

BEYOND THE VEIL

Psionics and the Supernatural in Savage Worlds



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A SAVAGED



SUPPLEMENT

The material presented here is intended for use with the [Savage Worlds](#) system from [Pinnacle Entertainment Group](#).

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Introduction

"You got a knack," Halloran said, turning to him. "Me, I've always called it shining."
-Stephen King, *The Shining*

Horror fiction often features characters that have 'a touch of the shine', as Dick Halloran might say. Those who've been touched - be it by Fate, God, or whatever - touched and left with a power to maybe see a little more or a little farther than those around them. In the past they would've been burned at the stake. Now they are the targets of psychic attack by ghosts and other evil spirit. Not quite a step up in the world!

I'm talking about psychic power, of course, or Psionics if you prefer. These aren't comic book psychics, tossing cars around with their minds. Psychics in horror fiction usually view their powers as both a blessing and a curse. I've tried to reflect this attitude as much as possible in this supplement. If you're running a horror game, and want to include a psychic character (or an entire group composed of psychics), you should find these optional rules to your liking - they provide a "grittier" and more grounded approach to psionics than do the rules presented in the *Savage Worlds* rulebook.

In keeping with the feel of the modern horror genre, you'll find that the offensive psychic powers, as given in the *Savage Worlds* rulebook, have been dropped. There are a few powers that will help you against mundane opponents, but they've only been included to help you along until the main event - taking on supernatural foes. Some of these you'll defeat, some you won't; you'll often find that getting out alive is victory enough!

You may look at these powers and think, "Against a *Savage Worlds* wizard, these guys would get their asses kicked," and you'd probably be right. Just keep in mind that these powers are meant to reflect psychics in a world of absolutely mundane, normal humans; compared to them, someone with the ability to glimpse the future is a thing to be feared, admired, or both.

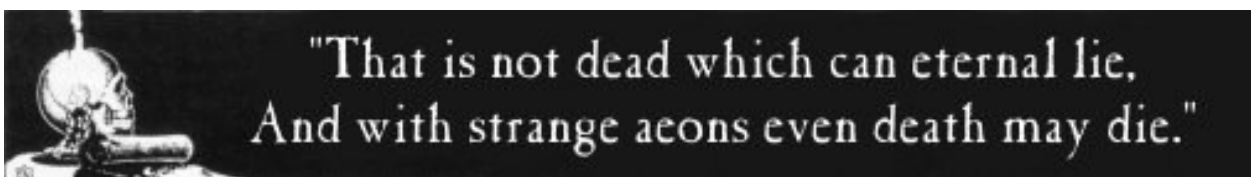
You'll find that all the new powers presented here are Novice level. Given the restrictions of Arcane Background: Psionics, this just made sense; these types of characters are born with one or two gifts, and that's all they ever learn; however, it's not impossible to hone one's abilities or learn additional powers - it's just not that easy!

Running Horror in *Savage Worlds*

You may well find that the normal characters you generate in *Savage Worlds* are 'larger than life' and may not fit within the bounds of the traditional horror game. One fix for this is to limit Attributes and Skills to d8. Functionally this gives you three different levels of ability: below average (d4), average (d6), and above average (d8). This should help keep your characters more grounded in the real world. If you decide to do this, simply reduce the normal amount of points to be spent on increasing attributes during character generation to three, rather than the five points normally allowed.

Another suggested change involves the Guts skill. If you don't have this, you're pretty well doomed the first time you run into most spooks, so you should consider simply making this a Spirit roll instead of a skill. Again, if you decide to do this, it is recommended that you treat Guts as an Edge. Each instance allows a +1 modifier on the character's Spirit roll.

Finally, take a good look at the Edges and Hindrances your players have chosen and make sure that they are both functional and in keeping with the spirit of the genre. Being Quick or Lucky could come in handy, but if you're not going to have the characters participate in many conventional fight scenes, they shouldn't waste an Edge on Two-Fisted or Improved Dodge!



"That is not dead which can eternal lie,
And with strange aeons even death may die."

Edges

Arcane Background: Psionics

Arcane Skill: Psionics (Spirit)

Starting Power Points: 10

Starting Powers: 2

This version of Psionics relies on Spirit rather than Smarts. This is in keeping with the more 'supernatural' flavor psionic powers have in *Beyond the Veil*. Also, unlike the Psionics background in the *Savage Worlds* rulebook, this version only allows for two initial powers. When choosing their powers, the character should pick one as their primary power; they'll get +2 to their Psionics rolls when using it. The second power is treated normally. Any additional powers taken after the initial two will be considerably weaker; you'll suffer a -2 penalty to any Psionics rolls when using them.

Emotional Sense

Requirements: Novice, Spirit d8+

You have a sense about how people are really feeling, regardless of how they're acting. Make a Spirit roll as a normal action when you're trying to get a read on someone. If you're successful, you get a +2 circumstantial bonus to any Intimidation, Persuasion, or Taunt roll against the target made prior to your next action. This Edge obviously doesn't work against opponents without emotion, such as zombies or skeletons, or against targets with animal intelligence. Other targets, such as ghosts, are highly emotional – such targets, at the GM's discretion, confer a +2 or bonus to your Spirit roll.

Practiced Power

Requirements: Seasoned

You've worked hard at developing your powers. If you've learned an additional psychic power beyond the two provided by your Arcane Background, you can take this Edge to eliminate the -2 penalty associated with it. You'll have to take this Edge multiple times, one for each additional power, to offset multiple penalties. This Edge never grants bonuses – it only offsets the stated penalty.

