

## Yags Modern

*Yags Modern* concerns itself with the modern era, from around the time of the 19th century to the 21st and onwards. The rules given here are genre neutral, and designed to be simple and flexible.

It is assumed that you have already read *Yags Core*, since the basic concepts are covered in more detail there.

# 2 Modern Characters

## Building a Character

Designing a character for *Yags Modern* is a relatively straightforward process. As always, you will need a character concept before hand, which will depend on the type of campaign being run by the GM, the type of characters everybody else is taking, and your personal preference.

If you have read the core character generation rules, ignore them, since they are focused on a fantasy setting where characters are more constrained into given roles and social classes. Character design in *Yags Modern* provides a great deal of flexibility to allow you to design the type of character you want.

### Priorities

Once you have determined the type of character you wish to play, it is time to determine the priorities of that character. There are five broad categories you must place in order of preference - *Advantages*, *Experience*, *Background*, *Social class* and *Wealth*. These are described below.

**Advantages:** Covers special abilities which cannot be purchased after character generation as well as raising attributes and skills above their defaults. This area is particularly useful for all-round heroic characters.

**Attributes:** Points to raise attributes.

**Background:** This covers what you have done up until this point. It is mostly a way to obtain a package of skills, either through education, military service or business experience. As well as skills, it can provide useful contacts.

**Experience:** Covers general experience and governs how many skills you start with, as well as the maximum skill level of any one skill at generation time.

**Social class:** Your social class determines how others view you. A high social rank provides you with a lot of power and responsibility (maybe you are a famous actor or a member of Parliament).

**Wealth:** Wealth determines how much disposable income you have. A high starting wealth also provides a fortune which can make you financially independent.

### Realistic

Each category provides you with the following. You should rate each one from A to F, using each letter only once. D is considered to be average.

Category	A	B	C	D	E	F
Attributes	+7/6	+5/6	+3/5	+0/5	-2/4	-4/3
Experience	40/8	30/7	20/6	15/5	10/4	5/3
Background	4	2	1	0	0	0
Advantages	10/10	6/10	3/10	0/10	0/5	-5/5
Social	4	3	3	2	1	0
Wealth	4	3	3	2	1	0

### Attributes

Attributes are listed as the number of points available to spend, and the maximum level of attribute which may be purchased. The cost of each level is as follows. Attributes above 5 tend to be very rare, and anything above 7 is truly outstanding.

Score	Cost
9	+15,
8	+10,
7	+7,
6	+5,
5	+3,
4	+1, Significantly above average for an adult. About 5% of the population has this level or above.
3	+0, Typical average for an adult. About 90% of the population.
2	-1, Significantly below average, the bottom 5%.

### Advantages

Advantages allow you to buy special abilities for your character, and to raise your attributes beyond the human average. Each rating gives you two values which are shown on the chart as X/Y.

The first number gives you the total points of advantages you may purchase for free. The second number is the maximum points of disadvantages you may take - each disadvantage buys you an advantage.

### Experience

Experience gives you experience points which may be spent on pretty much any skill. The table gives two numbers, in the form X/Y.

The first number is the total number of experience points you may spend on skills. The second number is the maximum skill level any single skill can be raised to.

Experience should be spent after any skills from background are chosen.

### Background

Your background determines what you have been doing up until this point. A background provides a number of benefits, including skills, contacts and possibly equipment. There are a number of backgrounds available, and each has a point cost associated with it. The level of background that you choose defines the number of points you can spend.

You may purchase as many backgrounds as you have points for, though you may not take the same background more than once. Where multiple backgrounds provide the same skills, take the highest level of skill provided.

#### Academic background (1):

*Prerequisites: Intelligence 4+.*

You are an academic, or at least a large part of your background has been spent in academia. You have a number of contacts in your chosen field of study, who you may be able to ask for aid or advice, though doing so will mean a favour that will need to be repayed.

If your *Research* skill is less than 4, it is raised to 4. You may also add +2 to any 3 different Academic skills.

You may take this background multiple times, though subsequent times only the skill bonuses stack. They may

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be placed on the same skills as previously

## Criminal background (1):

You have a criminal background, to the extent that you have a number of contacts and friends within organised crime, and a bad reputation with the law. Your social status will determine how bad your reputation (which may be just down to what you've got caught for, rather than how bad you've been).

As well as contacts, you start with a *Streetwise* skill of 4. You may not take this background more than once.

## Law enforcement (2):

You belong to, or did belong to, a law enforcement agency with national scope. As well as contacts within friendly law enforcement agencies, you have the authority to make arrests and investigate crimes.

You have *Law*, *Streetwise* and *Administration* skills of 4.

You cannot take this more than once.

## Military background (2):

*Prerequisites: Strength 3+, Agility 3+, Health 3+, Dexterity 3+.*

You have had military training, and it is your choice whether you are still in the military or whether you left with a good reputation. Taking this background gives you skills of *Military etiquette*, *Tactics*, *Athletics* and *Brawl* at 4. You also gain a bonus of +2 to any 4 suitable military skills, and a +1 bonus to *Health*.

You may only take this background once.

## Special Forces (2):

*Prerequisites: Military background, Agility 4+, Strength 4+.*

You may take this background if you already have a *Military background*. You gain a skill of 6 in *Brawl* and *Tactics*, and gain +3 to any 3 different military skills.

You also gain +1 to *Health* and *Perception*.

## Social

Your social rating allows you to buy reputation and power. With a social class of 0, you are a complete nobody, a petty criminal with a lot of enemies and no power over anyone. At 5, you are a powerful politician or celebrity with a lot of influence.

Rating	Description
0	Outcast. You are among the dregs of humanity. You are of no fixed abode, have several enemies and have probably been in trouble with the law. You may be guilty (or have been charged with) crimes considered dispicable (child rape, mass murder) and few people will be willing to help you.
1	Drifter. You drift from place to place, never settling. People mistrust you because of your lifestyle, and few will give you the time of day.
2	Average joe. You are an average person. You probably have a house (or at least, a mortgage) and have had steady jobs which can provide you with good references. You have a reasonable circle of friends, though most will be people like you.
3	Respectable. You are a respected member of the community, and can call on others for help. You may be a doctor, lawyer, minor politician or community leader, and some people may have heard

Rating	Description
	of you in your home country.
4	Celebrity. You are famous in your country, or to a select group across the world. You know many people in high places, and more importantly, they consider you a friend. You may be a famous athlete, a rock star or a well known scientist. People such as Arthur C Clarke, David Attenborough or Richard Stallman.
5	World famous. You are known and respected across the world. You have many contacts, and even where you don't know people personally, they will have heard of you, and some of them may be your fans. Examples are Madonna, Bill Clinton.

