Distant Star Games Presents

Thrash

Second Edition -beta-
By Ewen Cluney

Thanks To

My real life friends, a.k.a. the Neko Machi-gumi (or failing that, "The Group").

The Thrash Mailing List gang and all the other Thrash fans that have supported me over the years.

SNK, Capcom, Sammy, Tecmo, Namco, and too many others to mention.

Credits

Designed and written by Ewen Cluney

▶ Go Play. Because playing games is fun.

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Introduction

Everyone rumored
Nobody believed
But you see IT'S TRUE
Now it's time to have the REAL answer…
Who is…
THE STRONGEST?!
 – Capcom Vs. SNK: Millenium Fight 2000

For me, Thrash has variously been the new hotness, a total mess, an old friend, and my white whale. *Street Fighter II* came out while I was in high school (I'm not quite l33t and/or old school enough for SF1), and I was just fascinated by it. When we started hanging out at the Chinese place across the street after school, we found a *Samurai Shodown II* machine there to distract us from *Rifts* and *Magic*. And we played it a lot, until one day they swapped MVS cartridges and it became a *King of Fighters '95* machine. *Street Fighter: The Storytelling Game* was likewise a must. I collected most of the books (minus that one adventure book), and read them and over time tried to rectify the abject lack of anything past *Super Street Fighter II*. I hate to admit it, but somehow we never quite got around to playing it, least of all before, in my first year of community college, when I first put pencil to paper and wrote "Thrash: Fighting Game RPG" in a notebook when I was supposed to be paying attention in English 1A.

The goal of Thrash was and still is to create a tabletop RPG that captures some of the awesome inherent in 2D fighting games. In retrospect, the original version of *Thrash* was sloppily put together from bits and pieces of *Street Fighter: The Storytelling Game* (at the time, White Wolf's one attempt at a non-WoD game), *Mekton Z* (still my favorite mecha RPG), and *Ninjas & Superspies* (Erick Wujcik is awesome!). I think it got more revisions through complaints on the mailing list started by Rob Pool (which is still the official Thrash ML today) than through playtesting. Still, it let you stat up most any fighting game character, and it drew interest from people all over the world. In particular, I got a ton of e-mails from people in Mexico, Brazil, and Italy. I also used it to run a memorable and long running campaign called Karyuu Densetsu, the story of Asura Karyuu and her friends facing their destinies and seeing dragons fly free.

Thrash 2.0 is the white whale part. I first tried to start working on it around 2002. One way or another something—school, work, novels, other games, etc.—always seemed to get in the way, not to mention all the times my false starts collapsed in on themselves. But mostly, I think I needed to get more experience and become the guy that could pull it off. Hopefully after vastly expanding my horizons, including discovering the indie RPG scene, I'm ready to do this thing right at long last.

Where Do We Go From Here?

This is a "playtest version" of Thrash 2.0; this time around I'm trying to give the game a very thorough playtest, and get as much feedback as possible. My goal is to put together a fine-tuned core game before I get into going to town with optional rules and neat expansions—which is why Weird Powers (rules for mutants, robots, espers, sorcerers, etc.) aren't included here. It also means the file you've got in front of you is totally untested, and has a bare-bones layout. It has several optional rules that wouldn't ordinarily be included in the core rules; for the most part these are alternate ways of handling things that I've been considering for one reason or another, though the "official" rule is usually my preferred approach, for now. For the final version I intend to clear out most of the optional rules and put them in a sourcebook.

If you have any comments about the game, especially after actual play, please feel free to post to the Thrash mailing list (see **groups.yahoo.com/groups/thrash/**) or email me personally (**ewen@neko-machi.com**).

What You'll Need

- **This Book:** That kind of goes without saying, though it's also worth mentioning that having extra copies of the book, printouts of the character creation and traits chapters, or just reference sheets, can help speed up character creation when you need to make characters for the whole group.
- **Pencils and Paper:** Ideally, you should have a character sheet for each player to record their characters on, but blank paper will do in a pinch. Pencils (not pens; you'll want to be able to erase) are likewise vital. Scratch paper (I like using post-its) can be very useful for the GM to have handy, especially when it comes to keeping track of stuff in combat.
- **Dice:** Like most RPGs, you'll need some dice to play *Thrash*. In particular, you'll mainly need ten-sided dice (each player should have one), and a few six-sided dice (though these only come up occasionally).
- **Hex Grid and Tokens (Optional):** Thrash has some rules that have to do with movement and location. It's possible to just keep things in your head and use the movement rules as a rough guideline, but if you want to use the full-on map rules you'll need some kind of hex grid and some kind of tokens or figures to represent the characters. Tokens can also be handy for keeping track of certain things (Action Points, Super, etc.) in combat.

Creative Commons?

You might be wondering what he point of the whole Creative Commons "copyleft" thing is. In the case of Thrash, it's me explicitly giving you some extra options for it that go outside of what copyright normally allows. As long as you (1) give me credit, and (2) it's free, you can do pretty much anything you want with the game. Make your own sourcebooks, make your own variants, make your own layout for whatever, etc. If you want to do something commercial with it, you're going to have to talk to me about it as usual, though I have no intention of being difficult about it.

Newness

If you're familiar with the older versions of Thrash, what you're looking at is for the most part a new game, if one cast in the same general mold. New editions often strive to keep some semblance of compatibility with the old one, but for Thrash there was just too much that needed fixing. There are some radical changes, but in many cases they're meant to address problems that have been plaguing the game since its inception.

The traits that define characters are changed considerably. While I had been considering giving characters a single pool of CP for all traits, I realized that I hate dealing with lots of fiddly points. Instead, characters get separate pools of points of Attributes and Techniques, and a set number of selections for special maneuvers, supers, and "support traits." There are now only **six attributes**. **Styles** as a character trait have been replaced with "**Techniques**" that determine a character's accuracy with different classes of maneuvers. There are some notes on how to build characters with particular styles in the book, but for the most part fighting styles are a matter of flavor text. The **scale for ranked traits** (Attributes and Techniques) is a little more compact than before too; starting characters cannot have ranks above 8, and a normal human has a rank of 2-3. The "Agility as god-stat problem" is addressed with a set of three new derived traits called "**Combat Proficiencies**," which replace Agility in terms of the accuracy of combat maneuvers.

Everything that would've been bought with CP in previous editions, with the exception of special and super maneuvers, is instead covered by "**Support traits**." These include Edges (advantages), Support Maneuvers (simpler maneuvers, including ones for movement and defense), Maneuver Upgrades, Skills, and Story Hooks (which are a bit complicated). Characters can also take Flaws to get a few extra support trait selections.

Maneuvers are changed a bit too. There are now four distinct classes of maneuvers (basic, special, super, and support), and the maneuver design rules are as simple as I could manage. Since CP cost is no longer an issue, all the maneuvers from each class are numerically equal. Maneuver **modifiers** are replaced by **maneuver upgrades**, simpler and chunkier modifications that are taken as support traits, and of which only two can be applied to a given maneuver. **Damage bonuses** (which were turned into d20-style "modifiers" in one of the early drafts of 2.0) have been eliminated entirely in favor of adding half (rounded down) of an attribute rank to damage (and certain other things).

Combat is a significantly different animal too, mainly because the **Action Point** system has been radically reworked (inspired in part by *Xenosaga*). Every character gets 3 AP per round, and these can be saved up to a maximum of 6. Saving AP lets a character do bigger moves or do **counters** in response to an opponent's attacks. **Basic defenses** cost no AP, but each defense after the first has a cumulative –2 penalty, and more advanced defenses can cost AP. The default initiative rules tie into how many AP a character has and make going first in combat more important, but there is a variant rule for initiative to be used simply to determine order for an entire battle.

"Rage" has been replaced by a more customizable **Super** system, where characters have **Super Foci** that determine when they gain a point of Super. It takes 10 Super to do a standard super maneuver, and 5 to do an EX Move.

Finally, there is the matter of the **Destiny** rules. This is my effort to include some rules that drive the game towards more fighting manga style stories. Characters each have a **Motivation** that defines why they fight, and they can have **Story Hooks** that set up storylines and explicitly enable the player to have input into the story. Both of these can provide the character with Destiny points, and the GM also awards some for doing well in the game in general. These can in turn be used as XP, or used for some special meta-game effects.

The appendix has a totally new **maneuver construction system**. A maneuver is essentially treated as a set of enhancements and limitations applied to a base, depending on the general type of maneuver. The **weapon rules** are a little different. A weapon itself is treated as a template maneuver. Weapon-based maneuvers are *mostly* derived from making simple modifications to regular maneuvers (e.g., Dive Kick → Diving Strike). Considering how rare they are in fighting games, I'm going to leave ranged weapons for later. The appendix also has several optional rules, though none of them are anything I'm seriously considering making into official ones at this point.

Revision History

Thrash 0.8 ("Thrash: The World Warriors")
Thrash 1.0 ("Thrash: Blades of Blood")
Thrash 1.2 ("Thrash EX+α")
Thrash 1.8 ("Thrash Chronicles")
Thrash 2.0 Alpha ("Thrash 2: Millennium Fighting ~~2002~~ 2007")
Thrash 2.0 Beta ("Thrash: Second Impact")
Thrash 2.0 ("Thrash Fighting Evolution 120%")

Inspiration

A lot of different things helped inspire *Thrash*, from the fighting game genre, other RPGs, and other random stuff that fits into the same general milieu. Some of it is really well known (*Street Fighter*), and some of it is obscure stuff that hardly anyone besides me even remembers anymore (*Touki Denshou: Angel Eyes*). Some I played a lot more than others, but I really did dust off my PlayStation, Saturn, and Dreamcast when I finally got serious about working on Thrash again.

Video Games: Art of Fighting, Asuka 120% Burning Fest, Battle Arena Toshinden, Bleach DS: Souten ni Kakeru Unmei, Capcom Vs. SNK, DarkStalkers, Dead or Alive, Eternal Fighter Zero, Fatal Fury, Guilty Gear, King of Fighters, Last Blade, Legend of Legaia, Marvel Vs. Series, Melty Blood, Neo-Geo Battle Coliseum, Queen of Heart, Rival Schools, Samurai Shodown, SNK Vs. Capcom, Soul Calibur, Star Gladiator, Street Fighter, SVC Chaos, Touki Denshou: Angel Eyes, Variable Geo, Waku Waku 7, Xenosaga

Anime/Manga: Air Master, Bamboo Blade, Bleach, Fatal Fury, Fighting Beauty Wulong, Flame of Recca, Kenichi, Naruto, Ranma ½, Ruroni Kenshin, Samurai Champloo, Shadow Skill, Street Fighter, Tenjou Tenge

RPGs: In terms of inspiring this particular version of Thrash, the most important RPGs were Cinematic Unisystem, Street Fighter: The Storytelling Game, The Shadow of Yesterday, and Truth & Justice. Others that influenced it in various ways include: The Burning Wheel, Exalted, Final Stand, Fudge 10th Anniversary Edition, GURPS Martial Arts, Mekton Z, Mutants & Masterminds, Ninja Hero, Ninjas & Superspies, Pagoda, Spirit of the Century, The Ultimate Martial Artist, Weapons of the Gods

Glossary of Game Terms

Thrash has a fair amount of jargon; this section is here to help you keep it all straight. If this is your first time reading the rules, skip ahead to Chapter 1 and come back here if you feel you need it.

Action Points (AP): In combat, characters accumulate 3 Action Points per turn, which can be saved (to a maximum of 6) or spent on performing actions.

Action Resolution: "Action resolution" refers to using the rules to determine the outcome of an action taken by a character with a dice roll.

Action Total (AT): The sum of the Action Value and the roll of a ten-sided die, used to determine how well an action succeeds.

Action Value (AV): The sum of traits and bonuses/penalties applied to an action. The AV is usually the sum of an Attribute and an Ability, but for combat maneuvers it's normally the sum of a Combat Proficiency and a Technique.

Advance: Advances are purchased with Destiny points (5 per Advance) and can be spent to improve character traits.

Archetype: In game terms, an archetype is a pre-made character intended to represent a commonly seen type of character. See p. 18 for archetypes of heroic fighters, and p. 89 for some villain archetypes.

Attribute: These are a set of six traits that every character has, representing general abilities in the areas of Agility, Stamina, Strength, Intelligence, Presence, and Will.

Basic Maneuvers: These are a set of simple maneuvers that all characters receive for free.

Character Points (CP): At character creation, CP are used to buy Abilities, Edges, and Maneuvers (and Flaws can be taken to gain additional CP). For character advancement, the GM awards additional CP at the end of each session, which can be spent on these as well as Attributes and Techniques (see p. **Error! Bookmark not defined.**).

Ki: Ki is mystical energy inherent in living things. Normal people aren't aware of it, but martial artists can use it as a weapon, or to heal. In game terms, ki points are a character's "magic points" for certain special abilities.

Combat Proficiencies: These are a set of three secondary traits, each determined by averaging two attributes, which represent a character's proficiency with general types of combat. The three are Precision, Force, and Finesse, and they're added to a Technique to determine the base AV of a maneuver.

Combo: A Combo is a special type of maneuver that lets you use a pre-determined sequence of moves with a discount on the AP cost.

Counter: A Counter is an attack maneuver that is being used to interrupt an incoming attack. Some maneuvers are better than others for countering, and many have an advantage for countering specific types of attacks.

Defense Reset: Characters normally get a cumulative –2 penalty for each attempt at defense after the first in a given round, but at any time a character can spend 1 AP to reset this penalty back to zero.

Derived Values: These are numerical values that are derived from a character's traits: Health, Ki, and Super Limit.

Destiny: Points awarded to characters for playing the game well, and in relation to Motivation and Story Hooks. They can be spent to improve characters and for certain in-game effects.

Edge: An Edge is a positive character trait without any Ranks. These usually cost 1, 3, or 5 CP, depending on its effectiveness.

EX Move: An EX move is a less powerful version of a Super, and costs on 5 points of Super to use.

Motivation: A trait that defines why a fighter fights. When it leads the character to act in a way that puts him at a disadvantage, he can gain 1d6 Destiny.

Flaw: A Flaw is the opposite of an Edge, a bad trait that puts the character at a disadvantage, but provides an extra Support Trait selection. Only the first three Flaws count towards new trait selections.

Groove: A groove is a special template of various traits that simulate the effects of a fighting game's system or grooves – how super bars work and possibly additional maneuvers.

Health: Health is a measure of how much punishment a character can take before he's knocked out.

Maneuver: A maneuver is a move that can be performed in combat. There are Basic Maneuvers that are possessed by every fighter character for free, but others must be purchased.

Maneuver Upgrade: A Support Trait that allows an existing maneuver to be modified and improved somewhat.

Move: Each maneuver has a move rating, which is the number of hexes, squares, or meters/yards a character can move while using it.

Opposed Action: When two characters are acting against each other, an Opposed Action is used; the two characters make rolls as usual, and whoever has the higher Action Total wins.

Posture: Maneuvers usually have a given posture – Standing, Crouching, or Aerial – which is important for Counters.

Power Level: A measure of the overall power level of the player characters in a campaign; it limits how high various traits can rise. By default this starts at 1 and rises by 1 for every 4 game sessions.

Rank: Attributes and Techniques are measured in Ranks; the Rank of a trait is a number, usually added directly to die rolls concerning that trait (see Action Value).

At character creation traits cannot exceed a Rank of 8.

Special Maneuver: A moderately powerful maneuver representing a character's "special moves."

Story Hook: A Support Trait that creates a plot line for a character. The character gets Destiny points when the GM creates complications related to it, and the player can spend Destiny to get clues and other aids related to it.

Success Points: The margin by which the Action Total of an action exceeds the Target Number or an opponent's Action Total.

Super: A Super is an especially powerful maneuver that can only be used if the character spends 10 (or in some cases more) points of Super.

Super Enhancement: A Super Enhancement is a special bonus (usually +2 to Damage and +1 to either accuracy or Move) applied to maneuvers under certain circumstances.

Super Focus: A Super Focus is the means by which a character gains points of Super. There are several different Super Foci, and by default each character has two.

Super Limit: A character's Super Limit determines how many points of Super he can hold at one time. By default this is 10, and it can be increased with the Super Battery Ability.

Super Maneuver: A class of powerful maneuvers that require the expenditure of Super points (usually 10) to perform.

Super Points: Fulfilling the conditions of a character's Super Focus lets him gain points of Super, which can then be spent to perform Supers or EX Moves.

Support Maneuver: A class of weaker maneuvers that can be purchased as Support Traits. Support maneuvers mostly deal with movement and defense.

Support Trait: By default, characters receive 10 Support Traits at character creation. These cover Skills, Edges, Maneuver Upgrades, and Story Hooks. Characters can also take Flaws to get additional support traits.

Target Number (TN): If a character is attempting an Unopposed Action, the GM sets a Target Number, and the player's Action Total must exceed the TN in order to succeed.

Technique: Techniques are ranked traits that represent a character's level of skill with using different kinds of maneuvers. A character must have at least 1 Rank in a technique to learn maneuvers relating to it.

Trait: Traits are the various things that define a character mechanically – Attributes, Techniques, Maneuvers, and Support Traits – that the player selects to define his character.

Unopposed Action: An action where there isn't another character directly opposing the character. To succeed, an unopposed action needs to exceed a Target Number set by the GM.

Chapter 1: Fighter Creation

This chapter has the rules for creating *Thrash* characters. Descriptions of character traits are in Chapter 2, templates (character archetypes, grooves, and style guidelines) are in Chapter 3, and the gameplay rules are in Chapter 4.

Step 1: Concept

Before you even begin thinking about what kind of character you want to play, it's important to figure out the details of the campaign. Sometimes the GM will simply present everything to the group, and other times you can have everyone sit down and discuss the details of the game together.

Campaign Concept

Before you even begin conceptualizing, it is important to know just what kind of campaign the GM has in mind, and what kind of characters are appropriate for it. Thrash is aimed at fighting game style campaigns, but that still leaves a lot of room open for what kinds of player characters should take part. The GM may set parameters on what kinds of PCs are appropriate to the game. Thrash games are likely to feature all martial artists, but they could easily all be ninjas, high school students, students of a particular style, etc.

The overall tone of the campaign is something to consider too, both in terms of what's going on in the story and what kinds of player characters are taking part. If you want all of the PCs to be heroes, it's better to say so than to have some of them be more self-interested and ignore hero-oriented situations.

Rules Stuff

Thrash has a fair number of ways the rules can be changed, and for that matter some different ways in which the usual rules can be used. Default Thrash characters follow the character creation rules outlined below, but there are several ways in which the GM might change that for her campaign.

Realism: It's also important to consider the GM's intentions as far as the general "realism" level of the campaign. Thrash isn't meant for truly realistic martial arts, but some games might lack any ki blasts and special powers and others will more or less require them.

Power Level: The character creation rules are meant to produce characters that are competent, but have ample room to grow. If you want to create either total newbies or more experienced fighters, you can change their starting traits; see p. 99 guidelines.

Grooves: A "Groove" is a package of traits intended to model the "systems" of a fighting games – the way super bars work, the basic moves that everyone has, etc. See p. 60 for more details.

Character Concept

Before you begin coming up with stats, it's best to have some general idea of what your character is going to be like ahead of time. A concept doesn't have to be fancy or anything; it just needs to you a general direction to follow when deciding on your character's abilities and such.

Fighting Style

Style is kind of a nebulous thing in fighting games; while there are characters that obviously practice Karate or Tae Kwon Do or Kendo, even when the Street Fighter cast had a fighting style in each profile there were still some that were more or less made up. In King of Fighters characters do still have distinct fighting styles, but there are lots of fictional styles and sub-styles (Magatama, Kyokugen-ryu Karate, etc.) that figure prominently in the story, alongside the usual suspects. Chapter 3 has some suggestions for fighting styles, with both real-world information and advice based on how those styles have been presented in fighting games, but players shouldn't necessarily feel constrained by these. There are zillions of fighting styles all over the world—there are literally 1,500 or so styles of kung fu alone—and with fighting games we're not dealing with a genre that puts a lot of emphasis on accurately portraying the martial arts. For some guidelines on real-world fighting styles and how they're portrayed in fighting games, see p. 64.

Step 2: Motivation

Take a moment to think about the character's most pressing motivation. Especially in the earlier fighting games, fighters usually have some kind of clear motivation or goal, whether they had something to prove to the whole world, or just wanted to test their own skills. Even if it's simple, fighters need something to fight for. As a character trait, Motivation defines in basic terms *why* a fighter fights. Characters can gain Destiny points when their Motivations make their lives more complicated. See p. 20 for more details. The 12 Motivations included in the book are:

- **Bloodlust:** You like carnage.
- **Bond:** You're defined by your connection to a certain person.
- **Code:** You're defined by a code of honor.
- **Competitor:** You love to compete against worthy foes.
- **Driving Goal:** There's something you must accomplish at all costs.
- **Duty:** You're all about fulfilling your duty, getting the job done.
- **Hedonist:** You're all about having a good time.
- **Hero:** You just can't help but stand up to injustice.
- **Megalomaniac:** You want money, power, etc, no matter what it takes.
- **Power:** You want to become more powerful, no matter what it takes.
- **Pride:** You're out to prove the worth of your style, homeland, or yourself.
- **Showoff:** You want to be the center of attention.