Wild Talent

Requirements: Novice, Spirit d6+

Choose a Novice level Psionic power. You have 5 power points at your disposal to use on this power; these points return at a rate of 1/hour. Roll your Smarts or Spirit when using the power, based on whether you want the power to be Psionic or Empathic in nature. You treat this power as having the Uncontrollable Psi Hindrance. If you're a Wild Talent who'd like to take a psionic Arcane Background, you'll lose this Edge and the accompanying Power Points. However, you get whatever power you chose for your Wild Talent as your primary power in addition to the two powers granted by the Arcane Background.

Hindrances

Debilitating Psi (Major)

Your power comes on particularly strong. You must make a Vigor roll every time you use it or you're Shaken. On a snake eyes, you're automatically Shaken, and must make the Vigor roll or take a point of Fatigue.

Nosebleeds (Minor)

Use of Psi powers is strenuous under even the best circumstances. When you use yours, the pressure and stress causes arteries to burst, giving you a very noticeable nosebleed. The bleeding stops within a few rounds, but until then it pumps blood all over your face. Characters with this Hindrance will sometimes find their eyes or ears bleeding as well on a snake eyes Psionics roll. They may suffer a -2 penalty to Charisma until they clean themselves up.

Open Channel (Major)

The normal blocks and barriers that protect normal humans are absent in your psyche - psychics and spirits can read you like an open book. Ghosts and spirits are attracted to you like moths to the flame; though most aren't malevolent, they'll certainly make your life more interesting. On the plus side, you get a +2 to the Detect Arcana and Channel powers. Bad news is, you've got a -2 penalty to all your Spirit rolls to resist possession, the Puppet (Mind Control) power, Mind Reading, and any other similar powers that the GM deems appropriate.

Palsy (Minor or Major)

You've got a bad case of the shakes; you may have a neurological condition, or perhaps you've seen something Man Wasn't Meant to Know. You find it difficult to perform delicate tasks, and even mundane ones such as eating soup with a spoon or buttoning up your shirt can be a challenge. The Minor version of this only affects one hand. Any actions you take with your off-hand are at -4 rather than -2. If you've got the Major version, you're shaky all over. All your Agility, Fighting, Shooting, Throwing, or similar rolls with your dominant hand are at -2, and at -4 with your off-hand. Extreme stress will worsen this condition - perhaps adding an additional -1 modifier or even doubling the listed modifiers if the GM feels that the situation warrants it.

Personal Poltergeist (Minor or Major)

Somewhere along the way you've attracted the attention of an unwanted spirit. It tags along with you wherever you go, closing doors, turning lights on and off, and the like; most are mischievous, some are malevolent. Mischievous poltergeists pop up periodically and are simply annoying. The worst they can do is cause you to lose a night's sleep; on any given night when the poltergeist is active, roll a 1d6; on a 1 or 2, it keeps you up all night. Make Vigor check or take a point of Fatigue until you can catch up on your sleep. Malevolent spirits make their presence known much less frequently, but are out to get you. You have a full-fledged poltergeist on your case! For more details refer to the Poltergeist entry in the Ghosts & Spirits section. This poltergeist will only come after you when you snake eye a Guts, Spirit, or Psionics roll.

Uncontrollable Psi (Minor or Major)

Maybe you never really learned to control your powers as well as you think, or you're afraid of them, consciously or unconsciously. Whatever the reason, sometimes you lose control of them. Characters with this Hindrance will find one or more of their powers activating without their realizing it. This usually occurs when the character is under stress, or in some cases (particularly with powers like Post Cognition, Object Reading, or Mind Reading) when in the presence of extremely powerful psychic phenomenon, such as a haunted house or the scene of a recent murder.

Powers

The following powers are appropriate to a Psionic character, and include the new powers presented hereafter. The original names of powers that have been altered from the Savage Worlds rulebook are listed after their new version, in parentheses:

Clairvoyance
Distraction (Invisibility)
Empathic Healing (Healing)
Fear
Illusion
Lesser Telekinesis
Mental Blast (Stun)
Mind Block (Armor)
Mind Reading
Object Reading
Post Cognition
Precognition
Psychic Sensitive (Detect/Conceal Arcana)
Puppet
Suggestion
Telekinesis
Telepathy

The following powers are inappropriate to Psi characters. Their inclusion is up to the individual GM; however, it is suggested that they not be used in the interests of maintaining the feel of the psi-horror genre:

Barrier
Blast
Bolt
Boost/Lower Trait
Deflection
Dispel
Fly
Greater Healing
Light
Obscure
Quickness
Shape Change
Smite
Speed
Wave Runner
Zombie

Clairvoyance

Rank: Novice

Power Points: 3

Range: Varies

Duration: 3 (1/round)

Trappings: Astral projection

Clairvoyance allows you to see people, places, and things out of your normal sight. The range varies depending on how well you make your Psionics roll. A normal success is your Spirit in inches, with each raise doubling that distance. You can send it out at a Pace of 24" per round - walls, doors, or other barriers do not hamper its ability. Your Clairvoyant sight is not quite as good as normal vision; it takes a -2 to Notice or similar rolls. It cannot see in the dark or function in any way other than normal, if slightly diminished, sight.

