deliver themselves.

7. APPENDICES

"Keep in mind you must always be a good ninja... You must never forget the ninja commandment – Good must always win over evil. Now, go practice."

– Hexstatic, Ninja Tune

A. MOVIE AND TV SHOW LIST

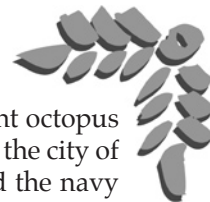
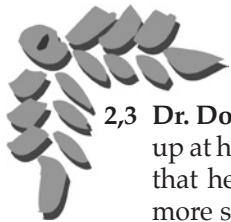
To assist you in finding inspiration for your Ninja Burger missions, here is a list of 36 movies and shows set in San Francisco (thanks to <http://www.imdb.com>). The plot descriptions – which run the gamut from mundane to supernatural – closely mirror those within each show, but they are changed to be more Ninja Burger appropriate. In most cases, the ninja in the scenario are presumed to be delivering to the people involved in the plot, but in some cases they might become entangled in the actual plot itself, or alter things through their involvement during a normal delivery.

Note that since there are 36 of these, you can roll two 6-sided dice to generate a random plot, in the same fashion as elsewhere; hence, the crazy numbers.

- 1,1 48 Hours** – A cop with revenge on his mind, and his partner for the next two days – a convict with a car full of money – are so busy tracking down a gang of murderers that they've forgotten to eat dinner. Find them somewhere inside a San Francisco parking garage and deliver two Combo meals before time runs out.
- 1,2 A View To A Kill** – A British agent is hot on the tail of a maniacal computer chip developer with plans to cause an earthquake that will kill millions. Of course, all that running around makes one hungry, and the agent has placed a call to Ninja Burger for some grub. Is he in a burning City Hall, racing through the city on a stolen Fire Truck, or battling for his life high above the Golden Gate Bridge? Or all three?
- 1,3 Big Trouble in Little China** – In search of his stolen semi in Chinatown, a trucker and his friends stumble into an underworld full of immortal Chinese sorcerers, monsters and a gaggle of gangsters. Tied up and guarded by the Three Storms, the trucker has placed an order for two burgers and two colas. Better hurry, before he's dropped into the Hell of Slowly Starving.
- 1,4 Bulletproof Monk** – For 60 years a strange monk has protected an ancient scroll. Now he has located a young scroll keeper to replace him. And that person is you. Now you must not only deliver hot and tasty food, but defend an ancient scroll with the key to unlimited power as well.



- 1,5 Bullitt** – A cop protecting a critically wounded witness at the hospital places a call for food – two burgers, two fries, one large cola. But before the delivery can be made, a hit man shows up at the hospital to finish off the witness, and the cop is off in hot pursuit through San Francisco's hilly, curvy streets. It's going to be tough making a delivery to a customer who won't slow down!
- 1,6 Charlie Chan's Secret** – An ocean liner sinks in the Pacific Ocean, and an heir to millions of dollars is presumed dead. A Chinese detective is hired to investigate, and he discovers that the heir did not drown, but was in fact stabbed in the back in San Francisco. Ninja Burger gets involved when the suspects – a family of spiritualists – order out for food during a séance in their mansion. Will a ghost appear, or just a body?
- 2,1 Dark Passage** – A man wrongfully convicted of murdering his wife escapes from prison and undergoes plastic surgery to change his appearance. Having shackled up with a young artist, he has started to seek revenge against those who put him away, and he's worked up a hunger for Ninja Burger. But who is he, really, and does Ninja Burger have something to do with his incarceration?
- 2,2 Dirty Harry** – A rogue cop who goes by his own rules is on the trail of a serial killer named Scorpio, who has sniped people from atop buildings, kidnapped and murdered a young girl, and hijacked a bus full of school children. Can Ninja Burger keep up with him as he orders from about town? What they ought to be asking is, do they feel lucky?



- 2,3 **Dr. Dolittle** – A scientist has Ninja Burger turning up at his animal laboratory with regular deliveries that he insists are not for him. Everyone is even more shocked when he reveals that he can talk to animals, and that it's them who are telling him what to order. Can Ninja Burger sort it out? And what's more, do they want to hire this guy?
- 2,4 **Escape From Alcatraz** – A group of inmates are concocting an ingenious plan to escape from Alcatraz, off the coast of San Francisco. But all that planning has made them hungry, and if there's one delivery team that can break into and out of Alcatraz, it's Ninja Burger. Deliver a dozen burgers, and don't get caught!
- 2,5 **Experiment in Terror** – A woman is terrorized by a man who demands that she steal \$1 million from a bank. If she tells the police, he will kill her sister. However, she has someone else to turn to, since she's a Ninja Burger customer. Can Ninja Burger deliver food to her sister, and track down the extortionist?
- 2,6 **Game, The** – A wealthy, bored San Francisco banker gets a gift for his birthday: a real-life game in which he's the main character. Are people really trying to kill him? And who is placing all these orders to have Ninja Burger show up during critical moments in the game?
- 3,1 **Guess Who's Coming to Dinner** – Ninja Burger is hired to cater a tense dinner party in which a wealthy female ninja introduces her parents to the man she wants to marry – a ninja from an opposing clan! Can Ninja Burger serve everyone without a battle royale breaking out?
- 3,2 **House on Telegraph Hill, The** – A woman takes on the identity of a dying friend and moves to San Francisco, only to find out that her "son" has just inherited millions of dollars. His taste for Ninja Burger food proves dangerous to the team when it turns out that her new lover is targeting the woman for death.
- 3,3 **Hulk, The** – Exposed to gamma rays, a scientist has developed a habit of turning into a giant green monster when things don't go his way. Deliver 24 cheeseburgers, and don't be late. Don't make him hungry. You won't like him when he's hungry.
- 3,4 **Invasion of the Body Snatchers** – Ninja Burger customers are acting strangely, almost as if they've been "snatched" and replaced by emotionless body doubles with no interest in fast food. The crew will have to figure out what's going on before pod people eat all their customers.
- 3,5 **It Came From Beneath the Sea** – A giant octopus rises from the deep and begins to attack the city of San Francisco. Numerous scientists and the navy scramble to stop it before it destroys the Golden Gate Bridge, and they've called on Ninja Burger to feed their hungry crews.
- 3,6 **Joy Luck Club, The** – Four Chinese women playing mahjong at San Francisco's Joy Luck Club trade stories about the past and the present. The twist: not only are they hungry (four Combo meals, pronto), but some Chinese Triad gangsters are eager to take over their club. Deliver the goods and protect the customers!
- 4,1 **Just Like Heaven** – A man in a Russian Hill apartment is upset that Ninja Burger keeps turning up with deliveries. Everyone is surprised to find out that he's not placing the orders – the previous owner of the apartment is, and she's been dead for months! How do you deliver food to a ghost?
- 4,2 **Lost Boys, The** – The mythical town of Santa Carla has moved north (really, it was filmed in Santa Cruz) to become San Francisco. A young street gang has placed an order for six burgers, extra-rare, and there's something funny about their pointy teeth. Maybe the kid in the comic store can lend a hand.
- 4,3 **Maltese Falcon, The** – After his partner is killed, a detective takes a case involving the hunt for a mysterious, gold-encrusted black bird statue. Someone has hired Ninja Burger to tag along and feed him on stakeouts, but who are they really working for? Does the fabled statue really exist?
- 4,4 **Mrs. Doubtfire** – Recently fired from his job, a man hires Ninja Burger to throw a wild party for his children. However, this results in tragedy when his wife finds the house a disaster, and separates from him. He soon disguises himself as a British nanny to see his children more often, and secretly hires Ninja Burger to deliver the kids fast food. How long can they keep this secret?
- 4,5 **Outside the Law** – The daughter of an underworld criminal (and a Ninja Burger customer) is lured back into a life of crime by Black Mike, a despicable rat of a man who framed her father for murder and plans to kill her after a diamond heist. This all leads to a showdown in a Chinatown alley, outside Ninja Burger headquarters.
- 4,6 **Parent Trap, The** – Identical twin daughters "switch places" with their divorced parents in an effort to reunite them. Ninja Burger gets involved when the girls start getting orders delivered to the wrong houses, and the "trap" starts to fall apart.