Step 3: Attributes

Attributes are traits that every character has to some degree; there are a total of six attributes, divided into the categories of Physical and Mental, as described below. Assign 25 points among the six attributes; you must put at least 1 point in each attribute, and starting characters may not have attributes higher than 8.

Physical	
Agility	Agility determines how fast the character can move and how good their reflexes are.
Stamina	Stamina is a measure of how long the character can carry out physical activities without being fatigued, and also determines how much damage they can take in combat.
Strength	Strength describes the character's overall physical strength, and thus determines both how much damage they inflict with normal, physical attacks, and how much they can lift and carry.
Mental	
Intelligence	This describes the character's overall reasoning ability, memory, perception, and so on.
Presence	Presence is a character's charisma and force of personality; in a sense it's both offense and defense for social matters.
Will	The Will attribute is a measure of the character's determination and force of will, and, amongst other things, is used to resist mental attacks.

Rank	Description
1	Poor
2-3	Average Human
4-5	Above Average
6-7	Exceptional
8-9	World-Class
10+	Superhuman

Step 4: Secondary Values

Secondary Values are special character traits that are dependent on other character traits. Combat Proficiencies, Health, and Ki are all based on attributes, and they can only be increased by improving the attributes they're based on. Super Foci and Super Limit are assigned during character creation, and can be changed using certain Support Traits.

Combat Proficiencies

Each character also has three *Combat Proficiencies* that are used to determine the accuracy of combat maneuvers, and each one is calculated as the average of two at-

tributes (rounded down). Each maneuver lists which Combat Proficiency it uses in its *Action Value*, and in a few cases the player is given the option of choosing between two different Combat Proficiencies.

Finesse	Finesse is used for maneuvers that are technical and/or are effective because they're skillfully executed. (Agility + Presence) ÷ 2
Force	Power is used for maneuvers that rely on raw power to overwhelm the opponent's defenses. (Strength + Will) ÷ 2
Precision	Prevision is used for maneuvers that depend on striking the opponent from a distance or accurately hitting a specific part of the opponent. This includes attacks that take advantage of weak points, and all ranged attacks. (Agility + Intelligence) ÷ 2

Health

A character's resistance to damage is determined by his *Health* rating. This is calculated as **(Stamina × 6) + (Will × 3)**. Characters lose Health points when they're hit by attacks, and a character that loses all of his Health points falls unconscious.

Ki

Ki is a character's reserve of spiritual energy; ki points are expended when a character uses certain maneuvers, and a character that has used all of his ki points cannot use maneuvers that require ki. Ki is calculated as **(Stamina × 2) + (Will × 4)**.

Super Foci

In order to use Supers and EX Moves, a character must spend Super points; Supers cost 10 Super points, EX Moves cost 5. How a character gains Super Points depends on which Super Foci he has. Characters get two foci for free, selected from among Attack, Cool, Damage, Defense, Heat, and Rage; see p. 59 for full descriptions.

Selecting an additional Super Focus costs 6 CP (the Extra Super Focus edge), eliminating one of the free ones gives the character an additional 4 CP, and eliminating both of the free ones (so that the character cannot gain Super Points at all) gives the character 10 CP.

Normally you can't assign more than one Super Focus selection to the same Focus; with the Double Super Focus you can do so (though you must still pay for the second focus either out of your free selections or with the Extra Super Focus edge). This doubles the amount of Super you gain from when that particular Super Focus is invoked.

Super Limit

"Super Limit" is the number of Super Points a character can store at one time. All characters start with a Super Limit of 10; this can be increased by taking levels of Super Battery or lowered with the Reduced Super Limit flaw.

Destiny

Destiny points are used both to improve characters' abilities and for special meta-game effects; see p. 78 for more details. Newly created characters start the game with 5 Destiny points.

Step 5: Techniques

Techniques determine the character's accuracy with different types of martial arts maneuvers. There are seven basic Techniques – **Acrobatics**, **Block**, **Evade**, **Focus**, **Grapple**, **Kick**, and **Punch**. Characters who use weapons can also put points into **Melee**; see p. 93 for more details.

Distribute 25 points among the various Techniques as desired. You may have individual techniques at zero, but this means you cannot learn any maneuvers that use those techniques. Like attributes, starting characters cannot have Techniques over 8.

Step 6: Maneuvers

A character's "special moves" are represented by **Maneuvers**. Characters start with the set of Basic Maneuvers for free, and get to select three **Special Maneuvers** and one **Super Maneuvers**. You cannot take a maneuver if you do not have at least one rank in the technique it used in its Action Value.

If you don't use all of your maneuver selections, you can convert one of these into two Support Traits (see below), but not the other way around.

Step 7: Support Traits

Support Traits are character traits that provide other advantages to the character. They're divided into **Edges**, **Maneuver Upgrades**, **Skills**, **Story Hooks**, and **Support Maneuvers**. Each character gets 10 support traits, selected from any of the five categories. Characters can also take **Flaws**; each flaw is a negative trait that hinders the character, but it also provides one additional support trait selection. Characters only receive "credit" for the first three flaws taken.

The GM may require players to put a certain number of support trait selections in certain categories. In particular, I recommend players take at least three Skills and one Story Hook.

Edges

Edges are things where the character has an advantage over others. These can include things that enhance his combat abilities, helpful social factors, etc.

Maneuver Upgrades

Maneuver Upgrades allow other types of maneuvers to be modified and improved somewhat. You can only put two upgrades onto a single maneuver. See p. 44 for more details.

Skills

Skills represent a character's areas of knowledge and expertise outside of fighting. A skill adds a bonus of +2 or +3 to actions that involve it. Characters can take a given skill multiple times for a cumulative effect, but cannot take a skill more than 3 times at character creation.

Story Hooks

Story Hooks are things that are going on with a character's life that he can't ignore. They serve to draw player characters into events (and give a clear message to the GM about things the player wants in the campaign), and help the character earn Destiny points when they come up.

Support Maneuvers

Support Maneuvers are a special class of weaker maneuvers that can be taken as Support Traits. Many of them relate to defense or movement, but there are also some attacks and template maneuvers.

Step 8: Character Profile

By now you should have a pretty good idea of what kind of guy (or gal) your character is. Character traits can suggest a lot about a fighter's physique, personality, background, etc, but it's up to you to fill in the rest of the details to make your character come alive. Come up with a name—if you're not sure, there are some great name generator sites on the net—and think about your character's looks, disposition, history, and anything else you might want to add. Some players like to write up long, detailed character profiles, while others just keep a rough idea in their heads. Do whatever works for you, and whatever lets you communicate your character's awesomeness to the rest of the group.

Between Media

Thrash is not a fighting game; it's a roleplaying game that aspires to ape fighting games in certain ways.

Lots of things in this game have their own distinct names, which are different from the equivalents seen in fighting games. In some places this is just me using whatever terminology happens to be my own preference, and in others it's an attempt to find a middle ground between several different overlapping names for the same thing. "Variable Combo," for example, is essentially a representation of the Custom Combos introduced in *Street Fighter Alpha 2*, something that later appeared by other

names in a number of fighting games, but named in a way that evokes the V-Ism of Alpha 3. Furthermore, a lot of maneuvers leave room for interpretation.

Adapting a character from a fighting game (or some other medium entirely) can be a somewhat daunting task, especially when it comes to filling out things that aren't covered by the original. This can be further complicated by working with limited pools of points. When you stat up a character in an RPG, you're creating your own version of it. No matter how accurate you manage to make it, on some level you're "role-playing fanfiction." Real fighting game characters are made of sprites (or 3-D models) and program code after all. If you have to make a younger or otherwise different version of the character, that's fine.

Maneuvers in *Thrash* are fairly customizable, and in fact most supers are meant to be built rather than chosen. This means that if you have trouble finding the equivalent of a given special move, it might be that you just need to think about an existing one in a different way, or find the right combination of maneuver and upgrades. This is especially important when it comes to basic maneuvers, since they're specifically meant to cover a decent range of things and prevent maneuver lists from getting overly cluttered. If your character is a Muay Thai fighter who attacks with elbows rather than fists, or a teenaged girl who sometimes rams opponents over with her butt (Athena Asamiya and Yuri Sakazaki from *King of Fighters* have done this), the basic Punch and Kick can handle it just fine. On the other hand sometimes you do need to just make a new maneuver from scratch, which is what the maneuver design rules (p. 91 are for).

Chapter 2: Character Traits

This chapter has full descriptions for the various selectable character traits, which is to say maneuvers and support traits, plus Super Foci and Motivations.

Motivations

A character's motivation is an expression of the reasons he has for fighting. There are 12 of them included below; Megalomaniac is the only one that's more or less exclusively for villains, but some of them make for characters who are at least anti-heroes. All Motivations have some leeway for the player to define how they relate to the particular character, but some (such as Bond and Code) explicitly require more detail. Aside from being a way to define your character and how to go about role-playing, there are two in-game effects of Motivations:

Invoking a Motivation: As a player, if you think that following your character's Motivation is going to make his life more difficult, you can say so to the GM. If the GM agrees that this is the case, you gain 1d6 Destiny points.

Compelling a Motivation: If the GM feels that your character's Motivation *should* be leading him to do something that'll make his life more difficult, she can "compel" it. That means that as the player you have a choice: you can go along with it and gain 1d6 Destiny, or spend 2 Destiny to ignore it. Although compelling Motivations is a part of the GM's authority, if you genuinely feel that the GM is in some way mischaracterizing your fighter you can say so and (briefly) discuss the matter.

Each Motivation gives a bulleted list of things that a character might be tempted to do that could lead to it being invoked or compelled. These aren't set in stone, but you should discuss your interpretation of the Motivation with the GM to avoid misunderstandings. Whether you're tweaking an existing Motivation or making a new one from scratch, you should be able to come up with at least three examples similar to the ones given below.

Bloodlust

For you it isn't about honor or glory, just the thrill you get when your fist breaks bones. Characters with Bloodlust aren't necessarily evil, but this Motivation makes being good a challenge as sometimes he can't help but take things a little too far.

- Once you start hurting someone, you have a hard time stopping.
- You can't pass up the chance to challenge someone who you think will provide exciting, visceral combat, regardless of whether they're too weak or too strong for you.
- Once you've started fighting, you won't back down, no matter how badly hurt you are.

Bond

There is a special person to whom you feel a powerful bond. This could be your mentor, a close friend or lover, someone you admire from afar, or even someone you

serve directly. Your desire to protect them, to please them, or perhaps to emulate the good you see in them, is what drives you.

- If they were in need of help, you couldn't leave them be.
- If they asked you to do something, you'd do it.
- If someone insulted them, you'd take exception.

Code

You have a code of honor that guides everything you do. This could be a traditional code like bushido or chivalry, or a personal code that may not be understood by everyone. Living up to this code means everything to you. A character might have his own unique code, but below are some examples of codes with some kind of historical precedent:

Bushido is the "way of the warrior" that was once practiced by samurai. It demands a frugal yet excellent existence and absolute loyalty to one's master, and a dishonored samurai can redeem himself by seppuku.

Chivalry was the code of European knights. People today often use the word in a metaphorical sense, but classical chivalry required courage, generosity, mercy, (Christian) faith, loyalty, truthfulness, and justice.

If the **ninja** had a code, it's hard to say with any historical accuracy what it was, but we can assume that each individual ninja is required to show absolute loyalty to the ninja clan, complete missions at all costs, and keep secrets without fail. A ninja who fails the code or tries to leave the clan is marked for death.

- Whatever the code requires you to do, you will do it.
- If you do fail to follow your code, you must do some kind of penance to redeem yourself, even if you must pay the ultimate price.
- You can't forgive anyone who disrespects or dishonors your code, especially if they're supposed to be following it too.

Competitor

You love to fight; you don't do this for glory or to see blood, but simply because the act of fighting, testing yourself against stronger opponents, makes you feel more alive than anything else.

- You can't pass up a challenge from a legitimate competitor.
- You don't want to bother with opponents that aren't going to be a challenge.
- You'd rather fight someone when they're at full strength rather than dispose of them the easy way, even if it'll create more trouble later on.

Driving Goal

There is some goal to which you've dedicated your whole life. In all likelihood it's the reasons you started learning martial arts in the first place. Vengeance is the most common Driving Goal, but virtually any is possible. A character can have a major goal without it being represented as his Motivation; remember that a Motivation means the thing is subject to being invoked and compelled. If your character is look-

ing for the man who killed his father, but you think he isn't likely to fly off the handle when confronted with that man, consider a different Motivation.

- You can't pass up anything that will get you closer to your goal.
- You will do everything in your power to avoid anything that will put you further from your goal.
- When confronted with the object of your goal (e.g., the man who killed your father) you can't help but go into action, regardless of the consequences.

Duty

You have a duty of some kind, and you take it very seriously, no matter where it might lead you. This motivation could be used for a soldier who diligently follows order, an ancient master who feels he must shepherd younger fighters, a knight defined by his vow to protect a princess, etc. Whatever your mission is, you must do everything in your power to ensure that you do not fail.

- You are not accepting of questioning of your duty, and are unlikely to do so yourself.
- Unless your incapacitation would prevent you from succeeding, you place your duty above your own safety.
- You sometimes ignore things that aren't pertinent to your duty.

Hedonist

Win enough tournaments and you can live pretty comfortably. You may have gotten your talents through honest training, and you may do what it takes to maintain and improve your fighting prowess, but ultimately the reason you fight is to maintain your easy life and have a good time. Some characters with this Motivation really are lazy, but others have taken this route because their chaotic spirit won't let them accept the confinement of any other profession.

- If something in front of you seems like it'll be fun, you'll go for it, regardless of the consequences. If fighting a given opponent looks like it'll be interesting, you'll try to challenge him.
- You're in this to enjoy yourself, so you can't help but use what resources you have on stuff that you find fun.
- You try to avoid dealing with anything that requires "real" work. You probably don't consider martial arts training to be "work" per se, but if it's chopping firewood or doing algebra homework you'll almost certainly slack off.

Hero

You are a true hero. You can't stand by when there's an injustice, so you constantly leap into action to defend the innocent and right wrongs. For you, the strength you've gained in becoming a fighter means nothing if it can't be used to do what's right.

- You can't stand by while injustice is taking place.

- You can't let evildoers go unpunished, unless protecting the innocent comes first.
- You have a hard time overlooking even minor wrongdoings by your friends and allies.

Megalomaniac

You want it *all*—wealth, fame, and especially power—and you want to grab it by any means necessary, no matter who gets hurt. This Motivation is almost exclusively for villains, and almost cartoonishly evil heads of evil organizations at that. It would take a pretty silly campaign for a megalomaniac to be a viable PC.

- You take what you want. Those who stand in your way are insects to be trampled underfoot.
- You might make certain exceptions here and there—when your emotions cloud your evil judgment—but normally you treat people as disposable tools, no matter how loyal they might be to you.
- You are one of the more arrogant people in the world. You hate being insulted, and whatever talents you might have can be overshadowed by your overconfidence.

Power

Power doesn't come without a price. The "right" way to train is to gain power by your own efforts, to hone yourself. But you crave power at *any* cost. Perhaps you started out dedicated to your art (Perfection) and reached a hurdle you couldn't pass without cheating somehow, and slid downhill, or maybe you were a bad apple from the beginning. While this Motivation seems made for villains, a hero or anti-hero might have it too. Such a character could find himself doing terrible things for the noblest of reasons, as his desire to fulfill some goal brings him to seek the power he needs by any means necessary.

- You want to gain power by any means necessary, and you won't trouble yourself over bumps in the road, like innocent people.
- You're overconfident about what power you do have, and often assume you must be more powerful than whatever opponent you're facing.
- You're impatient about obtaining power, and can't be bothered to do training that requires real time and discipline.

Pride

You're driven by the need to prove something, to make the world respect your fighting style, your homeland, or simply yourself. Not a few fighting game characters decided to enter a major tournament to show the world the worth of their country or fighting style.

- You can't pass up an opportunity to prove yourself.
- You can't let insults to the object of your pride go unchallenged.

- You *hate* seeing someone with the same homeland/style/etc. making it look bad.

Showoff

You love being the center of attention, and will do whatever it takes to get there. Your moves are flashy almost to the point of being impractical, and your attitude doesn't always go over well with other fighters.

- You won't pass up the chance to get noticed, whether it's in front of a crowd or on TV.
- Whatever you do, you want to look good doing it.
- You're not above humiliating your opponent if it'll get you more attention, even if it'll bring you trouble later.

About Maneuvers

Maneuvers are the special moves that all but define fighting game characters. This section explains how they're defined and used in the game. In *Thrash* there are four types of maneuvers:

- All characters get the ten **basic maneuvers** (p. 29) for free; these cover the simple punches, kicks, block, and so on. However, there are certain Flaws (notably Grounded) that can deprive a character of one or more basic maneuvers.
- **Special maneuvers** (p. 31) are for general special moves; in fighting game terms these require a special controller motion but no special conditions have to be met. Starting characters get three special maneuvers.
- **Super maneuvers** (p. 37) are more powerful attacks that require spending Super points. Starting characters get one super maneuver.
- Finally, **support maneuvers** (p. 38) are simpler moves that are purchased as Support Traits. They mostly deal with defense and movement, and those that are used to attack are on par with basic maneuvers in terms of power.

FX: What You're Actually Doing

In this game you have a good amount of freedom to have a maneuver do whatever you like within its stats. A Rising Uppercut, for example, can be pretty much anything that goes upwards and hits with the upper body, so it doesn't matter if it's the classic Dragon Punch, or Shingo Yabuki's 100-shiki (from King of Fighters), or even a crazy rising head butt. Even the number of physical "hits" can vary. If you want your guy to add an extra slapdown punch at the top of his rising uppercut, you don't have to add anything to the move (it already causes Knock-Down after all) as long as you're satisfied with the existing stats of the maneuver.

This is especially important with Basic Maneuvers, since anything you do in combat that isn't a big cool special move is probably going to be one of these. You do not need a special maneuver to hit with your elbow or an open palm instead of your fist; use a Punch and describe it as whatever move you like; even a head butt would be fine! Also, a given character doesn't necessarily have to use a maneuver the same way all the time, especially when it comes to Basic Maneuvers.

You also can and should come up with names for your special moves. No self-respectable fighter is going to leave it as a "Rising Uppercut" when it could be a Shoryuken, Rising Dragon, Dragon Uppercut, or even something that doesn't have "dragon" in it. Whether your character shouts out the name of the move is up to you, but in this genre it needs to be *called* something. Move names in fighting games tend to be either in Japanese or English (or Engrish, more likely).

Supers and EX Moves

Just like their fighting game counterparts, Thrash characters can have "supers." These are divided into two classes; EX Moves, which cost 5 Super points to use, and

Supers, which cost 10 or more. Strictly speaking, that they consume Super points is the only criterion for a maneuver to be considered a "super maneuver."

Super Enhancements

Certain traits will allow a character to spend Super points on a maneuver to add a "Super Enhancement" to it. The EX Blazing maneuver lets you do this with any non-super maneuver, Super Boosting lets you do it with any existing super maneuver, etc. A super enhancement adds +2 to Damage and +1 to either the AV or Move, and if multiple super enhancements are applied to the same maneuver, they're cumulative.

If the GM allows, characters can have "customized" super enhancements, substituting a Maneuver Upgrade for the usual bonuses. Customized super enhancements should be pre-determined for each instance where they would come up.

Maneuver Descriptions

Maneuver Type: Most maneuvers list at least one "type" in the parentheses following the name.

- **Ki-Based** maneuvers consist mainly of energy, and a standard Block is ineffective against such moves (see Energy Block).
- **Combos** are a special class of maneuver that allow a character to use other maneuvers in sequence; more details are provided below.
- **Defensive** maneuvers can be used, even when it's not your turn, to defend against an incoming attack.
- **Grapples** are throws and other wrestling moves; Grapples are special in that they can be dodged but not blocked.
- **Movement** maneuvers let the character get around faster rather than attacking, though some have special effects when they immediately precede an attack.
- **Strikes** are punches, kicks, and certain Athletics-based maneuvers that involve hitting the opponent directly.
- **Supers** are maneuvers that require expenditure of Super points; while most super maneuvers are created with combos or modifiers (especially Mega-Attack), some are pre-made as maneuvers. All characters have the Heavy Attack and Move Boost templates as Basic Maneuver.
- **Templates** are special maneuvers that can only be used to modify the effects of other maneuvers; each Template maneuver explains what kinds of maneuvers it can be combined with. Certain template maneuvers can be stacked with other template maneuvers on the same base maneuver; refer to the individual maneuver description.

Prerequisites: Certain maneuvers require you to have particular maneuvers or other traits before they can be learned. If the GM allows, players may spend a Support Trait selection to ignore a prerequisite.

Action Value: This is the starting point for the die roll used to determine if the maneuver can be used successfully. This is typically the sum of a Combat Proficiency and a Technique, sometimes with a bonus or penalty from the maneuver itself.

Damage: This is the damage (if any) inflicted to an opponent's Health if the maneuver hits. Many maneuvers add half the Ranks of a particular attribute (often but not always Strength) to the damage; always round down.

AP Cost: Most maneuvers cost Action Points to use. Characters accumulate an additional 3 AP at the beginning of each round (to a maximum of 6), and these are consumed when a maneuver is used. If a character doesn't have enough AP for a maneuver, he simply can't use it. A special exception exists for maneuvers that cost 7 or more AP (see p. 74).