Distraction (Invisibility)

Rank: Novice

Power Points: 3

Range: Spirit

Duration: 3 (1/round)

Distraction makes the target ignore you for the duration of the spell. Make an opposed Psionics vs. Smarts roll; a success makes you effectively invisible against a single target. You're not really invisible, but as long as you don't draw attention to yourself they'll remain completely oblivious to you. This power only works on normal, living humans; it's useless against animals, undead, or spirits. You may affect any targets within range; however, it only takes one failure to negate the effects of this power.

Empathic Healing (Healing)

Rank: Novice

Power Points: 3

Range: Touch

Duration: Permanent

Some consider Empathic Healing to be as much a curse as a blessing. The psychic heals the wounded by laying hands upon them, drawing the wound from them and onto his own body. Only wounds less than an hour old can be healed with this power. The wounds that the healer takes upon himself will heal quite rapidly. The psychic can make a Vigor roll once every hour. Success removes a wound, and a raise removes two. It is quite possible for healers to heal themselves to death with this power. Empathic Healing can be used to remove poisons or disease if used within 10 minutes of exposure.

Fear

This power is functionally identical to the version presented in the Savage Worlds rulebook. It only works on normal, living humans; it's useless against animals, undead, or spirits.

Illusion

Rank: Novice
Power Points: 3
Range: Spirit
Duration: 3 (1/round)

Illusion makes the target see something that isn't there, or to see things differently than they actually are. Make an opposed Psionics vs. Spirit roll; success means the target perceives the illusion as real with one of their five senses. If they're able to examine the illusion with their other senses, though, the Illusion is broken immediately. A raise indicates the target perceives the illusion as real with all their senses. Illusionary attacks can never actually wound a target, though it can leave them Shaken. Passive illusions, like an illusionary wall, take no effort to maintain. Active illusions, like a fictitious black cat or the ghost of your dead great-grandmother, require constant concentration to maintain. The psychic creating the illusion can move their normal Pace, but can't attack or take any other action other than focus on the illusion. This power only works on normal, living humans; it's useless against animals, undead, or spirits.

Lesser Telekinesis

Rank: Novice
Power Points: 3
Range: Spirit
Duration: 1 (1/round)

This power is a weaker version of the full-fledged Telekinesis power. It allows the character to lift 3lb per Spirit die type, twice that on a Raise. If it's used to try and snatch something from someone's grasp, throw things for damage, or the like, it has an effective Strength of d4; thrown items will do d4+1 damage.

Mental Blast

Rank: Novice
Power Points: 2
Range: Spirit x 2
Duration: Special
Trappings: "Boo!"

By focusing your mental energies on a target, you can induce a sudden shock. This could be a burst of powerful emotions, a migraine headache, or merely a sudden feeling of complete and utter surprise. Make an opposed Psionics vs. Spirit roll; if you succeed, the target must pass a Vigor roll at -2 or be Shaken. On a raise, they take the roll at -4. Using this power on an Extra who's already Shaken will cause them to faint (they can make a Vigor check once/minute to wake up), but won't cause a Wound to Wild Cards or in any way cause actual physical harm. This power only works on normal, living humans; it's useless against animals, undead, or spirits.

Mind Block (Armor)

Rank: Novice
Power Points: 2
Range: Self
Duration: 3 (1/round)

Mind Block protects the psychic against mental or spiritual assault. The character shuts down their emotions, blocking off all possible inroads into their psyche. While in use, the character seems to go cold and distant, though they remain very much aware of their surroundings. A success gives the character a +2 to all Spirit rolls to resist mental attacks, Possession, Fear, and the like. A raise grants a +4 bonus.

Mind Reading

Rank: Novice
Power Points: 3
Range: Spirit
Duration: 3 (1/round)

Mind reading allows a character to read another's thoughts. This is an opposed roll versus the target's Spirit. A success detects surface thoughts. A raise reveals deeper thoughts, and a second raise reveals any memory in the subject's mind. At the GM's discretion, certain techniques and conditions—drunkenness, "singing" in one's head, etc. - give the target +2 (or more) bonus to his resistance roll. Characters who use this power willy-nilly will find themselves learning all manner of things they might not have wanted to know (their mother had an affair with a Catholic priest, their best friend killed a kid in a hit-and-run accident though he was never caught, etc.).

Object Reading

Rank: Novice
Power Points: 3
Range: Touch
Duration: Permanent

When you touch a person or thing, you can get a sudden flash of insight into its past, present, or possible future. Make a normal Psionics roll; a success will give you a flash of information. Raises will give more information, though not necessarily clearer. Information gleaned through object reading is entirely up to the GM to determine; it will rarely serve as a 'smoking gun' to show you exactly who pulled the trigger on the murder weapon, for example. You might be able to see through the killer's eyes for a moment and see a tattoo on his arm, for example. The vision will always be centered on a moment in time that is highly emotionally charged.

Postcognition

Rank: Novice
Power Points: 3
Range: 1 mile radius or less (see below)
Duration: Permanent

By opening himself up to the spirit world, the psychic can catch glimpses of past events in the area. The character can try to shrink the area of effect by taking a penalty to his roll: -2 reduces it to a 100-yard radius, -4 to a Large Burst Template. On a success, the character witnesses a surge of memories, focused on events that are emotionally charged, from within the last 10 years. Subsequent raises allow him to see further back. (Note that certain events, such as murder, are always treated as being 'fresher' memories, and can be witnessed on a normal success regardless of how far in the past they occurred.) After the fact, he can make a Smarts roll to try and pick out pertinent pieces of information. Each success pulls out one piece of data; if the character was able to successfully shrink the area of effect, they get a +2 or +4 to this roll based on the scope of the reading.