- 5,1 **Point Blank** – Left for dead in Alcatraz after being shot by his wife and her lover, an ex-criminal shoots his way up and down the coast in search of the money he’s owed, and a little bit of revenge. Complicating matters is the fact that both he and the man he’s hunting down are Ninja Burger customers. Can the team deliver to both without taking sides?
- 5,2 **Presidio, The** – A series of murders has forced a police detective and his former commanding officer to work together, complicated by the fact that the detective is dating the former Colonel’s daughter. Of course, as fate would have it, the cop is a big fan of Ninja Burger, and they are drawn into the intrigue.
- 5,3 **Rock, The** – A lunatic has set up gas-filled rockets on Alcatraz, and is threatening to launch them at San Francisco unless his demands are met. The only one who can stop him is an ex-convict and a federal agent, and the only company that can deliver to those two heroes is Ninja Burger.
- 5,4 **Romeo Must Die** – A turf war between San Francisco and Oakland erupts over a battle to build a new sports stadium on prime waterfront property. Ninja Burger is thrust into the midst of this when one of the team’s brothers is killed, forcing them to juggle their career with the need for vengeance.
- 5,5 **Shadow of a Doubt** – A young girl (and Ninja Burger customer) is surprised to learn that her Uncle Charlie is visiting from the East Coast. Things take a strange turn when it turns out that Chuck is being pursued by two detectives who suspect him of being a serial murderer. Can Ninja Burger deliver the goods and protect their customer at the same time?
- 5,6 **Sneakers** – A group of security analysts is hired to steal a black box capable of decrypting any database, but when it turns out that the CIA did not hire them, things take a turn for the worse. Ninja Burger has a vested interest in the case, of course – that black box could decrypt their entire customer database, and that would be bad for many powerful people.
- 6,1 **Star Trek: The Voyage Home** – A group of strangely dressed gentlemen insists that they are here from the future to save some whales. They’re also quite hungry, and have placed an order for one of everything on the menu. Get to them before the authorities track them down.
- 6,2 **Streets of San Francisco** – A grizzled, streetwise detective and his young partner attempt to solve a series of murders around the city. Of course, all that detecting can make one mighty hungry, so expect numerous calls from these plainclothes cops over the course of the campaign.
- 6,3 **The Conversation** – A surveillance expert has been hired to surreptitiously record a conversation between two employees of a powerful corporation. While in the midst of doing his work, he gets hungry and places a call to Ninja Burger for a Combo meal. Little do any of them know that the threat of murder looms...
- 6,4 **Time After Time** – A man from the past has come to the present in a time machine to stop Jack the Ripper from continuing his famous time spree in modern day San Francisco. Can Ninja Burger stop the Ripper from killing all their customers?
- 6,5 **Towering Inferno, The** – The city’s tallest skyscraper is on fire, and a group of party-goers is trapped near the top. As the firemen fight to rescue them, only Ninja Burger can hope to deliver them the twelve Combo Meals they’ve ordered. Can you beat the flames, and the clock?
- 6,6 **Vertigo** – A retired police detective with an extreme fear of heights has been drawn into a tangled conspiracy involving a college friend, his wife and (supposedly) the spirit possessing her. Now he’s stuck up top of a tall building, scared to move, and dying of hunger. Deliver him a Combo #3 before he starves (or falls) to death!



B. HOW TO SPEAK NINJA

Ninja Ranks & Training

Chunin – Mid-level ninja who act as supervisors and crew trainers for other ninja. (Good [+2] Ninja)
 Daimyo – Lord (especially a feudal one).
 Deshi – Student, disciple.
 Dojo – Training hall.
 Genin – Low-ranking junior ninja sent on general missions as part of a team. (Average [+0] Ninja)
 Gi – Martial arts uniform.
 Jenin – High-ranking elite ninja who act as managers and are sent on special missions. (Expert [+4] Ninja)
 Kage – The highest-ranking ninja, supervising entire districts; literally, “Shadow.” (Master [+6] Ninja)
 Kusa – A novice, or trainee, ninja who has little or no training; literally, “weeds.” (Poor [-2] Ninja)
 Sempai – Senior.
 Sensei – Teacher.

Food, Delivery & Orders

Baagaa – Burger.
 Haitatsu – Delivery.
 -Kai – A coming together, group, or team, as in Haitatsukai, or “Delivery Team”
 Keitai – Cellphone.
 Kechappu – Ketchup.
 Koora – Cola.
 Masutaado – Mustard.
 Okane – Money.
 Seppuku – Ritual suicide through disembowelment.
 Shinobi – Sneaking; another word for ninja.
 Tori – Bird, and specifically, chicken.
 Yami – Darkness.

Combat

Bushi – Warrior.
 Chi – Blood.
 Daisho – “Long and short,” describing the two swords worn by samurai: katana and wakizashi.
 -Do – “Way of...” as in Bushido.
 -Jitsu/-Jutsu – “Art of the...,” as in Bojutsu, which is the “Art of the Bo-staff.”
 Ochimusha – A dishonored warrior.
 Saya – Scabbard.
 Sutemi Waza – Self-sacrificing techniques. (“Time for some Sutemi Waza, eh guys? Guys?...”)
 Yojimbo – Bodyguard.

Exclamations & Phrases

Abunai! – “Look out!”
 Anone – “Hey, listen!”
 Anoo... – “Uh, hey...”
 Baka! – “Stupid!”
 Banzai! – “Hooray! Let’s go!”
 Butsu Yo! – “I’ll hit you!”
 Daijoubu – Safe, well. (“How are you?” “Daijoubu.”)
 Domo Arigatou – “Thank you.”
 Hajimemashite. – “How do you do?”
 Hayaku! – “Hurry!”
 Itai! – “Ouch!”
 Kawaii – “(That’s so) cute!”
 Konnichiwa – “Good day.”
 Nani? – “What?”
 Ohayo Gozaimasu – “Good morning.”
 Oi! – “Hey! Yo!”
 Sayonara – “Good bye.”

General Vocabulary

Bakemono – Monster, spirit, etc.
 Bishoujo/Bishounen – Beautiful young girl/man
 Ichiban – Number one, best. (“How do you feel about your manager?” “Hanzo Ichiban!”)
 Juhakkei – Ninja skills.
 Kanji – Japanese written characters.
 Ki – Inner spirit; a spirit-summoning shout is a Kiai.
 Nihon/Nippon – Japan.
 Omoi – Serious, important.
 Oni – Monster, esp. a horned demon or ogre.
 Tamashi – Soul, spirit.
 Tomodachi – Friend.

Numbers/Counting

| | | | |
|---|-----------|----|---------------|
| 1 | ichi | 6 | roku |
| 2 | ni | 7 | nana, shichi* |
| 3 | san | 8 | hachi |
| 4 | yon, shi* | 9 | ku |
| 5 | go | 10 | ju |

* The word for death is “shi” and out of superstition some people avoid words that use it; hence, the alternate words.

For more ninja vocabulary, visit these links:

- <http://kihon.com/dojo/glossary.html>
- <http://www.cnfnavy.mil/phrases.html>
- <http://japanese.about.com/bllesson20.htm>

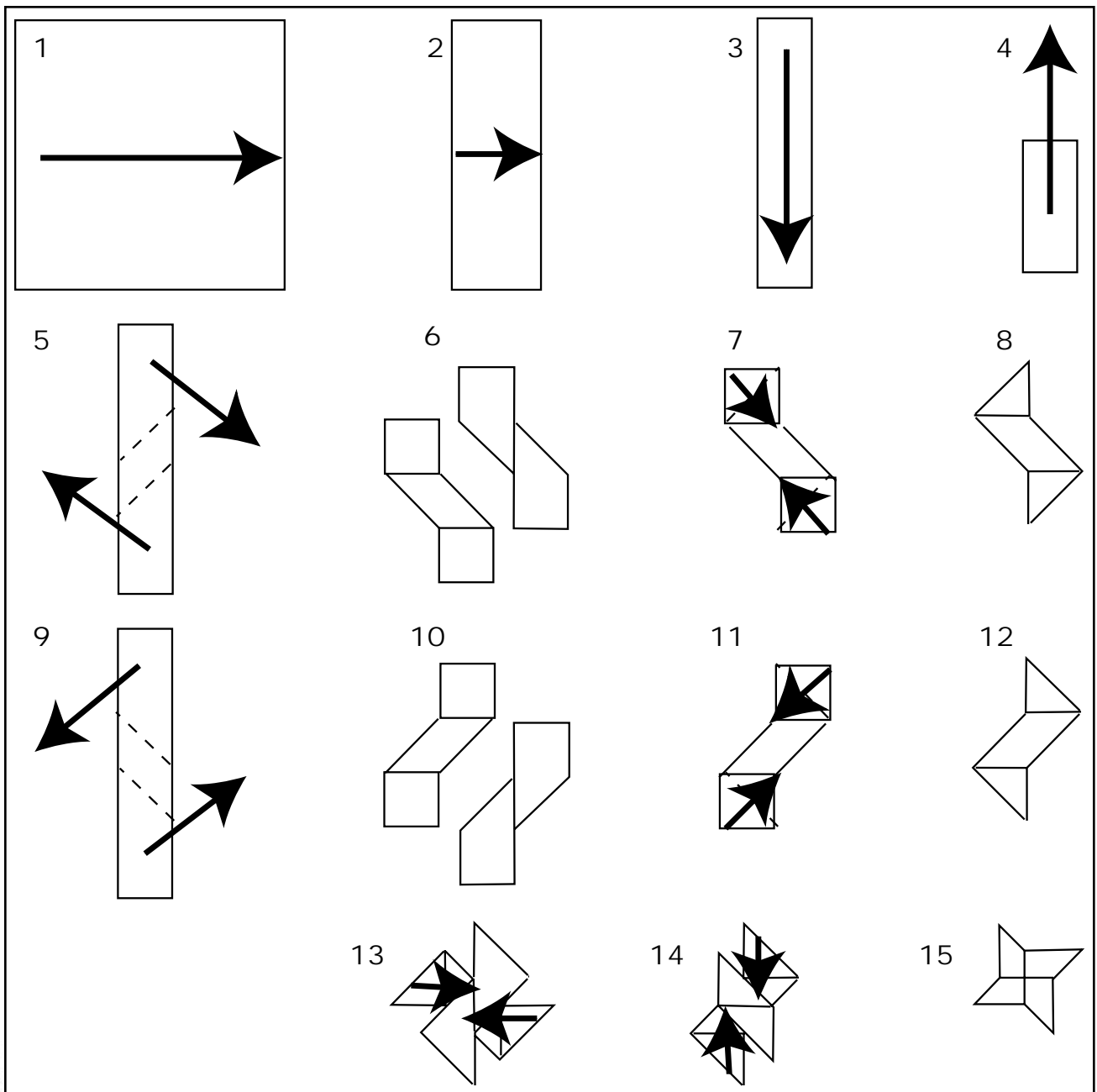
C. NINJA BURGER PROPS

"There are no utensils in medieval times, thus, there are no utensils at Medieval Times. Would you like a refill on that Pepsi®?" – Cable Guy

The following pages include handouts to be used by the Dispatcher and players to enhance their roleplaying experience. They include paper shuriken, character sheets, maps, a menu, and several quick missions, complete with maps. You have permission to make copies of these pages for your own personal use so you don't have to tear them out, but don't give them away on street corners, OK? Thanks.