Move is the number of meters/hexes a character can move while using a maneuver. A few particularly fast maneuvers add ½ the character's Agility to the total move; as usual, round down. If the Move of a maneuver is insufficient, a character can opt to add the Move Boost template maneuver (see below).

Posture refers to how a character's body is positioned while performing the maneuver. The three basic postures are Standing, Crouching, and Aerial. Most of the time posture is unimportant, but certain maneuvers allow easy counterattacks to opponents using maneuvers of certain postures. If a maneuver doesn't list a posture, it is assumed to be Standing.

Counter: While any attack can be used to counterattack, certain ones are designed for that purpose, though often only against specific types of maneuvers (based on posture or other factors). Maneuvers without an appropriate counter feature have the AP cost increased by 1 and take a –2 penalty to Accuracy when used as a counterattack; see p. 75 for more details.

Knock-Down: A maneuver that causes knock-down will render the opponent prone if it hits successfully and inflicts damage.

Knock-Back: "Knock-Back" is when an attack hits with enough force to send an opponent reeling backwards.
Light Knock-Back usually only shoves the opponent back, and seldom knocks them down. If an attack with Light Knock Back hits and inflicts damage, the target is shoved back 1 hex per 2 Success Points attained on the attack roll, to a maximum of ½ the attacker's Strength (or whatever attribute is being added to the damage). If the attack gets more Success Points than the target's Stamina, he will suffer a Knock-Down as well.

Maneuvers with *Heavy Knock-Back* can actually send the opponent flying backwards. If a maneuver with Heavy Knock-Back hits and inflicts damage, the opponent is sent flying back 1 hex per Success Point.

Extended Hold: An Extended Hold is a grappling maneuver where the fighter grabs onto the opponent and holds on for a while, wrenching/bashing some part of their anatomy to inflict extra damage. When an Extended Hold is used, the attacker inflicts the damage/effects listed in the maneuver right off the bat, and he gets to make one extra "wrench" for every 2 Success Points the attack scored. For each of these, the attacker and defender make an opposed Strength + Grapple roll (though the Disengage maneuver can be used by the defender). If the defender wins, the hold is broken and the remaining wrenches are lost.

Combo Maneuvers

Combos are a special type of maneuver that allows a character to more accurately string several different maneuvers together. With the exception of Variable Combo, a combo maneuver represents a series of maneuvers that the character has learned to use in a predetermined sequence. In Thrash the combos that you can pull off in a fighting game on the fly are represented by successfully doing multiple attacks in one turn, while a combo maneuver would be a multi-hit attack that you do with a controller motion.

Learning a combo as a maneuver allows a character to get a "discount" on the AP required to perform the maneuvers it entails, but those AP have to be committed all at once, even if part of the combo misses. In particular, a character executing a combo needs to stay close enough to actually hit, which makes the Leap Dodge maneuver especially frustrating to characters who make extensive use of combos.

The major combo-based maneuvers are Combo Maneuver, Defensive Combo, Power Combo, Super Combo, and Variable Combo.

Enhanced Combos

Combo Maneuvers can potentially have Super Enhancements, Maneuver Upgrades, and Template Maneuvers applied to them; this is handled as follows:

When a combo is being enhanced, all of the costs imposed by whatever's changing it (AP, Ki, etc.) must be paid when it is initiated, but bonuses to damage are applied to the last maneuver in the combo. Bonuses to Move can be applied anywhere within the combo, and enhancements to Accuracy and Reach are applied to the first hit.

On the other hand, super enhancements can be treated as a maneuver upgrade to the total AP budget of the combo as per the Upgrading Combos rule (see p. 45).

Basic Maneuvers

Block (Defensive)
If the damage of an attack is less than the character's Stamina, it does no damage. However, for every full multiple of the character's Stamina, he takes 1 point of damage (e.g., a character with Stamina 6 blocking an attack that does 19 damage will take 3 points of damage).

Block is ineffective against Grapple maneuvers.

Action Value: Force + Block +1

Move: 1

Dash (Movement)
2 AP

Move: 3 + (½ Agility)

Defense Reset (Defensive)
This maneuver lets a character "reset" his defenses, reducing the usual cumulative multiple defense penalty (see p. 74) back down to zero. This maneuver can be performed at any time, regardless of initiative.

1 AP

Dodge (Defensive)
Action Value: Finesse + Dodge

Move: 2

Heavy Strike (Template)
This is a Template Maneuver that can be applied to any move that does damage using muscular force (i.e., any move that adds a character's Strength Modifier to damage), including punches, kicks, grapples, and appropriate athletics maneuvers. It can also be applied to Ki-based maneuvers, but the Ki cost is increased by 2.

Modifiers: +1 AP, –1 Accuracy, +3 Damage, –1 Move

Jump (Movement)
1 AP

Special: Aerial

Move: 3 + (½ Agility)

This maneuver lets the character leap into the air, traveling a long distance with only 1 AP. Certain maneuvers (notably the basic Punch and Kick, but there are others) can be used while in the air. This means that maneuver effectively becomes Aerial, and the extra momentum adds a special bonus of +2 to the damage.

Kick (Strike)
2 AP

Action Value: Finesse (or Force) + Kick

Move: 1

Damage: 5 + (½ Strength)

This is normally a Standing maneuver, but it can be used as a Crouching one, or if the character is airborne (as with Jump or another maneuver) it can be used as an Aerial maneuver.

Move Boost (Template)

Move Boost: +1 AP, Move +3

Punch (Strike)

2 AP

Action Value: Finesse (or Force) + Punch + 1

Move: 1

Damage: 4 + (½ Strength)

This is normally a Standing maneuver, but it can be used as a Crouching one, or if the character is airborne (as with Jump or another maneuver) it can be used as an Aerial maneuver.

Throw (Grapple)

You can also do a "Takedown" throw; this adds +2 to Damage, but both the fighter and the opponent are left prone if it is used successfully.

3 AP

Action Value: Force (or Finesse) + Grapple + 1

Move: 1

Damage: 7 + (½ Strength)

Special Maneuvers

Blast Knuckle (Strike)

This is a powerful standing punch with so much power behind it that it actually launches the opponent backwards. A good hit with a Blast Knuckle is not only a devastating attack, but can give you time to regroup.

Special: Counterattack vs. Standing, Heavy Knock-Back

4 AP

Action Value: Force + Punch

Move: 0

Damage: 8 + (½ Strength)

Body Missile (Strike)

This maneuver covers any number of attacks where the character hurls his entire body at the opponent. This can cover a flying head butt, a particularly long-range drop kick, or a rolling "cannonball" attack.

4 AP

Action Value: Force (or Finesse) + Athletics

Move: 5 + (½ Agility)

Damage: 8 + (½ Strength)

Combo Maneuver (Combo)

A Combo Maneuver allows a character to perform a set series of moves more quickly than would otherwise be possible. In effect, the fighter gets a "discount" on the AP cost, but must commit all of the AP at once.

To create a Combo Maneuver, first select its AP Cost, from 3 to 6. The table below gives the maximum AP total of the maneuvers it contains. Within that total, select a sequence attack maneuvers (any category except Super). Any template maneuvers (like Heavy Attack) need to be applied during the combo's creation. Also, a single maneuver cannot appear more than twice in a combo, and no more than 3 maneuvers costing 2 AP can appear in a combo.

Combo AP Cost	Max Maneuver AP Total
3	5
4	7
5	9
6	11

Defensive Combos: It's possible to create a combo maneuver that begins with a defensive maneuver. This is bought in a similar manner to a basic Combo Maneuver, but for the purposes of determining the cost treat the initial defensive maneuver as though it cost an additional 3 AP.

Dash Punch (Strike)

In this maneuver the character dashes at the opponent, trying to very quickly clear the distance between them and using his momentum to deliver a powerful punch.

4 AP

Action Value: Force + Punch

Move: 5 + (½ Agility)

Damage: 8 + (½ Strength)

Death From Above (Strike)

This is a powerful attack favored by ninjas; the fighter leaps high up into the air, so high that the opponent is likely to lose sight of them, and comes straight down on their heads with a single, powerful blow.

4 AP

Special: Aerial, Knock-Down

Action Value: Precision + Athletics – 1

Move: 4 + (½ Agility)

Damage: 6 + (½ Strength)

Dive Kick (Strike)

This maneuver can only be performed while the character is already in the air; he rights himself and dives diagonally downward, aiming a massive kick at the opponent.

3 AP

Special: Aerial, Counterattack vs. Standing

Action Value: Finesse + Kick – 1

Move: 4

Damage: 6 + (½ Strength)

EX Blazing (Template)

You can turn *any* attack maneuver into an EX Move, which means you can spend 5 points of Super to add a single Super Enhancement to it (p. 26). This can be combined with other Templates.

Forward Leap Kick (Strike)

With this maneuver the character hops or flips forward, striking the opponent with one or both feet.

3 AP

Special: Counter vs. Crouching

Action Value: Finesse + Kick

Move: 4

Damage: 8 + (½ Strength)

Hurl (Grapple)

Hurl is similar to a typical throw, except that the opponent is sent flying as per a Light Knock-Back, making it a good way to put some distance between oneself and the opponent.

4 AP
Special: Light Knock-Back, Knock-Down
Action Value: Force + Grapple
Move: 1
Damage: 8 + (½ Strength)

Intercept Counter (Defensive)

This sophisticated maneuver lets a fighter intercept an incoming striking attack and throw the opponent to the ground. When using it, the fighter has to specify which Posture he is trying to counter against, and it will automatically fail if he gets it wrong.

2 AP
Action Value: Finesse + Grapple
Move: 0
Damage: 4 + (½ Strength)

Justice Fist (Strike)

This is a powerful standing punch that sends the opponent crashing to the ground.

3 AP
Special: Counterattack vs. Standing, Knock-Down
Action Value: Force + Punch
Move: 0
Damage: 8 + (½ Strength)

Ki Blast (Ki-Based)

What's the point of having all this Ki in you if you can't use it to shoot energy blasts? With this maneuver you can.

Fighting game characters have had projectile attacks based on a lot of different things. In game terms, fire, psychic energy, ice, electricity, etc. are mostly just flavor text. The GM may take into account a Ki blast's nature if it's appropriate, but since most of these pose both advantages and disadvantages (a blast made of fire can start fires… but it can do that even when you don't want it to) any special effects it might have in game terms need to be taken as modifiers. If you want your ice blast to briefly freeze people in place, add the Freeze modifier.

A Ki Blast has a special ability to be used as a defense against other Ki Blasts.

Special: Ranged Attack
3 AP, 5 Ki
Action Value: Precision + Focus + 2
Move: 0

Damage: 8 + (½ Focus)

Leaping Power Throw (Grapple)

This is an exceptionally powerful grappling maneuver; the fighter takes hold of the opponent, jumps into the air, and uses his momentum to slam the opponent down on the ground with extra force.

5 AP
Special: Knock-Down
Action Value: Force + Grapple
Move: 3
Damage: 12 + (½ Strength)

Multi–Kick (Combo)

A multi-kick is a barrage of short, fast kick attacks. Although it costs 4 AP, the attack delivers 2 strikes, plus one additional strike for every 3 Success Points of the first attack, to a maximum of 5 strikes total.

4 AP
Special: Combo Attack
Action Value: Finesse + Kick
Move: 0
Damage: 5 + (½ Strength)

Multi–Punch (Combo)

Likewise, a multi-punch is a short flurry of light punches. It costs 4 AP, and delivers 2 strikes, plus one additional strike for every 3 Success Points of the first attack, to a maximum of 5 strikes total.

4 AP
Special: Combo Attack
Action Value: Finesse + Punch + 1
Move: 0
Damage: 4 + (½ Strength)

Power Channeling (Template)

In effect, this template maneuver lets a character infuse any striking attack (punches, kicks, and Athletics-based attack maneuvers) with Ki similar to the Power Strike modifier. This cannot be combined with any other template maneuvers except Heavy Attack and EX Blazing, and it cannot be used with any maneuver that already has the Power Strike or Power Flash enhancements.

Modifiers: +4 Damage, +4 Ki

Power Throw (Grapple)

This is an exceptionally powerful throw, such as a spinning pile driver or similar.
4 AP
Action Value: Force + Grapple – 1
Move: 0

Damage: 10 + (½ Strength)

Rising Kick (Strike)

In this maneuver the character either launches upwards, thrusting one or both feet into the air, does a high backflip to kick the opponent on the way up, a powerful rising knee, or some other variation.

Special: Counterattack vs. Aerial
3 AP
Action Value: Finesse + Kick
Move: 1
Damage: 8 + (½ Strength)

Rising Uppercut (Strike)

This is a standard signature move in fighting games; the fighter does a powerful uppercut (or other upward-moving punch of some kind), and launches himself upwards as he does so.

3 AP
Special: Counterattack vs. Aerial
Action Value: Force + Punch
Move: 1
Damage: 8 + (½ Strength)

Sliding Grapple (Grapple)

In this maneuver the fighter slides along the ground, scissors the opponent's feet between his legs, and twists to bring them down onto the ground before he hops to his feet.

Special: Knock-Down
3 AP
Action Value: Finesse+ Grapple – 1
Move: 3
Damage: 7 + (½ Strength)

Spinning Multi–Kick (Combo; Strike)

This rather flashy move involves spinning around with one or both legs outstretched to deliver several strikes to the opponent. Though it costs 4 AP, the attack delivers 2 strikes, plus one additional strike for every 4 Success Points of the first attack, to a maximum of 5 strikes total.

4 AP
Special: Combo Attack
Action Value: Finesse + Kick
Move: 4
Damage: 4 + (½ Strength)

Through Strike (Strike)

In this powerful attack, the fighter appears to dash past the opponent with lightning speed, delivering one or more blows with such precision that the damage isn't even felt until a moment later.

4 AP

Special: Crouching, Knock-Down

Action Value: Precision + Focus

Move: 4 + (½ Agility)

Damage: 8 + (½ Strength)

Super Maneuvers

Final Murder
In this powerful and dangerous finishing maneuver, the fighter latches onto his opponent and delivers a devastating blur of blows that leaves them lying on the ground.

4 AP, 10 Super
Special: Knock-Down
Action Value: Force + Grapple
Move: 4 + (½ Focus)
Damage: 12 + (½ Strength) + (½ Focus)

Mega–Attack
A Mega-Attack is essentially a massively powered up version of one of the character's Special Maneuvers. Pick whichever maneuver you want to turn into a Mega-Attack, and add a Super point cost of 10, +1 to the AP Cost, and +10 to the damage.

Power Combo (Combo)
A Power Combo is a small number of maneuvers (usually 2 to 3) performed quickly and with considerable extra power. Create the combo as per a *Combo Maneuver* (see above), but each maneuver gets +3 to Damage and +1 to Move. As a Super, a Power Combo costs 10 points of Super.

Combo AP Cost	Max Maneuver AP Total
4	8
5	10
6	12

Super Combo (Combo)
A Super Combo is similar to a Combo Maneuver, costs 10 points of Super, and allows the character to use a number of maneuvers that would normally be impossible in a single turn. Unlike a normal combo maneuver, maneuvers included can be repeated as many times as desired.

Combo AP Cost	Max Maneuver AP Total
4	11
5	14
6	17

Variable Combo (Combo)
A Variable Combo is similar to a Super Combo, except that the character can improvise, selecting a different series of maneuvers each time it is used. This maneuver is a Super, and the character must spend a minimum of 10 Super points to activate it, but additional Super can be put into it for added effect. This maneuver costs 6 AP, but it gives the character 15 AP to work with for one round, plus 1 AP per additional point of Super spent on it.

Support Maneuvers

Air Jump (Movement)
This lets you execute a normal jump while still in mid-air, presumably by using your Ki to manipulate the air somehow. Unlike a normal jump, it doesn't provide a momentum bonus to damage on a subsequent attack.

Special: Aerial
1 AP
Move: 3 + (½ Agility)

Air Snatch Throw (Grapple)
This maneuver lets you grab an opponent out of the air and slam them onto the ground.

3 AP
Special: Counter vs. Aerial
Action Value: Finesse + Grapple – 1
Move: 0
Damage: 6 + (½ Strength)

Air Throw (Grapple)
Not yet tired of doing things in the air? Then how about grabbing and throwing your opponent while you're both in mid-air? This doesn't have an inherent counter-attack ability, so it's tricky to use for that, but when you're both jumping it can definitely catch them by surprise.

Special: Aerial
3 AP
Action Value: Finesse + Grapple – 1
Move: 0
Damage: 6 + (½ Strength)

Anticipated Dodge (Defensive)
A character with a sharp mind can sometimes see something coming and slip out of the way just enough to avoid being hit. This is a replacement for the basic Dodge that uses Intelligence instead of Finesse, but has a Move of 0.

Action Value: Intelligence + Dodge + 1
Move: 0

Breakfall (Special)
This maneuver lets a character control his fall when knocked down, reducing damage. It can be used against any maneuver that causes Knock-Down (including Grapple maneuvers), and can even be used after a single ordinary defense has failed. If it succeeds, the damage is reduced by two times the Success Points scored.

Action Value: Finesse + Block
Move: 0

Circular Parry (Defensive)

This is a specialized defensive move intended for facing lots of different opponents—or a single opponent that can dish out a lot of attacks in a turn. It requires a considerable expenditure of AP for a defensive maneuver, but the AT of the maneuver can be used to block *any* blockable attack aimed at the character for the remainder of the round.

2 AP
Action Value: Finesse + Block + 1

Defensive Roll (Defensive)

This is a special defensive/dodging maneuver that puts a lot of distance between the fighter and his opponent.

1 AP
Special: Defense Reset effect
Action Value: Finesse + Dodge
Move: 3 + (½ Agility)

Disengage (Defensive)

Disengage is an alternate defensive action that can be used against Grappling maneuvers, including extended holds. A character who successful Disengages manages to slip out of the opponent's grip.

Action Value: Finesse + Grappling + 1

Disruptive Taunt

A disruptive taunt is a special form of taunt that lets the fighter sap the opponent's Super points. The opponent automatically gets to defend with an AV of Will x 2, but if the fighter doing the taunting wins, the opponent loses Super points equal to half (round up) the Success Points scored.

2 AP
Action Value: Presence + Taunt Skill

Fist Sweep (Strike)

This is a low punch intended to knock the opponent's feet out from under them.

3 AP
Special: Crouching, Knock-Down
Action Value: Force + Punch
Move: 0
Damage: 4 + (½ Strength)

Focus Super

With this maneuver, the character stands still and concentrates to "charge up" his super points. Each time it's used, the character gains Super points equal to ½ his Focus.

3 AP

Kippup

Getting up from a prone position normally takes a full 2 AP, but a character who can do a kippup can do flip up onto his feet at a moment's notice. If the character spends 1 AP this happens automatically, but he can also attempt to do so without spending AP by making an Agility + Athletics roll. The Target Number varies, but is 15 on average. This can only be attempted once per round, but if it fails the character can opt to either spend the 1 AP and get up anyway or remain prone.

Leap Dodge (Defensive)

This variant on the traditional Dodge maneuver allows the character to leap into the air and put some considerable distance between himself and the attacker.

1 AP
Special: Defense Reset effect.
Action Value: Finesse + Dodge
Move: 3 + (½ Agility)

Lock (Grapple)

This maneuver lets the fighter grab hold of one of the opponent's limbs and twist it around into a painful lock, wrenching it to hurt them.

Special: Extended Hold
3 AP
Action Value: Finesse + Grapple
Move: 0
Damage: 4 + (½ Strength)

Portentous Dodge (Defensive)

A step above Anticipated Dodge, this maneuver allows a character to use his intuition to "just know" to get out of the way of an attack. It can be used without even knowing that the attack was coming.

1 AP
Action Value: Will + Focus
Move: 1

Power Attack (Template)

Power Attack is a step above Heavy Attack; maneuvers with Power Attack applied take considerable wind-up, but they can be devastating. Ki-based maneuvers with Power Attack applied cost an additional 3 Ki. You cannot combine Power Attack with Heavy Attack.

Modifiers: +2 AP, +5 Damage

Precise Attack (Template)

This template maneuver allows the character to execute a striking attack with extra precision, hitting vital points for extra damage.

Replace whatever Combat Proficiency is used for a maneuver with Precision, add +1 to Action Value, +1 AP, and +(½ Intelligence) to damage.

Pursuit Jump (Movement)

This is a powerful jumping maneuver that sends you hurtling right at the opponent. An attack immediately off of a pursuit jump gets a bonus of +2 to damage and +2 to Accuracy.

Special: Aerial
1 AP
Move: 3 + (½ Agility)

Push Block (Defensive)

This is a more powerful block; the fighter not only intercepts the attack, but shoves the opponent back. If used successfully, the block works like usual, and the opponent suffers a Light Knock-Back.

1 AP
Special: Light Knock-Back
Action Value: Force + Stamina
Move: 1

Replacement Technique (Defensive)

This is a favorite technique of ninjas; an attack will appear to have hit the character, but then there's a puff of smoke, and it turns out the attack hit a log that's wearing the character's clothes. Unlike other defensive maneuvers, Replacement Technique can be used after another defense has been attempted and failed.

2 AP, 5 Ki
Action Value: Precision + Focus
Move: 6 + (½ Focus)

Smashing Hold (Grapple)

This is a brute-force grappling move where the fighter grabs onto his opponent and bashes them repeatedly with his knees, head, or fist.