Note that social class and wealth are not the same, and though they will normally be similar, it is possible for them to be widely different. A person with a wealth of +5 and social status of +0 would be unusual, and a good background will be required. Possibly you have access to a fortune, but in so much trouble with both criminals and the law that you are unable to settle down and make much use of it.

## Wealth

Rating	Description
0	Poor. You are heavily in debt, and pretty much live hand to mouth. You own nothing of worth.
1	Struggling. You have little of worth, and probably some debts as well. You earn enough to live, but you constantly have to think about how you are going to spend your money.
2	Comfortable. You are used to a typical upper middle class standard of living. You own a car (possible two), have a decent house (or rent a good flat in the city) and have a steady income. You still need to work to keep that standard of life style however.
3	Wealthy. You are probably worth close to a million pounds, and rarely have to worry about having enough money. You could survive the rest of your life without working, but only if you invested wisely and lived cheaply. You have maybe a tenth of your total wealth as easily spendable wealth.
4	Rich. You are rich enough not to have to worry about working again, whilst still be able to maintain a good standard of living. Your total fortune is in the order of tens of millions.
5	Very rich. You are very rich, and have a wealth in the order of hundreds of millions.

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## Skills

### Skill list

#### Academic

**Anthropology(K)** - *The study of Homonids.*  
**Archaeology(K)** - *How to dig up ruins.*  
**Area lore(K)** - *Knowledge about a given region.*  
**Astronomy(K)** (Astrophysics)  
**Astrophysics(K)** (Astronomy)  
**Biochemistry(K)** (Biology, Chemistry)  
**Biology(K)** (Science) - *The science of biology.*  
**Botany(K)** (Biology)  
**Chemistry(K)** (Science) - *The science of chemistry.*  
**Cryptography(K)** - *Designing and using cyphers.*  
**Ecology(K)** (Botany, Zoology)  
**Economics(K)** - *Knowledge of financial matters.*  
**First aid(K)** - *Healing injuries and other ailments.*  
**History(K)** - *Knowledge about historical events.*  
**History(K)** - *Knowledge of the past.*  
**Law(K)** - *Knowledge about the law of the land.*  
**Law(K)** - *Knowledge of the law.*  
**Mathematics(K)** - *Geometry, aglebra etc.*  
**Occult(K)** - *Knowledge of the supernatural.*  
**Physics(K)** (Science) - *The science of physics.*  
**Politics(K)** - *Knowledge of politics.*  
**Religion(K)** - *Knowledge about gods and cults.*  
**Research** (Any Academic skill) - *Being able to find information.*  
**Science(K)** - *Basic science, logic and reasoning.*  
**Teach** - *The ability to teach people.*  
**Theology(K)** (Religion) - *Theoretical knowledge about religion.*  
**Zoology(K)** (Biology)

#### Business

**Accountancy** (Administration) - *Managing finances.*  
**Administration** - *Being able to manage people and paper.*  
**Current affairs(K)** - *Current affairs.*  
**Economics(K)** - *Knowledge of financial matters.*  
**Law(K)** - *Knowledge about the law of the land.*  
**Law(K)** - *Knowledge of the law.*  
**Politics(K)** - *Knowledge of politics.*  
**Trade** (Guile) - *Bartering and other merchant skills.*

#### Combat

**Aikijutsu** - *Unarmed combat specialised in throws.*  
**Bow** - *Using a short bow or long bow.*  
**Boxing** (Brawl) - *The sport of boxing.*  
**Brawl(\*)** - *Punching, kicking, wrestling and dodging.*  
**Chain weapon** (Melee weapon) - *Using chains, nunchuk or similar weapons.*  
**Crossbow** - *Using a crossbow.*  
**Heavy weapons** (Rifle) - *Using heavy machine guns.*  
**Heavy weapons** - *Using heavy machine guns.*  
**Karate** - *An aggressive unarmed combat style.*  
**Melee weapon** (Brawl) - *Using a sword, club or spear.*  
**Melee weapon** - *Using a melee weapon in combat.*  
**Pistol** (Rifle) - *Firing pistols, revolvers and SMGs.*  
**Pistol** - *Using pistols.*  
**Rifle** (Pistol) - *Firing rifles.*  
**Rifle** - *Firing rifles.*  
**Sniper** - *Long range single shots.*  
**Tactics** - *Knowledge of combat tactics.*  
**Throw(\*)** - *Using thrown weapons, and catching things.*

#### General

**Drive** (Motorbike) - *Driving a car or similar vehicle.*  
**Motorbike** (Drive) - *Driving a powered motorcycle.*  
**Pilot** - *Piloting a powered aircraft.*

#### Military

**Combat engineering** - *Building things quickly.*  
**Communication systems** - *Using radios and similar*

*communications gear.*

**Demolitions** - *Blowing things up efficiently.*

**Gunnery** - *Firing large vehicle mounted guns.*

**Sensor systems** - *Using radar, sonar and other sensor systems.*

**Strategy** - *Military strategy and logistics.*

**Tactics** - *Knowledge of combat tactics.*

#### Rogue

**Computer hacking** (Computer operation) - *Indepth knowledge of computers.*

**Demolitions** - *Blowing things up efficiently.*

**Security systems** - *Using and evading security.*

**Surveillance systems** (Security systems) - *Spying on people with electronic devices.*

#### Science

**Anthropology(K)** - *The study of Homonids.*

**Astronomy(K)** (Astrophysics)

**Astrophysics(K)** (Astronomy)

**Biochemistry(K)** (Biology, Chemistry)

**Biology(K)** (Science) - *The science of biology.*

**Botany(K)** (Biology)

**Chemistry(K)** (Science) - *The science of chemistry.*

**Cryptography(K)** - *Designing and using cyphers.*

**Ecology(K)** (Botany, Zoology)

**Mathematics(K)** - *Geometry, aglebra etc.*

**Medicine(K)** - *Diagnosis and healing.*

**Physics(K)** (Science) - *The science of physics.*

**Science(K)** - *Basic science, logic and reasoning.*

**Surgery** (Medicine) - *Performing complex surgery.*

**Zoology(K)** (Biology)

#### Sport

**Bicycling** (Athletics) - *Being able to ride a bycle well.*

**Boxing** (Brawl) - *The sport of boxing.*

**Fencing** - *Fighting with light fencing weapons.*

**Gliding** - *Piloting an unpowered aircraft.*

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**Skiing** (Athletics) - *Using skies.*