HOW TO MAKE PAPER SHURIKEN

1. Take a square piece of paper (a regular piece won't do) and fold it in half. Fold it in half again, and then again lengthwise to make a rectangle. Unfold it so you have a crease in the middle.
2. Fold each end diagonally through the middle (see Fig. 5-6). Fold the corners in (see Fig. 7-8).
3. Repeat steps 1-4 with a second sheet of paper.
4. Fold the new sheet in a mirror image of what you did in steps 5-8. See Fig. 9-12 for a guide.
5. Take the two pieces and lay them on top of each other (Fig. 13). Use the indicated folds to tuck the points in so the two pieces are locked (Fig. 14). If you did it right, it will look like Figure 15.





NINJA BURGER
DELIVERY MENU



Order online 24 hours a day at
<http://www.NinjaBurger.com>

| ITEM | DESCRIPTION | PRICE |
|----------------------------------|--|------------------|
| 1. Ninja Burger | Our specialty. Two soy-meat patties hand-broiled in the traditions of our ancestors, special sauce, lettuce, cheese, pickles, onions, and Kung-Fu Grip! All inside a roll. | \$3.50 (¥374) |
| 2. Double Ninja Burger | Four soy-meat patties cooked over an open flame fueled by the bones of our enemies, special sauce, lettuce, cheese, pickles, onions, and Kung-Fu Grip. All inside a roll. | \$5.50 (¥588) |
| 3. Junior Ninja Burger | A single soy-meat patty with special sauce, cheese, pickles, and onions (no lettuce or Kung-Fu Grip), inside a roll. | \$2.00 (¥214) |
| 4. Samurai Chicken Sandwich | Get it? Samurai chicken? Hahahahahahaha. Erk. Does not contain real Samurai (stupid FDA regulations), but does contain a spicy coating, lettuce, tomato, and wasabi sauce. | \$3.50 (¥374) |
| 5. French Fries of Our Ancestors | Crispy French fries cooked in secret Ninja Burger™ style, sprinkled with a secret selection of spices. | \$2.50 (¥267) |
| 6. Onion Death Blossom | Specially requested by our Ninja friends Down Under. Sliced by katana and deep-fried. It's ninjariffic! | \$5.50 (¥588) |
| 7. Large Cola | What were you expecting? Sake? We do not offer sake. When we offer sake, old gaijin lady, spill hot sake on her lap. Sue Ninja Burger™ for million yen. You will drink cola! Cola is good enough for Ninja, and it is good enough for you too. | \$1.50 (¥160) |
| 8. Ninja Burger Combo Meal #1 | Ninja Burger, French Fries of Our Ancestors, and Large Cola. Do not ask for better perfection because there is none, also we would kill you for asking. Enjoy! | \$7.00 (¥756) |
| 9. Ninja Burger Combo Meal #2 | Double Ninja Burger, French Fries of Our Ancestors, and Large Cola. Meal made for a sumo or big Ninja! | \$9.00 (¥972) |

Ohashi, wasabi and napkins (serviettes) are included free of charge with every order, but a minimum of \$10 (¥1,068) must be spent with every order or we will mock you. And please keep in mind that although Ninja Burger provides free delivery in most areas, a nominal delivery charge may be applied depending on your delivery location. Finally, no, we do NOT serve fortune cookie with food. Fortune cookie is Chinese. Ninja Burger is Japanese. Stupid gaijin. Ninja Burger is a registered trademark of aethereal FORGE. All Rights Reserved.

EMPLOYEE APPLICATION

Real Name: _____

Ninja Name: _____

Social Security #: (No need to enter this - we already know)

Street Address: _____

Village: _____ Prefecture: _____

Phone #: _____ Email: _____

Are You 18?: Yes No
 Are You Immortal?: Yes No So Far

Have You Ever Been a Samurai, Yes No
 Ninja Or Other Bushi Before?: Maybe

If Yes, Daimyo: _____

Reason For Going Ronin: Dishonor Daimyo killed

HOURS AVAILABLE:

| | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat | Sun |
|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| From | | | | | | | |
| To | | | | | | | |

Total Hours Available Per Week: _____

Are You Under A Curse, Yes No
 Geas or Blood Oath?: Curse Prevents From Saying

How Did You Hear Of Job?: _____

How Far Do You Live From Work?: _____ Miles / KM

How Will You Get To Work?: Horse Run Magic
 Car Bus Train

DOJO MOST RECENTLY ATTENDED:

Name: _____

Street Address: _____

Village: _____ Prefecture: _____

Phone #: _____ Martial Art: _____

Sensei: _____ Kyu / Dan: _____

Reason for leaving: _____

FOR OFFICIAL NINJA BURGER RPG USE ONLY

Job Title: _____

Qualities that qualify the candidate for this position:

Background: (Summarize candidate's job history):

Element: _____

Clan: _____

M. of Honor: _____

Honor Score: _____

Juhakkei (Verify ninja candidate's skill in these areas):

- Taijutsu** – Unarmed Combat
- Kendo / Ninja Ken** – Swordsmanship
- Bojutsu** – Staff / club fighting
- Shurikenjutsu** – Blade / shuriken throwing
- Kusarigama** – Sickle and chain fighting
- Yari** – Spear fighting
- Naginata** – Halberd / axe fighting
- Bajutsu** – Horsemanship
- Suiren** – Swimming techniques
- Kayakujutsu** – Use of gunpowder
- Bo Ryaku** – Strategies
- Choho** – Espionage
- Shinobi Iri** – Infiltration
- Intonjutsu** – Lying low
- Hensojutsu** – Disguise
- Tenmon** – Meteorology
- Chimon** – Geography
- Seishin Teki Kyoyo** – Spiritual refinement
- Kyojitsu Tenkan Ho** – Philosophy
- Makudonarudo** – Fast food

一
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NINJA BURGER



TWO MOST RECENT JOBS:

Employer: _____

Employer: _____

Address: _____

Address: _____

Dates Worked: From _____ To _____

Dates Worked: From _____ To _____

Phone #: _____ Payment: _____

Phone #: _____ Payment: _____

Reason for leaving: _____

Reason for leaving: _____

MILITARY EXPERIENCE:

Branch of Service: _____

Branch of Service: _____

Country: _____

Country: _____

Dates Worked: From _____ To _____

Dates Worked: From _____ To _____

Rank: _____ Payment: _____

Rank: _____ Payment: _____

Reason for leaving: _____

Reason for leaving: _____

Have you ever been convicted of/pled guilty to a crime, excluding misdemeanors & traffic violations? Yes No

Have you ever committed a crime/crimes for which you were not convicted or captured? Yes No

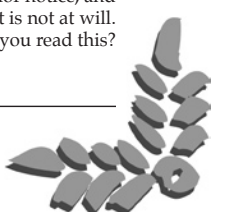
If Yes to either question, describe in full: _____

GENERAL EXPERIENCE:

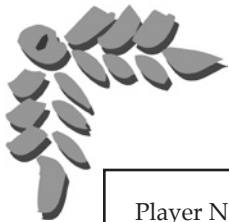
What additional relevant experiences or training have you had which you feel would add to your value as a Ninja Burger employee? (Include weapons, poisons, or any of the Ninja Juhakkei):

I certify that I have read and fully completed both sides of this application and that the information contained on this application is correct to the best of my knowledge and understand that any omission or erroneous information is grounds for dismissal, torture or decapitation by Ninja Burger. I understand that Ninja Burger provides a unique service to their customers. This service may include situations which could prove quite hazardous to your health, or the health of others. These situations include: capture by the enemy; attack by Ronin or Samurai warriors; poison by rogue Ninja; temptation by female Ninja (Kunoichi); falling off walls; falling into spiked pits; being decapitated; grease burns; and salmonella poisoning. By signing below (not optional), I agree to hold Ninja Burger free of all liability regarding any injury or death which may occur during the above, or any other, circumstances which may or may not arise as a condition of working for Ninja Burger. Furthermore, I agree that Ninja Burger will deny my employment if asked by anyone, including future employers, law enforcement officials, or next of kin. I acknowledge that Ninja Burger reserves the right to amend or modify the policies at any time, without prior notice, and that these policies do not create any promises or contractual obligations between Ninja Burger and its employees. At Ninja Burger, employment is not at will. This means I am not free to terminate my employment at any time, for any reason. Attempts to terminate employment will result in death. Did you read this?

