

# SEMPER OCCULTUS

## “ALWAYS SECRET”

IT IS 1887, Queen Victoria's golden jubilee year.

It is an age of conquest, with the empire expanding every year, and of adventure, with glory and fortune to be made exploring and fighting in foreign fields. It is also an age of industry, with the tunnel under the English Channel soon to be completed—a crowning achievement in British rail. Scientific progress also maintains a heady pace. The empire is strong and prosperous—truly the average Briton had never experienced such security and plenty.

But for all her confidence and strength, Britain and her empire are threatened, both

abroad and internally. Our European neighbours look across the Channel in envy and certain of our colonial brothers chafe at the bit of imperial rule. At home anarchists and other malcontents would endanger the stability of the nation. Britain needs brave volunteers to counter these threats, risking their lives so that her citizens may continue to live in safety.

Semper Occultus will combine espionage, mystery, pulp action, nefarious villains, occult intrigue and rum and uncanny proceedings, all cut through with the sensibilities and prejudices of the Victorian age. So tie down your deerstalker and hail yourself a Hansom cab—the Empire needs you.



## CHARACTER CREATION

THERE ARE a few things to consider when making up your character.

- ◆ I intend for Semper Occultus to be fairly pulpy, in the manner of the novels of H. Rider Haggard or those about Fu-Manchu. Therefore, you may want to consider having your character somewhat larger than life (without being annoyingly so).
- ◆ That being said, it won't be all action; there will be a good deal of mystery and intrigue involved. So a balance of thoughtful and physical characters would be appropriate. Approach making your character as you would a Call of Cthulhu character.
- ◆ I envision that many of the adventures will involve protecting the national interests of Britain and the empire. Hence your character should be either very loyal or be very good at pretending to be loyal, so that you are likely to be

called upon to enter Her Majesty's service. Alternatively, you may have a price at which your loyalty can be bought or a weakness that can be used to secure your patriotism.

- ◆ To be called on to do extraordinary services for your queen and country, you ought to be exceptional yourself.

## CHARACTER TEMPLATES



We won't be using character classes or any such system, but here are some ideas of Victorian appropriate character types to consider, bearing in mind the above considerations.

Adventuress (with a wealthy sponsor)  
Antiquarian/historian  
Aristocrat (a titled dilettante)  
Artist  
Author  
Big game hunter  
Bureaucrat

Clergyman  
 Colonial administration  
 Consulting detective (e.g. Sherlock Holmes; solves cases more by deduction than investigation)  
 Criminal  
 Demimondaine  
 Diplomat  
 Doctor  
 Engineer  
 Ex-military  
 Explorer (e.g. Allan Quatermain)  
 Gangster  
 Gentleman/Lady  
 Groundskeeper  
 Inquiry Agent (a private detective more in the vein of a private eye than a consulting detective)  
 Inventor (e.g. Mr Cavor, the inventor of the anti-gravity material Cavorite, which he used to travel to the moon with his neighbour)  
 Journalist  
 Lawyer  
 Mechanic  
 Military (army, navy, dashing hussar)  
 Official police (bobby, investigator in the CID, commissioner)  
 Parapsychologist  
 Performer  
 Poet  
 Professor  
 Rouge (an upper class ne'er-do-well)  
 Scientist  
 Seaman  
 Secret agent  
 Servant  
 Soldier of fortune



Savage Worlds is that skills and abilities are rated by dice, so the better you are at something, the bigger the dice you will roll when you do it. An average ability is d6 and a particularly good ability is d10, with a general target of rolling 4 and above.

It is quite a streamlined system, without being light on rules. The combat system in particular is designed to be fast and furious, while still allowing for plenty of options to emphasise the action. Another important aspect of the rules is that they are heavily slanted in favour of the heroes and major villains. Heroes and villains get to roll an extra d6 in task resolution, get hero points and have more wound levels in combat. But like I said, I will describe it all later.

## ATTRIBUTES

There are five attributes:

**AGILITY**—nimbleness, quickness, dexterity;

**SMARTS**—how well you know your world and culture, how well you think on your feet, mental agility;

**SPIRIT**—inner wisdom, willpower;

**STRENGTH**—raw physical power, general fitness;

**VIGOUR**—endurance, resistance to disease and poison, how much pain and injury you can abide.

The attributes have several effects in the game, e.g. your strength die is your base damage in hand-to-hand combat. Note though that they don't add to your skills, but instead determine how expensive it is to increase your skills, as is explained below.

Each attribute starts at d4 and you have 5 points to spend on raising them. One point will raise an attribute by one die size, e.g.