Special: Extended Hold
3 AP
Action Value: Force + Grapple
Move: 0
Damage: 4 + (½ Strength)

Super Burn

This maneuver lets you use up a super bar (10 points of Super) to power up for a short time. For the rest of the current round and the next three rounds, all of your attacks get a bonus of +2 to damage, and any Supers you use get a Super Enhancement.

1 AP

Super Charge

This maneuver lets you concentrate in order to raise your overall energy level and prepare for a powerful attack. In other words, the character stands there and concentrates, and gains Super points. Each AP spent gives you 2 points of Super.

Super Jump (Movement)

This exceptionally acrobatic maneuver sends the fighter high up into the air, such that his current turn and entire next turn will be spent airborne.

2 AP
Special: Aerial
Move: 6 + (½ Agility)

Sweep (Strike)

This is a kick that goes low to the ground, in the hopes of knocking the opponent off of their feet.

3 AP
Special: Knock-Down
Action Value: Force + Kick
Move: 0
Damage: 4 + (½ Strength)

Teleport (Movement)

Using some kind of strange mystical power, you can disappear and then reappear in another place a moment later.

3 AP, 5 Ki
Move: 6 + (½ Focus)

Teleport Dodge (Defensive)

A quicker teleport can be used to avoid an attack and place oneself well out of the opponent's reach, and possibly out of his sight.

3 AP, 5 Ki
Action Value: Precision + Focus + 2
Move: 5 + (½ Focus)

Wall Spring (Movement)

A normal jump requires that the character launch himself off of the ground, or some other reasonably stable surface. Wall spring lets a character who is already airborne bounce off of a horizontal surface to propel himself where he wants to go. Like a normal jump, this can add a momentum bonus of +2 to the damage of one subsequent attack.

Special: Aerial
1 AP
Move: 3 + (½ Agility)

Whirlwind Dodge (Defensive)

You execute a complicated series of dodging maneuvers as you fight, potentially evading several attacks at once. Similar to Circular Parry, you make a single die roll, and you can apply that Action Total, without penalties, to dodging any number of incoming attacks for one round.

2 AP

Action Value: Agility + Dodge

Move: 1

Maneuver Upgrades

Maneuver Upgrades are special traits that let you take an existing Special Maneuver or Super Maneuver and power it up in certain specific ways. You cannot add more than two upgrades to a single maneuver, and you cannot add *any* upgrades to a Template Maneuver.

Variants: Although you are limited to two upgrades to a single maneuver, you can potentially possess more than one version of the same maneuver, with different upgrades applied. You can do this with *any* type of maneuver, including Basic and Support maneuvers, but you must purchase the maneuver a second time as a Support Maneuver. For example, if you wanted to take the basic Punch Maneuver and add Dashing Attack and Power Strike, you'd have to buy Punch as a Support Maneuver, for a total cost of 3 Support Traits.

Maneuver Upgrades

Aerial Use: This upgrade makes an attack usable in the air when it couldn't be normally.

Backstep Attack: The maneuver is performed by making a quick step backwards and then lashing out. It requires an open hex behind the character, but it can be used to Counterattack against Standing or Crouching attacks (choose one).

Dashing Attack: The attack sends the character a considerable distance in a short time. Add + (½ Agility) to its Move. Optionally, you can instead add +1 to the AP Cost to add + 3 + (½ Agility) to the Move.

EX Move: The maneuver can be used as an EX Move as well as a regular maneuver. This means you can spend 5 points of Super to add a Super Enhancement.

Forceful: The attack hits hard, and can knock opponent's off their feet. It now causes Light Knock-Back.

Lunging Attack: This upgrade makes a striking or grappling maneuver be performed with a quick lunge beforehand, adding distance and momentum. Add +2 to Move and +2 to Damage.

Power Flash: This is similar to Power Strike (see below), except that the energy actually stretches out past the reach of fighter's limbs. The maneuver costs 5 Ki, but adds +4 to Damage and +1 to Reach.

Power Strike: The maneuver is performed with the addition of crackling ki energy (or fire, lightning, etc.) to cause more damage to the opponent. It costs 5 Ki, but does +6 damage.

Super Counter: This modifier lets you use a special maneuver for a powerful counterattack that costs Super points. You can still use the regular version of the maneuver, but if you use it as a Super Counter it costs 10 Super, but it has the counterattack ability against any striking maneuver, its AP cost is reduced by 1, and its damage is increased by 3.

Body Missile Upgrades

Diving Body Missile: Instead of launching horizontally at he opponent, the fighter leaps into the air and comes down on them. The Body Missile becomes Aerial and can Counterattack vs. Standing.

Rising Body Missile: Instead of launching horizontally, the fighter flings his body upwards. The Body Missile becomes Aerial and can Counterattack vs. Aerial.

Ki Blast Upgrades

Aura: Rather than shooting out, the "ki blast" is an energy aura that briefly surrounds the character. Anyone within a Reach of 1 (i.e. the same hex or an adjacent hex) takes damage.

Charging: The Ki Blast can be "charged up" by holding onto it longer. You can spend an extra AP to add +3 to damage.

Ki Burst: Instead of a blast that travels a distance, the maneuver produces a burst of energy. Instead of its usual range, the Ki Blast now has a Reach of 3, but its damage is increased by +3.

Freeze: Whether because of ice or some other factor, if the Ki Blast hits, it causes the opponent to be momentarily held in place. The damage is reduced by 3, but if it his, the opponent loses 2 AP, and if this reduces them to 0 AP they can't defend until they gain more AP.

Geyser: The blast is a large spike of energy that goes into the air in front of the fighter. It has Reach 1 instead of being a ranged attack, but can Counter against Aerial attacks.

Homing: The Ki Blast has a limited ability to home in on the target, making it more accurate. +2 to the base Action Value.

Physical: Instead of energy, the "Ki blast" represents some kind of physical projectile. Normal Block maneuvers can be used to defend against it, but it gets +2 to damage.

Powerful: The Ki Blast carries an unusually big punch. +5 to Ki Cost, +4 to Damage.

Whirlwind: The blast takes the form of a small whirlwind that knocks the opponent off their feet. The blast now causes a Knockdown.

Upgrading Combos

As noted on p. 28, Maneuver Upgrades (and Template Maneuvers and Super Enhancements) added to combos are applied with certain conditions in mind. It's also possible to use a Maneuver Upgrade selection to improve a combo maneuver's actual number of component attacks. This kind of upgrade has two options; you can add +2 to the maneuver AP total, or you can increase the AP cost of the combo by +1 to add +3 to the maneuver AP total. In the case of a Super Combo (see p. XX), the maneuver AP added per upgrade is increased by +1.

Skills

Unlike some other Support Traits, Skills can be taken multiple times, but not more than three times at character creation.

Alertness

Alertness represents how good your character is at staying alert and noticing threats. This allows you to notice ambushes and other surprise attacks. +2 bonus.

Art

You are skilled at one or more forms of art – drawing, painting, sculpture, etc. +3 bonus.

Drive

This skill is used to operate ground vehicles of all sorts, should you feel the need to have a character that can drive a car or ride a motorcycle. +3 bonus.

Escape Artist

With this skill, you can get out of restraints. If someone ties you up, puts you in handcuffs, etc. against you will, you know how to get out of them. +3 bonus.

Insight

Insight gives you an ability to observe a fighter and make educated guesses about their abilities and intentions. Based on someone's general fighting stance you can make a good guess about their general fighting style, and after seeing them in action for at least a few rounds you can start to understand their strengths and weaknesses (and the GM can tell you, in general terms, the levels of the character's Attributes and Techniques). In a full-on fight, you can also tell roughly how much Health someone has left. +2 bonus.

Lore

Lore provides knowledge of things in the world that are hidden and in some cases better left unknown. What lore there is to know and what they character could know depends on the particular setting, but it can include martial arts mysticism, arcane matters, supernatural creatures, etc. +3 bonus.

Medicine

You are skilled at treating illnesses and/or injuries. This Ability can represent first air training, herbal medicine, or even being a medical doctor. +3 bonus.

Meditation

You are skilled at meditation, allowing you to clear your thoughts, calm your mind, and get back Chi points faster. +3 bonus.

Performance

With this skill a character knows how to do one or more types of performing arts, whether acting, dancing, singing, or something else. +3 bonus.

Persuasion

You are good at getting people to do what you want. How exactly you do this is up to you, whether it's intimidation, seduction, fast-talking, wheedling, etc. +3 bonus.

Presence Sense

You have trained yourself to be able to sense the chi in others, enabling you to detect those with strong chi, and read its character. This is most useful when dealing with those with especially strong chi, since they can be sensed more easily and from a distance, and those with weak or totally untapped chi can be very difficult if not impossible to sense. Characters that are actively using chi-based powers are also much easier to sense. +2 bonus.

Science

You are knowledgeable in one or more areas of scientific study. This provides you with knowledge, and gives you the skills necessary to conduct research and use it for practical applications. In fighting games science is mostly the domain of bad guys who want to make clones and/or generically engineered monsters. +3 bonus.

Spot

Anyone can notice things (and if things are hard to notice they can make an Intelligence roll), but a character with the Spot skill is particularly good at catching details and noticing important things. +3 bonus.

Stealth

This is the skill of being sneaky and moving around in a way that doesn't get you noticed. If your skill roll beats the other guy's Intelligence roll (with bonuses from Alertness or Spot, not to mention Acute Senses) he won't notice you. +3 bonus.

Subterfuge

This is the skill of doing sneaky and less than legal things, like picking locks, palming things, and so forth. +3 bonus.

Taunt

Taunting is the ability to effectively mock an opponent. This can throw off their concentration, and if you're especially charismatic you can use it to make yourself look good, but it can backfire sometimes, especially against an opponent who has Rage as a Super Focus. +3 bonus.

Technology

You are skilled at working with technology. At lower skill levels this just covers being able to do things like operate a computer, but at higher levels you can tackle repairs and even building things. +3 bonus.

Wilderness

This provides skills that let a character handle himself in the wilderness: survival, navigation, hunting, etc. +3 bonus.

Edges

Acute Senses

One or more of your senses is exceptionally acute. Add +2 to all sense-related rolls, or +4 to rolls relating to one particular sense.

Air Block

You are sufficiently skilled at fighting in the air to be able to use Block and other block/parry type defensive maneuvers while airborne.

Ally

You have one or more allies – friends who can help you in times of need. This could be a mentor, a fellow fighter, an organization, etc. Take some time to discuss an Ally with the GM and define who he/she/they are.

Ambidextrous

You are equally proficient with both hands, and suffer no penalties for using a weapon in either hand.

Appearance: Attractive

A character with this Edge is in some way good-looking, which provides a bonus of +3 to Presence-based actions where the character's appealing looks can be beneficial. There are different ways for a character to be attractive (beautiful, cute, handsome, sexy, striking); take note of what kind of attractive looks your character has.

Appearance: Impressive

This is similar to Appearance: Attractive, except that your character is in some way impressive and/or intimidating, so his appearance doesn't attract people per se so much as scare or overawe them. This adds a +3 bonus to Presence-based actions where being impressive/intimidating comes into play.

Appearance: Inconspicuous

A character with this Edge doesn't stand out in a crowd; people tend to overlook him because of his plain, unremarkable appearance.

Aura Hardening

Through specialized training or natural toughness, the character has become resistant to energy. Each rank of Body Hardening reduces the damage from energy attacks by 1. However, exceptionally accurate attacks can overwhelm the character; if an attack scores 6 or more Success Points, it inflicts full damage.

Blind Fighting

Your other senses are developed to the point where being blinded is usually only a minor inconvenience for you. Where fighting blind would usually impose a –6 penalty, you can ignore that penalty entirely most of the time. If an opponent is attacking from a distance or being exceptionally stealthy the penalty may still apply.

Block Bullets

Though it's much harder to do, and take a lot of specialized training, your character will have somehow learned to actually parry bullets like any other attack. Crazy, huh?

Block Energy

A normal Block maneuver doesn't allow for blocking Ki-based attacks; this template maneuver lets any existing blocking maneuver be used to defend against energy attacks.

Block Projectiles

A little easier, this lets you block projectiles, which is to say stuff like arrows, throwing knives, and so on.

Body Hardening

Through specialized training or natural toughness, the character has become resistant to damage. Each rank of Body Hardening reduces the damage from physical attacks by 1. However, exceptionally accurate attacks can overwhelm the character; if an attack scores 6 or more Success Points, it inflicts full damage.

Costume

Anime characters frequently have distinctive costumes, and a character with this Edge is never without his; the costume can be revealed by tearing off his normal clothes, and no matter how injured he might get, his costume will suffer only minor cosmetic damage. Also, in extremely dramatic moments the character can spend 1 Chi to have their normal clothes just "melt away" to reveal the costume.

Desperation

If your Health is at or lower than the sum of your Stamina and Will, any super maneuvers you do gain a Super Enhancement. Also, when you're that low on Health you can also perform super maneuvers by spending an equivalent amount of Chi instead of Super, though maneuvers done this way don't get the Super Enhancement.

Double Super Focus

Normally a character can only select a given Super Focus once, even with the Extra Super Focus edge (see below). With this Edge you can assign two selections to the same Focus, and as a result you'll get double the usual amount of Super points when.

You still have to pay for the second Super Focus normally (either by using one of your two free selection or taking Extra Super Focus).

Extra Super Focus

Select one additional Super Focus.

Property

You own some piece of property—a restaurant, bar, fighting arena, etc. This can serve as a backdrop during the campaign, and may give you opportunities to meet people and make contacts.

Rapid Healing

You heal up from injuries more quickly than most people. Under the default healing rules, you regain Health equal to their Stamina $\times$ 2 after an hour or so of rest, and after that Stamina $\times$ 3 per day.

Reputation

Somewhere along the line you've earned a reputation that can help you out in certain situations. People know him as "the champ," or as a trustworthy guy, or something else useful. If you want your character to have a reputation that causes problems, take the Bad Reputation flaw instead.

Resources

You have more money on hand than is typical for the campaign. You'll have to discuss what exactly this means with the GM, and she may in turn ask you to take the Resources edge multiple times if you want your character to be filthy rich.

Super Battery

This enhances the character's Super Limit. Add 5 to Super Limit for each time it's taken.

Super Boosting

You can spend an additional 10 Super to add a Super Enhancement to any maneuver you have available that consumes Super. This can be done as many times as you have increments of 10 Super points to spend.

Super Finesse

A character with this Edge has no super bar or super foci (do not take the Missing Super Foci or Reduced Super Limit Flaws), but in exchange he can still learn and attempt supers and EX moves. The catch is that all of these cost 1 extra AP, and a Presence + Focus roll is required for the super to be used.

Flaws

Annoyance

Intended mainly for a comedic campaign, this Flaw provides you with a person or group of people that you has to deal with who are just plain annoying to put up with. This can take any number of forms; below are some of the possibilities.

Appearance: Unattractive

A character with this Flaw is particularly unattractive, and it affects how people look at him. A penalty of –3 is applied to Presence-based rolls where this comes into play.

Bad Reputation

Somewhere along the line, you've picked up a *bad* reputation. People who've heard of you have usually heard something bad—that you're a cheater, that you might've killed someone, etc.—and react accordingly.

EX Super Bar

You can't use Supers, only EX Moves, and those cost you 10 Super points.

Fading Super

Although you can gain Super normally, it naturally bleeds away over time. At the end of each round you lose 1 point of Super.

Grounded

You do not have the Jump basic maneuver, and cannot learn any Aerial maneuvers. If you absolutely have to leap somewhere, such as to cross a chasm, make an Agility + Athletics roll; you can jump 1 hex per 2 Success Points.

Inconvenient Size

You are particularly large (or small), making it difficult for you to really function in everyday life.

Insanity

Your character has lost a few of his marbles, and has some kind of serious psychological problem. Possible forms of insanity include phobias, delusions, multiple personalities, etc.

Missing Super Focus

You have one fewer Super Foci than a typical character.

Obligation

There is some obligation you have that takes away from the time you could be spending having adventurers. This could be attending school, holding down a job, having dependents, etc. Regardless, it has to be something that puts the character apart from the other PCs in the campaign. In a campaign where all of the characters are high schools students, the fact that the characters are in school would not warrant an Obligation flaw, but a part-time job could.

Obsession

You're obsessed about something. This could be almost anything, including a long-term goal, a type of weapon, person, food, car, etc., a specific person, a concept or ideal, etc. When you have the opportunity you're likely to drop everything to get closer to the object of your obsession.

Personality Flaw

The character has a particular personality trait that is substantial and problematic. This can be arrogance, shyness, greed, etc. A character cannot have more than one Personality Flaw.

Poverty

A character with this Flaw has considerably less financial resources than is normal for the campaign.

Reduced Super Limit

The character's Super Limit is reduced by 5.

Story Hooks

A story hook is something that will draw the character into events that he can't ignore. Ideally each character should have one Story Hook. A character without has less (explicitly stated) story behind them. Characters with two story hooks are manageable, but three or more gets to be a bit much for everyone concerned to really put to good use. Story hooks can be fleshed out ahead of time or over the course of the game, and they can be developed by the player, the GM, or some of each, depending on your preferences.

A story hook cannot be completely internal to the character; merely being "impulsive" or someone who "can't back down from a challenge" isn't appropriate. It has to bring things to the character that incite him to action. Whether you create a story hook from scratch or pick one from the list, take some time to discuss with the GM what its specifics are and who is going to take responsibility for brining it into the game and developing it.

Some story hooks have the potential to overlap with other traits, especially Motivation and Flaws. As a rule, if you have the opportunity to take more than one trait to represent the same thing you should pick just one, and do so based on the actual mechanical effects you want.

A story hook can be used to create complications and to introduce aids. Both of these uses affect the character's Destiny points.

Creating Complications

A complication means something relating to the hook makes the character's life more difficult. The GM can add them, or the player can request them, but regardless the character gets compensated with 1 to 6 Destiny, depending on the severity of the complication. Unlike compelling a Motivation (see p. 20), players don't get to spend Destiny to refuse complications.

Destiny	Examples
1	You're put in an awkward situation.
2	You are attacked by Minions. Your reputation is damaged.
3	Your reputation is significantly damaged.
4	You are attacked by a competent fighter. Someone you care about is taken hostage. Your reputation is damaged enough to cause serious trouble some places.
5	Someone you care about is placed in critical danger.
6	You are targeted by a skilled assassin or a group of fighters.

Introducing Aids

Introducing an aid means the player asks the GM to let him spend Destiny to introduce something beneficial into the game that relates to the story hook, such as a clue or an encounter. The GM doesn't have to approve every aid, but she should try to approve them more often than not, unless they're going to completely derail the game. If the GM approves, she sets a Destiny point cost, from 1 to 3. The player gets

to describe the new element in fairly general terms, and from there it's up to the GM to run with it. As a rule of thumb, players can spend a maximum of 4 Destiny per story hook per game session.

Destiny	Examples
1	A minor clue turns up.
2	A significant clue turns up. An NPC appears who has a scrap of information.
3	A major clue turns up. An NPC appears who turns out to have some information, or offers some help. An NPC appears who needs your help.
4	A major revelation brings you closer to the truth. An NPC appears who offers considerable assistance.

Sample Story Hooks

Below are several examples of story hooks. Each one describes what it entails, and includes some examples of possible complications and aids.

Dangerous Rival

Somewhere along the line you've made a rival out of someone dangerous. She has no intention of killing you outright: that would deny her the chance to defeat you in a proper match. However, she refuses to be denied that match, and will do just about anything to get it, regardless of how she has to hurt people around you. Since this story hook would center around a single NPC, that character has to be someone who can't be disposed of by the player character without substantial difficulty.

Example Complications: Your rival takes out someone who you were supposed to face in a match, and people become suspicious of you. Your rival challenges you at an inopportune time. Your rival uses her connections to keep you from leaving the city.

Example Aids: Your rival helps you out of a sticky situation just so she can be sure to have her own chance to finish you off. Your rival gets fed up at your incompetence in dealing with the current situation and thrusts a clue in your face. You find out more about your rival's history, which turns out to be connected to the larger threat you're facing.

Dark Pact

You have knowingly made a deal with a major villain. She might have some hold on you—say, someone you care about held hostage—or you might simply be doing this for reasons you believe are right.

Example Complications: You are asked to act against another PC. You are asked to do something against your conscience. You are asked to turn over information without knowing what will be done with it. You are ordered to hand someone over, with no idea of their fate. After doing you a favor, the villain demands an additional favor from you.

Example Aids: The villain sets up some of his stooges to take a fall to help you keep your secret. You are given a reward for successfully carrying out an objective.

Since your demise would be troublesome, the villain has you bailed out of serious trouble.

Designed for Battle

You might not know it yet, but you were created or re-made to be a warrior. You could have been genetically engineered, brainwashed, turned into a cyborg, or otherwise altered. You're out of the clutches of the organization that did this to you—though that could have been deliberate on their part—but now you need to find out what to do with yourself.

Example Complications: Agents of the organization try to recapture you. The villain claims to have a device that can incapacitate or kill you. The villain claims that if he dies, so will you. The organization is evil, and the "good guys" come after you, not knowing you're no longer a part of it.

Example Aids: You encounter someone from the organization who recognizes you. You find another fighter produced by the same process. In fighting against the organization you find you have allies.

Dubious Fame

At some point you attained a measure of fame as a fighter, and it's caused you no end of trouble since. Whatever it was, fighters from all over the world want to challenge you. Maybe you managed to win a tournament or defeat a highly respected warrior, or maybe you just managed to badmouth a particular style and get everyone who practices it pissed off at you.