Sign Here: _____



DISPATCHER RECORD SHEET



Player Name: _____

Ninja Name: _____

Job Title: _____

Qualities: _____

Element: _____

Clan: _____

M. of Honor: _____

Honor Score: _____

Player Name: _____

Ninja Name: _____

Job Title: _____

Qualities: _____

Element: _____

Clan: _____

M. of Honor: _____

Honor Score: _____

Player Name: _____

Ninja Name: _____

Job Title: _____

Qualities: _____

Element: _____

Clan: _____

M. of Honor: _____

Honor Score: _____

Player Name: _____

Ninja Name: _____

Job Title: _____

Qualities: _____

Element: _____

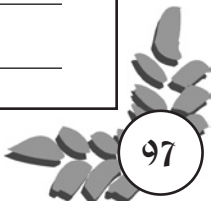
Clan: _____

M. of Honor: _____

Honor Score: _____

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D. QUICK DELIVERIES

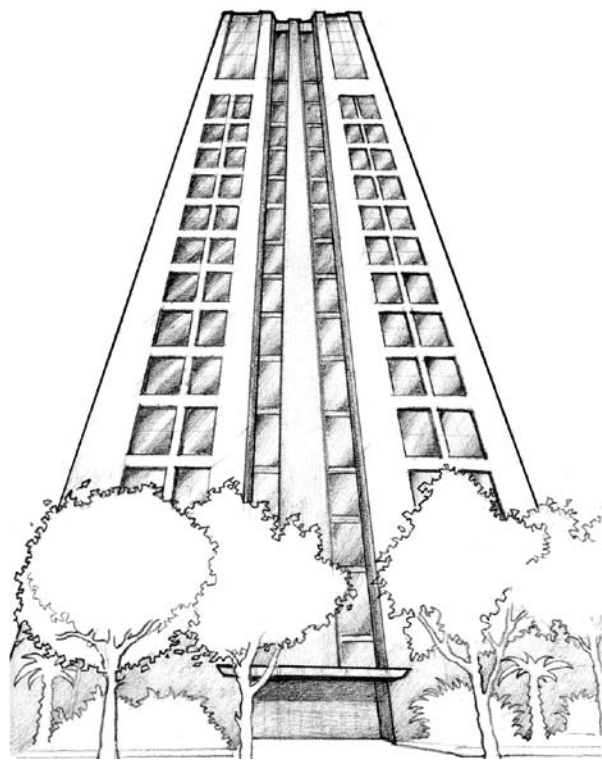
The following four deliveries are meant to illustrate the types of missions that ninja players might be sent on. They are set up movie-style, with a synopsis, a “call to action” which the Dispatcher might read aloud, a cast of characters, and three acts worth of adventure.

QD1- DIET HARD

Terrorists have taken over a building! Unfortunately for them, they’ve got the wrong one, and have invaded not a corporate tower, but a high-rise apartment complex. Making their lives more difficult is the fact that the building they chose is the abode of one of the city’s vigilante cops, home on paid leave and an enforced diet due to the fact that he failed his physical. Now, overrun by “terrorists,” he says “to hell with the diet” and calls Ninja Burger. They’ve got to get in and deliver in 30 minutes, or the bad guys will find him. He’s all that stands between them and... something.

CALL TO ACTION

“Kay, we got a SWiM (that’s a Single White Male), age 45, 13th floor of the Sockitome Apartment Complex, suite 1312. Order is for a burger, extra mayo, extra cheese, extra burger, plus an order of fries, with extra fries. 27 minutes to go. It’s a condo, 1,200 square feet, standard layout. Door on one end, glassed-in patio on the other, elevators, two staircases. Looks pretty clean. Oh, except for the terrorists. Did I mention them?”



CAST OF CHARACTERS

John McLean. Expert [+4] Cop, Good [+2] Aim, Good [+2] Dessert Trivia, Poor [-2] Physique

Hans Uppe. Expert [+4] Bank Robber, Good [+2] Acting, Poor [-2] Speaking German

Carl “The Dragon” Marks. Good [+2] Terrorist, Good [+2] Aim, Poor [-2] Self Control

Random Goons. Good [+2] Following Orders, Average [+0] Bank Robbers, Poor [-2] Aim

Random Cops. Good [+2] Cop, Poor [-2] Strong Dislike of Masked People

ACT 1

A group of would-be-terrorists masquerading as bank robbers have taken over a building, in the hopes of making some money and kidnapping a corporate executive for ransom. Unfortunately for them, they got the address wrong and they wound up taking over a condominium instead. As luck would have it, this condo just so happens to be the home of a police officer on leave – he spotted the bad guys, pulled the alarm, and dodged a hail of gunfire on the way back to his room. Then, exhausted from the ordeal, he placed a second call to Ninja Burger.

Getting to the parking lot outside the apartment complex is a fairly simple process, but the building is surrounded by fire trucks, police cars, reporters and several heaps of smoldering metal. Apparently these bad guys have come armed, and they’re fond of launching rockets out the windows at any vehicles that come too close. If the delivery vehicle comes closer than a block away, the terrorists will likely launch a rocket at it. This is easily dodged on an Average driving check, but it will also draw the attention of the crowds surrounding the building. This could be bad.

The biggest challenge here is getting inside the building, of course. Sneaking past the police [Target 9] might do the trick, or a disguise [Target 7] might very well be an option, as long as a nosy reporter doesn’t try to ask any questions along the way, which will require some bluffing [Target 9].

Once inside, ninja need to get past the terrorists, who are more than happy to blast anyone they see trying to get inside the first floor. They have all the elevators and stairways covered, but if the ninja are suitably sneaky, they might avoid a direct conflict at this point and get through into a stairwell. However, no matter what happens, the characters will inevitably (and possibly accidentally) kill one of the bad guys as they enter, whether by stabbing him, squishing him, knocking something on top of him, etc. This is “Little Dragon,” aka Carl Marks’s brother, and when he finds out what happened, he will not be at all happy.

Act 2

Once inside the condo, there are numerous challenges to overcome. John McLean (who is not so lean) is wedged in an air vent he unsuccessfully tried to climb through above his bathroom. Not only will the characters have to get up to the 13th floor – bypassing broken elevators, terrorists with machine guns, potential random SWAT team members, and the like – but they’ll have to figure out where their customer is before 30 minutes have elapsed. And of course, the skilled cop won’t be able to help them fend off terrorists along the way, though if they do manage to establish radio contact [Target 13], he will be able to help them navigate around the building. He will not, however, mention the fact that he’s stuck in a vent.

He’s too embarrassed.

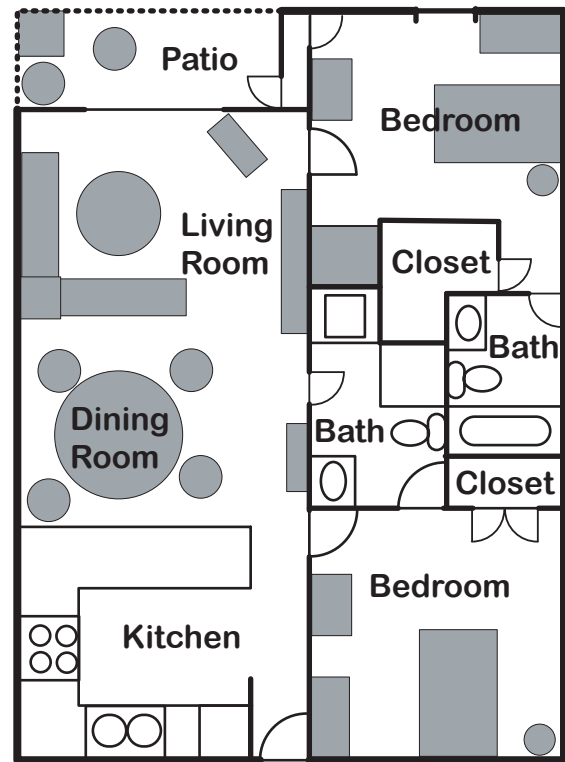
There are at least three groups of terrorists roaming the halls, each group coincidentally consisting of the exact number of player characters in the team.

The primary tactic of the first group is to take up positions at the end of a hallway, or just inside a condo apartment, and fire wildly, filling the hall with bullets to prevent anyone from passing through the area. The characters will really have to make a concerted effort to get killed here; simply sneaking down a different hallway or filling the area with smoke will be enough to slip by with very little effort [Target 7].

The second group is a bit better armed, as well as a bit more tactically astute, and while the characters are distracted by gunfire, one of them will busily set up a rocket launcher. If combat is somehow drawn out for longer than 30 seconds, he will appear around a corner and fire the rocket at the characters. Assuming they are not all killed in the ensuing explosion, two things result from this. The first is that any remaining terrorists in this group are knocked out of combat, either dead or unconscious. The second is that the loud explosion draws the attention of the third group of terrorists wandering the halls. The really bad one.

The team’s biggest challenge will come in the form of “The Dragon,” Hans’ second-in-command and the would-be leader of the group. Eager to seek revenge for the death of his brother, he will lead a group of goons (again, equal in number to the number of PCs) in an all-out assault on the ninja team, not stopping until they are all dead, or he is. He is quite a tactician, and will position his men in flanking positions, have them provide covering fire while he advances, and the like. It will take some effort to take him down.

Of course, while the battle ensues, the clock is ticking... throughout all this noise and fire, the Dispatcher should keep reminding the characters that they have a job to do, and they are running out of time. Leave the terrorists to the police – deliver the food!



Act 3

Once The Dragon is dispatched, only one obstacle stands between Ninja Burger and their delivery – Hans. While they’ve been dealing with Carl, Hans has wired the entire building to explode, with the intent of killing everyone inside. *Except, he hopes, himself.*

Unfortunately, Hans is holed up inside John’s condo apartment, lurking in the living room near the patio. Holding a detonator in one hand, and an assault rifle in the other, he orders the delivery team to drop the food and leave the premises. Of course, if they do this, they’ll have failed to complete the delivery.