Precognition

Rank: Novice
Power Points: 5
Range: Special
Duration: Permanent
Trappings: Tarot cards, crystal ball, tealeaves, dreams

Precognition allows the character to catch a glimpse of possible future events. Like most other Psi powers, these are usually serious, often traumatic events, such as disasters, murders, or fatal accidents.

When using Precognition, the player makes a normal Psionics roll. A failure indicates that they've either received nothing, or that the vision is so chaotic (or traumatic) that they can't make any sense of it. On a success, they get a hunch about the future, with no images or anything concrete ("Wait! We shouldn't kill that guy... we're going to need him later," or "We need to get off of this airplane.") With a raise, they receive an actual vision, though it may be couched in symbolism that the player won't understand until later. One of the Little People from The Wizard of Oz might show up in the vision to replace a very small person or a child, for example, or the character's Mom could represent someone else's mother. If the character is specifically trying to learn a particular future (what horse will win the next race, or what card will come up next at blackjack), they'll take a -4 to the roll, and the GM should make this roll for them, in secret. Regardless of the result, they'll still get a hunch, but they'll have no idea how accurate it is. This power is particularly interesting when combined with the Uncontrollable Psi Hindrance.

Psychic Sensitive (Detect/Conceal Arcana)

Rank: Novice

Power Points: 0

Range: Sight

Duration: Permanent or Concentration (see below)

Trappings: Séance, Tarot cards, Ouija board, automatic writing

A sensitive character can detect psychic energies, including ghosts, phantoms, and other spirits. They can tell if a person, place, or thing was central in a highly charged emotional event as well. This portion of the power is always on; it requires no Power Points to use or activate. Only the presence of Psi energies can be determined without a Psionics roll. If the character concentrates and succeeds at a Psionics roll, they can get a general location and power level. A raise gives more detail (more-or-less exact location, power level, and temperament). Psychic sensitives can sometimes see spirits (the spirit can become invisible to even sensitives if it wishes, though the sensitive will still be able to sense its presence), though this isn't always a desirable ability, since many appear as they did at the moment of their death.

Puppet

This power functions identically to the standard version; it's typically referred to as 'Mind Control'. It only works on normal, living humans; it's useless against animals, undead, or spirits.

Suggestion

Rank: Novice

Power Points: 3

Range: Spirit

Duration: 1, plus 1/raise

Trappings: "mind trick" hand wave

Suggestion allows you to make the target follow a single, simple command, or to believe without question something you tell them so long as the evidence at hand doesn't obviously contradict the Suggestion. Make a contested roll against their Spirit; success indicates they'll follow your order, so long as it doesn't contradict with their nature (a Pacifist won't kill, for example). They'll only follow the Suggestion for a single round, but this time increases by one round with each raise. Examples would be "You don't need to see our identification," or "These are not the droids you're looking for." While standing over a body - obviously stabbed to death - with a bloody knife in your hand, however, you couldn't suggest that the knife isn't the murder weapon. As long as you're not also covered in blood, though, you could Suggest that you didn't do it, you only found the weapon. Targets in combat, under high stress, or who are in some other extreme emotional state get a +2 to their roll. If you fail at the Suggestion, not only can you not try again on the same target for the duration of the scene, but you'll probably also have some explaining to do.

Telekinesis

This power functions identically to the version presented in Savage Worlds.

Telepathy

Rank: Novice

Power Points: 3

Range: Spirit

Duration: 1 (1/round)

Telepathy is used to communicate mentally with another person. If the target is willing, make a normal Psionics roll. If not, it's an opposed Psionics vs. Spirit roll. Success allows you to 'speak' with the target. You can only 'hear' those thoughts the target directs at you; anything more requires Mind Reading. Telepathy can be used to speak with spirits who cannot speak normally. Real communication is difficult; they're not very good listeners usually, and ghosts, in particular, are often too self-absorbed to do little more than bemoan their fate. Finally, telepathy can be used to enter into 'psychic combat' with other psychics or with psychic entities such as ghosts. Once a link has been established, the following round begins the combat, with the combatants drawing initiative as normal. Use Psionics to hit (Spirit for ghosts) with a target number of 4. Mental Toughness is 2 + half Spirit. Roll Spirit for damage; being Invulnerable, ghosts can only be Shaken by Telepathic combat, not wounded. Telepaths take non-lethal damage from it; they can be Wounded and knocked out, but never Injured. Either side can try to break the contact once combat has started as a normal action, by making a contested Spirit vs. Spirit roll. A telepath can't enter into telepathic combat with a non-telepath; use Mental Blast instead.

THINGS THAT GO BUMP IN THE NIGHT

For our purposes, 'spirits' refers to the class of entities that includes Ghosts, Phantoms, and other psychically active creatures originating from this or another world or dimension. Some are demonic in nature, while others are the souls of normal humans. You should consider all these creatures to be Wild Cards; though most don't get Wound Levels, of course, they'll all get bennies. There are, of course, some exceptions, as you'll see below. Most, but not all (see the individual descriptions for variants) do have a few things in common:

Ethereality

Spirits are completely incorporeal. Unlike other ethereal creatures, they cannot touch, move, or alter anything in the physical world save through the use of their powers. They can allow themselves to be seen by normal humans, though usually only for short periods of time; this power can be used selectively as well, only allowing one person to see and hear them. The one noticeable physical effect of spirits is a marked drop in temperature when they are particularly active. Locations they frequent are usually measurably colder than the surrounding areas even when they're not there (and usually for years after they've gone). Psychics, animals, and oftentimes children, can sense the presence of spirits, or even see them when others can't.