Example Complications: You find it hard to get a moment's peace once everyone finds out who you are. A reporter hounds you for an interview. A challenger comes to fight you out of nowhere.

Example Aids: Someone who's heard about you gives you a little bit of help when they wouldn't otherwise (e.g. a kid trips a bad guy, then scurries away while shouting that he wants your autograph later). A bouncer decides to let you through because having you around will make things more interesting. Someone offers to sponsor you at the tournament.

Endangered Significant Other

You have a girlfriend or some other person close to you to who is often put in danger for some reason. It might be some kind of screwed up ancestral destiny, or simply something she possesses or knows, or it could be her connection to you.

Example Complications: Your relationship with your S.O. gets strained at just the wrong time. Your S.O. gets threatened, yet again. Your S.O. is injured and confined to a hospital bed, so you can't protect her unless you stay at the hospital.

Example Aids: While being held hostage, your S.O. overheard the villain's plans. Your S.O. inspires you right when everything seems hopeless. Your S.O. turns out to have befriended a low-ranking member of the evil organization.

Inner Power

There is some kind of strange power lurking inside of you. This might be some kind of ancestral power resurfacing, or a result of something you've been exposed to, or something else. For this kind of character you should think about how to design his moves around it, such as by having everything involve a spark of ki. Some people might recognize whatever power it is you have, and some might be shocked or repulsed by it too.

Example Complications: Your power goes out of control and seriously hurts someone you didn't mean to. Someone is convinced that you are too dangerous to be allowed to walk free. Your power scares someone away.

Example Aids: Someone becomes your mentor in the hopes of harnessing your power for good. A convenient flare of your power is enough to convince someone to let you have your way. Your power activates an artifact that no one could figure out before.

Murdered Associate

Someone you deeply care about was murdered, and now it falls to you to find the killer and set things right. They could be a friend, lover, mentor, fellow student, etc. The killer might be a looming evil organization, or one very dangerous fighter. Either way, your life will never be the same with that person gone, and the road to vengeance is a long one.

Example Complications: You're threatened while visiting their grave. While looking for clues you hit a dead end because someone has erased or stolen records. A contact who provided you with information is also murdered.

Example Aids: A memento from that person turns out to contain a clue. While visiting their grave, you bump into someone else who knew them, who offers you information. You find someone else who know them, who wants to join your fight.

Targeted by Evil Organization

Whether because of your fighting prowess, your potential, your heritage, or some bauble you possess, an evil organization has targeted you. Its agents spy on and attack you, but for the time being you're able to escape.

Example Complications: Someone you thought you could trust turns out to work for them. The organization sends goons out to capture you. The organization turns out to have created a clone of you. The organization uses brainwashing to send one of your friends against you.

Example Aids: Someone you thought was with them offers you some unexpected help. The local police detective turns out to have been investigating this organization, and has some juicy information on it. Agents of the organization show up just as you're facing off with some *other* bad guys, giving you a chance to escape.

Undercover Mission

The situation you're in now, alongside the other PCs, is actually part of an undercover mission. They might know about it, or you could be required to keep it a se-

cret. Whatever organization you work for might be able to help you out once in a while, but they can't afford to act overtly.

Example Complications: Your cover is blown. The organization sends you orders to do something you'd rather not. You're sent an urgent assignment. There's a mole within the organization causing trouble for you. The organization turns out to be more sinister than you realized. You get assigned to work with someone you'd rather not.

Example Aids: You receive a message from the organization pertinent to the situation at hand. Someone nearby turns out to be an agent of the organization and can help you. The person you're meant to be watching/protecting turns out to have a piece of critical information.

Unwanted Protégé

Your career as a fighter has been going pretty well. So well, in fact, that you've wound up with a hanger-on who wants to be *just* like you. She's taken up learning the same fighting style, tries to dress like you as much as she can, and of course gets in trouble sometimes.

Example Complications: Your protégé talks big about you, and you wind up in a fight because of it. Your protégé gets taken hostage. Your protégé bites off more than she can chew, and you have to bail her out.

Example Aids: Your protégé happened to be in the right place at the right time to see what really went on. Your protégé has some friends who are surprisingly useful. Your protégé's dedication makes you look good in front of your master.

Super Foci

Attack

Gain a point of Super every time you successfully hit an opponent with an attack, including individual attacks within a Combo Maneuver. However, attacks that cost Super points do not provide you with any new Super points when they hit.

Cool

At the GM's discretion, you gain 1 to 3 points of Super (or occasionally more if the circumstances warrant) when you do something particularly cool. Any attack where the d10 roll is a 10 earns at least 1 point of Super.

Damage

Gain a point of Super every time you take damage. If you soak all of the damage of an attack (using Body Hardening or some other trait) you don't receive the point of Super.

Defense

Gain a point of Super every time you successfully defend against an opponent's attack, and 2 points of Super when you successfully defend against a super attack.

Heat

At the GM's discretion, you gain 1 to 3 points of Super (or occasionally more if the circumstances warrant) when you get a strong reaction out of an audience.

Also, if there is an audience and you make an attack that hits with 5 or more Success Points, you gain an additional point of Super.

Rage

At the GM's discretion, you gain 1 to 3 points of Super (or occasionally more if the circumstances warrant) when you become particularly angry.

If the opponent taunts you, make an opposed roll; they roll Presence + Taunt, while you make a Will attribute check, and if the opponent succeeds you gain 1 point of Super, and if the opponent gets 5 or more Success Points you get an additional point of Super.

Chapter 3: Templates

Templates are various kinds of guidelines for creating different things in the game. This chapter includes **archetypes** (complete, read-to-play characters of a given type), **grooves** ("presets" for super bars and whatnot to simulate different fighting games), and **styles** (guidelines for making fighters who use different kinds of fighters).

Archetypes

The following set of eleven archetypes is intended to show how to build a variety of different characters using *Thrash*. Each is a complete, ready-to-play character, and if you're in a hurry they can be used as-is or tweaked instead of building a character from scratch.

[I'll fill in the archetypes after I've done some more revisions to the actual rules and Suichi finishes his illustrations, so I don't have to completely re-write them.]

Ancient Master

Boxer

Brawler

Dedicated Karate Fighter

Elite Striker

Kendo Girl

Kung Fu Girl

Mutant Luchador

Ninja

Special Forces Soldier

Thai Kickboxer

Grooves

A "Groove" is a set of traits intended to be applied to every fighter in the campaign. They're derived from the terminology used in *Capcom Vs. SNK 2*, and they let the GM quickly decide on a baseline for the super bars and other special features each character has.

While most Grooves are fine with Thrash's default rules, some need certain rules options in play; these are noted in the Groove descriptions under "**Special**." See the Appendix (p. 91) for explanations of these options. Below are several sample grooves, intended to simulate a number of notable fighting games, and of course you can invent new ones to suit your campaign.

> ## Balancing Grooves
>
> The examples provided are not balanced against each other; instead each one includes an "adjustment" number, which is the amount of extra stuff the groove provides, measured in Support Traits. If you let players choose grooves at character creation, they can pay (or receive) the difference between their choice and the campaign's default.

Alpha Groove

Adjustment: 14
Based On: Street Fighter Alpha, Street Fighter Alpha 3 (A-Ism)
Base Super Limit: 30
Super Foci: Attack x2
Support Traits: Air Block, Breakfall, Energy Block, Double Super Focus, Super Boosting, Super Counter (add this upgrade to one special maneuver of choice)
Special: Characters get two additional Mega-Attack Supers at character creation.

Basic Groove

Adjustment: –6
Based On: Street Fighter II
Base Super Limit: 0
Super Foci: None
Special: Super Maneuvers are not available. Characters do not receive their usual single Super Maneuver selection.

Beta Groove

Adjustment: 7
Based On: King of Fighters '97 (Advanced Mode)
Base Super Limit: 30
Super Foci: Attack, Damage
Support Traits: Defensive Roll, Energy Block, Super Burn

Bushido Groove

Adjustment: 0
Based On: Last Blade, Samurai Shodown
Base Super Limit: 10
Super Foci: Damage, Defense
Support Traits: Desperation, Fading Super

Iron Fist Groove

Adjustment: 1
Based On: Dead Or Alive, Tekken
Base Super Limit: 0
Super Foci: None
Support Traits: Disengage, Grounded, Super Finesse
Special: Ki-based maneuvers are not available.

Manga Insanity Groove

Adjustment: 22
Based On: Angel Eyes, Eternal Fighter Zero, Party's Breaker
Base Super Limit: 90
Support Traits: Air Block, Air Jump, Breakfall, Energy Block, Pursuit Jump, Super Jump
Super Foci: Attack, Damage
Special: Increase max AP to 12, and characters get 6 per round. Double the amount of Health given to each character.

Meteor Groove

Adjustment: 12
Based On: Street Fighter EX series
Base Super Limit: 30
Support Traits: Double Super Focus, Energy Block
Super Foci: Attack (2)
Special: Starting characters get 3 Supers Maneuvers and one Ultra-Attack Ultimate Maneuver (see p. 100).

Midnight Blaze Groove

Adjustment: 21
Based On: DarkStalkers, Vampire Savior
Base Super Limit: 90
Super Foci: Attack x2
Support Traits: Air Block, Double Focus, Energy Block
Super Maneuver: EX Blazing
Special: Increase max AP to 8, and characters get 4 per round.

Rage Groove
Adjustment: 5
Based On: King of Fighters '95, King of Fighters '97 (Extra Mode)
Base Super Limit: 10
Super Foci: Damage x2, Rage
Support Traits: Desperation, Disruptive Taunt, Double Super Focus, Extra Super Focus, Fading Super, Super Charge

Soul Groove
Adjustment: 2
Based On: Soul Calibur
Base Super Limit: 0
Super Foci: None
Support Traits: Grounded, Power Attack, Push Block, Super Finesse
Special: Ki-Based maneuvers are banned when using this groove.

Super Versus Groove
Adjustment: 8
Based On: X-Men Vs. Street Fighter, Marvel Vs. Capcom, etc.
Base Super Limit: 30
Super Foci: Attack, Damage
Support Traits: Air Block, Energy Block, Push Block, Super Jump
Special: Increase max AP to 10, and characters get 5 per round.

Thrash Classic Groove
Adjustment: 0
Based On: Thrash 1.8 and earlier
Base Super Limit: 10
Super Foci: Damage, Defense

Thrash New Generation Groove
Adjustment: 7
Based On: What I felt like.
Base Super Limit: 30
Super Foci: Attack, Defense
Support Traits: Desperation, Energy Block, Power Attack

Variable Groove
Adjustment: 7
Based On: Street Fighter Alpha 3 (V-Ism)
Base Super Limit: 20
Super Foci: Attack, Defense
Support Traits: Air Block, Breakfall, Energy Block
Super Maneuver: Variable Combo

Styles

In Thrash, fighting styles are primarily a matter of "flavor text." They can become very important to the game, but they're not enforced by game mechanics. Below are details on some of the more common fighting styles seen in fighting games, and guidelines for creating characters that use them.

Boxing

Boxing began as in ancient history a brutal deathsport for the entertainment of kings, and has since evolved into a professional sport with very specific and formalized rules. Boxers attack exclusively with punches, and wear padded boxing gloves to prevent or at least reduce permanent damage. In a formal boxing match, the fighters have to hit within a legal area, and victory is decided either by points or knockout.

In real life boxers have generally fared poorly against other martial arts, owing to their style being first and foremost a sport, but in fighting games they can stand their own. Fighting game boxers use punches almost exclusively, and tend to rely on brute force. Because this is based on fighting games, wearing boxing gloves doesn't affect how much damage a characters does with his punches.

It's also worth noting that *Hajime no Ippo* (*Fighting Spirit* in the American release of the anime) and *Ashita no Joe*, both of which are old-school manga about boxing, have significantly influenced the portrayal of fighting in general in anime and manga.

Example Fighters: Balrog (Street Fighter II), Dudley (Street Fighter III), Heavy D (King of Fighters '94), Vanessa (King of Fighters)

Techniques: Boxers rely on Punch attacks to hurt the opponent, but being able to Block is critical for the sport, and Evasion is very useful as well.

Maneuvers: Boxers tend to use punches almost exclusively, though the types of punches can vary.

Brawling

A fair number of fighting game characters are brawlers, not formally trained in combat, but able to do some damage nonetheless. There are no schools for brawling, no specific techniques, no ancient masters. Fighting game brawlers aren't likely to be intelligent or disciplined, but they're always tough and possess a certain animal cunning. A brawler wasn't formally taught how to hurt people, but he pays attention to what works.

Example Fighters: Birdie (Street Fighter Alpha), Cracker Jack (Street Fighter EX)

Techniques: Brawlers pretty much never have any Focus, but they'll happily make use of any move that works, even if they tend to be a bit sloppy at it. Punches are an important part of it, and Melee weapons, whether a chain or bat carried as a signature or a chair or bottle grabbed in the middle of a bar fight, are useful as well.

Maneuvers: Brawlers typically use moves that rely on brute force and dirty tactics. Devastating punches (Justice Fist or Blast Knuckle work well for this) and pow-

erful throws (Power Throw and/or Leaping Power Throw) work well, not to mention weapons maneuvers like Home Run Hero.

Commando Training

From Guile in *Street Fighter II* onwards, there have always been some military guys (and gals) in fighting games, whether rank and file soldiers, special ops badasses, or mercenaries. Military hand-to-hand training tends to be exceedingly pragmatic, aimed at incapacitating an opponent as efficiently as possible, and often designed to allow the soldier to do so while wearing heavy equipment. Different military organizations teach different forms of unarmed combat, but these tend to be derived from more traditional styles, whether a refined new system that draws on whatever techniques are effective (like what's taught to American soldiers, or the Israeli Krav Maga style), or a direct variant of an existing style (like the Lerdrit form of Muay Thai used by the Royal Thai Army).

In fighting games, military characters tend to use moves with a lot of impact to them, whether it's brutal grappling moves or acrobatics that lead up to a big, crunchy hit. For some reason military characters that actually use weapons are the exception to the rule, though those that do tend to use a nasty combination of melee weapons, garrote wire, and explosives.

Example Fighters: Cammy (Super Street Fighter II), Guile (Street Fighter II), Ikari Warriors Team (King of Fighters)

Techniques: Military characters in fighting games use a range of striking and grappling moves, and possibly some Athletics-based ones if it suits their individual fighting style. Others make use of weapons, which can potentially cover any of the three weapon Techniques. However, while military characters should be competent with firearms and such, if they're not going to play a role in the campaign, the GM may allow this training to be hand-waved and not bought with points.

Maneuvers: Military-trained fighters tend to use powerful, pragmatic moves that do lots of damage to the enemy. Grappling moves tend to be good for this purpose, but nearly anything will do. A smaller fighter (like Cammy or Leona) could use more acrobatic moves to achieve the same kind of crunch.

Karate

Karate is an Okinawan style, and was influenced by southern Chinese martial arts. It is primarily a striking hand-to-hand form, emphasizing punches and kicks and making some use of grapples. In fighting games much of this holds true, though karate fighters often include a Ki Blast in their repertoire.

In real life, karate students often learn some *kobudo/kobujutsu*, which involves various traditional Okinawan melee weapons, including the bo (long staff), sai, tonfa, nunchaku, kama (sickle), and tekko (knuckle duster). However, this seldom if ever makes its way into fighting games.

Particularly in Capcom's various games there is a notion of "killer intent," where a fighter's desire for the thrill of combat consumes him and turns him into a deadly monster, and grants him power at the cost of his humanity. Such characters can make

for neat villains once in a while, as they're motivated first and foremost by the desire for a satisfying fight. For such characters, the Final Murder super is all but mandatory.

Example Fighters: Ryu, Ken (Street Fighter II), Akuma, Dan, Sakura (Street Fighter Alpha), Ryo, Robert, Takuma, Yuri (Art of Fighting), Makoto (Street Fighter III)

Techniques: Karate fighters tend to concentrate on striking moves (especially punches), but are at least competent at grappling, and in fighting games are often very skilled with Ki blasts.

Maneuvers: The stereotypical fighting game karate fighter has a Rising Uppercut, Ki Blast, and some kind of special kicking move as his three signature maneuvers. More broadly, karate fighters should mainly use powerful striking attacks.

Kung Fu

In real life, the term "kung fu" is practically a catch-all term for "Chinese martial arts," in which case it encompasses around 1,500 different styles, covering armed and unarmed, internal and external styles based on all sorts of different philosophies and theories. There are many forms inspired by animals, including the five animal forms used in Shaolin (tiger, crane, leopard, snake, and dragon). And of course, there's Drunken Boxing.

There are also legends (and wuxia movies) in which kung fu masters have all sorts of miraculous powers, including superhuman mastery of pressure points, incredible acrobatic feats, and yes, Ki blasts. When it comes to fighting games, characters that use kung fu tend to resemble something out of a kung fu movie, as seen through the eyes of a manga artist. These fighters are light on their feet and make stylized movements as they deliver hard striking attacks and occasionally make use of more mystical fighting techniques.

The term "wushu" is all but interchangeable with kung fu, though it can also refer to a martial arts sport created in Kina in 1949. Contemporary wushu mixes hand-to-hand and melee combat techniques with gymnastics, and competitions are primarily based on performing routines.

Example Fighters: Chin Gentsai (King of Fighters '94), Chun Li (Street Fighter II), Fei Long (Super Street Fighter II), Gen (Street Fighter Alpha), Li Xiangfei (Fatal Fury 2 Real Bout), Yun and Yang (Street Fighter III)

Techniques: Kung fu fighting game characters tend to concentrate on punches and kicks, though focus-based maneuvers are not uncommon.

Maneuvers: Kung fu characters come in a fairly large variety, enough to make their maneuvers hard to generalize about. They can be acrobatic, use lightning-fast striking moves, deliver powerful hits, and launch ki blasts, all in varying proportions.

Muay Thai

Muay Thai is also known as Thai Kickboxing. Although the name can cover a variety of similar styles practiced throughout Southeast Asia, in Thailand it is the national sport. Fighters use their fists, feet, elbows, knees, and shins to attack their op-

ponents, and the style places a heavy emphasis on blocking incoming attacks, especially with one's shins. Muay Thai fighters use the motion of their entire bodies with virtually every move they perform.

Several different fighting game characters use Muay Thai. Most such characters specialize in powerful kicking attacks, but punches and ki blasts are not at all unusual.

Example Fighters: Adon (Street Fighter Alpha), Joe Higashi (Fatal Fury), Sagat (Street Fighter II)

Techniques: Kick is the most important technique for a Muay Thai fighter, but they tend to use some Punch and possibly Focus moves too, and Evasion is more than a little useful regardless.

Maneuvers: Muay Thai fighters favor hard, fast kicking attacks, though there are characters like Sagat that use devastating punches and ki blasts. A lot of Muay Thai strikes are made with the knees, shins, or elbows, but in game terms just treat these like punch and kick attacks.

Ninjutsu

In feudal Japan the ninja were feared as assassins, vicious fighters and masters of stealth. The view of the ninja and their arts presented in fighting games is a mixture of a romanticized past presented in samurai movies and the mythos spawned by manga and anime reinterpreting fanciful Edo-era depictions. In real life there is a modern form of ninjutsu, the Bujinkan Taijutsu style, which mixes hand-to-hand techniques (striking, grappling, movement), and training with a variety of weapons. Fighting game ninjas have very little to do with real life.

If one believes the mythos, ninjas were members of ninja clans, tightly-bound, secretive organizations that train their members—male and female—in their secret arts. Members of a ninja clan are bound to that clan for life, and those that leave are to be hunted down. Naturally, the clan's many secrets must be kept. Ninjas are divided into ranks: *gen'nin*, *chuunin*, and *jounin*, for lower, middle, and upper ninjas. Female ninjas are called *kunoichi*, and while in real life they probably emphasized more the spying and seduction side of things, in pop culture they get to kick ass along with their male counterparts.

In real life, ninjas most likely favored weapons that could be disguised as common tools or hidden entirely, but in myths the two standard weapons of the ninja are the *shuriken* (throwing stars) and *ninjatou* (ninja sword). Another popular ninja weapon is the *kunai*; though in real life this is an ancient gardening tool, fictional ninjas use it as a throwing knife.

I could write a whole other book about the various mystical techniques ninjas supposedly employed, but in a nutshell these have included things like vanishing, sticking to walls, flying, summoning giant frogs, making temporary copies of oneself, leaping to incredible heights, and so on.

Example Fighters: Eiji Kisaragi (Art of Fighting 2), Galford (Samurai Shodown), Hanzo (Samurai Shodown), Mai Shiranui (Fatal Fury)

Techniques: Different ninja characters can specialize in different types of combat, but by and large ninjas are very diverse in the types of combat they use, and can em-

ploy maneuvers that fall under *any* Technique. Focus and Athletics are, however, probably the most important.

Maneuvers: Fighting game ninjas tend to use a mixture of highly acrobatic maneuvers and Ki-based powers. Replacement Technique, Death From Above, and teleportation are all favorites. They do sometimes use grappling moves, and these tend to be quick and nasty.