## SOCIAL CLASS

A critical consideration when making up your character is social class—upper class, middle class or working class. This will be determined by our background.

There are advantages to being of a higher social class, but do be aware that class prejudices cut both ways.

## RULES SUMMARY

I'll be running Semper Occultus using the Savage Worlds rules, which I will summarise later. Suffice it to say that the basic rule in

from d4 to d6. An average person as d6 for each attribute, so you can make yourself an average person with little effort.

## DERIVED STATISTICS

PACE—12 yards (+d6×2 yards when running)

PARRY—2+(fighting skill die level/2)

CHARISMA—initially 0

TOUGHNESS—2+(Vigour/2)

## SKILLS

You have 15 points to distribute amongst your skills. The first point you spend on a skill will take it to d4. (If you are unskilled, your roll is d4–2.) To increase skills further the following apply:

- ♦ Raising a skill by one die costs 1 point if you have the skill at a die level less than the associated attribute. For example, if your strength is d8, it costs 1 point to raise your fighting from d6 to d8.
- ♦ Raising a skill costs 2 points per die increment if you already have the skill at the same level as the corresponding attribute. For example, it costs 2 points to raise your fighting skill from d8 to d10 if your strength is d8.

The list of skills is given below, listed with their linked attribute. The main rulebook has more complete descriptions of the skills.

Note that the skills are very general. For example, the skill fighting covers all hand-to-hand combat. This means that your character may be quite competent, but perhaps not terribly distinctive. You can make your character more individual by choosing edges.

Skill	Linked attribute
Boating	Agility
Climbing	Strength
Driving	Agility
Fighting	Agility
Gambling	Smarts
Guts	Spirit
Healing	Smarts

Intimidation	Spirit
Investigation	Smarts
Knowledge (must choose a focus, e.g. occult, science, etc.)	Smarts
Lock picking	Agility
Notice	Smarts
Persuasion	Spirit
Piloting	Agility
Repair	Smarts
Riding	Agility
Shooting	Agility
Stealth	Agility
Streetwise	Smarts
Survival	Smarts
Swimming	Agility
Taunt	Smarts
Throwing	Agility
Tracking	Smarts

## EDGES AND HINDRANCES

A character can be made unique through edges and hindrances. Edges are advantages and hindrances are flaws or handicaps. The lists of edges and hindrances are given at the end of this section with a short description of their game effects. Fuller descriptions are given in the main rulebook. Also, if you can think of an edge or hindrance that is not listed, you are greatly encouraged to come up with something yourself.

Edges in particular are very important in Savage Worlds. Defining your character simply by his or her attributes and skills will make for a rather dry, middle-of-the-road character. Edges can be used to give your character colour, depth and individuality. Edges can also be gained as your character advances, giving you more options for developing your character.

Each character begins with one edge of your choice and may take as many as one major and two minor hindrances to accrue points to spend on further edges or on skills. Taking a major hindrance will give you two points to spend and a minor hindrance will give you one point.

- ◆ For 2 points you can raise an attribute by one die level or take another edge.
- ◆ For 1 point you can gain an additional skill point or increase your starting funds by £100.

Note that certain edges have requirements. These may be requirements to be a certain rank (novice, seasoned, veteran, heroic, legendary—see later), to have attributes or skills of a certain level or to have certain other edges.

## EQUIPING YOUR CHARACTER

Your character starts with £100 and any possessions reasonable for their background.

## PERSONAL INFORMATION

To finish off, I would like you to write down some information about your character.

- ◆ Firstly, a description of your character that is apparent to anyone meeting them, such as their appearance and mannerisms.
  - ◆ Secondly, some information about the background of your character that is known only to those who are familiar with him.
  - ◆ Thirdly, some information that no one knows about your character.
- Beyond this, any other details about your character that you can give me will really help me build adventures around your character. Here are some examples of details that you might want to come up with that I can use.
- ◆ Names of family members, friends, landlady, old acquaintances, old school chums, workmates, boss, etc.
  - ◆ What school you went to and how well you did.
  - ◆ Any significant events in your past: achievements, scandals, failed romances, etc.
  - ◆ Your ambitions.