#### Technical

**Communication systems** - *Using radios and similar communications gear.*

**Computer hacking** (Computer operation) - *Indepth knowledge of computers.*

**Computer operation** (Intelligence, Electronic operation) - *The skill of using a computer.*

**Electrician** - *Fixing electrical things.*

**Electronics** - *Building electronic devices.*

**Engineering** - *The science of building things.*

**Machinest** (Mechanics) - *Building tools*

**Mechanics** (Engineering) - *Fixing machines.*

**Security systems** - *Using and evading security.*

**Sensor systems** - *Using radar, sonar and other sensor systems.*

**Surveillance systems** (Security systems) - *Spying on people with electronic devices.*

#### Vehicle

**Boating** - *Handling small watercraft.*

**Drive** - *Driving simple ground vehicles.*

**Drive** (Motorbike) - *Driving a car or similar vehicle.*

**Gliding** - *Piloting an unpowered aircraft.*

**Gliding** - *Piloting an unpowered aircraft.*

**Heavy weapons** (Rifle) - *Using heavy machine guns.*

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**Motorbike** (Drive) - *Riding a motorbike.*

**Motorbike** (Drive) - *Driving a powered motorcycle.*

**Pilot** - *Piloting a powered aircraft.*

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## Skill descriptions

### Accountancy

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BUSINESS.

**Defaults to:** Administration

Accountancy provides you with the knowledge of how to manage the finances of a business or organisation. It includes knowledge of tax laws, legal requirements and how to use common tools (including computers) needed to do your job.

## Administration

BUSINESS, SOCIAL.

The skill of managing an organisation, from dealing with people, basic finance, reception type duties and so on and so forth. You also know how to best short cut administration enforced by others, cutting through bureaucracy in the shortest possible times.

## Aikijutsu

COMBAT, MELEE.

**Requires:** Brawl-2

A style of unarmed combat which concentrates on throws and locks. It is designed for real combat, and has a number of techniques to get your opponent into a position ready to be thrown or grabbed.

You gain a +1 to your agility for all trip attacks and defences, and always use *agility x Aikijutsu* for such manoeuvres. If fighting from the prone position, you suffer no penalties. It can otherwise be used in place of *Brawl* for punches, kicks, dodges and other unarmed combat moves.

If using a weapon, you gain the damage bonus of the weapon and suffer a +1 increase in the fumble chance.

## Animal husbandry (Knowledge)

RURAL.

**Defaults to:** First aid

Looking after animals, especially on a farm. May be used to tend to sick or injured animals, in which case it may default to *first aid*.

## Anthropology (Knowledge)

ACADEMIC, SCIENCE.

This is the study of Homonids.

## Archaeology (Knowledge)

ACADEMIC.

This skill is mostly about digging up the ruins of ancient civilisations, and covers the practical skills needed to find, recognise and preserve items, as well as basic management - social, equipment and legal. It does also include knowledge of how to identify and date ruins, as well as general knowledge of specific civilisations. However, detailed knowledge of ancient history requires the *History* skill.

## Architecture (Knowledge)

CRAFT.

The skill and knowledge required to design buildings, from simple houses up to huge cathedrals. Larger constructs may require knowledge of techniques in order to stand much chance of success.

## Area lore (Knowledge)

ACADEMIC.

Knowledge of a given area, including geographical and political knowledge. The *Area lore* skill is used when checking to see if a character has heard of a person, place

or organisation. Area lore is nearly always based on intelligence.

There is an area lore skill for each area, normally an area the size of a country, with the same culture. An area lore skill can give knowledge of surrounding areas, though such knowledge will be prejudiced by the beliefs of the original area the skill is for.

### Example difficulties

**10** - Knowledge that everyone knows, such as who the ruler is, to names of major cities.

## Artist

ARTISTIC.

The ability to draw or paint competently. Used with dexterity, or with intelligence to try and accurately draw some scene from memory.

## Astronomy (Knowledge)

ACADEMIC, SCIENCE.

**Defaults to:** Astrophysics

This is concerned with the study of stars and planets, their motions, positions and general behaviour. It does not provide full detail on their formation and physical makeup (that is left to *Astrophysics*).

## Astrophysics (Knowledge)

ACADEMIC, SCIENCE.

**Defaults to:** Astronomy

**Requires:** Physics-4, Astronomy-2

Astrophysics deals with the makeup and behaviour of stars and planets from the point of view of physics. It is not concerned with particular stars (that is *Astronomy*) but with the underlying physics behind them.

## Athletics (Talent)

TALENTS.

This is a broad skill covering all forms of athletics, gymnastics and acrobatics. It does not, however, cover swimming or flying. It is split into the following tasks.

### Running

Running represents a light jog which you can keep up for many minutes without too much difficulty. When running, you move a number of metres each round equal to your *move* score. A point of fatigue is gained every *health x athletics* minutes you are running.

### Sprinting

Sprinting represents an all out sprint, moving as quickly as you can. You cannot do anything else whilst sprinting, and most people can only sprint for a few rounds before becoming exhausted.

When sprinting, you may move a distance in metres equal to *move x 2 + athletics* each round, and gain a point of fatigue each round.

### Jumping

Jumping represents both long jumps and high jumps.

### Climbing

Climbing things.

### Example difficulties

**10** - Jumping onto a table

**20** - Jumping over a table

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## Awareness (Talent)

TALENTS.

This skill is used by the character when there is a chance of noticing something which isn't obvious, such as someone trying to sneak around, people moving at a distance, or looking for a secret door. If the character is asleep, then any awareness rolls are quartered. If the character is only dozing (or day dreaming), then rolls are halved.