Wrestling

Wrestling is probably the oldest system of unarmed combat, and in the present day there are numerous forms of it. Needless to say, wrestlers specialize in grappling moves, though they seldom use these exclusively. There are countless different forms of wrestling too; most cultures had some kind of wrestling at one point or another and many—including India, Turkey, Iran, etc.—are still actively practiced. In addition there's the spectacle of professional wrestling, whether the testosterone-laden antics of American wrestlers, the high-flying stunts of masked Mexican luchadors, or the technical and often brutal world of Japanese *puroresu*.

Fighting game characters have covered all of the above to varying degrees. Not surprisingly, there are any number of characters that clearly show that someone among the developers is a pro wrestling fan (look at the movelists of Tina and Bass from *Dead Or Alive* some time). In general, these tend to be strong, tough characters that make good use of brute force. They go in for bone-crunching throws and terribly painful submission moves, but depending on the particular character can mix in some luchador-style high-flying moves (Body Missile fits particularly well).

Example Fighters: Hugo (Street Fighter III), Raiden (Fatal Fury), Rainbow Mika (Street Fighter Alpha 3), Tizoc (Garou: Mark of the Wolves), Zangief (Street Fighter II)

Techniques: Grapple is by far the most important Technique for a wrestler, but they tend to be at least competent with striking maneuvers (punches and kicks), and may make use of Athletics-based moves as well.

Maneuvers: Wrestlers tend to concentrate on powerful grappling moves, though some are acrobatic enough to put Athletics-based maneuvers like Body Missile to good use. If a wrestler has any ki-based maneuvers, it's usually because of some kind of weird mutation.

Other Styles

There are countless styles from around the world; if you do some research you will seriously be blown away by just how many there are. The eight featured above were selected for how common they are in fighting games, as well as being relatively easy to fudge if you're unfamiliar with the real thing. Below are a smattering of other notable styles from around the world, ones that are either famous in real life or used by a well-known fighting game character.

If you happen to be intimately familiar with a given style yourself, as a spectator or a practitioner, you're more than welcome to bring it into the game if you like. However, please keep in mind that the criteria for a good fighting game character are

very different from those for a good martial artist. Fighting game characters need a repertoire of interesting signature moves that feed into a general style of combat, and they often involve things that in real life would be impractical, risky, or physically impossible.

- **Aikido** is a relatively recent unarmed Japanese martial art that derives its techniques from Jujutsu and Kenjutsu. There is a strong emphasis on redirecting and controlling the energy of incoming attacks, as well as dealing with multiple opponents.
- **Capoeria** is a Brazilian style originally created by slaves, which has a musical/dance element to it, and primarily uses kicks. It is rare, but not unheard of, outside of Brazil.
- **Jujutsu/Judo:** Jujutsu is a Japanese martial art originally developed during early feudal days, which places a strong emphasis on grappling, especially joint locks, and makes some use of striking attacks, especially at vital points. Judo is a sport derived from Jujutsu, and places most of its emphasis on grappling, both while standing and on the ground.
- **Kenpo:** In Japan the word Kenpo (or Kempo) is a catch-all for Asian martial arts forms, while in the Western usage it refers to a mixed style that combines external kung fu with karate and sometimes Jujutsu and Aikijutsu.
- **SAMBO:** SAMBO is a Russian wrestling style; the name is an acronym (in Russian) that translates to "unarmed self-defense." It draws on styles from all over the world, but is primarily based on various Russian grappling forms.
- **Shootfighting/Mixed Martial Arts:** MMA is a popular fighting sport, and fighters typically use a mixture of grappling and striking techniques, especially from Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu and various forms of wrestling.
- **Sumo** is a martial arts sport originating in ancient Japan, and for the *sumotori* themselves a way of life. The sport itself is based on pushing the opponent out of the circular ring, and sumo wrestlers work mainly with grapples and palm strikes.
- **Tae Kwon Do** is Korea's national sport, and the result of efforts to unify the country's various styles of martial arts shortly after the Korean War. It is an external style, with a heavy emphasis on powerful, controlled kicks, limited use of punches, and very little grappling.
- **Tai Chi Chuan:** Tai Chi is an internal Chinese martial art. Though many people learn Tai Chi as a form of exercise, it is an effective martial art based on Taoist principles. It is mostly a hand-to-hand style, with a mix of strikes and grapples that make use of shifting momentum, but practitioners do train with a variety of weapons.
- **Weapon Styles:** There are numerous styles based, in part or in whole, on using weapons.
- **Western Kickboxing:** Just as the name suggests, Kickboxing combines boxing with kick attacks, either as a form of exercise or as a full-contact sport.

- **Even More Styles:** Bando, Brazilian Jujutsu, Hapkido, Jeet Kune Do, Kalari-payit, Krav Maga, Savate, Tang Soo Do
- **Fictional Styles:** Plenty of fighting games and anime deal with fictional styles (or sub-styles) of martial arts.

Chapter 4: Rules

Action Resolution

In game terms an "action" is when a character attempts to do something and the outcome is uncertain, requiring a roll of the dice to resolve. If the character isn't being in some way challenged, don't roll dice.

This game assumes that when dice are being rolled, it's because the task at hand is at least somewhat challenging. Thus an "Average" Target Number (see *Unopposed Actions*, below) means that an average character has a decent chance of success or failure.

1. Determine Action Value

The first step is to determine the character's **Action Value (AV)**; this is the character's basic competence when attempting the action, based on the Rank(s) of one or more Traits. Usually this is the sum of an Attribute and either a Technique (for combat) or an Ability (for everything else).

2. Determine Action Total

The Action Value is added to a roll of one ten- sided die (1d10) to determine the **Action Total (AT)**, the overall quality of the action.

Action Modifiers

Often there are factors that affect the odds of a character's success other than his level of ability. This is when action modifiers are used; an action modifier is a plus or minus to the roll, usually by one point, but sometimes by up to three. Modifiers are usually used for Opposed Actions; they're basically redundant for an Unopposed Action since a higher or lower Target Number (see below) serves the same purpose.

3. Determine Result

Unopposed Actions

In an **Unopposed Action** the GM sets a **Target Number (TN)** representing the difficulty that the character is trying to overcome to complete the task at hand. If the AT matches or exceeds the TN, the action is successful.

TN	Description
6	Trivial
9	Easy
12	Average
15	Difficult
18	Very Difficult
21+	Legendary

Opposed Actions

In an **Opposed Action** two characters are competing and one will win over the other. Both characters make rolls like usual and compare their Action Totals; the one with the higher AT is the winner.

Success Points

For both opposed and unopposed actions it is sometimes necessary to calculate the **Success Points (SP)**. This is the number of points by which the AT exceeds either the TN or the opponent's AT. This can be used as a tool to gauge the overall quality of the success, and it's also used for certain specific purposes in the game. A character that fails an action technically has *negative* SP for that action (which can be used as a way to gauge the magnitude of the failure), and a few game mechanics (notably in Cooperative Actions) call for its use.

Special Actions

Cooperative Actions

When multiple characters work together to perform a given action, it's called a cooperative action. Cooperative Actions can be Opposed or Unopposed; the character with the highest AV level makes a roll as normal and half (rounded down) of the Success Points of anyone assisting him is added to his effective AT.

Extended Actions

An extended action is one that takes such a considerable amount of time and effort that it is not represented by one roll. Extended Actions can be Opposed or Unopposed, but in either case the Success Points of each successive roll is added to the previous ones until the character attempting the action is able to accumulate a number of Success Points set by the GM.

No-Pressure Actions

Sometimes there isn't really any pressure to perform a given action quickly or otherwise under duress. In these instances the added anticipation of a die roll isn't really necessary. If the GM allows, in such circumstances a player can simply use an AT equal to the AV plus 4.

Combat

Combat in Thrash is divided into *rounds*. A round is "a few seconds" of real time, and gives each participating character a chance to act. The instant in which a given character acts is that character's *turn*. When all of the participants in the battle have had their turns, a new round begins.

Taming Combat

Combat in Thrash involves keeping track of several rapidly fluctuating values – Action Points, Initiative, Health, Ki, Super, and defense penalties. These are too much for most people to keep track of mentally, so a concrete means of tracking

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them is in order. For this purpose a pad of sticky notes for each player can work wonders. For Action Points and defense penalties in particular (as they come in much smaller quantities) physical counters/tokens of some kind (glass beads, pennies, etc.) can be handy.

It can also be helpful to count damage and Ki expenditures by adding rather than subtracting (it's always a little bit faster). That is, instead of subtracting damage from Health, keep a running total of damage, so that the character goes down when the damage exceeds his base Health points.

Initiative

Initiative determines who acts first in combat; at the beginning of each round, each participant makes an Initiative roll. This is the roll of 1d6, plus ½ the character's Agility, plus his current stored Action Points (see below; during the first round of combat this is zero for all characters) to the Action Value. Other Traits or circumstances may apply modifiers to the roll. The characters participating in combat act in order from highest to lowest.

Static Initiative (Option)

If rolling for initiative at the start of each round bogs down combat, you can instead opt to have each player make one initiative roll (1d10 + Agility + Alertness) that is used to determine the order of initiative for the entire battle. At the start of each successive round players have the option of re-rolling initiative, but all participants who wish to re-roll must declare their intention to do so before any dice are rolled, and the character is stuck with whatever roll comes up until the next round.

Action Points

Action Points (AP) are "spent" to perform actions. Maneuvers have their AP cost specified in the description, and other types of actions will have the AP cost determined by the GM. Action Points work the same for every character; players need to learn how to budget them effectively, and to arrange maneuvers and other traits in such a way as to make them useful.

At the beginning of combat each character has zero Action Points (AP), and at the beginning of each turn (including the first) he gains an additional 3 AP. Characters can use as few or as many AP as desired. Unspent Action Points carry over into the next round, but a character can never have more than 6 AP. Characters do not have to spend any AP in a turn if they don't wish to.

If a character doesn't have enough AP for an action, he simply can't do it that round. The only exception is actions that cost 7 or more AP (see below).

Example AP Cost Chart

Action	Suggested AP Cost
Get up from prone position	2
Ready a small sheathed/holstered weapon	1
Ready a large sheathed/holstered weapon	2

Climb a rope (Strength in feet)	2
Say something brief	0
Pick up a weapon or object	1
Taunt an opponent	2+

Initiative Boosting

After all participants have rolled initiative, but before any actions have been declared, combatants have an opportunity to boost their initiative rating. For each AP spent, the character's initiative roll gets a +2 bonus. If multiple players wish to boost their initiative, they declare how many AP they're spending on it in order of lowest to highest rolled initiative.

Technically this happens before characters have received any AP (as that happens at the start of a character's turn, not at the start of the round), but on the first round of combat a character may spend up to 2 AP this way, leaving him with only 1 or 2 AP at the start of his first turn.

7+ AP Maneuvers

Although maneuvers themselves never have more than 6 AP, it's possible for a template maneuver or other circumstances to cause a maneuver to consume 7 or more AP. To attempt such a maneuver, the character must already have 6 AP available. After executing the move he goes into negative AP, and he can't defend at all (attacks always hit him unless the attacker's roll is really miserable) until it becomes his turn again and he gains enough AP to make up the debt.

Defense

Excepting special circumstances, a character being attacked can attempt to defend, but only once for each attack.

Basic Defenses

Fighters will often simply use the basic defensive maneuvers, Dodge and Block, since they cost no AP. However, there is a **multiple defense penalty** applied to characters who use defend themselves more than once in a round, regardless of whether the additional attacks came from one foe or several. For each defense after the first there is a cumulative –2 penalty to the Accuracy of defenses. In this way a large number of attacks can potentially overwhelm a character.

Defense Reset

If multiple defense penalties are starting to become overwhelming, a character has the option of spending 1 AP to perform a Defense Reset action; allowing him continue fighting with the multiple-defense penalty back at zero.

Advanced Defenses

Characters may also acquire special maneuvers that allow them to bring other types of defenses to bear. Some of these have an AP cost and some don't. Some special defensive maneuvers have an "automatic reset" that returns the multiple defense

penalty back to zero for free; for those that don't the penalty still applies, but a character can still Defense Reset regardless of what kind of defense he might be using.

Counterattacks

Counterattacks are the trickiest but potentially most effective form of defense, since a counterattack is simply the use of an attack at the right moment to hit the opponent first. A character wishing to use a counterattack must have enough AP stored up to use an appropriate maneuver. Certain maneuvers have the ability to counterattack specific types of maneuvers, such as how a Rising Uppercut can be used to counterattack against Aerial maneuvers. A maneuver without the appropriate counterattack ability can still be used as a counterattack; the catch is that its AP cost is increased by 1 and it has a –2 penalty to the Action Value.

The character doing the counterattack makes an attack roll in place of a defense roll, and needs to match or exceed the AT of the original attack. If the counterattack succeeds it hits before the original attack can be initiated. If there is a tie, both attacks land successfully. A character being targeted by a counterattack can choose to abort his attack and defend normally, but this costs 1 AP, in addition to the cost of whatever defensive maneuver is used, and the AP spent on his original attack maneuver are lost.

Partial Counter

A "partial counter" is a counterattack where the defender doesn't worry about his own safety. The counterattack gets a bonus of +3 to the AV, but even if it succeeds he still takes half the damage of the original attack. If the counter fails, he takes full damage plus 4, suffers a Knock-Down, and if the attack causes Knock-Back, the distance of the Knock-Back is calculated as though he defended with an AT of zero.

Damage

Since it emphasizes combat so much, damage is an important part of *Thrash*. A character's Health is the amount of damage he can take before he's incapacitated.

Combat Damage

When an attack gets through a character's defenses, he takes damage. Usually this is simply the damage listed in the maneuver's description, but Body Hardening, Knock-Back, and other things can sometimes affect the amount of damage a character takes.

Knock–Back

Knock-Back is a separate consideration from damage (see), though sometimes related.

Recovering From Knock-Back: When a character is sent backwards from an attack that causes Knock-Back, it's possible to recover and halt one's movement, or at least keep from falling prone. The simplest way is to make an Agility + Athletics roll, which has to exceed the AT of the original attack. If it's successful, the attack doesn't cause Knock-Down, and each Success Point cuts one hex off of the distance the at-

tack makes the character travel. Characters can also sometimes use certain maneuvers to recover, notably those that let them maneuver in mid-air. Air Jump would let a character automatically recover, and if the character is heading for a wall, Wall Spring would be another good option.

Damage From Collisions: Characters can sometimes slam into things while they're being thrown back, inflicting even more damage. If the character hits something relatively soft/flexible like a chain link fence, he takes damage equal to the number of remaining hexes of movement. If it's something solid, it'll be 2x that number, and if it's something specifically meant to put on the hurting (razor wire, spikes, etc.) it'll be 3 times the damage. This is in addition to damage caused by the environment (see below).

Non–Combat Damage

There are plenty of opportunities for characters to take damage from things that aren't other fighters' punches and kicks and ki blasts. On the other hand environmental hazards aren't that big of a theme in this game, so the rules are fairly simple and handwavey. Characters should usually have an opportunity to avoid these kinds of things somehow, whether by common sense (not dipping your arm in the vat labeled "poison") or effort (not getting knocked off the building by that big bruiser). Regardless, if a character is going to take damage, it basically falls to the GM to set an appropriate amount for the fighter to take. Below are some general guidelines, with both fixed and random damage listed; pick whichever one you prefer.

Damage Description/Examples	Damage
Painful (Small fire, hit by bookshelf, etc.)	2-6 (1d6)
Dangerous (Medium fire, strong electrical shock, fell down a flight of stairs, etc.)	12+ (3d6)
Maiming (Large fire, hit by a car at moderate speed, serious electrical shock, fell off a medium building, etc.)	20+ (5d6)
Lethal (Hit by a car at high speed, fell onto spikes, fell onto power lines, etc.)	40+ (10d6)
Ridiculous (Heavy duty military hardware, thrown into the sun, etc.)	60+ (15d6)

Injury and Healing

Thrash is not a very deadly game. When characters lose all their Health points it means that they're too beaten up to continue fighting, and it's assumed that characters will recover unless someone purposely goes up and delivers a deathblow. Characters regain Health equal to their Stamina attribute after an hour or so of rest, and after that Stamina × 2 per day.

Regaining Ki

When ki points are expended on maneuvers and such, characters naturally regain points equal to their Will per hour, Will × 2 per hour of rest, or Will × 3 per hour of meditation. Depending on the setting, special circumstances, items, magic, etc. could affect how much ki a character can regain.

Reserve Health (Option)

Reserve Health is an optional rule intended to make the best 2 out of 3 tournament thing more plausible in game terms. Each character has a separate pool of Reserve Health points equal to his pool of regular Health points. Fighters still get knocked out if they lose all of their regular Health, but when resting they can transfer points from Reserve Health to normal Health at a rate of 5 per minute. So, between rounds the fighters rest for a few minutes, and they're ready to go kick some ass again, but they have to rest a while longer to be ready for the next match.

Reserve Health heals at the usual rate, but only after a character's normal Health is fully healed.

For characters that can handle more than 2/3 rounds, try doubling or tripling their Reserve Health.

Breaking Things

Fighters will sometimes feel the need to bust up the environment as well as each other. Objects basically have a number of Health points (and they gets destroyed when all the Health points are lost), and sometimes a "Toughness" rating that works like Body Hardening (i.e. every level of Toughness reduces all damage by 1). The table below gives some examples of objects and their values.

Object	Toughness	Health
Car	4	50
Chair	0	6
Crate/Oil Drum	2	12
Door, Metal	5	16
Door, Shōji*	0	2
Door, Wooden	0	8
Statue (Stone or Metal)	5	30
Statue (Wood or Ceramic)	0	20
Table	0	8
TV/Computer	2	10
Window	0	4

Fighting In The Air

Most fighting game characters can jump, and a few are very heavy on the aerial antics. A character that uses a Jump maneuver has the option of either waiting until he lands to take action, or performing an appropriate action while airborne. Any attack with the Aerial posture can be used while airborne, as can any striking Basic Maneuvers (Punch or Kick, with template maneuvers applied if desired). Defensive maneuvers cannot be used while airborne though, unless they're specially designed to be used that way.

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* A shōji (障子) is the name of the paper sliding doors common in traditional Japanese buildings.

If a character gets forcibly launched into the air, he suffers the same limitations—making it difficult to defend oneself against further attacks—and won't land until the end of his opponent's turn.

How Combat Ends

Fights need to be more than two guys trying to knock off each other's hit points. That means that the end of a fight can come because of any number of things, not just one side losing all of his Health. Sometimes humiliation can be enough to send an opponent on his way, and sometimes the point of the fight isn't the actual fight itself. If you're holding the bad guy off while your friend defuses the bomb, Health points become a secondary concern. Villains should be good at not being captured, and being rendered unconscious is a great way to get captured. Smart bad guys (not all of them are going to be smart of course) will cut their losses before things get too bad. Besides, winning a battle doesn't mean much if your bomb doesn't go off because of some interfering hero.

Destiny

"Destiny" points represent two things: experience points (to let a character improve over time) and influence on the story (in the form of various meta-game abilities). Destiny points are awarded by the GM for playing the game in general, and for things relating to the character's Motivation and Story Hooks.

Working With Destiny

Destiny points are a new addition to Thrash, and they're meant to have a substantial impact on how the game is played. GMs need to be giving players opportunities to engage the story with their characters' Motivations and Story Hooks, and players need to grab onto those opportunities and create more besides. As a rule of thumb, each PC should have these come into play *at least* once per session.

Also, Destiny points have to be split between character advancement and meta-game "save your ass" type stuff, all while avoiding accumulating more than 30 points and thereby missing out on more that might be acquired and put to good use. For players, I recommend planning on taking an average of 1-2 Advances per game session, and keeping the rest ready to use when you need it during the game.

Particularly when it comes to Motivation and Story Hooks, the Destiny rules can give the GM authority over things you might not be used to. Keep in mind that while the GM is the ostensible leader of the game, she needs to be receptive to feedback too. Avoid bogging down the game with arguments, but be willing to discuss what's going on.

Destiny Cap

Characters can never accumulate more than 30 points of Destiny. If the character receives enough Destiny to go over 30, all the points past 30 are lost.

Awarding Destiny Points

There are basically three ways that player characters earn Destiny points. Motivation (p. 20) and Story Hooks (p. 54) each give players the opportunity to earn points during play, and the GM also hands out a more free-form Destiny award to each character at the end of each session. It's up to the individual GM to decide how much exactly to hand out and for what reasons, but here are some guidelines:

How Many Points

Really, it's up to the GM to decide how many points she wants to dole out. It depends on how fast you want the PCs to be able to improve, and how much you want them to be able to use Destiny points for meta-game stuff, coupled with how much Motivation and story hooks are really impacting the game in practice. As a general rule of thumb, I'd suggest awarding somewhere between 3 and 8 Destiny. Characters should usually get enough to be worth at least one Advance (see below).

Good Gaming

Reward the players for doing well playing the game, which is to say for being clever, solving problems, and generally being effective and helping the game be smooth and enjoyable.

Role-Playing

Reward players for getting into character and thereby making the game more than just an exercise in using the combat rules. Dialogues between PCs or PCs and NPCs can make the game more interesting, not to mention when character's motivations are reflected in their actions. Each character's Motivation trait rewards role-playing in certain specific ways, but you should reward players for role-playing that adds to the game in general.

Being a Fighter

Beating people up isn't anything to be particularly proud of, but players should be rewarded for having their characters walk the path of a fighter. Victories (especially hard-won victories), lessons learned through combat, and displays of fighting spirit in spite of the odds are all worthy of praise.