Clever ninja will notice that John, their customer, is stuck in the vent above the bathroom, and that he has a pistol. If they can somehow coax Hans into the dining room, John will have a clear shot, and will shoot the detonator right out of Hans’ hands. Of course, ninja might try the same thing with shuriken, but this will be extremely difficult [Target 13], and failure will result in the detonator being triggered anyway.

This can really only end two ways:

1) The detonator IS triggered, The building begins to collapse from the top down, and the ninja have ten seconds to devise a way to get out. Many people will be killed, including their customer, but if they’ve delivered already, then they might avoid Seppuku.

2) The detonator is NOT triggered. Hans may or may not escape, but his plans are foiled, and the delivery is a success. With a little effort, and some butter, John can be extricated from the vent, and all ends well. Or as well as these things go, as it were.

QD2- BURGER, SHE WROTE

Another day, another delivery for Ninja Burger. This time, the delivery itself seems easy – take five combo meals to a loft apartment. However, when the team arrives, they will discover a dead body, which raises two questions: who killed Jessica Fryer, and who’s gonna pay for all this food?

CALL TO ACTION

“Awright guys, order’s comin’ in. Five, that’s five combo meals, to be delivered to the home of Jessica Fryer. She’s one of our regular customers and between you and me, a big tipper, if you’re polite. The address should be in your computers already, but it’s practically around the corner. Can’t miss it. Big yellow loft, palm trees out front. She’s in number 12, and expecting you, so there’s no need for stealth here. Door’s unlocked, so you can probably just walk right in and deliver the goods, if you want. Should be easy.”

CAST OF CHARACTERS

- Jessica Fryer.** Expert [+4] Mystery Writer, Good [+2] Detective, Poor [-2] Aura of Bad Luck
- Jeeves.** Good [+2] British Butler, Good [+2] Dry Wit, Poor [-2] Stuck Up
- Jean-Marie.** Good [+2] French Maid, Good [+2] Sexy, Poor [-2] Clumsy
- Jésus.** Good [+2] Mexican Gardener, Good [+2] Strong Hands, Poor [-2] Illiterate
- Hermes Perot.** Expert [+4] Private Eye, Good [+2] Witty, Poor [-2] Egocentric

ACT 1

Somewhat atypically, getting into this apartment is the easiest part of the delivery. The front door is not only unlocked, it’s *wide open*. The door leads into a small hallway, with a closet off to one side, and a staircase leading up into the loft on the other.

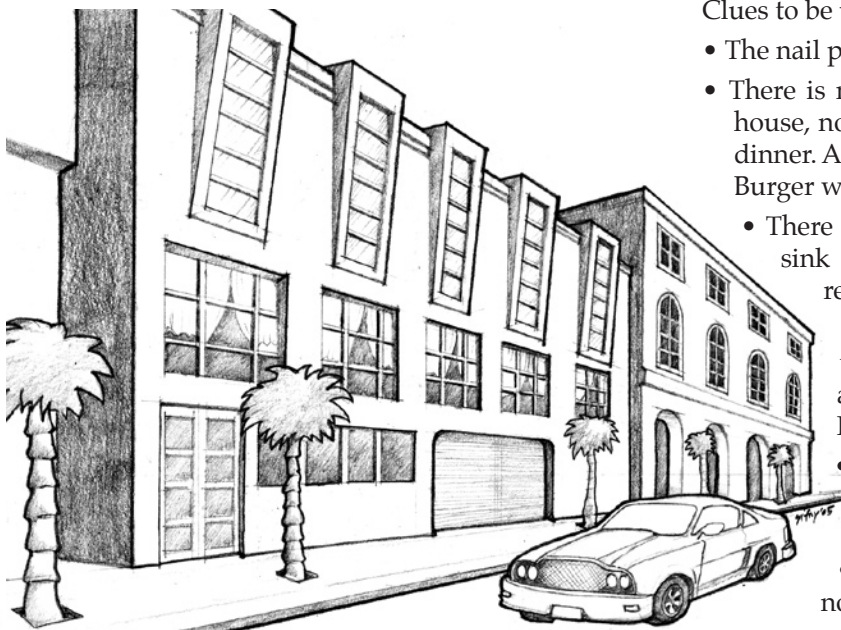
Upstairs, a quick search of the apartment reveals a somewhat untidy state of affairs. Pillows have fallen off the back of the couches in the living area, and computer disks are scattered on the floor beneath a computer desk in the opposite corner. In the kitchen, half an onion sits on the counter, the other half having been diced up in preparation for a meal of some sort (and recently enough to still bring tears to your eyes if you get too close). On the stove, a pot of boiling water rapidly depletes itself, only an inch left in the bottom.

The real mystery comes when the ninja investigate the bedroom, which is over the kitchen and accessible via a narrow iron staircase. Lying on the floor beside her bed is the body of Jessica Fryer. She is dressed in her nightclothes, and appears to be dead – there’s no obvious pulse, and no sign of breathing. There is no sign of what killed her – her body is unmarred – but in her hand she clutches a piece of paper that reads “It was Je-.” It appears to be written in nail polish, and a search of the area beside the bed reveals a tipped-over nail polish container. Next to her is an empty glass.

The PCs are faced with a delivery that needs to be delivered, but there’s no protocol that deals with delivering to someone who’s dead. Second, they have a dead customer, and Ninja Burger HQ (by way of the Dispatcher) will insist they figure out who did it. It could be an enemy of Ninja Burger, after all, targeting customers. Since the PCs are already there...

Clues to be uncovered in the apartment include:

- The nail polish bottle is missing its brush.
- There is no pasta anywhere to be found in the house, nor anything else that one might boil for dinner. And why was dinner being made if Ninja Burger was being delivered?
- There are small bits of mud in the bathroom sink downstairs. A closer inspection will reveal that this is fertilizer.
- There’s a small bit of nail polish on the bookshelf in the living area, beneath a missing book. It appears to be Ms. Fryer’s first novel that’s missing.
- Amongst the scattered pillows on the floor is a single long strand of red hair. Jessica is not a redhead.
- Though computer disks are scattered, nothing appears to be missing, and the computer is not turned on.



Act 2

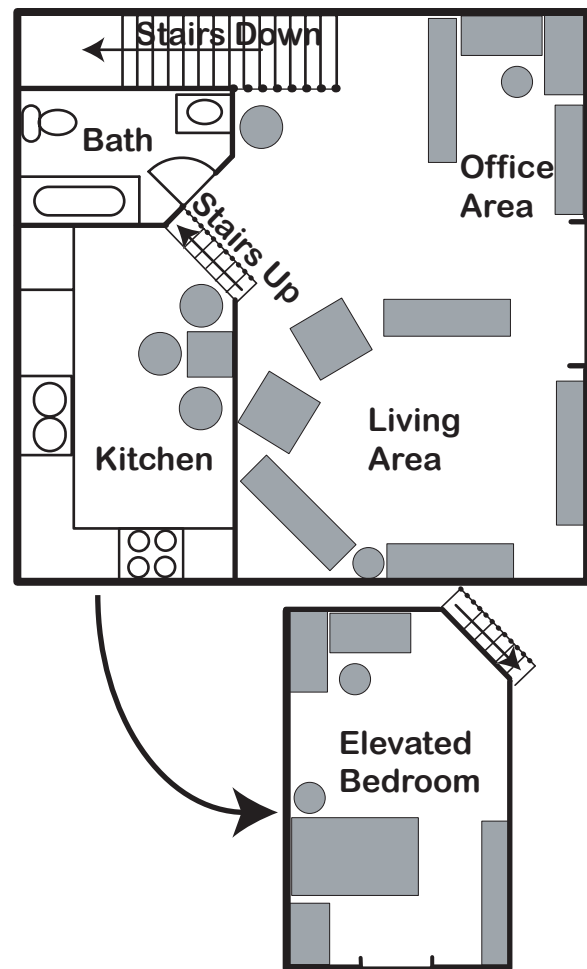
Shortly after discovering the body (within a minute or so), the first of several “guests” will arrive by way of the front door. It is probably at this point that the characters discover that there are no other ways in or out of the loft apartment – all the windows are sealed and locked shut, and made from glass block.

There are at least two different ways for PCs to deal with this situation – disguise and stealth. They might disguise themselves as police or investigators and question “suspects,” or they might use stealth and sneak around the apartment to observe the goings-on. Either option will prove increasingly amusing as more and more guests arrive, leaving fewer options.

The guests arrive in the following order:

1. **Jeeves**, Ms. Fryer’s butler is first, announcing his presence with “Ms. Fryer? It’s Jeeves. You left the door open.” He is carrying a bag containing what’s needed to make a spaghetti dinner. If left alone, he will go about preparing dinner, putting items away, chopping, making sauce, etc. without ever going upstairs. Whether this implies guilt, or ignorance, is up to the PCs to decide.
2. **Jean-Marie**, Ms. Fryer’s maid is next. She drops cleaning supplies, and (if nobody stops her) starts to clean, vacuuming, dusting, etc. This destroys evidence, which the PCs might want to prevent in some way or other. She acknowledges Jeeves with a nod, but otherwise does not speak with him. After she cleans the main area, she goes into the bathroom. She does not go upstairs.
3. **Jésus**, Ms. Fryer’s gardener, arrives next-to-last. His hands are filthy, and he wrings his hands somewhat nervously. Small spots of blood can be seen on his hands. He rushes to the bathroom without greeting anyone and proceeds to take a shower. He does this regardless of whether or not Jean-Marie is in there.
4. The last to arrive is Ms. Fryer’s best friend, **Hermes Perot**. He asks loudly where Ms. Fryer is, and when none of her staff replies, he goes upstairs, where he loudly announces that Jeeves should call the police. Rather than dial the phone, Jeeves (who is chopping tomatoes) walks upstairs with the chef’s knife in his hand. Perot pulls a gun, and marches Jeeves downstairs. He then rounds up Jean-Marie and Jésus (both of whom have wet hair, since they just showered together) and makes everyone sit in the living area so he can question them to figure out the truth.