### Example difficulties

**perception x stealth** - See a hidden person

**agility x stealth** - Hear a sneaking person

**10** - Hear people talking through a door

**20** - Hear people talking through a wall

**10** - Hear someone walking on gravel

**15** - Hear someone walking on leaves

**20** - Hear someone walking on grass

**1/10m** - See someone with casual glance

**1/25m** - See someone with careful look

**x2 range** - Vision during dusk

**x4 range** - Vision under moonlight

**x10 range** - Vision under starlight

## Bicycling

SPORT.

**Defaults to:** Athletics

Riding a bicycle well. Most people in a modern setting probably learnt to ride a bike at some point, and so this skill defaults to *athletics*. If you have practised stunts or mounting biking in harsh conditions, then you probably have this skill however.

### Example difficulties

**5** - Riding a bicycle in good conditions.

## Biochemistry (Knowledge)

ACADEMIC, SCIENCE.

**Defaults to:** Biology, Chemistry

**Requires:** Biology-4, Chemistry-4

This is the study of the chemicals of life.

## Biology (Knowledge)

ACADEMIC, SCIENCE.

**Defaults to:** Science

**Requires:** Science-2

Biology is a particular branch of *Science*, and covers the study of living things.

## Boating

VEHICLE, RURAL.

Being able to use a small oared boat. Based on intelligence for judging travel conditions, strength for speed or dexterity for fine navigation.

### Example difficulties

**10** - Row a boat in a straight line in calm conditions.

**15** - Row a boat in choppy conditions

**20** - Row a boat in rough conditions (open sea)

**30** - Very rough conditions

**40** - Row in a storm

## Botany (Knowledge)

ACADEMIC, SCIENCE.

**Defaults to:** Biology

This is the study of plants.

## Bow

COMBAT, MISSILE.

The skill of using a bow as a ranged weapon.

## Boxing

COMBAT, MELEE, SPORT.

**Defaults to:** Brawl

*Boxing* is a specialised form of *brawl*, which is designed for use under particular sporting conditions. Though it can be used as a combat skill, it is not designed to be, and can be ineffective outside of the boxing ring. Knowledge of this skill grants knowledge of the rules and etiquette of the game, as well as skill at fighting.

Boxing is used like *brawl* to attack and defend. You have +1 to your agility for purposes of defence, but the penalty for making multiple defences is increased by 50%. You get a bonus to punching damage equal to your *Boxing* skill.

## Brawl (Talent)

TALENTS, COMBAT, MELEE.

A general purpose combat skill covering dodging, punching and wrestling. This is covered in more detail in the combat section. It allows the use of small weapons such as knives and daggers, as well as improvised weapons such as stones, bottles, sticks and chairs.

A character may always use the *brawl* skill to dodge even if they are using a weapon, but they don't get any bonuses from the weapon if they do so.

## Calligraphy

ARTISTIC.

The skill of writing in a way that produces a work of art, as well as a record of knowledge.

## Chain weapon

COMBAT, ARMED MELEE.

**Defaults to:** Melee weapon

Using flexible chain melee weapons.

## Charm (Talent)

TALENTS, SOCIAL.

A high *charm* allows you to appear friendly and sociable. It is nearly always based on *empathy*, and allows you to make a good impression and gain people's interest and trust.

*Charm* can be used to improve a second social skill test (such as *guile*, *trade* or *perform*). Make a charm check against the of the target to gain a +3 bonus for each level of success.

### Carousing

Used at parties and similar social gatherings. Can be used to find out information, flirt or try and talk to someone who might be otherwise difficult to talk to (such as a duke surrounded by hangers-on and aids who won't let anyone else near him). Generally not resisted.

### Chatter

Mindless chatter to try and draw information out of someone, or to simply distract them. Generally not resisted, unless the target is being deliberately close mouthed about a subject.

### Seduction

Can try to seduce a person. Add appearance to *empathy* for purposes of seduction attempts, and resisted with the target's *will*.

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## Persuade

If trying to change someone's mind by emotional arguments, resisted with the target's *will*.

### Example difficulties

- 10 - *Not make a fool of yourself.*
- 20 - *Give a good impression.*
- 30 - *Be very likeable and understanding.*
- 40 - *Win friends and influence people easily.*

### Example difficulties (Carousing)

- 10 - *Survive a party.*
- 20 - *Make a good impression. Get to talk to someone important.*
- 30 - *Make a very good impression. People will remember the character favourably. Get to talk to someone important who doesn't want to talk to you.*
- 40 - *Most popular person at the party.*

### Example difficulties (Seduction)

- 10 - *Bad circumstances. Target of attempt is busy doing other things, such as working or is tired.*
- 20 - *Inappropriate circumstances. Target is on guard, or doing something else important.*
- 30 - *Highly inappropriate circumstances.*

## Chemistry (Knowledge)

ACADEMIC, SCIENCE.

**Defaults to:** Science

**Requires:** Science-2

Chemistry is a particular branch of *Science*, which is concerned with the study of chemicals and elements.

## Combat engineering

MILITARY.

Most infantry has experience with digging trenches, building bridges and putting up sandbags. A combat engineer has a lot of experience doing this. This skill covers getting the job done in the minimum time, often so that's its good enough to do what it needs to do. It covers a wide range of tasks, from bridge building to tunneling, and is more practical than theoretical.

Unlike 'real' engineering skills, this one assumes that the needed materials aren't readily to hand and that the people doing most of the heavy lifting are mostly unskilled infantry, so the result will often be simple and ugly. But it'll work.

## Communication systems

TECHNICAL, MILITARY.

This skill provides advanced knowledge of how to use communication devices such as radios. It does not just cover how to switch a device on and talk into it, since that is covered by basic *Intelligence*, but provides in depth knowledge of how to fix it when things go wrong, how to get around jamming, how to jam someone else's communications, and how to improve signal strength.

## Computer hacking

TECHNICAL, ROGUE.

**Defaults to:** Computer operation

**Requires:** Computer operation-2

A hacker is someone who has in depth knowledge of how computer systems work. Sometimes, this knowledge can be put towards circumventing security on computer systems, but doesn't have to. This skill covers programming, system design, network administration and most other advanced tasks.

The point-and-click style of system administration can be covered by *Computer operation*, though this skill doesn't

include much knowledge of why things work the way they do.

## Computer operation

TECHNICAL.

**Defaults to:** Intelligence, Electronic operation

This covers basic computer use, from switching it on to using a word processor, browsing the web or sending an email. High levels of skill will allow basic programming tasks and diagnosing faults.