Invulnerability

The means of destroying spirits varies from entity to entity; some are trapped on earth because of some unfinished business, to avenge their own deaths, etc., and if this purpose can be discovered and completed, the spirit will be able to move on to the next life on its own. Phantoms, on the other hand, are little more than batteries of emotional energy; defeating them is simply (or not so simply) a matter of running that charge down to empty.

Psychically Active

Spirits are powerful psychic entities. Even normal people can usually feel something's not quite right when they're near one, though they can't put their finger on it. Spirits can try to hide their presence with a Spirit roll at -2, though they'll usually only do this if they believe they're in danger.

Intensity of Emotion

Spirits, ghosts and phantoms in particular, are creatures of raw emotion. Many of them have minimal Smarts and act purely on instinct.

Special Abilities

Deepest Fear / Darkest Secret

This is a specialized form of Mind Reading, which allows the spirit to know what the target fears most, or to learn the one secret thing they would never want anyone else to know. Combined with Illusions or Manifestations, this is a terrible power. The spirit makes a contested Spirit vs. Spirit roll to make the attempt; on a success, it gets the information it needs, while the target will feel as though insects or worms are crawling around on the surface of their brain. With a raise, the target is unaware that anything has happened. Successful use will give the target a -2 to any Fear checks, and give the spirit a +2 to Taunt rolls against the character.

Illusions

The spirit can create convincing illusions of virtually anything. They're not convincing enough to cause actual physical harm (use Manifestations for that) but they can be frightening as hell. Most Illusions created by spirits will require a Guts check (at -4 if the ghost successfully used Deepest Fear first).

Manifestations

The spirit can do more than just create illusions; it can manifest real things, living or otherwise, by making a Spirit roll. (Think of the crawling, maggot-filled steak in Poltergeist, for example.) You can use this ability any time you want the spirit to be able to interact with the physical world in a way that Telekinesis won't handle, like a character waking up from a dream where they were attacked by cats to find that they're covered with scratches. Corporeal spirits can use Manifestations to make changes to their appearance (such as Regan's 'facelift' in The Exorcist) or perform other, typically vile or fearsome acts (vomiting up a gallon of black, half-clotted blood, perhaps). In most cases this will give opponents a -2 to Fear checks.

Possession

Spirits with this ability can take control of a host and use its body as their own. This requires three successful opposed Spirit vs. Spirit rolls against the target, over three turns (regardless of Edges, the spirit can't make multiple Possession attempts in a single round). Success means that the host has been taken over completely, and will remain so until removed or the host is killed. While in possession of a host, the spirit has full access to the host's memories, Skills, and Edges, as well as their own Special Abilities. Spirits who possess non-living items need only make a Spirit roll in order to do so. Most who do so end up stuck, however, and can only attempt to escape when the host item is destroyed by making a Spirit roll at -4; failure means they're killed along with the host item, as long as it is completely destroyed (burned to ashes and scattered, for example).

Telekinesis

As with the Telekinesis Power, the spirit can move things without touching them (a useful power when you're ethereal!). The average spirit will be able to move 10 lbs times their Spirit die type in weight; less powerful spirits might only be able to move 1 lb x Spirit, while massive entities (such as the Belasco House in Legend of Hell House) can move many times the base amount (20, 50, or even 100 lbs x Spirit). Note, however, that they cannot use this power on living beings, only inanimate objects, regardless of their strength level.

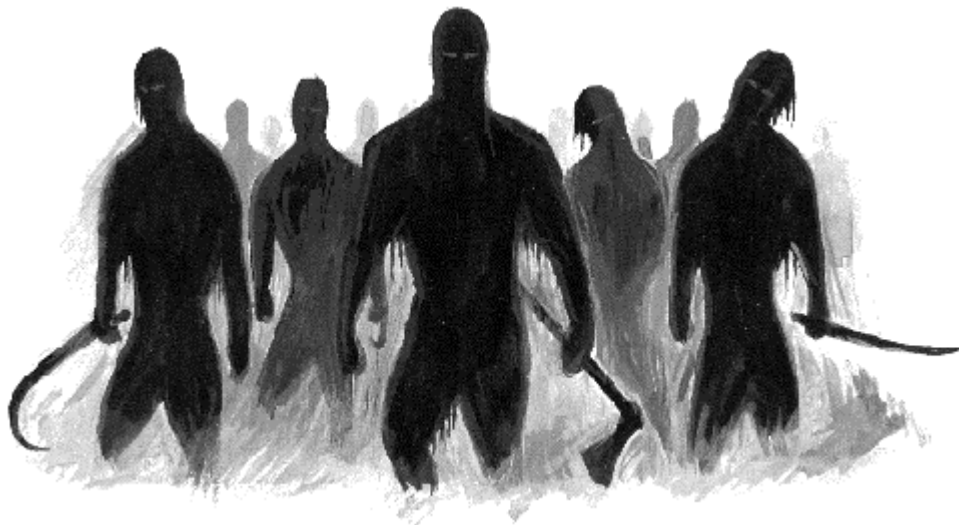
Optional Rules for Spirits

Handling spirits properly can be a tricky situation at best. Defining them too clearly can reduce them from ethereal horrors to little more than the 'monster of the week'. Keeping them completely nebulous can be

infuriating to players from a purely mechanical standpoint; they'd like to know that they're making some progress in defeating these spirits.