If the PCs are in disguise during this entire period, then obviously events will unfold a bit differently. In this case, allow the PCs to control the flow of events as they order people around and investigate things.



Act 3

Once all four have arrived, they can be questioned, either by Perot or by the PCs. The following secrets coming to light during questioning:

- Jeeves is in possession of the missing novel. He will at first say he just borrowed it, but if pressed admits he wanted to sell it on Ebay.
- Jean-Marie is in possession of the missing nail brush, which she says she found under a pillow. She is having an affair with Jésus.
- Jésus is dirty because he was working in the rooftop garden, where Ms. Fryer grows several lethal plants (including Nightshade).
- Hermes Perot is in possession of prescription painkillers which could be used to kill someone, if they overdosed on them.

When the PCs have finally decided they know who killed Ms. Fryer (or when they give up, or when the police are called), Ms. Fryer herself suddenly gets up and enters the room. She was just playing dead, using some of Perot’s painkillers and plants from the garden. It was all just so she could gather material for her next novel, to be entitled “The Ninja and the Nightshade.” For their trouble, she gives each ninja a \$1,000 tip, then shoos everyone out so she can begin her novel.

QD3- HOUSE ON HAMBURGER HILL ACT 1

This is a delivery to a haunted house, but exactly *how haunted* depends on the Dispatcher's mood. The descriptions that follow leave the real facts about what's going on to the imagination. Obviously, the house is portrayed as being haunted, but depending on your world's VR rating, this might be real ghosts, a technological trick, or old Man Winters trying to fool those darn kids again. Up to you.

CALL TO ACTION

"Ok, we got an order for ten, count 'em, ten combo number twos. That's ten burgers, ten fries, ten colas, and we got twenty-five minutes left on the clock. Drop zone is... oh no. Let me double check that... Yeah, I was afraid of this. The delivery point is the old mansion on the top of Hamburger Hill. We've lost more ninja there than I can count. Well, anyway, off you go. Customer's name is... Tippy? Says here he's a... beagle? That can't be right. Just get going. I'll check on that and update you along the way. Watch yourselves."

CAST OF CHARACTERS

- Frank.** Good [+2] Amateur Detective, Good [+2] Leader, Poor [-2] Predictable
- Tiffany.** Good [+2] Amateur Detective, Good [+2] Looking, Poor [-2] Dumb Blonde
- Valerie.** Expert [+4] Intellect, Poor [-2] Fashion
- Scruffy.** Good [+2] Driving, Poor [-2] Cowardice
- Tippy.** Good [+2] Dog, Poor [-2] Cowardice

A group of amateur detectives has taken a bet. They're spending the night in an old haunted mansion, and if they uncover the mystery inside, they'll earn themselves a cool \$1,000. (Hey, times are tough!) They've confident they'll solve this mystery the same way they've done it before: prove it's all a hoax, collect the cash, and head out for burgers. The terms of their bet stipulate that they can't leave the house for any reason – not even to eat.

Thing is, the fridge is empty, and their rations are depleted. Now, a couple members of the group don't want to wait for dinner, and they've called Ninja Burger in. They might not be able to leave, but if anyone can get inside this house – haunted or not – it's ninja.

Pulling up outside the house, which is on a hill in a bad part of town, the team will notice a van parked in the driveway. Inside, there's nothing but the remnants of some dog biscuits and the faint smell of patchouli. It's clear that whoever drove the van is inside the house, waiting for their order.

Getting inside the old Victorian house will not be easy, however. All the doors have been boarded shut from the outside – an obvious attempt to keep whoever's inside from leaving – and all the windows are likewise sealed shut with heavy boards. Prying an entrance open will be noisy and take a few minutes, but is doable.

However, the first ninja through any such opening – window or door – will fall victim to a cleverly placed guillotine trap. The ninja can make a Complicated check (Target 11) to avoid the blade; otherwise, he takes 4 Ranks of damage and loses a hand or foot (his choice). Ouch!

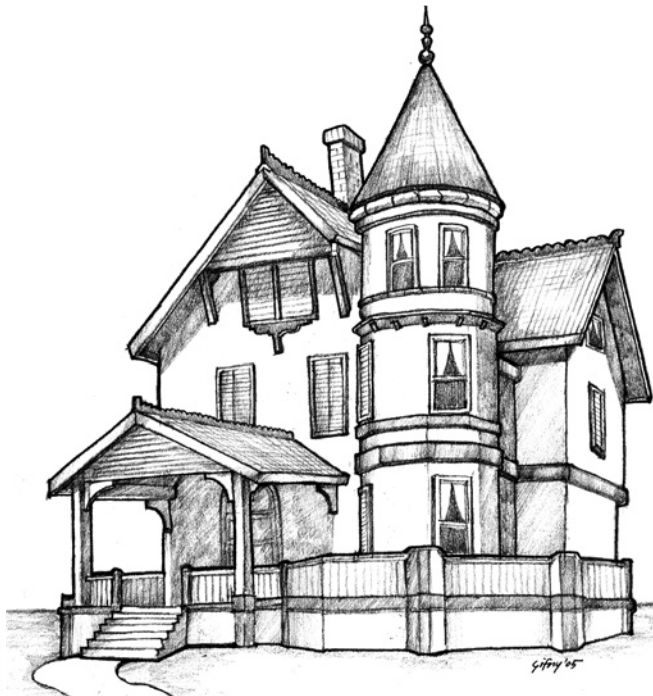
The Dispatcher can assure the team that they can probably reattach that back at Ninja Burger HQ.

Probably.

If the team opts to skip the doors and windows, there's always the garage. This seems like a good plan, except for the fact that it's full of vampire bats. Anyone prying the door open will release a cloud of the bloodsuckers, which will swarm all over the ninja and deal 2 Ranks of damage to everyone before fluttering off into the night.

Another option is the chimney, which will require a climbing check (Target 9). Getting down the chimney is much easier – it's quite large, and can fit even an overweight ninja. However, the first one down will discover that someone has lit a fire underneath them. Anyone without protection (Ninja Magic, for example, if it's allowed) takes 4 Ranks of fire damage; ninja whose Element happens to be Fire only take 2 Ranks. This only affects the first one down the chimney.

Once the ninja are inside, the real fun begins.



ACT 2

The house doesn't appear to be that large, but for some reason it's difficult to find any of the people in the house. In part, this is because the house is working against everyone – but it's also because the kids are a bunch of hiding cowards because they believe the ninja are ghosts and ghouls out to get them. Each of the five is in a different room of the house.

Valerie is in the Study on the first floor, studying the history of the building. Anyone entering the room will see a sword on the wall detach itself and fly towards her. If the ninja do not stop the sword, it will impale and kill her; if they do intervene, other swords will also detach (one per ninja) and they will become engaged with invisible swordsmen whose skill matches their own. If defeated, the swords will drop to the ground. Valerie will be quite thankful and amorous, and will tell the ninja that she didn't order the food, and that it was probably Frank and Tiffany. "They're upstairs in the B E D room," she will say scornfully.

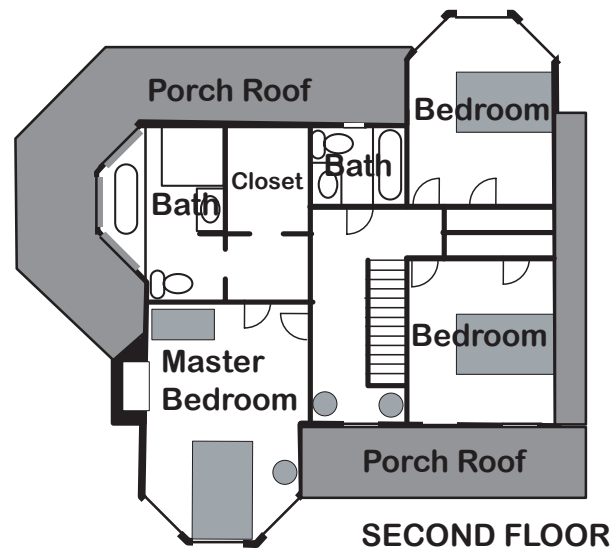
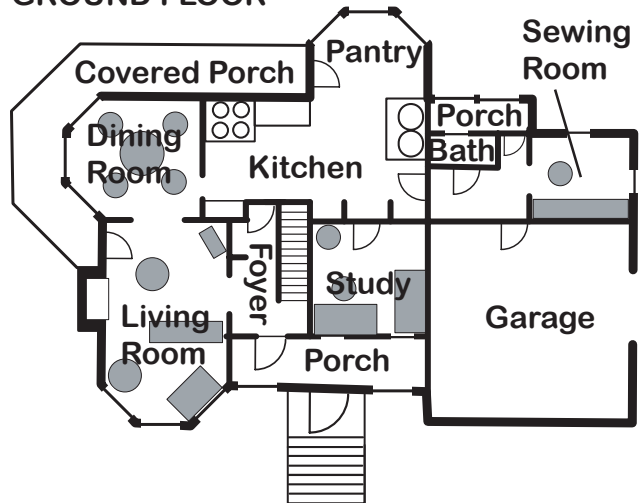
Frank is in the Master Bedroom on the second floor, hiding in a closet beside the walk-in bathroom. He will react at first with panic, swinging a large board at the first person to find him, but if he can be calmed down or subdued, he will be indignant that he is not afraid, and was just surprised. He knows nothing about the food delivery, and suspects it was "probably Scruffy." He does not know where Scruffy is, but seems eager to get the ninja to head back downstairs.