If the computer system does not have a point-and-click, or otherwise very simple, style of interface, then you must use *Computer hacking* instead.

### Example difficulties

- 10 - *Looking for a particular file using easy criteria.*
- 20 - *Filtering information from a database and analysing it (producing graphs, finding correlations).*
- 20 - *Connecting a computer to a network, or software to a server. Halved if you have the right System Administration technique.*

## Cooking

CRAFT, RURAL.

The preparing, preserving and cooking of food. Includes some knowledge of herbs.

## Crossbow

COMBAT, MISSILE.

The skill of using a crossbow as a ranged weapon.

## Cryptography (Knowledge)

ACADEMIC, SCIENCE.

**Requires:** Mathematics-2

Using and designing cyphers.

## Current affairs (Knowledge)

BUSINESS, SOCIAL.

Represents up to date knowledge of what is going on in your society. This is a skill which is constantly changing, so if you lose contact with society, then you will be at a large disadvantage when you return. It also covers knowing how to get information and how to interpret it, so becoming up to date again is relatively quick for you.

## Dance

ARTISTIC.

**Defaults to:** Athletics

With *Dance* you are able to impress people with your graceful dances. It allows you to know the common types of dances, as well as the ability to actually dance. With sufficient skill, you will be able to improvise new dances, and work with a partner to complement their improvisations.

The skill covers all forms of dancing, though you can buy techniques which provide bonuses in specialisations.

### Example difficulties

- 0 - *You are clumsy and obviously unskilled. You will give a poor impression to anyone who is watching.*
- 10 - *Nothing special, but you don't make any big mistakes (though lots of little ones). People won't pay to watch you dance.*
- 20 - *You dance with competence and some degree of grace. Your dancing will please most people.*
- 30 - *Very good dancing, which will impress most people. You get a +1 bonus to the reaction level of people who saw you dance.*
- 40 - *An excellent performance which will impress pretty much everyone. You can a +2 bonus to the reaction level of those around you. Probably a level of skill better than most people have seen.*
- 50 - *An outstanding performance of skill and grace. You gain a +2 reaction bonus, or +3 if asking someone to share a dance with you.*

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## Demolitions

MILITARY, ROGUE.

Blowing things up is easy, but doing it with the minimum of explosives, at minimal risk to yourself, and in a way that causes maximum damage is somewhat harder. This skill provides everything you need to know about destroying things with explosives. You also know about the different types of explosives, how best to store, move and deploy them, and how to disarm other people's bombs.

## Drive

VEHICLE.

The skill of driving a car or similar sized vehicle. Larger vehicles (lorry, tank) use this skill, though may require techniques for competence.

## Drive

GENERAL, VEHICLE.

**Defaults to:** Motorbike

The skill of driving a car or similar sized vehicle. Larger vehicles (lorry, tank) use this skill, though may require techniques for competence.

## Ecology (Knowledge)

ACADEMIC, SCIENCE.

**Defaults to:** Botany, Zoology

**Requires:** Biology-2, Zoology-2

This is knowledge of ecosystems, of the relationships between plants and animals living together in balance.

## Economics (Knowledge)

ACADEMIC, BUSINESS.

Economics is the study of how the economy and financial world works.

## Electrician

TECHNICAL.

The skill of fixing electrical systems when they break.

## Electronics

TECHNICAL.

**Requires:** Electronics operation-2

You have skill in building electronic devices, as well as a good understanding of how they work and the theories on which they are constructed.

There is a technique for each type of electronic device that can be built. Knowing the correct technique halves the difficulty for a task.

## Engineering

TECHNICAL.

The knowledge and skill of designing, building and repairing machines, buildings and other structures. Engineering tends towards the theoretical side of things, and does not necessarily cover the everyday maintenance of such items.

## Etiquette

SOCIAL.

**Defaults to:** Charm

Etiquette is a knowledge of good manners and social behaviour. It is of much greater use amongst the higher classes than amongst the peasantry, where no-one really cares which fork they use to eat their meal with, as long as a meal is there to be eaten.

It may be used to know how to address someone of rank, how to flirt with a noble Lady without offending her, or how to behave at a joust or banquet. It is normally based on intelligence, but may use *empathy* (especially for courtly flirting or flattery).

## Flirt

*Flirt* with a lady or gentleman in a polite and possibly discreet way.

## Fencing

SPORT.

The sport of using light fencing weapons. It can be used in dueling and combat, though is primarily concerned with the use of fencing weapons as a sport. Because it is *not* part of the Combat group, it cannot be used with any of the standard combat techniques.

## First aid (Knowledge)

ACADEMIC.

Provides care and treatment of wounds to stop bleeding and prevent infection. Once a wound has been successfully first aided, it may begin healing naturally. First aid checks are generally made with intelligence. First aid can also be used to treat stuns.

To treat a character's wounds, the base difficulty is 10. This is modified upwards by the total of the character's stun and wound penalties (a fatally wounded character (-15) would be difficulty 25 to treat). Success means that the wounds will begin healing naturally. If the roll was made by 10 or more, then one level of wound is also healed.

Stuns are a base difficulty of zero to first aid, again modified by total stun and wound penalties. Success heals one stun, and each 10 over that heals another level of stuns. Stuns do not need to be treated before they begin healing.

## Gambling

SOCIAL, CRIMINAL.

**Defaults to:** Guile

This is the skill of playing games of chance, such as card games or dice games. This is a generic skill, based around being able to spot patterns, work out probabilities, bluff, cheat and basic gaming tactics.

A high skill represents a good, broad, knowledge of all such games, and so a greater chance of knowing how to play any given game, or at least knowing enough about a similar game in order to be able to play well.

## Game

SOCIAL.

Knowledge of, and skill at playing a game such as chess or Hnefatafl. A skill is required for each game played, though similar games may allow half skill. This is based on intelligence.

The simplest way to find the winner for a game, is for both opponents to roll their skill, and the highest roll wins. If it is desired to play out the game in more detail, then proceed as follows.

Each opponent makes a skill check each turn of the game. If one exceeds the other by five or more, then they gain

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an advantage. Each advantage gained gives +3 to the skill check next turn. On gaining the fourth advantage, the player is considered the winner. If the player with the advantage loses a turn, then they lose a level of advantage.