With that in mind, here are a couple of ways you can codify spirits more clearly, hopefully without losing their overall flavor and appeal:

- **Arcane Background: Spirit.** Give the spirit this Edge, with Power Points to match (the amount is up to you; vary it to reflect different power levels of spirit, with 20 being a good general starting point). Since spirits are invulnerable and ethereal, they won't be taking any physical damage, but if they allow themselves to be reduced to zero Power Points, they disincorporate. How would they let this happen, you might ask? Don't forget, spirits are creatures of emotion, not rationality. If they use their powers sparingly, over an extended period of time, there's no problem; they don't get emotionally involved enough to risk losing control. (This mimics ghostly activity at the early and middle stages of most ghostly fiction and movies - a few knocks in the attic here, manifesting a character's dead mother there - just enough to keep the characters on edge.) A good rule of thumb would be, once the spirit uses one of its powers, it must make a Spirit check to keep from using another one. Each use after the first gives them a cumulative -1 to the Spirit roll, as they get caught up further and further in scaring the bejesus out of the players. If this is making things go too quickly, you can give the ghost a +1 to this roll for each player who fails a Guts check; the spirit gets a 'charge' out of scaring people, and the more people it scares, the more satiated it becomes and the easier it'll be to stop. Using this option means you'll have to assign a power point cost to the spirit's Special Abilities; three is a good amount.
- **Fear Bennies.** Instead of Power Points, use bennies to track how strong your spirit is. Start it with five or so; each time it uses a power costs one Benny, but each time a player fails a Guts check, it gets two back; if it manages to kill a character, roll that character's Spirit die and give the spirit that many bennies. The spirit can spend bennies to re-roll as normal. You can rule that if the spirit reaches 'x' number of bennies, it becomes even more powerful than before; what exactly that entails is up to you, of course, but it will generally be considered a "bad thing" - the spirit escaping her prison at the end of *The Ring* is a good example. If the spirit runs out of Bennies, it becomes disincorporate. This doesn't necessarily mean that it's destroyed, but it will certainly be vulnerable; perhaps a well placed Mind Blast, Mind Reading, or Telepathy could send it on to the next world.



What follows is a collection of generic descriptions for different types of ghosts, spirits, and other psychic creatures that may be encountered by the characters. These creatures can vary immensely from one incarnation to the next, so think of these as nothing more than examples. You can, and should, customize them as you see fit.

The Damned

Hell is not the inescapable prison that some believe it to be. Sometimes, the souls of the condemned are able to escape their fetters and return to Earth. They find no succor in returning; with their bodies long since gone to rot or dust, they wander the world as hateful, disembodied spirits. They can sometimes take control of a physical form temporarily, but if this body is killed the spirit is simply sent back into the world. In some other cases, you could rule that the Damned spirit was able to reconstitute its body whole. In that case, destroying the body will send it back to Hell; though in most cases the body will only be vulnerable to specific attacks (destroying the eyes, a stake through the heart, decapitation, etc.). Since the Damned are usually only encountered while they're inhabiting a host, they don't have the Fear power that other spirits do; they're still spooky as hell, and use their Intimidation skill to good effect. In whatever form they're in, they'll set off the alarms for any psychic sensitives in the area.

Ethereal Damned Soul

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d12, Vigor d10

Skills: Fighting d6, Intimidation d8

Pace: 6

Parry: 5

Toughness: 7

Special Abilities:

Ethereal: While 'between bodies', the Damned Soul is completely incorporeal and invisible to most. Unlike other spirits, the Damned can't typically be seen even if they wanted to. Animals and psychics can still detect their presence, however.

Possession: These Damned can move from body to body at will. They make an opposed Spirit vs. Spirit check to attempt the takeover. If successful, they immediately take control of the host body and take on the Attributes and Skills listed above. On a raise, they can also access the possessed bodies' memories, Skills, and Edges.

Fearless: The Damned have already experienced Hell, and nothing less than the Devil himself can cause them any fear. They're immune to Fear and Intimidation, though they can still be Taunted.

Deathless: In spirit form, they're immune to physical attacks, though they can be affected psychically. While in possession of a body, they can be attacked normally. Typically, killing the host of a Damned Soul will not destroy it permanently, however, though there might be exceptions (such as killing the host inside a church or on other holy ground). Typically, these Damned can only be killed permanently by denying them a host until they disincorporate and are dragged back down into Hell. Make a Spirit roll +2 for the Damned Soul when it leaves a host; it can last that many rounds between hosts before being destroyed.

Flight: While incorporeal, the Damned spirit can speed about at a furious rate looking for a new host. It flies at a 60" pace in this form.

Physical Damned Soul

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d10, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d8, Intimidation d10,

Pace: 6

Parry: 6

Toughness: 6

Special Abilities:

Fearless: As with the Ethereal Damned, these Damned have had all the fear burned from them. They're immune to Fear and Intimidation, but can still be Taunted.

Invulnerability: The Physical Damned has rebuilt their body – they are more powerful than before they died. They can only be killed under specific circumstances that vary from Damned to Damned.