The reason for his evasiveness is the ninja have interrupted a heavy make-out session between him and Tiffany, who scurried into the adjoining Bathroom, sans several pieces of clothing. Unbeknownst to Frank, Tiffany stumbled into one of the house's secrets, and was knocked out and pulled into the shower, which is quickly filling with blood. If the ninja do not find her and break the glass, Frank will begin calling for help after they head back downstairs. As long as they assist him before the delivery time expires, she can be saved. If they wait until they deliver the food, though, she will be in serious trouble of a fatal kind.

Scruffy is a shaggy hipster who will be discovered in the kitchen, curled up inside the empty refrigerator, cowering in fear. He will assume the ninja are demons and will do everything in his power to flee the room. During the chaos, the gas line on the stove disconnects, and the room fills with gas (Target 11 to notice). Once this happens, everyone has 5 minutes to leave the house before it explodes in a ball of flame.

Scruffy will steadfastly deny having ordered the food, and will insist that it was Tippy. Tippy, he adds, is a dog. In fact, Scruffy is lying – he ordered the food – but in any case, Tippy can be found nearby, in the first floor bathroom, drinking from the toilet.

GROUND FLOOR



ACT 3

Regardless of whether anyone noticed or not, the entire house is going to explode in a ball of blue flame at some point. If the ninja notice, presumably they will attempt to get everyone out, although Valerie, in particular, will put up a fight since this means they'll have to give up the prize money.

If any ninja are in the house when it detonates, they take 10 Ranks of damage, which can only be reduced through appropriate Qualities like Armor, or Ninja Magic (if allowed). Any of the amateur detectives in the house at the time are killed, which is bad, since they are all Ninja Burger customers. This will result in a loss of honor for any survivors.

After the explosion, police and fire trucks will show up quickly, so the team will have to scramble to avoid being detected or arrested. A car chase might ensue.

If this is part of a longer campaign, the house will mysteriously be rebuilt within a week, as if nothing had ever happened. Spoooooooky...

QD4- THE MEATRIX

In the near future (or perhaps the present), a young hacker named Andy Thompson (code name Prius) has decided to place an order with a new robot fast food chain called The Meatrix. He is their first customer, but if they have their way, he won't be the last. Their plan is to move into every house in the city and make everyone their customer. Can Prius' friends, and Ninja Burger, save him from a fate worse than death? And, more importantly, do they want to?

CALL TO ACTION

"We got a weird one here. Sounds sort of garbled, like encryption. Anyway, this is through a third party. Unusual, but not unheard of. Someone's paid us to deliver a burger and fries to a Mr. Andy Thompson, lives in the bad part of town, if you know what I mean. We know where he lives, but we can't pull it up on the computer. Maybe you guys can figure out what's up when you get there. Here's the address."

CAST OF CHARACTERS

- Andy "Prius" Thompson.** Good [+2] Hacker, Good [+2] Quick Learner, Poor [-2] Low IQ
- Duality.** Good [+2] Hacker, Good [+2] Martial Arts, Poor [-2] Loves Andy Thompson
- Proteus.** Good [+2] Hacker, Expert [+4] Martial Arts, Poor [-2] Guilty Conscience
- AG-NTs.** Expert [+4] Robot, Good [+2] Stun Gun, Poor [-2] Can't Climb Stairs



ACT 1

While the team is en route to the delivery location, a white Volkswagen Rabbit pulls up alongside theirs, and the people inside do everything in their power to stop the ninja vehicle – flagging them down, cutting them off, even resorting to shooting out their tires if need be. The PCs will probably do everything in their power to avoid being stopped, but in the end, something should cause their vehicle to stall, crash or otherwise stop moving.

At this point, the two people inside the other vehicle get out and surround the ninja. They quickly introduce themselves as Duality and Proteus, and then ask if the PCs have ever heard of The Meatrix.

"The Meatrix has pulled the wool over your eyes," says Proteus. "They phoned in that delivery to get you into their clutches. You're heading right into a trap."

The Meatrix, he will go on to say, is a new fast food chain run by robots. He knows because he was the founder. He and a group of other hackers wanted to start up a new dot com business that would make them all millions, but the project got out of control. Of the original team, only Duality, Proteus and Prius are left. All the other team members got hired by Google.

Now there's a group of robots out running around that have only one mission in mind: making everyone in the world their loyal customer, for life. Obviously, this won't sit well with Ninja Burger, and after checking with the Dispatcher, higher-ups will insist that the PCs help to eliminate the competition.

However, they will add one important fact – the call to Ninja Burger was not entirely in vain. Andy Thompson (aka Prius) is the prisoner of the robots, and delivering him real food is the only way to break him free of their clutches and return him to consciousness. Ninja Burger has 20 minutes left to get the order to him – even if it does turn out to be a trap, the customer comes first.

Both Duality and Proteus insist on coming along. Duality is in love with Andy (they used to have some hot cyber-chat sessions) and Proteus feels incredibly guilty that he's loosed something like this on the world. At least, that's what he seems to be feeling...

The truth of the matter is that Proteus is thrilled that the robots are working as he planned. He's eager to seek a second round of funding for his startup, and he wants proof that these things work. Everyone else involved is part of his nefarious plan, and although on the surface he will appear to help the PCs, attack the robots, etc., he will do everything he can to secretly work against them. He can willingly fail any successful die roll, for example to avoid killing a robot or saving a PC from their clutches.

ACT 2

Once the team has arrived at Andy's house, their primary goal is to get in and deliver the food to him. There are several ways into his house – in addition to the many windows, there are three doors, including one in the front, one in the garage, and one in the back yard. Each of these leads up a short flight of stairs to Andy's apartment, which is on the first floor. The second floor is inhabited by Andy's landlord, who will continually pound on the ceiling or complain about any noises he hears.

Doors and windows are all locked, but the robots inside will not actively prevent anyone from entering. Quite the contrary – they want the PCs trapped inside so they, too, can be forced to become customers. It's in their programming.

For this reason, it's remarkably easy to find Andy. Although Duality and Proteus will spin tales about how the robots will have him encased in a slimy pod so they can force feed him liquid fast food, in reality Andy is just asleep in his bathtub, listening to techno music, and smoking a joint. He will awake when the door is opened, greet everyone with a "Whoa, dudes," and take the food.

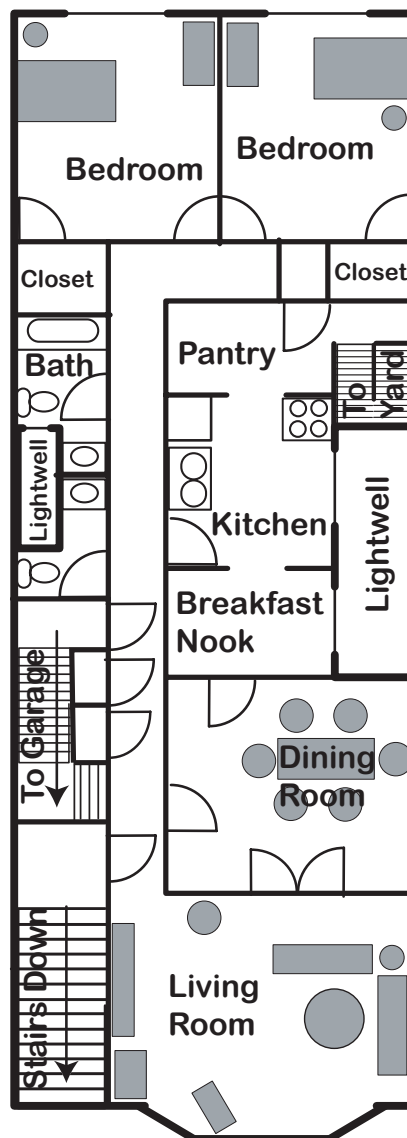
"Something's not right," he says. "Something's changed." He empties out the bag, and inside is not a burger, but a pile of oily bolts.

Suddenly, from all around the apartment come the sounds of robots rising to life. Each robot is marked with a model number and the letters "AG-NT," and wields a long weapon – a cross between a cattle prod and a barbecue fork – that sizzles with electricity.

The robots will use herding tactics to try and get all the PCs and their friends into the same room, where they will be restricted and can easily be stunned into submission. Assuming this happens, they will be tied up and placed in the bedrooms, where they will be force fed a slurry of liquid beef, and their bank accounts deducted automatically with each feeding.

Hopefully this won't happen, since it would probably mean the end of the player's campaign (though this would be an amusing end to a one-shot).

However, this end is unlikely. Each one of the AG-NT robots also rolls around on narrow treads, making it impossible for them to climb stairs. Once the PCs realize this, all they need to do to escape the robots is to run up to the second floor. Of course, Andy's landlord will not be too thrilled about this, and he will go so far as to pull out a shotgun to make the PCs leave, call the police, or threaten to evict Andy from his apartment.



ACT 3

Once Andy has been officially "rescued," Proteus will reveal himself for what he is. He had the robots programmed to hate ninja, and then delivered them to Andy's apartment (they can't climb stairs) and that it's all part of his plan to dominate the fast food industry. Since Ninja Burger is his greatest competition, they all must die. He opens a nearby closet (or car door) to unleash 1d6 AG-NT Mark 2 robots upon the group ("Whoa, Upgrades," says Andy). These robots have enhanced treads, and they can climb stairs.