## Example difficulties

- 10 - *Knowing the rules to a game*
- 20 - *Playing a game reasonably well*

## Gliding

VEHICLE, SPORT.

You have experience in flying gliders. This skill provides you with the ability to fly a glider, to know how to find and use thermals and geographic features for lift and how to look after and maintain a glider. You'll also have some knowledge of aviation law and etiquette.

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## Guile (Talent)

TALENTS, SOCIAL.

*Guile* allows a character to use and understand social methods of deception, through lying, body language and actions. A character can lie by making an opposed *will x guile* against the target's *empathy x guile*. Success means that the target is fooled, though the attempt may be modified by circumstances based on how probably the lie is.

Will is generally used when trying to hide a character's own emotions, *empathy* to understand another's and *intelligence* to think quickly when inventing a believable story.

### Disguise

The character can disguise either themselves or another person by using *guile*. Make an *empathy x Guile* check, normally against a difficulty of 10, as long as no-one is taking notice of you. If somebody is specifically looking at you (guards will, if you approach them), then they get the original difficulty as a bonus to their *empathy x Guile* or *perception x Awareness* (whichever is higher).

### Fast talk

When trying to invent a plausible story quickly, then an *intelligence x guile* check can often be called for, against the same for the target. If the target finds the story plausible, then opposed *empathy* and will checks may still be necessary in order to hide the lie.

### Taunt

Make someone mad. Opposed with *will*.

## Example difficulties

- 10 - *Disguising yourself to fit in with a random crowd of people. A random crowd on a high street for example.*
- 20 - *Disguising yourself to fit in with a specific group of people. A soldier on a military base.*
- 30+ - *Disguising yourself to fit in amongst a small group of people, where they all know each other. A security guard for a single building.*

## Gunnery

MILITARY.

The *gunnery* skill covers the use of very large vehicle mounted or emplacement weapons, such as artillery and battleship main guns. Whereas *Heavy weapons* covers "barely man portable in a Hollywood action film" weapons, Gunnery is only for the really big weapons which often require several crew members to operate. Will often use *Intelligence*, since doing the maths to plot the trajectory is generally more important than quick reflexes.

## Handicraft

CRAFT, RURAL.

The making of baskets, embroidery and other similar village hand crafts not covered by other professional skills. It is generally seen as the province of women.

## Heavy weapons

COMBAT, FIREARMS, VEHICLE.

**Defaults to:** Rifle

This skill provides you with knowledge of how to use heavy weapons such as vehicle mounted machine guns, grenade launchers, anti-tank weapons and mortars. Most non-man portable weapons fall into this category. Always uses *Perception* when firing weapons.

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## History (Knowledge)

ACADEMIC.

Knowledge of the past, especially the last few hundred years. Based on intelligence.

## History (Knowledge)

ACADEMIC.

The study of historical events. As standard, it gives a knowledge of a broad range of recorded history without specialisation in any one area. Most people will know more about their own culture than others, so there's a +10 or +20 increase to the difficulty to know the history of cultures outside your own (note that some historical events, such as who built the pyramids, is popular knowledge even in non-Middle Eastern cultures).

There are many techniques which allow you to specialise in a period or culture. These are 4 points each.

## Intimidation

SOCIAL, CRIMINAL.

**Defaults to:** Guile

Being able to scare people, either with threats of simple physical violence, or by more subtle means. Can either be based on *strength* or *empathy*.

## Karate

COMBAT, MELEE.

**Requires:** Brawl-2

*Karate* is one of the popular (or at least, well known) styles of unarmed combat in the modern world. It is specialised in attack rather than defence. Though it is often used as a sport, it is effective in a real fight as well.

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It is used in the same way as *brawl* in combat, though it does not teach the use of weapons. When fighting unarmed, you gain a bonus to damage equal to your skill, but suffer a -1 penalty to agility for defence rolls.

## Law (Knowledge)

ACADEMIC, BUSINESS.

Knowledge and understanding of the law, and how to apply it in a given situation. Based on intelligence.

## Law (Knowledge)

ACADEMIC, BUSINESS.

Knowledge of the legal system, including how it works, what the laws are, and how to bend or avoid them.

## Lip reading

SOCIAL.

The skill of reading lips. Each 10 rolled gives an equivalent point of language skill. There may be penalties for distance, or partial visibility.

## Machinest

TECHNICAL.

**Defaults to:** Mechanics

The skill of building high tech tools. Though absolutely vital to a high tech society, most mechanics and engineers can get away with buying standard parts from a local shop. In a society where there isn't a ready availability of tools and parts, most (if not all) engineers will have some level of skill in *Machinest*.

## Mathematics (Knowledge)

ACADEMIC, SCIENCE.

Mathematics is the knowledge of advanced mathematics. Simple arithmetic is considered to be basic intelligence. Mathematics covers geometry, algebra, set theory, probability and other branches of mathematics. Most children with a Western education will have some knowledge of Mathematics after leaving school, though it's likely to be only a couple of points.

## Mechanics

TECHNICAL.

**Defaults to:** Engineering

The skill of fixing mechanical devices when they break.

## Medicine (Knowledge)

SCIENCE.

**Requires:** First aid-2, Biology-2

The skill of diagnosing illnesses, and knowing what to do to cure an illness. Provides knowledge of the currently available drugs and how best to make use of them. Whilst first aid is focused on basic wounds (mostly cuts and bruises) and tends to be quite simple in its solutions, medicine provides a wide range of knowledge about how the body works, what drugs are available, and how best to diagnose illness and injuries.

## Melee weapon

COMBAT, ARMED MELEE.

**Defaults to:** Brawl

The skill of using a simple melee weapon, such as blades, spears and clubs. This skill covers all such weapons, as their use with a shield or a second parrying weapon. Exotic weapons, such as chain weapons, aren't covered since they are used in a completely different way. Small weapons such as knives however are used with the *Brawl*

skill.

Melee weapon is used with *Dexterity*.

## Melee weapon

COMBAT, MELEE, ARMED MELEE.

This is the skill of fighting with a heavy or bladed weapon. You are not specialised in any particular style of fighting, but you have a good knowledge of how to attack and defend.

## Motorbike

VEHICLE.

**Defaults to:** Drive

The skill of driving a motorcycle, or similar two wheeled vehicles.

## Motorbike

GENERAL, VEHICLE.

**Defaults to:** Drive

The skill of driving a motorcycle or similar two wheeled vehicle.