Doppelganger

This is not the doppelganger made popular in a certain fantasy RPG; the doppelganger of legend was the spirit of someone who had not yet died. Seeing one was considered a dire omen. This version tends to show up before something really bad happens, to either warn the character away or to steer them towards it. There's no real write up required for these doppelgangers; just duplicate the Attributes, Skills, Edges, and Hindrances of the original (if they're even required), and add the following special abilities:

- Incorporeal: Actually, these ghosts are normally solid, but they can turn both ethereal and invisible at will. They'll always be invisible to everyone except the person they're copying.
- Fear -2: Anyone seeing their own doppelganger will be overwhelmed with feelings of impending doom. They'll have to make a Guts check at -2.

Ghost

A Ghost is nothing more than the soul of a dead person that remains on this world for some reason. Usually that reason is unfinished business, though sometimes someone can die so suddenly that they refuse to let go the mortal coil and end up trapped.

Attributes: Agility -, Smarts d6, Spirit d10, Strength -, Vigor -

Skills: Persuasion d6, Taunt d8 (add Throwing d8 if they have Telekinesis)

Pace: 12 (flying)

Special Abilities:

Incorporeal: Ghosts are completely ethereal. They can't turn solid or attack physically. They're also completely invisible unless they choose otherwise.

Fear -2: Ghosts are capable of instilling intense dread into those around them.

Fearless: Ghosts are immune to the Fear power, though if they were afraid of something in life that fear may well have carried over beyond the grave. Their reliance on emotion makes them particularly vulnerable to Taunting, however; they have a -2 to resist Taunts.

Invulnerable: Generally the only way to 'kill' them permanently is to finish the business that's keeping them around, avenge their death, perform an exorcism, or something similar.

Illusion, Manifestation, or Telekinesis: Most ghosts have only one of these; some have two, and the most powerful have all three.



Haunted House



A house that is said to be haunted could be residence to a Ghost or Phantom. The worst, though, are sentient entities, houses that have gone mad, or were simply made that way. Characters who think they're on a ghost hunt and end up trapped inside one of these will quickly find themselves in a world of trouble! Some houses are more instinctive than intelligent; lower their Smarts to roughly d8 (A) to reflect this.

Attributes: Agility -, Smarts d8, Spirit d12, Strength -, Vigor -

Skills: Throwing d8 (used with Telekinesis)

Special Abilities:

Invulnerable: Short of complete destruction of the house, tearing up the foundation, and seeding the earth with salt, you'll find Haunted Houses all but impossible to kill. Exorcisms generally won't work, since the house isn't really 'possessed' in a traditional sense.

Fear -4

Fearless: Fearless, though they may be, they can still be Taunted; most are particularly vulnerable to Taunts and take a -2 to resist them.

Telekinesis: Most Haunted Houses are powerful telekinetic entities within themselves. This only extends to the House itself and the grounds immediately surrounding it. They can typically lift and throw 20 lbs x Spirit or more.

Illusions: The House can generate Illusions that affect all the senses, including ones that are only visible/audible to only one character at a time.

Manifestations: Anything the House can't handle with Telekinesis, it can do with Manifestations, such as filling a room with flies, turning the water in the showers to black slime, create messages on the walls in blood, or causing the big portrait hanging over the staircase to change in appearance over time. Exceptional Houses can even alter their own internal layout with Manifestations: a door that just led to the bathroom can suddenly lead to the parlor, and a staircase that used to go to the second floor could now take you to a dead end.

Phantom

Phantoms are nothing more than leftover psychic energy, typically from a traumatic event. Phantoms may believe that they're real on some primitive level, but in fact they're just batteries of Psi power with a slow leak. Left to their own devices, they'll eventually run out and vanish unless they're recharged with emotional energy (see the Fear Bennies option for one way of handling this). They have almost no intellect, and operate on pure emotion, striking out at anything that threatens them. Another differentiating factor between Ghosts and Phantoms is movement: Ghosts can move about freely, but Phantoms are tied to a person, place, or thing; they're essentially immovable. For example a Phantom may inhabit a room where a woman was raped and murdered; the room becomes part of what the Phantom is, and it can't extend its power beyond that boundary. On the other hand, the phantom might be tied to the murder weapon instead, and will go where it goes. (These can sometimes be confused with Possessing Spirits.)

Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d6 (A), Spirit d10, Strength -, Vigor -

Skills: Throwing d6 (used with Telekinesis)

Special Abilities:

Incorporeal: The Phantom itself is invisible and ethereal. Phantoms may sometimes become visible, usually in the presence of psychic sensitives or strong emotions. If they do, they'll always show the same thing: whatever event or events that brought them into being in the first place.

Invulnerable: Phantoms disincorporate and vanish if they run out of energy; destroying their location will destroy them as well. Otherwise, they're pure psychic entities, and can't be harmed, even by Telepathic combat. Unlike Ghosts, too, Phantoms won't vanish if their reason for being is seen to (such as a murderer being brought to justice).

Fear -2: Phantoms tied to a place will cause this effect to anyone who enters. If it's tied to a person or thing, it extends out in a Large Burst Template.

Telekinesis: Phantoms usually lash out with a combination of Fear attacks and TK; they lack the subtlety to use powers such as Manifestations and Illusions. Phantoms can lift and throw 10 lbs x their Spirit die type, and they're among the most likely ghosts to try and kill their targets.

Poltergeist

Poltergeists can be Ghosts, Phantoms, or the pent-up rage of a (possibly latent) telekinetic person. Poltergeists use either the Ghost or Phantom descriptions as listed and add the Telekinesis ability for those versions; for the latter type, obviously, it's just a Hindrance in the telekinetic person (even if they don't realize it).