During the battle, Andy will show himself to be quite inept at most tasks. However, any time he fails in a check, he gets a +2 the next time he attempts the exact same task, since he learns well from his mistakes. He is, however, quite dull, and does not take direction well, so the PCs should not count on him.

Assuming they survive, Duality and Andy thank the characters for their help, and then head off to the bedroom to have some private time.

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QUICK PLAY (P21-29)

Compare Difficulty Rank Target Number to PC's most appropriate Quality Rank. The higher Rank "wins." If the Difficulty Rank of the task is equal to or higher than the PC's Quality Rank, the PC rolls 2d6 and adds his Quality Rank. If he matches or exceeds the Target, he succeeds. If the PC is in conflict with another person, they each roll 2d6 and add relevant qualities. The winner inflicts the difference in Failure or Damage Ranks on the loser; if it's a tie, each loses 2 Ranks.

| Level | As Quality Rank | Modifier to 2d6 Roll | As Difficulty Rank | Target Number |
|---------|-----------------|----------------------|--------------------|---------------|
| Poor | Inept | -2 | Trivial | 5 |
| Average | Typical | 0 | Average | 7 |
| Good | Talented | 2 | Complex | 9 |
| Expert | Professional | 4 | Intricate | 11 |
| Master | Genius | 6 | Difficult | 13 |

QUICK CHARACTER CREATION (P9-19)

1. Name – (see p. 9) Choose a name, or roll 2d6 twice on the Ninja Name table here for a first name and family name.

2-3. Job Title (p. 10-12) & Qualities (p. 13-15) Choose one of the following: Chef, Deliverator, Driver, Navigator, or Spotter. Write down the following Quality block, based on the Job Title chosen. Or, pick your own Job Title and take Average [+0] Ninja, 6 Ranks of Strengths, and 2 Ranks of Weaknesses.

Chef: Average [+0] Ninja, Good [+2] Chef, Good [+2] at Using Sharp Things, Good [+2] at Handling Stress, Poor [-2] Personal Hygiene.

Deliverator: Average [+0] Ninja, Good [+2] Deliverator, Good [+2] at Fleeing, Good [+2] Dirty Fighter, Poor [-2] at Following Orders.

Driver: Average [+0] Ninja, Good [+2] Driver, Good [+2] at Karaoke, Good [+2] at Multitasking While Driving, Poor [-2] Customer Service.

Navigator: Average [+0] Ninja, Good [+2] Navigator, Good [+2] at Speed Reading, Good [+2] at Auto Repairs, Poor [-2] Driver.

Spotter: Average [+0] Ninja, Good [+2] Spotter, Good [+2] Causing a Distraction, Good [+2] Snappy Dresser, Poor [-2] Impulse Control.

| D1 | D2 | Male Name | Female Name | Family Name |
|----|----|------------|-------------|-------------|
| 1 | 1 | Akira | Akemi | Chiaki |
| 1 | 2 | Bokuzen | Aoi | Chieko |
| 1 | 3 | Daisuke | Chiyoko | Fujita |
| 1 | 4 | Gisaku | Chiyoko | Fujiwara |
| 1 | 5 | Gorobei | Fumiko | Futaba |
| 1 | 6 | Hansuke | Haruka | Hidari |
| 2 | 1 | Haruko | Hiroko | Higuchi |
| 2 | 2 | Hideko | Hisako | Hiroshi |
| 2 | 3 | Inokichi | Kana | Ichikawa |
| 2 | 4 | Izumi | Kaori | Inaba |
| 2 | 5 | Jinjiro | Kazuko | Katayama |
| 2 | 6 | Kamatari | Keiko | Kato |
| 3 | 1 | Katsushiro | Kiyo | Kimura |
| 3 | 2 | Kazuko | Kumiko | Kiyokawa |
| 3 | 3 | Kinjiro | Kyouko | Kodo |
| 3 | 4 | Kiyoshi | Mai | Kosugi |
| 3 | 5 | Kyuzo | Mami | Kurosawa |
| 3 | 6 | Manzo | Mayumi | Makabe |
| 4 | 1 | Matakishi | Megumi | Mano |
| 4 | 2 | Mosuke | Misaki | Mifune |
| 4 | 3 | Nakadai | Mitsuki | Mitsui |
| 4 | 4 | Naosuke | Miu | Miyoshi |
| 4 | 5 | Rinsaku | Miyoko | Nagakura |
| 4 | 6 | Sadao | Miyu | Nakamaru |
| 5 | 1 | Sanjuro | Moe | Ohashi |
| 5 | 2 | Seibei | Nanami | Sakamoto |
| 5 | 3 | Seiji | Natsuki | Sawamura |
| 5 | 4 | Setsuko | Riko | Shimada |
| 5 | 5 | Susumu | Rin | Tadokoro |
| 5 | 6 | Tachikawa | Sachiko | Tatsuya |
| 6 | 1 | Tadao | Sakura | Toyama |
| 6 | 2 | Takeshi | Setsuko | Tsuchiya |
| 6 | 3 | Toshiro | Shizuko | Tsukasa |
| 6 | 4 | Unosuke | Tomoko | Uehara |
| 6 | 5 | Ushitora | Yoshiko | Yamada |
| 6 | 6 | Yoshio | Yumiko | Yamashita |

4. Background (p. 16)

Describe your ninja in 50 words or less. Not what he looks like, but what he used to do and what he does now.

5. Element, Clan, Honor (Optional - p. 16-19)

A. Roll 1d6 to pick an Element using the D2 result with column 3.

B. Roll 2d6 two times to pick a Clan using the D1 and D2 results with column 3 or 4 and 5.

C. Roll 2d6 to pick a Matter of Honor using the D1 and D2 results with column 6.

D. Roll 2d6 and add them for your Honor Score, or choose Dishonorable Dog and take -5 Honor.

| D1 | D2 | Elem./Color | Action Verb | Animal | Matter of Honor |
|----|----|-------------|-------------|-----------|---|
| 1 | 1 | Air/Yellow | Leaping | Rat | I will never harm a (child/woman/etc.). |
| 1 | 2 | Earth/Green | Crouching | Tiger | I will never remove my mask if others can see me. |
| 1 | 3 | Water/Blue | Patient | Ox | I will never hurt an animal. |
| 1 | 4 | Fire/Red | Drunken | Monkey | I will never shoot a firearm. |
| 1 | 5 | Dark/Black | Hidden | Dragon | I will never let anyone see me cry. |
| 1 | 6 | Light/White | Biting | Snake | I will never let anyone hear me laugh. |
| 2 | 1 | Silver | Running | Bear | I will always kill any (pirate/monkey/etc.) I see. |
| 2 | 2 | Gold | Stalking | Panther | I will always pray towards Mecca five times a day. |
| 2 | 3 | Bronze | Soaring | Raven | I will always go to (church/temple/etc.) on holy days. |
| 2 | 4 | Copper | Stinging | Wasp | I will always be the last one out in times of danger. |
| 2 | 5 | Platinum | Dancing | Crane | I will always be the first to charge into combat. |
| 2 | 6 | Brass | Circling | Scorpion | I will always give (10%/half/all) my salary to charity. |
| 3 | 1 | Ivory | Roaring | Lion | I will never draw an enemy's blood. |
| 3 | 2 | Obsidian | Snapping | Turtle | I will never leave an enemy alive. |
| 3 | 3 | Mahogany | Angry | Shark | I will never take the elevator if stairs are available. |
| 3 | 4 | Bamboo | Prowling | Leopard | I will never fly in any aircraft. |
| 3 | 5 | Coral | Praying | Mantis | I will never reveal my true identity. |
| 3 | 6 | Jade | Snapping | Crocodile | I will never turn down a dare. |
| 4 | 1 | Gray | Weaving | Spider | I will always hold doors open for other people. |
| 4 | 2 | Brown | Buzzing | Hornet | I will always address others as Sir or Ma'am. |
| 4 | 3 | Orange | Diving | Hawk | I will always obey my elders. |
| 4 | 4 | Purple | Bolting | Sparrow | I will always turn enemies over to the police, alive. |
| 4 | 5 | Azure | Laughing | Hyena | I will always observe all traffic laws and speed limits. |
| 4 | 6 | Crimson | Racing | Cheetah | I will always fight fair (I.e., enemy uses fists, so do I). |
| 5 | 1 | Sapphire | Clever | Fox | I will never be taken alive. |
| 5 | 2 | Ruby | Howling | Wolf | I will never show fear. |
| 5 | 3 | Emerald | Proud | Stag | I will never drink alcohol or do drugs of any kind. |
| 5 | 4 | Diamond | Bleating | Goat | I will never eat meat. |
| 5 | 5 | Pearl | Galloping | Horse | I will never lie, cheat or steal. |
| 5 | 6 | Opal | Goring | Ram | I will never allow myself to be photographed or filmed. |
| 6 | 1 | Garnet | Gentle | Sheep | I will always give money to needy beggars. |
| 6 | 2 | Turquoise | Fertile | Rabbit | I will always speak respectfully and in a soft, calm voice. |
| 6 | 3 | Aqua | Crowing | Rooster | I will always carry a sword. |
| 6 | 4 | Teal | Singing | Dog | I will always try to return lost items to their owners. |
| 6 | 5 | Cyan | Wallowing | Pig | I will always obey an officer of the law. |
| 6 | 6 | Octarine | Ponderous | Elephant | I will always let foes take the first (punch/swing/etc.). |

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