## Musician

ARTISTIC.

The skill of playing musical instruments, whether they are a drum, a flute or a harp.

## Example difficulties

15 - *Play without sending people running for cover*

20 - *Play in tune with others*

30 - *Play very well*

## Occult (Knowledge)

ACADEMIC, OCCULT.

Knowledge of the occult and things related to it.

## Perform

SOCIAL, ARTISTIC.

**Defaults to:** Charm

A skill which covers many forms of social skills, including oratory, poetry and singing. It may be used to rouse a crowd, invent some poetry on the spot, or remember a poem or song well enough to recite or sing it.

The mood of the audience can be affected with either song, poetry or oratory. The performer matches their skill roll against the will of the audience. If the audience can be treated as a *crowd*, take the average will and roll once for the whole audience (a vocal few will tend to lead the silent majority). Success by the performer will mean the crowd listens to what the performer says, and will think about it, though their opinion isn't shifted greatly. For each full 10 the performer beats the will of the crowd, the crowd's mood is shifted one category.

When singing or reciting poetry, the mood of the audience can be shifted, sometimes considerably. This can be done subtly, though it takes an evening of performance to carry it out.

A more direct way to sway an audience is through oratory. This is quicker and more direct than by choice of song, but is also pretty blatant.

## Example difficulties

10 - *Sing without inflicting pain on listeners. Less than this may get the character forcibly removed from the stage.*

20 - *Sing well enough to impress the audience, though not in a way that*

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will be particularly remembered.

**30** - Sing very well. The singer will be well received, and probably kept around for more of the same. The mood of the audience can be shifted subtly.

**40** - The singer will be spoken of for months to come, and people will be most eager to please. The mood of the audience can be shifted noticeably.

**50** - All others will be compared (probably unfavourably) to the singer, who will be heralded as a master of their art. The singer pretty much has control over the mood of the audience.

## Physics (Knowledge)

ACADEMIC, SCIENCE.

**Defaults to:** Science

**Requires:** Science-2, Mathematics-2

Physics is a particular branch of *Science*, concerned with forces and motion, energy and matter at the smallest scales. Particular branches of physics are treated as *techniques* - not knowing the technique doubles the difficulty.

### Nuclear physics

Knowledge of nuclear physics, including how to build a nuclear power station or a nuclear bomb. Also covers how to work safely with radioactive materials.

### Quantum physics

Knowledge of quantum mechanics.

### Relativity

Relativity and gravity.

## Pilot

VEHICLE.

The skill of piloting a powered aircraft. By default it assumes a small low performance aircraft.

## Pilot

GENERAL, VEHICLE.

The skill of piloting a powered aircraft. By default it assumes a small low performance aircraft.

## Pistol

COMBAT, FIREARMS.

**Defaults to:** Rifle

You are skilled in firing pistols and similar small hand guns, including revolvers, automatic pistols and SMGs. This skill is most effective at short ranges and when in close combat with the target. It is always based on *Dexterity*.

At short range, you may normally add the attack bonus of the weapon to your attack roll unless you are making a *snapshot*.

## Pistol

COMBAT, FIREARMS.

Firing a hand gun with accuracy.

## Politics

SOCIAL.

**Defaults to:** Guile

The skill of dealing with the intrigues of a political court. With it, it is possible to find out relationships within the court, and to obtain information from people, or even to spread information without it being obvious that the plotter is trying to spread information.

Note that politics is as much knowledge of the local political situation as it is the ability to 'play' it. Knowledge of who the powerful people are, and what their strengths,

weaknesses and allegiances are is gained with this skill.

## Politics (Knowledge)

ACADEMIC, BUSINESS.

Knowledge of political systems and how to take advantage of them. It may provide some knowledge of the current political groups of your culture, but this is really covered by *Current affairs*, and any knowledge provided by *Politics* will be more long term and theoretical.

## Religion (Knowledge)

ACADEMIC.

Knowledge of the traditions, ceremonies, laws, gods, priests and mythology of a given religion. More broad or narrow the skill is depends very much on the culture and the level of knowledge required. In a monotheistic culture, especially where knowledge of other religions is discouraged (e.g. Medieval Europe), each religion will have its own skill, and this will give little knowledge of the others.

In a pantheistic culture, one skill can give knowledge of all the gods and cults, though only on a general level. Single skills will exist for each individual cult, which will also give knowledge of other cults, though that knowledge may be coloured by prejudice.

Where a religion actually grants supernatural abilities to its cult members or priests, these may be represented as *techniques* based on the cult's specific skill.

## Research

ACADEMIC.

**Defaults to:** Any Academic skill

The skill of being able to find information in books, on a computer system, or in any other knowledge source which doesn't require interaction with people (beyond standard dealing with librarians etc).

## Ride

RURAL.

The ability to ride, normally a horse. A different skill is needed for different types of animals (horses and ponies would be the same skill, a Griffin another skill). As well as enabling you to remain mounted, it grants a bonus to combat skills when mounted if the relevant techniques are known.

## Rifle

COMBAT, FIREARMS.

**Defaults to:** Pistol

The use and handling of rifles, carbines, shotguns and the like. It is not very effective at very close range, but is designed for short to medium ranges. Can be used with either *Dexterity* or *Perception*. Add-ons to rifles such as an underslung grenade launcher may also be used with this skill instead of the more usual *Heavy Weapons* skill, but always use *Perception*.

At short range, you may normally add the attack bonus of the weapon to your attack roll unless you are making a *snapshot*.

## Rifle

COMBAT, FIREARMS.

The use and handling of rifles, shotguns, sub machine guns and the like.

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## Science (Knowledge)

ACADEMIC, SCIENCE.

Science covers basic scientific knowledge, logical reasoning and ballony detection. Most Western schools will teach *science* to some degree. The skill provides basic knowledge of the various sciences, an understanding of the philosophy of science, and the ability to tell the difference between a scientific theory and dodgy pseudo-science.

All scientists will have *Science* to a greater or lesser degree, as will those in science based professions such as engineering or mathematics.

## Scrounging

CRAFT.

Being able to turn useless scrap into something useful. Used with intelligence. Covers finding, planning and building, though skills such as *carpentry* or *blacksmith* may be needed as well.

## Security systems

TECHNICAL, ROGUE.