Possessing Spirit

These entities tend to come in two varieties: those that possess people (The Exorcist) or even corpses (The Evil Dead), and those that possess things (Child's Play, Christine).

People Possessors

For those that possess people, use the base character and add the following Special Abilities:

Invulnerability, Incorporeal, Possession, and Fear -2. In addition, they'll have at least one other power, typically Telekinesis, Illusions, Manifestations, or any combination you think appropriate.

Item Possessors

Again, the variations are endless; their attributes will vary depending on the item they control. Here are some examples to get you started:

Steppin' Jack's Razor

Believed to be the knife used by Jack the Ripper himself. The spirit inside it will attempt to force anyone who finds it to perform five brutal murders, and then commit suicide. The Razor can't be destroyed, but it can be gotten rid of for a time (such as encasing it in a block of cement and dropping into the sea).

Eventually it will turn up again somewhere, though it may take years before it surfaces in a trinket shop in Delhi, or buried in a pile of decapitated Barbie dolls in a back alley in Singapore... The Razor appears to be a steel straight razor, flecked with dried blood that can never quite all be cleaned off. It does Str+1 damage normally, or Str+4 when used against women. Despite this massive damage, however, it will never kill female victims immediately; only reduce them to Incapacitated initially. The victim will remain alive for their Vigor die type in minutes in this state, giving the carrier of the Razor ample time to torture them. Treat the Razor as having Spirit d12+1 and the powers Puppet and Suggestion. It can use Suggestion at limited range (5") to convince a male target to pick it up. It can only use Puppet against the person carrying it. Neither of these powers work on women. Some occult scholars who've studied the Razors' history believe that an exorcism performed by five virgin nuns would destroy the spirit within the Razor, but that theory has never been put to the test.

Possessed Doll

These evil dolls are tough bastards; since they don't bleed or feel pain, they can take punishment that would drop a fully-grown man in his tracks and keep on coming. Luckily, their small size means they're not very strong, but they're not afraid to use a weapon and attack from hiding (to get The Drop on foes) to make up for this. They're not all that scary looking at first, so they don't get the Fear power, but they make up for this with a fair Intimidation skill. You'll have to completely destroy the doll (burning or immersion in acid should do the trick) in order to disincorporate the Possessing Spirit inside it.

Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d4, Vigor d12+1

Skills: Climbing d10, Fighting d8, Intimidation d8, Stealth d10, Taunt d8, Throwing d8

Pace: 6

Parry: 6

Toughness: 10

Special Abilities:

Weapons: Dolls fight with a variety of small-sized but unusually deadly weapons; these generally do Str+2.

Construct: Dolls are treated as Constructs for all intents and purposes. They get: +2 to recover from Shaken; take no damage from called shots; arrows/bullets/piercing do half damage; take no Wound modifiers; take no damage from poison or disease.

Armor: You'd be surprised at how tough these little guys are... they get +2 to Toughness, and don't take any Toughness penalties from their size.

Small: Dolls have an advantage when fighting normal adult sized foes; they take a -2 penalty to hit the doll. Dolls don't get this bonus if they're fighting children, however...

Fearless: Dolls are immune to Fear and Intimidation, though they can be Taunted.

Possessed Car

Another classic, the Possessed Car is a true killing machine. The Car can control itself with the equivalent of Driving d10. It can regenerate damage at 1 "wound" every 3 rounds, no roll required; it can even rebuild itself to normal if crushed into a block, though this will take time. It must be cut into component pieces and the bits buried separately in order to destroy it permanently. Possessed cars can't drive onto sanctified ground, such as a cemetery.

Acc/Top Speed: 33/60; **Toughness:** 15 (4); **Crew:** 0



Precursor

Some believe this being is the Angel of Death. Others believe that it is the precognitive ability of humankind's collective subconscious. A few think they're aliens, trying to warn us but lacking the understanding of our thought processes to communicate with us properly. Whatever it is, it appears in an area prior to a terribly disaster, terrifies the community, and vanishes once the disaster has occurred.

Attributes: Agility -, Smarts d10 (alien), Spirit d10, Strength -, Vigor -

Special Abilities:

Incorporeal and Invulnerable: The Precursor itself is incorporeal and invisible, though it does manifest images that people can come to believe are it. The Precursor is a primordial force; you can talk to it, try to reason with it, but never kill it. At best you can remove its reason for being by averting the disaster that's called it.

Omnipresent: Precursors are effectively omnipresent within the area they've been called to. They can cause effects to happen in multiple places simultaneously with little effort.

Fear -4: Precursors will cause everyone within the area to feel on edge; they'll have nightmares, become agitated, and the like. Worse still, anyone who witnesses one of the Precursors Manifestations can be stricken with Fear if the Precursor chooses.

Alien Intellect: The Precursor exists on a level we cannot comprehend; anyone making an opposing Smarts roll against one takes a -2 penalty to the roll. Precursors are immune to Fear, Intimidation, and Taunts.

Manifestations: Precursors don't waste time with Illusions; they'll create horrifying images, sounds, and the like, at will, then dissipate them as quickly as it created them. If they want to speak to someone, they'll manifest a voice on the phone, or coming out from the drain in your sink. (Since Manifestations are real, if only temporary, these can be recorded...)

Precognition: Precursors can see human disasters with uncanny accuracy. The future isn't set, but some futures are harder to avoid than others.