Helping Out

Getting a group of people together to play a role-playing game can be a pain at times. You need to figure out a place and time to play, gather the right materials and people, and make sure everyone is fed and comfortable. Consider rewarding the people who help make this happen; give a couple extra points to the guy who springs for pizza or lets you use his place.

Advancement

In order to improve your character, you must trade Destiny points for Advances. An Advance costs 6 Destiny (the GM may slide this up or down to make advancement slower or faster), and the cost of improving character traits is as follows:

Trait	Cost
+1 to Attribute/Technique (New Rank of 1-5)	1 Advance
+1 to Attribute/Technique (New Rank of 6-8)	2 Advances
+1 to Attribute/Technique (New Rank of 9+)	3 Advances
New Super/Special Maneuver	2 Advances
New Support Trait	1 Advance
Adding 3rd or Higher Stacking Support Trait	2 Advances

Advancement is normally done at the end of a game session (though there's also the matter of Epiphany; see Powers of Destiny, below), and it can be done before and/or after the GM hands out Destiny points. There needs to be a certain amount of in-game plausibility to how characters improve. Raising attributes and techniques are relatively easy, since it's just a matter of putting in time on sparring and physical conditioning. For maneuvers, especially if they're meant to be esoteric, should require time and possibly outside teaching to learn.

When you increase an attribute, re-calculate any of the secondary values derived from it to account for the increase. For example, if you raise your Stamina, your Health and Ki will go up as well.

Changes to Other Traits

Flaws, Story Hooks, and Motivation don't fit neatly into the scheme of spending Advances used for other character traits.

Removing Flaws: Sometimes you'll want to get rid of a Flaw your character has. If it's plausible to do so, your character can make whatever kind of effort is necessary in the game, and then spend an Advance to remove it.

Gaining Flaws: It's entirely possible for a character to take on a new Flaw. Sometimes events force it on a fighter, and other times it might be possible to take on one deliberately, such as if a fighter purposely tries to adjust his fighting style. If this is permanent, the character gets compensated with 3 Destiny per Flaw taken.

Losing Edges: Some Edges, like Property and Wealth, have the potential to be lost over the course of the game. The bar your character owns could be burned to the ground by his enemies, some disaster could wipe out his family's fortunes, etc. If the damage isn't permanent (e.g., the insurance company pays for your bar to be rebuilt) you can keep the Edge and move on. If it is permanent—the GM should discuss this with the player rather than taking stuff away arbitrarily—the character gets compensated with 3 Destiny points per Edge lost.

Story Hooks: Story hooks can't be added or bought off quite like other character traits. If an existing story hook completely comes to fruition or is otherwise resolved in a way that makes it irrelevant to the game, simply remove it from the character. It can be tricky to know when to do this, however, since a dead lover or a revealed secret past can still potentially influence the game. If you do decide that a story hook has been resolved, you have the option of either modifying it to something appropriate to whatever happened, or trading it in for 1 Advance. You can buy a new story hook by spending 1 Advance like a normal Support Trait, but only when something currently happening in the game sets it up. If your character is attacked by ninjas out

of the blue, you could ask the GM to let you take a story hook that has you targeted by a ninja clan.

Changing Motivation: Motivation is an unusual trait in that it's the only one in the game where every character has exactly one of them. You can't take on another Motivation, and you can't get rid of your current one, but you might be able to change it. Generally, a change of Motivation represents a dramatic shift for a character. He's actually rethought his most basic reasons for his whole way of life. That isn't something you do lightly or frequently. There's no point cost for changing a character's Motivation, but you should do it because of something monumental happening in the story, and a fighter shouldn't change his Motivation more than once, period.

Power Levels (Option)

"Power Levels" are a way to set and gradually raise the power cap for player characters. By default, the power level starts at 1, and rises by one for every four sessions. The max rank (for Attributes and Techniques, the number of times a Skill or Edge can be stacked, and the number of upgrades that can be applied to a single maneuver, will all gradually increase.

Power Level	Rank Cap	Skill/Edge Cap	Max Maneuver Upgrades
Neophytes (0)	6	×2	1
Normal (1)	8	×3	2
Experienced (2)	9	×4	2
Established (3)	10	×4	3
Veterans (4)	11	×5	3
Legends (5)	12	×5	4

Powers of Destiny

In addition to character advancement, Destiny can be used in the following ways:

Digging Deep

When pushed to the limit, you can expend some Destiny to put some extra oomph into whatever action you're attempting. You can spend 1 Destiny to add +2 to the AT of a single action. You can spend as many Destiny as you want on one action, up to a total bonus of +12 or the base AT, whichever is higher.

Duel

Sometimes you want to fight someone all-out, with no interference. A duel lets you grasp control of the narrative enough to insist that your character and an opponent are going to duke it out, and no one is going to stop them. Initiating a Duel costs 4 Destiny. Both sides have to be in a condition to fight decently, which means their current Health point totals have to be within 12 points of each other. If one of you can't meet that requirement, you can spend additional Destiny as per Second Wind so that you and/or your opponent regain enough Health to qualify.

Once that's settled, commence combat as usual. Anyone else in the vicinity can make comments, cheer or boo or whatever, and for that matter can fight someone else who happens to be around, but they can't interfere with the duel. If someone does insist on interfering they have to pay 4 Destiny themselves in order to cut in.

Epiphany

Characters usually only get to trade Destiny for Advances at the end of a session, but fighters can sometimes develop new moves or otherwise rise to the occasion when under pressure. The most basic kind of epiphany simply means that the player gets permission from the GM to trade for Advances on the fly because the situation is really dramatic and cool. A character can take a maximum of 5 Advances by epiphany in one session. However, under certain circumstances characters can get a discount on the Destiny cost of Advances. Each of the following can reduce the cost per Advance by 1 Destiny, to a minimum of 3:

- The character's Health is reduced to the level of his Stamina × 2 or less.
- The character's Ki is reduced to less than 5—*if* the character relies heavily on ki-based maneuvers.
- Someone the character cares deeply about is in serious danger.
- Someone who has a real chance of succeeding is about to try to kill the character.

Second Wind

By taking a little bit of time to rest, the fighter can catch his breath and get ready to stay in the fight longer. To use a Second Wind, the fighter has to spend 2 AP, and not attack at all during the current round. Defending is okay, as long as the character doesn't get hit. At the end of the round, he can regain 1d6 Health or Ki (all of one or the other, or you can divide the dice up as you like) per 1 Destiny point spent, to a maximum of 4 points total.

Destiny? Really? (Options)

If you want to play Thrash as more of a straight-up combat game, or just don't want fluffy meta-game stuff, you should take Motivation and Story Hooks out of the game completely. Rename Destiny to XP and only allow it to be used for Advances, or just award 1-2 Advances directly per session.

On the other hand, if using Destiny for both meta-game stuff *and* character advancement bothers you, you can always separate them, and award either XP or Advances in addition to Destiny.

Chapter 5: Running a Thrash Campaign

This section contains some general advice and ideas for the Game Master. Nothing here is off-limits for the players, and some of it can actually be kind of useful.

General Advice

I could sit around writing advice until my fingers fall off, but the most important thing to do is simply to *have a good game*. Do what you want, how you want, in whatever way you think will be the most fun for you and your friends. Making the game feel more like a fighting game or anime is great and all, but first and foremost what you really need is to have a good time playing a role-playing game.

What Thrash Does

In terms of genre, the game is based around fighting games, but with something of an anime/manga sensibility. It has certain nods to plausibility that wouldn't be necessary in a pure fighting game, like ki points (Ryu's gotta run out of juice for those fireballs *eventually*), and some narrative nods to the storylines of those games and similar anime/manga.

By fighting games I mainly mean the old-school 2D stuff, particularly *Street Fighter* and *King of Fighters*. Most 3D fighting games—like *Dead or Alive* and *Soul Calibur*—are significantly different in design, with exceedingly long movelists that don't fit well with Thrash's special move driven combat. Also, while martial arts movies can be a great source of story ideas, the back and forth choreography of a Jackie Chan movie isn't something the game is meant to handle.

Use Character Traits

You and the players alike should operate under the assumption that if something is on the character sheet, the player is saying that he *wants* it to be used. Whether in advance preparation or on the fly, you should plan on putting character traits to use as much as possible. This is critical for Motivation and Story Hooks; I recommend specifically planning on setting up at least one compel and/or complication for each player character for each session.

Genre Stuff

Ki

Ki is a form of energy that flows through all living things, including the world itself. "Ki" is the Japanese name; it is called *ch'i* or *qi* in Mandarin[*], and by dozens of other names around the world. Sorcery is a means of manipulating ki, traditional Chinese medicine is based in part on affecting and correcting the flow of ki through

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[*] Depending on the romanization system used. The first consonant is meant to be an extra-sharp CH sound, with the tongue touching the front teeth. But saying "chi" with an American (or other) accent is just fine.

the body, and Feng Shui is in large part based on understanding how ki flows in the natural world. Many martial arts include breathing and meditation exercises intended to help cultivate and control the practitioner's ki. In fighting games, ki is most often used by fighters as a weapon. Many fighters learn to channel their own ki into a powerful blast of energy that can be hurled at opponents, but there are plenty of other uses for it.

Tournaments

Most fighting games are about martial arts tournaments. This isn't necessarily the best way to set up a campaign, since it tends to involve having individual player characters take up a lot of screen time while the rest sit on the sidelines, but they are a sure-fire way to get fights happening. The tournament can also be more of a framing device, with the heroes having to get into all kinds of trouble behind the scenes.

Tournaments can be organized any number of ways. The typical fighting game has fighters go best 2 out of 3, but some feature elimination or tag-team matches, and some are weapon free, require melee weapons, or are more anything goes. One obvious question is, who's organizing the tournament? It's often left unclear, but it can be vitally important to the plot. In *King of Fighters* different people have organized the tournament at different times, and that person often turns out to be a boss character. In *Street Fighter* the tournament is pretty much always set up by one of the bad guys for nefarious purposes.

Weird Science

In fighting games, there are a lot of mad scientists around, and their favorite thing to experiment on is fighters. They just can't help wanting to find ways to use, duplicate, and improve upon the power of the world's strongest fighters. Cyborgs, clones, genetically engineered fighters, and so on are all features in fighting games. Mad scientists find ki powers and ancestral bloodlines fascinating, and can't wait to try to isolate that genetic factor and make an army of clones.

The Dark Side

Especially since Capcom of America came up with "Evil Ryu," it's sort of become a cliché in fighting games that some fighters are in danger of succumbing to the "murderous intent." Every fighter aspires to become stronger, but that desire can sometimes lead into darkness. The thrill of combat can too easily turn into a love of carnage, and the desire for strength can too easily lead to the power to kill.

There are also ancient bloodlines that contain some hidden power that if awakened can turn even a disciplined, peaceful fighter into a killing machine. *King of Fighters'* first major storyline was all about the Orochi power that resided in Kyo, Iori, and a few others, and Iori and Leona both get turned into raving, rampaging monsters by that power.

In either case, this leads to one of the major archetypes being a "demon," a fighter who has completely embraced this power, and become insanely strong because of it.

He is at once a terrible enemy and a reminder of what some of the heroes might become if they're not careful.

References

Fighting games frequently have subtle references to other media, and sometimes to each other. The cast of *Street Fighter* draws inspiration from Hong Kong movies, manga, real-life fighters, and celebrities, not to mention other Capcom games, and in one case an SNK game (what with how Dan started as a jab at *Art of Fighting*).

Structuring the Game

The base premise of *Thrash* is broad enough that you definitely need to give some thought to how you want to structure the campaign.

Bringing the Group Together

A role-playing game is a different medium from a fighting game, and more often than not in the context of an RPG you need to have a group of heroes that work together for some reason. They don't necessarily have to be all buddy-buddy all the time, but a certain amount of camaraderie makes things much easier for everyone concerned.

Common Threat

Fighters might be united by the need to stand together against a common threat. If Shadow Ninjas are stalking the streets killing people, even fighters who have issues with each other might be forced to worked together to survive.

Dojo

The PCs could all be part of the same training hall. Of course, this implies that they practice the same style, or at least styles that are somewhat similar. Regardless, a dojo implies that there's a master, and a certain amount of hierarchy there. There's plenty of room for interesting NPCs to make the player characters' lives complicated. Also, the dojo is something important to them, and they may be called upon to defend it from time to time. In Japan there's a custom where a fighter can challenge a dojo, and if no one can beat him, he takes their sign.

Organization

An obvious framing device for any campaign is to have the characters be members of an organization that sends them out on missions. This could be something like Interpol, or a ninja clan, or what have you. Whatever the organization is, the PCs shouldn't always find it agreeable.

School

There are actually a fair number of Japanese fighting games set in high schools, not to mention anime/manga like *Tenjou Tenge*. In a school setting the PCs might simply be friends who work together, or they could be members of a martial arts-

related club/team, or part of a special squad of fighters that defends the school. The school could be a weird martial arts obsessed school too.

Team/Stable

Although it's not something often seen in fighting games, the prevalence of a tournament scene could lead to professional fighters forming teams to travel the world and compete in various tournaments. Although one assumes they must get along with each other reasonably well, the fighters in a stable would be together as a commercial venture. A stable can in turn have a manager, possibly a retired fighter, who handles most of the business end of things, leaving the fighters free to train and fight. Unlike a dojo, it makes perfect sense for a team to have a diversity of fighting styles.

The Crucible

One of the great things about using a modern day setting is that protagonists and antagonists are forced to deal with each other, instead of them pushing each other away as they'd like. You don't have to go this route for your entire campaign, or any of it for that matter, but it can be a powerful tool. In a fighting game type setting, the different fighters are almost certainly going to wind up colliding eventually when the tournament comes around. No matter how much you might hate some other fighter, you'll most likely have to wait your turn.

On the other hand, if the campaign is centered around a high school or a dojo, antagonists within it are more or less inescapable. Both sides are held back by the rules, so eliminating the ones you don't like isn't an option, however hard you might work to thwart their ambitions.

Other Models of Play

By default, *Thrash* assumes that each player has one character, and that all of the player characters work together to some degree. This doesn't necessarily have to be the case:

Troupe Style

Fighting games typically involve a heck of a lot of characters—sometimes far more than the number of human players an RPG campaign can hope to accommodate—each with their own stories to tell. You might even want to set up the game as more of a "federation" like in MMA or professional wrestling. One way to approach this is to adopt a troupe style of play, having different participants take on different roles over the course of the campaign. This could mean that the player has a primary character and the group occasionally does side stories about others, or the players might not have any specific characters of their own per se. Even the role of GM can be shuffled around if you're so inclined.

Split Group

Especially if the campaign is set up based on two distinct factions, it might be interesting to deliberately have the PCs divided between those factions. This could be

done in terms of the players being divided up, or troupe-style play where the group alternates between two full sets of PCs. Especially in the latter case, the factions need to be big enough that you won't have to worry too much about the PCs running into the other PCs.

Combat Game

Some people like to use Thrash as the basis of a pure combat game, with no actual role-playing elements involved. Doing so makes Destiny, Motivation, Story Hooks, and quite a few other Support Straits become irrelevant. If you want characters to improve, set up some hard and fast guidelines for awarding Advances. For example:

Lost but took of at least ½ opponent's Health	1 Advance
Won a Match	2 Advances
Perfect (won and took no damage)	3 Advances
Super Finish	+1 Advance

Non-Player Characters

Another thing to keep in mind is that you'll need to assemble a fair number of NPC fighters to take part in the campaign, good guys, bad guys, and whatever falls in between. If the campaign is leading up to a big tournament, you might draw up a tournament bracket and use that as a guide to how many fighters you need to make. If coming up with a dozen or more NPCs proves difficult, you can ask the players to each come up with one or two for you (full stats or just concepts). That way they have that much more input into the game, and you have less work to do to make it happen.

As for the actual stats, different GMs approach non-player characters differently. In most games I prefer to fudge NPCs' stats as I go along, but that doesn't necessarily work as well for Thrash. Sometimes it's better to take the time to write up full stats for an NPC just like a PC. On the other hand sometimes you want to save yourself the time.

NPCs and Destiny

Generally speaking, NPCs don't get Destiny points. There's already plenty of bookkeeping involved in having them around in the first place, and the point of Destiny is to give the player characters an edge on the grounds that they're the main characters of the story.

This also means that NPCs don't need Motivations or Story Hooks. You might pick out a Motivation if it helps inform how you portray them, but otherwise it's just extra unnecessary paperwork.

Simplified NPCs

Simplified NPCs are written up differently from normal characters, in order to let the GM create and use them more efficiently.

Characteristics

"Characteristics" are special super-simplified character traits for NPCs. A Characteristic represents the NPC's total Action Value for a given general type of action. The four Characteristics are Attack, Defense, Smarts, and Physique.

Power Level	Average Characteristic	Total Characteristic Points
Neophytes (0)	4	20
Normal (1)	6	30
Experienced (2)	8	36
Established (3)	10	42
Veterans (4)	12	50
Legends (5)	14+	60

Secondary Values

- **Health:** Calculate the NPC's Health points as **Physique** × 5.
- **Ki:** Don't bother with Ki.

- **Super:** Don't bother with Super points. Let the NPC use Super moves up to once per 4 rounds maximum.
- **Action Points:** For simplified NPCs, treat AP as a static allotment per round. If the NPC wants to use a maneuver that takes up more AP than her allotment per round, just have it use up all of her available AP that round and move on.

Power Level	Health	AP
Neophytes (0)	20	3
Normal (1)	30	4
Experienced (2)	40	4
Established (3)	50	5
Veterans (4)	60	6
Legends (5)	70+	7

Movelist

Finally, pick out a movelist from the ones below (or make your own). These have all of the modifications from attributes (roughly) included, so just use them as-is.

[Movelists will be completed after more revisions are done to the game.]

Big Bruiser, Karate, Ninja, Sorcerer, Wrestler

Minions

Many major villains have squads of disposable bad guys they send against the heroes to try to slow them down. Here we'll call them "minions." They're not all that common in actual fighting games, but they're a constant in side-scrolling beat-'em-ups (games like *Final Fight* and *Double Dragon*), and they pop up in fighting anime and manga sometimes too.

Minions can be written up as very weak NPCs (simplified or normal). An individual minion will typically be equal to or even weaker than a "Neophyte" PC. Another more interesting option is to write up an entire squad of minions as one simplified NPC. If you go this route, the minion squad NPC will need a much higher AP total than usual—enough to attack a whole group of PCs once per turn—and a bit more health, but otherwise they should have pretty weak stats. When making such an NPC, use one of the movelists below:

Gun-Toting Minions, Ninja Minions, Security Guard Minions, Thug Minions

Villain Archetypes

Below are seven archetypes for villains of various stripes.

Assassin

"Target eliminated. Mission complete."

Motivation: Duty

Dangerous Experiment

"Blood! I want to see more *blood!*"

Motivation: Bloodlust

Dark God
"I am… everything. And you… you are nothing!"
Motivation: Megalomaniac

Dark Mirror
"You're worthless! Let me show you how it's done!"
Motivation: Driving Goal (Surpass a particular hero)

The Demon
"Pathetic. Train, and come fight me again if you think you've truly become stronger."
Motivation: Power

Evil Warlord
"This is the dawn of a new era! *My* era!"
Motivation: Megalomaniac

Mimic
"Well. That was an interesting move. I think I'll try it out!"
Motivation: Showoff

Appendix

This section covers a few other things that didn't quite fit in with the main rules, but shouldn't be left out of the main rulebook.

Maneuver Construction

What follows is a system for creating new maneuvers; it's intended for the purpose of adding new maneuvers to the game, not for players to use during character creation.

An **offensive maneuver** starts with 4 AP, 4 Damage (plus ½ of a particular attribute), and 2 Move. The Base AV is equal to a Combat Proficiency plus a Technique, appropriate to the nature of the maneuver. From there, you add Enhancements and Drawbacks until you get the maneuver you want. Each class of maneuvers has a limit on the number of Enhancements you can add, but each Drawback lets you take one additional Enhancement.

A **standard maneuver** can have a net total of 3 Enhancements. A **super maneuver** can have a net total of 4 Enhancements, but it must have a Super Cost drawback and cannot take the Fast/Very Fast enhancements. An **offensive support maneuver** can have a net total of 1 Enhancement.

A **maneuver upgrade** is essentially a collection of specific enhancements and drawbacks. It must have a net total of 1 Enhancement.

Defensive maneuvers are assumed to cost 0 AP and have a Move of 1. Choose whether it is a dodge or block (see the basic maneuvers for how they work). Defending against multiple attacks (as per Multiple Dodge or Circular Parry) counts as one Enhancement. Including a defense reset also counts as one Enhancement.

Movement maneuvers start with 1 AP and a Move of (3 + ½ Agility). The special effects of a Jump count as one Enhancement.

Template maneuvers are essentially a set of Enhancements and Drawbacks that can be put on top of any number of applicable maneuvers. If it's a Special Maneuver it has to come out to a net total of 1 Enhancement. If it's a Support Maneuver it has to come out to a net total of 0 Enhancements (i.e. it can just shuffle stuff around).

Weapons: Weapons are effectively Template maneuvers, and they can be Special or Support. By default they're added to the "[Melee Weapon] Strike" maneuver for a basic attack (which is basically Punch with the Technique changed). Weapon-based special maneuvers are just regular special maneuvers that (1) have Melee as the Technique and (2) require the use of an appropriate weapon.