Provides knowledge of using and by-passing electronic security systems such as short range sensors, pressure pads, electronic locks, iris and fingerprint scanners etc. It can be used to forge ID to try and bypass such systems.

## Sensor systems

TECHNICAL, MILITARY.

Provides knowledge and experience with using advanced sensor systems, interpreting raw sensor data, knowing how to evade and block sensors, and how to make best use of an existing sensor network.

This provides far more knowledge than a person working in traffic control would have, and it is a skill normally only found in the military, in labs or amongst hackers.

## Skiing

SPORT.

**Defaults to:** Athletics

The skill of skiing. Includes practical experience, as well as knowledge of identifying poor conditions.

## Sleight (Talent)

TALENTS, CRIMINAL.

Sleight of hand, from filching items on a market stall, to picking someone's pockets. Can also be used for anything which requires a great deal of fine dexterity, including juggling, card shuffling and magical tricks.

If you try to do something without being noticed, then you roll against the *perception x Awareness* of the target.

### Example difficulties

**Easy** - Shuffle a deck of cards, juggle two balls, take something from a busy market stall.

**Moderate** - Expertly shuffle a deck of cards, perform a simple sleight of hand trick, pick a person's pocket on a busy street.

**Difficult** - Shuffle a deck of cards how you want to. Pick a person's pocket in a quiet environment.

## Sniper

COMBAT, FIREARMS.

Firing a rifle over long distance with accuracy. Covers not just accuracy with firing, but knowing how to find a good position, keeping in cover, planning escape routes after you've assassinated the target and other actions

required to be a good sniper.

## Speak language (Language)

LANGUAGE.

The ability to speak a language. Every character starts with a score of 4 in speaking their own language. This skill is rarely rolled, but instead gives an indication of the character's grasp of a language.

## Sport

SOCIAL.

Knowledge of, and skill at, playing a particular sport such as Cricket, Football or Squash.

### Example difficulties

**10** - Knowing the rules to a game

**20** - Playing a game reasonably well

## Stealth (Talent)

TALENTS, CRIMINAL.

Moving quietly, hiding, and generally not being seen or heard. Based on agility for moving quietly, or perception for finding somewhere to hide.

## Strategy

MILITARY.

Unlike *Tactics*, which is concerned with small scale skirmishes, military strategy provides knowledge and experience of running a war, including making most effective use of troops, logistics and knowledge of large scale tactics.

## Streetwise

SOCIAL, CRIMINAL.

**Defaults to:** Guile

*Streetwise* is similar to *Politics*, though is more suited to life amongst the criminal classes. With it, comes knowledge of how to survive on the street, how to gain the trust of those who live on the wrong side of the law, as well as how to find them in the first place.

## Surgery

SCIENCE.

**Defaults to:** Medicine

**Requires:** Medicine-4

This is a particular specialisation of medicine, focused on cutting people open and fixing their insides. It is considered to be quite a difficult skill, and failure can often be fatal for the patient.

## Surveillance systems

TECHNICAL, ROGUE.

**Defaults to:** Security systems

This skill provides knowledge of using and evading bugs, hidden cameras, tracking devices and the like. You may use this skill or *Awareness* to search for them.

## Survival

RURAL.

With this skill, you are capable of surviving on many different types of terrain for foraging and hunting. There is a single skill, which covers all terrain types, though a number of techniques are needed to survive in harsh environments without penalty. *Survival* also covers tracking, finding shelter and travelling safely and quickly.

On coastal lands (where it is possible to fish), plains, woodlands and low mountain regions, the basic skill will

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suffice. In desert, arctic or jungle environments, then a technique is required. High mountains may count as arctic, swamps may count as coastal or jungle, depending on the exact environment.

## *Foraging*

When foraging for food, it takes four hours for each roll. Each five over the difficulty allows enough food to be found for another two people. If more food is found than is needed, then the forager has the option of stopping early as soon as enough food has been found. Assume that food is found at a consistent rate through the time period.

## *Hunting*

Similar to foraging, it takes four hours for each attempt to hunt game. Success indicates that suitable game has been found, and relevant combat skills are required to actually kill the animal. In this case, game is large game animals, such as deer.

## *Navigation*

Anyone with any survival skill can navigate by use of the sun and stars. This is unaffected by the terrain type and difficulty of surviving in that terrain. When attempting to navigate, use the character's highest survival skill.

## *Tracking*

Survival can be used to track others by their footprints and other signs. It is possible to estimate the type of animal, their number and how long it has been since the tracks were made. Of course, it can be used to track people as well.

## **Example difficulties**

**10** - Base difficulty for woodland, plains or coastal regions.

**20** - Base difficulty for mountain, swamp or jungle.

**30** - Base difficulty for desert or arctic regions.

**+0** - Find a suitable shelter

**+0** - Forage for food for one person

**-10** - Good conditions

**+10** - Poor conditions

**+20** - Very poor conditions (e.g. winter)

**15** - Accurately determine direction, time of day or night according to the position of sun, moon or stars.

## **Tactics**

COMBAT, MILITARY.

Tactics, strategy and leadership when planning and fighting a battle involving small groups. It can be used to choose a suitable site for battle, to determine weaknesses in the enemy's strategy and defences, and to plan the logistics of travel and supply.

## **Teach**

SOCIAL, ACADEMIC.

The ability to teach another person, and train them in the use of a skill. See the Campaign section for details on training.

## **Theology (Knowledge)**

ACADEMIC.

**Defaults to:** Religion

The theory of religion, used by people who want to understand the why and how of religious beliefs. In many cultures doing this too critically can lead to charges of heresy, thought good use of this skill will enable the character to argue effectively and *safely* with others.

## **Throw (Talent)**

TALENTS, COMBAT, MISSILE.

This is the ranged attack equivalent of the brawl skill, and is used for throwing rocks, spears, knives, axes etc at distance targets. The talent is perception based. For hurled improvised weapons, short range is considered to be four times strength, medium twice this, and long range twice medium.

This skill can also be used to catch items. When trying to catch an item, throw is dexterity based.

## **Trade**

SOCIAL, BUSINESS.

**Defaults to:** Guile

Covers a multitude of skills involved with trading, including bartering, and having some clue as to the value of goods.

## **Zoology (Knowledge)**

ACADEMIC, SCIENCE.

**Defaults to:** Biology

This is the study of animals.