Enhancements

Accurate: Adds +2 to the AV of the maneuver.

Counter: The maneuver can be used as a counter to one posture (standing, crouching, or aerial) or one type of maneuver (projectiles, grapples, etc.). This can be taken multiple times to cover different postures/types.

Fast: The maneuver uses 1 less AP. This can be taken up to twice (reducing the AP cost to 2 at the very minimum).

Knockdown: The maneuver causes Knockdown.

Knock-Back: The maneuver causes Light Knock-Back. You can apply this Enhancement a second time to turn it into Heavy Knock-Back.

Quick Footwork: This adds either +3 or +(½ Agility or another attribute) to the Move rating of the maneuver. Can be taken multiple times.

Reach/Range: Take this once to increase the maneuver's Reach to 3. Take it twice to give it a Range equal to an attribute.

Strong: This adds +3 to the attack's damage. Can be taken multiple times.

Drawbacks

Inaccurate: Subtracts –2 from the AV of the maneuver.

Ki Cost: The maneuver costs 5 Ki points to use. Can be taken multiple times.

No Footwork: The maneuver has a Move of 0.

Prerequisite: The maneuver has at least two prerequisites, which must be other maneuvers of the same class or attributes or techniques at 6+.

Self-Knockdown: The user suffers a Knockdown after this maneuver is completed, regardless of whether it's successful.

Slow: The maneuver uses 1 more AP. This can be taken multiple times, though 6 is nominally the maximum AP cost.

Super Cost: The maneuver costs 5 points of Super. Can be taken multiple times.

Weak: The maneuver's damage is reduced by 2.

Fine-Tuning

When designing maneuvers, you can exchange points between different things as follows:

1 Move = 1 point
1 Damage = 1 point
1 Ki Cost = ½ point
1 Accuracy = 2 points
1 Reach = 2 points

Melee Weapons

Not all fighters are content to merely use fists and feet (and grappling and ki blasts and whatnot). Some prefer to bring a knife (or something nastier still) to a fist-fight. There are some balance issues—even fighters with basic melee weapons still have an advantage in reach and damage—so the rules for weapons are included here as an option. Missile weapons are firearms are something I'm saving for a future supplement, since they make life so much more complicated.

Making a Weapon Character

To create a weapon-using character, first be sure to take the **Melee technique** when you get to Step 3 of character creation. It's when you get up to dealing with Maneuvers that life starts to get complicated.

You have to pay for your weapon as a maneuver, usually a special maneuver, but in some cases (like a knife) a support maneuver. Unlike other stuff, you can use 2 Support Trait selections to cover the cost of a weapon that counts as a special maneuver. Characters can still use other types of weapons if they happen to be on hand, but when one is bought in this way it is assumed to be a good quality weapon (and thus unlikely to become broken) that the character will almost always have handy in a fight.

A weapon has a set of modifiers that are applied to maneuvers that use it, including the "[Melee Weapon] Strike" basic maneuver. There are some special maneuvers specifically designed for use with weapons, and existing maneuvers can also be modified for use with weapons (see below), but in either case you have to actually have the weapon (or a reasonable substitute) to use the maneuver at all. This is especially important since a character that uses a melee weapon can potentially be disarmed and deprived of a big chunk of his arsenal.

Disarming

The thing about a weapon is that it can be taken or knocked out of a fighter's hands. There are a couple of different ways a character can be disarmed; when they come up the weapon-user has to make a roll with an AV of his Strength + Melee to hang onto his weapon. The TN (or opposed roll) depends on the source of the disarmament:

- If the character is hit by a Super Maneuver he has to roll against a TN of 14 (12 for an EX Move) to hold his weapon.
- If the character is hit by a maneuver that causes Knock-Back he has to make a roll against a TN of 10 to hold his weapon.
- Characters can deliberately try to disarm an opponent. A disarming attack is essentially a normal attack that does no damage, but targets the hands the opponent is using to hold the weapon to force it out of their grasp. The target can try to defend normally, but if the attack hits, he must make a Strength +

Melee roll against a TN of what would've been the attacks damage, times 2. Pretty much any striking or grappling attack can be used to disarm.

If a character is disarmed by knock-back or a disarming attack, his weapon lands in the same hex. If a character is disarmed by a super, the weapon flies 1d6 hexes in a random direction (start with the direction the character was facing, roll 1d6, and count that many hex-sides around to determine the direction).

Weapon Styles

Fighting game characters that use weapons often don't have a named fighting style per se, and that's fine. Astaroth (Soul Calibur) is just a big guy with a really big hammer, and there's not much point trying to contrive a style name for him. Some of them use weapons as part of a fighting style that's not solely about using weapons, like Ninjutsu or Kung Fu. That leaves only a handful of styles that are solely about using weapons, most notably Fencing and Kendo/Kenjutsu.

Fencing

Fencing is used as a general term for European swordfighting techniques and the sport that evolved out of them. Fencers use lightweight swords—in contemporary fencing a foil, saber, or epee—that came about after heavy armor and longswords became largely obsolete. They train extensively in their footwork, and the foil and epee are mainly effective for thrusting attacks. As a sport—one featured in the Olympics—modern fencing is done using distinctive protective clothing, and is scored in points, often electronically.

Fighting game fencers tend to be either beautiful and deadly European women, or effeminate and snobbish European men. They emphasize speed and finesse over power.

Example Fighters: Charlotte (Samurai Shodown), Raphael (Soul Calibur II)

Techniques: While the ability to handle a sword (Melee) is of course paramount for a fencer, defending (Block) is vital, and good footwork (Evasion and to a lesser extent Athletics) is likewise very important.

Maneuvers: Fighting game fencers tend to favor lightning-fast thrusting attacks. Multi-Strike is a fairly common maneuver, but just about anything is possible.

Kendo/Kenjutsu

Kenjutsu ("Art of the Sword") is the name for the swordfighting martial arts of Japan, practiced by the samurai in feudal times. It acquired significance as an art form as well as a method of combat, and quality swords became highly prized. Kendo is a modern sport based on Kenjutsu. Competitors wear protective gear and use shinai, a sword-like nonlethal weapon made of strips of bamboo. Both versions emphasize powerful, direct slashing attacks and place great importance on both mental discipline and footwork.

Related to Kendo and Kenjutsu are Iaido and Iaijutsu. Iaijutsu is a sword fighting form that emphasizes readiness in everyday life, and thus quickly and smoothly drawing the sword, even from a sitting position, is its main focus. Iaido is the sport form,

and it is an almost meditative martial art, where practitioners focus on mental discipline and facing one or more imaginary foes.

Fighting game kendo/kenjutsu fighters tend to use powerful slashing attacks to bring their foes down. Quite a few of them have a ki blast of some kind too. They can range anywhere from muscle-bound ronin, to aging loyal samurai, to a lithe high school girl from the kendo club, and their moves can range from brutal slashes to calculating strikes.

Example Fighters: Haohmaru (Samurai Shodown), Kaede (Last Blade), Mitsurugi (Soul Calibur)

Techniques: Melee is of course essential for actually using a sword. Evasion and Block are likewise very useful, and many Kenjutsu fighters would need Focus for ki blasts and similar attacks.

Maneuvers: Kenjutsu fighters favor quick cutting attacks that either hit the opponent with devastating force or cover a lot of ground. Dash Strike, Rising Strike, and Through Strike are all possibilities.

Other Weapon Styles

There are numerous other styles of weapon-based martial arts; a few more examples are included below. In particular, in Japan it's as though every weapon has a "-jutsu" associated with it (bojutsu, jojutsu, yarijutsu, etc.).

- **Naginatado:** In Japan, Naginatado, a style of fighting with the naginata (a polearm) is a martial sport practiced mainly by women.
- **Staff Fighting:** A longer staff potentially gives a character all kinds of advantages in terms of range, and staff fighting techniques existed in England, Japan (*Bojutsu*), and China. In fighting games, staff-using characters tend to be very acrobatic and light on their feet.
- **Stickfighting:** Stickfighting styles such as the Japanese Joujutsu and the Phillipine Arnis de Mano (a.k.a. Kali, a.k.a. Escrima) use a pair of short staves.
- **Tribal Warrior:** Regardless of how cheesy it might be, it would definitely be genre appropriate to have a tribal warrior who fights with some mixture of primitive weapons (spears, throwing knives, boomerangs, machetes, shield, etc.) and possibly some Ki-based maneuvers that take the form of calling up crazy spirits.

Weapon Stats

[Melee Weapon] Strike (Strike)

2 AP

Action Value: (Finesse or Force) + Melee

Move: 1

Damage: 4 + (½ Strength)

This is the Basic Maneuver for attacking with a melee weapon. For the AV, use Finesse for weapons with a Minimum Strength of 3 or less and Force for those with a Minimum Strength of 4 or more. Other weapon-based maneuvers use whatever

Combat Proficiency is listed for the maneuver, regardless of which one is used for the weapon's basic strike.

The weapon's modifiers to AV, AP, and Damage listed in the weapon's stats are applied to it (and any special maneuvers done with the weapon), and if the weapon lists "None" under Move, its Move becomes 0. Template Maneuvers (notably Heavy Attack and Power Attack) can be applied where appropriate.

This is normally a Standing maneuver, but it can be used as a Crouching one, or if the character is airborne (as with Jump or another maneuver) it can be used as an Aerial maneuver.

Type	Min Str	AV	AP	Parry	Damage	Move	Reach
Knife*	2	+1	+0	Yes	+1	+0	1
Short Sword	3	+1	+0	Yes	+2	+0	1
Long Sword	4	+0	+0	Yes	+3	+0	2
Greatsword	6	-1	+1	Yes	+8	None	3
Staff	3	+0	+0	Yes	+3	+0	3
Short Staff	2	+1	+0	Yes	+2	+0	1
Bokken	3	+0	+0	Yes	+2	+0	2
Shinai	3	+0	+0	Yes	+1	+0	2
Pole Arm	3	+0	+0	Yes	+4	None	3
Spear	3	+0	+0	Yes	+4	None	3
Mace/Club/Bat	4	+0	+0	Yes	+5	+0	1
Nunchaku	2	+1	+0	No	+2	+0	1
Flail	3	+0	+0	No	+4	+0	2
Giant Mace/Club	6	-1	+1	Yes	+6	None	3
Tonfa	3	+1	+0	Yes	+2	+0	1
Jitte/Sai	3	+1	+0	Yes	+2	+0	1
Scythe	3	+0	+0	Yes	+4	+0	2
Axe	4	+0	+0	Yes	+4	+0	1
Lance	4	-1	+1	Yes	+6	+0	3
Rapier	2	+1	+0	Yes	+1	+0	2
Whip	3	+0	+0	No	+1	+0	3

Weapon-Related Edges

Dual Technique

You are well-trained in using two weapons at once. These must be one-handed weapons, of course. Each turn you can declare that you are using Dual Technique offensively or defensively. If you use it offensively and you successfully attack with one weapon, you can add a +2 bonus to the AV of one attack with the other in the same round. If you use it defensively, you can add a bonus of +2 to the AV to one Block attempt per round.

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* If you're requiring characters to buy weapons as maneuvers, a Knife should be a Support Maneuver rather than a Special Maneuver.

Oversized Weapon Proficiency

For whatever reason, your character is able to wield weapons that, by all rights, he shouldn't be able to handle. Pick out one weapon type; you can completely ignore the minimum Strength requirement for that weapon. Needless to say, this is best used with a Greatsword or Giant Mace/Club.

Weapon Special Maneuvers

Below are some special maneuvers for weapons, as well as guidelines for converting regular maneuvers into ones that use a melee weapon.

Converting Standard Maneuvers

Certain regular maneuvers can be converted into ones usable with weapons if you're so inclined—and the GM doesn't mind.

If it makes sense to use a **grappling** or **ki-based** maneuver through a weapon, you can generally simply specify that the maneuver is being done with a weapon and be done with it. If, for example, you want to do Hurl by catching the opponent on the end of a staff and swinging them around, or if you want a Ki Blast to come out of your sword, buy the move as usual and note that it's done with a weapon. The maneuver uses the same stats (including the same Technique; don't replace it with Melee) and can't be performed without the weapon or a reasonable substitute.

Strikes are potentially more interesting, but slightly more complicated. As with grappling and ki-based maneuvers you need to think in terms of plausibility, and the maneuver isn't usable without an appropriate weapon on hand. However, the Technique (but not the Combat Proficiency) used in the AV does change to Melee, and the weapon's modifiers to AV, AP, and Damage are applied to the maneuver. If the weapon has a Move of "None" but the maneuver has a Move rating, reduce it by 3.

Below are some examples of special moves that can be converted.

Maneuver	Melee Version	Weapon Types
Blast Knuckle	Home Run Hero	Staff, Bat
Dash Punch	Dash Strike	Sword, Lance
Rising Uppercut	Rising Strike	Sword, Short Staff
Through Strike	Through Slash	Sword
Sweep	Trip	Staff, Whip
Dive Kick	Diving Strike	Spear, Sword
Hurl	Hurl	Staff

Iaido Strike (Strike)

This maneuver is specifically for Japanese swords. It lets you go from having your weapon sheathed to delivering a devastating, lightning-fast slash in the blink of an eye. In order to use it, the fighter must have his sword sheathed (deliberately sheathing a sword costs 1 AP).

3 AP

Special: Sheathed Sword Only, Weapon Only (Japanese Sword)

Action Value: Precision + Focus + 2

Move: 2
Damage: 8 + (½ Strength)

Multi-Strike (Combo)

This is a short flurry of blows with a weapon, similar to multi-punch and multi-kick. It costs 4 AP (or 6 if the weapon has a +1 modifier to AP cost), and delivers 2 strikes, plus one additional strike for every 3 Success Points of the first attack, to a maximum of 5 strikes total.

4 or 6 AP
Special: Combo Attack, Weapon Only
Action Value: Finesse + Melee
Move: 0
Damage: 4 + (½ Strength)

Spinning Strike (Strike)

With this maneuver, the fighter swings his weapon around him, delivering a hit to anyone who happens to be around him. The strike hits a radius around him equal to the weapon's reach in hexes.

3 AP
Special: Area Effect, Weapon Only
Action Value: Force + Melee + 1
Move: 0
Damage: 6 + (½ Strength)

Character Creation Options

Starting Power Level

Thrash's default point allotment is intended to create characters that are fairly accomplished yet still have plenty of room to grow. If this makes for characters that are too weak or strong for your tastes, you can adjust the power level and point totals accordingly. The chart below gives suggested point totals for the power levels explained on p. 81.

Power Level	Attributes/ Techniques	Maneuvers (Special/Super)	Support Traits
Neophytes (0)	20	2/0	6
Normal (1)	25	3/1	10
Experienced (2)	27	4/1	12
Established (3)	30	5/2	14
Veterans (4)	32	6/2	16
Legends (5)	35	7/3	18

Starting Advances

Another way to power up fighters at character creation—and make the process a little more flexible—is to give players some Advances (say, 10 of them) to play with right off the bat.

Character Points

For the second edition of Thrash I've made an effort to drastically reduce the amount of fiddling with points that is involved in playing the game. If you really want players to be messing around with character points—providing them with more flexibility but also more opportunities to abuse things—here's how to go about it.

Power Level	Starting Character Points
Neophytes (0)	76 CP
Normal (1)	115 CP
Experienced (2)	156 CP
Established (3)	174 CP
Veterans (4)	202 CP
Legends (5)	218 CP

Attributes start at 3 and cost 3 points to raise by 1 Rank. Lowering one to 2 or 1 gives you 2 or 4 more CP to work with.

Techniques start at 0 and cost 2 points to raise by 1 Rank.

Maneuvers and **Supers** cost 6 points each.

Support Traits cost 3 points each. Consider letting players use CP as Skill Points as per the rule below.

Character Advancement: Rather than using Advances, you can opt to let characters trade Destiny points for additional CP; I recommend 3 Destiny per CP. In this case Ranks over 8 cost double.

Skill Points

Rather than skills adding bonuses of +2 or +3, you can instead spend a Support Trait selection to get 3 Skill Points. Skills go by Ranks (and are limited by the same maximum rank as Attributes and Techniques); skills that add a +3 bonus per selection cost 1 SP per Rank, while skills that add a +2 bonus per selection cost 2 SP per Rank.

To improve skills, spend 1 Advance to get 3 more Skill Points and spend them however you like, but the SP cost is doubled for ranks over 8.

Random Character Creation

Some people just gotta have randomness in their lives.

Random Attributes: Roll 3d6 and divide by 2 (round down) for each of the 6 attributes. Feel free to have them either be used as-is, arranged as the player sees fit, or add one or two extra rolls that can be dropped.

No Ki Points

That *Thrash* uses ki points is both for game balance and a nod to plausibility, but the notion that a character could run out of energy isn't really a part of fighting games. If you're still allowing ki-using maneuvers in the game, life gets a little bit more tricky if you care all that much about game balance. By the Maneuver Design rules (see p. 91), stripping out a Drawback (every 5 Ki points is a Drawback) from a maneuver requires that it lose an Enhancement to account for the difference. The simplest thing is to increase the AP cost by 1, but it might be better to look at it on a case-by-case basis.

Freeform Maneuvers

Although the maneuver design rules aren't meant to be used by players per se, it's certainly an option. Simply let players make up their maneuvers as per the rules, or let them pick and choose between pre-made and "custom" maneuvers. It's pretty straightforward either way.

Ultimate Maneuvers

Sometimes "super" just isn't enough. It might be fun to create another class of maneuvers called "Ultimate Maneuvers" that use up a full three Super bars (i.e., 30 points of Super), not unlike some kind of crazy *Dragon Ball Z* fighting game. You're certainly welcome to come up with your own designs using the maneuver creation rules (it's like a Super, but the extra super cost gives you *four* more Enhancements to play with). If the game does use these, characters should probably get one (but probably *only* one) for free.

Ultra-Attack

Ultra-Attack is basically the Ultimate version of Mega-Attack; it lets you convert a Special Maneuver into an Ultimate Maneuver. Pick whichever maneuver you want to turn into an Ultra-Attack, and add a Super point cost of 30, +1 to the AP Cost,

and +25 to the damage. Alternatively, you can take a Super, add +20 to the Super point cost and +15 to damage.

Combat Options

More AP

The AP limits set in Thrash are intended to provide more of an old-school fighting game feel. Increasing the number of APs available to characters makes for longer combos and more counterattacks, and can help capture some of the feel of more combo-heavy games, whether it's *DarkStalkers 3* with its chain combos or Capcom's Vs games with their absolute insanity, or something in between. In general, I recommend setting the maximum AP at your new figure, and having characters get half that amount per round.

The rule for maneuvers with 7+ AP (p. 74), naturally, is invoked for maneuvers that go beyond the campaign's new maximum.

Random Damage

In earlier versions of Thrash, the damage inflicted by a maneuver was listed as a die type rather than a flat number (with a handful of exceptions). If you really like the idea of rolling dice for damage, the easiest thing is to set the random damage to 1d6 per 4 points of damage, and add the remainder as a flat bonus.

Upwards AP

This is a rather different alternate system for handling AP, inspired by *Exalted*.

At the start of combat, make initiative rolls as per the Static Initiative optional rule (p. 73; an Agility + Alertness roll). Characters take their initial actions in order from highest to lowest. Initiative is only relevant at the beginning of combat.

Instead of characters being able to save up AP each round, the GM keeps a running total of how many each character has spent. After each character has acted once at the beginning of the fight, whoever has the lowest running AP total gets to act next, until they use up enough AP to not have the lowest total anymore. If a character jumps into combat in the middle of things, his AP total starts as being the same as whoever currently has the lowest.

In this variant, Block and Dodge cost 2 AP, and special defensive maneuvers have their cost increased by 2. Characters can defend as usual, but if they're more than 10 AP ahead of the attacker, they're rendered unable to defend as per the 7+ AP Maneuver rule. Counters are easier to afford AP-wise in this variant, but they can be very risky if they use too much AP at once.

Design Notes

Part of the frustration about trying to revise *Thrash* is that more than any RPG of any kind I've ever known, it has this ability to elicit strong and divisive opinions, often on things that don't really matter that much. Part of the problem is that there's pretty much no competition. *Street Fighter: The Storytelling Game* is long out of print (though it does have a small fan community), that Capcom World Tournament game failed to happen, and the few other related games (Final Stand, Mortal Konquest, etc.) don't quite scratch the same itch. As a creative person I have to work in isolation at least part of the time, and as a game designer I have to design with an eye towards what I'll enjoy playing with my friends.

In Need of Attention:

- I need to fill in the archetypes and NPC movelists, but not until I get the rules revised a little more.
- Is there anything that should be added to the character traits? I'm especially concerned with Motivations and Maneuvers (any common special moves that are missing or can't be built?).
- The Destiny rules are the one part of the game that's a new, radical addition. Not sure if I've done something brilliant or totally fucked up the game, or something in between.
- I was contemplating some kind of rule that would let characters with higher initiative "hold" and act when they feel it opportune to do so.
- How to handle the question of whether a fighter can actually figure out what his opponent throwing at him and therefore pick the right defense?
- Anything else that should be added to the Breaking Things item table?
- I was originally going to have a Destiny ability called "Fury/Quiet," where the character gets a temporary power boost by reaching a new plateau of either rage or meditative calm. But I have no idea how I would actually implement it.