Hindrance	Type	Effects
All thumbs	Minor	−2 repair; roll of 1 on a mechanical or electronic device causes malfunction
Anaemic	Minor	−2 vigour to resist sickness, disease, poison or environment
Arrogant	Major	Must humiliate opponent, always look to challenge the 'leader'
Bad eyes	Minor/major	−2 to attack or notice something more than 5" distant
Bad luck	Major	One less benny per session (see later)
Big mouth	Minor	Unable to keep a secret, blabs at the worst time
Blind	Major	−6 to all actions that rely on vision, −2 on social rolls, gain additional edge
Bloodthirsty	Major	Never takes prisoners
Cautious	Minor	Overly cautious
Clueless	Major	−2 to most common knowledge rolls
Code of honour	Major	Keep your word and always act like a gentleman
Curious	Major	Want to know about everything
Death wish	Minor	Want to die after completing some task
Delusional	Minor/major	You suffer from grave delusions

Hindrance	Type	Effects
Doubting Thomas	Minor	Don't believe in the supernatural
Elderly	Major	-1 pace, -1 to strength and vigour die types; 5 extra skill points for any skill linked to smarts
Enemy	Minor/major	Have a recurring nemesis of some sort
Greedy	Minor/major	Obsessed with wealth
Habit	Minor/major	A minor habit is simply annoying (charisma -1); you must make a fatigue roll when deprived of a major habit
Hard of hearing	Minor/major	-2 to notice sounds; automatic failure if completely deaf
Heroic	Major	A true hero and always helps those in need
Illiterate	Minor	Unable to read or write
Lame	Major	-2 pace and running die is a d4
Loyal	Minor	Try to never betray or disappoint your friends
Mean	Minor	-2 charisma for ill-temper and surliness
Obese	Minor	+1 toughness, -1 pace, d4 running die
One arm	Major	-4 to tasks requiring two arms
One eye	Major	-1 charisma, -2 to rolls requiring depth perception
One leg	Major	-2 pace, d4 running die, -2 to rolls requiring mobility, -2 to swimming skill rolls
Outsider	Minor	-2 charisma, treated badly by those of the more dominant society
Overconfident	Major	Believe you can do anything
Pacifist	Minor/major	Fight only in self-defence as a minor hindrance, and won't fight living creatures under any circumstance as a major hindrance
Phobia	Minor/major	-2 or -4 to trait tests when near the phobia
Poverty	Minor	Half starting funds, general inability to hang onto future income
Quirk	Minor	Have some minor but persistent foible, such as bragging, elitism or the pursuit of fame
Small	Major	-1 toughness
Stubborn	Minor	Always want your way
Ugly	Minor	-2 charisma due to the your less-than-average appearance
Vengeful	Minor/major	Hold a grudge, will kill to settle the score as a major hindrance
Vow	Minor/major	Have a pledge to yourself, a group, a deity or a religion
Wanted	Minor/major	Are a criminal of some sort
Yellow	Major	Cowardly and suffer -2 to guts rolls
Young	Major	3 points for attributes (instead of 5); 10 skill points (instead of 15), +1 benny per session

Edge	Requirements (see footnote at end of table)	Effects
Ace	N, A d8	+2 boating, driving, piloting; may make soak rolls for vehicle at -2
Acrobat	N, A d8, St d6	+2 to nimbleness-based agility rolls; +1 parry if unencumbered
Alertness*	N	+2 notice
Ambidextrous*	N, A d8	Ignore -2 penalty for using off-hand
Arcane background*	N, Special	Allows access to supernatural powers
Arcane resistance*	N, Sp d8	Armour 2 vs magic, +2 to resist magic effects
Improved arcane resistance*	N, arcane res.	Armour 4 vs magic, +4 to resist magic effects
Attractive*	N, V d6	+2 charisma
Very attractive*	N, attractive	+4 charisma
Beast bond	N	May spend bennies for your animals
Beast master	N, Sp d8	Gain an animal companion
Berserk*	N	Smarts roll or go berserk after being wounded; +2 fighting and strength rolls, -2 parry, +2 toughness; roll of 1 on fighting die hits random adjacent target
Block	S, fighting d8	+1 parry
Improved block	V, block	+2 parry
Brawny*	N, St d6, V d6	+1 toughness; load limit is 8×strength instead of 5×strength
Champion	N, see text	+2 damage and toughness vs supernatural evil
Charismatic	N, Sp d8	+2 charisma
Combat reflexes	S	+2 to recover from being shaken
Command	N, Sm d6	+1 to troops recovering from being shaken within 5"
Common bond	WC, N, Sp d8	May give bennies to companions in communication
Connections	N	Call upon powerful friends with persuasion roll
Danger sense	N	-2 notice to detect surprise attacks/danger
Dead shot	WC, S, shoot throw d10	Double ranged damage when dealt joker
Dodge	S, A d8	-1 to be hit with ranged attacks
Improved dodge	V, dodge	-2 to be hit with ranged attacks
Fast healer*	N, V d8	+2 to natural healing rolls
Fervour	V, Sp d8, command	+1 melee damage to troops in command
First strike	N, A d8	May attack one foe who moves adjacent
Improved first strike	H, first strike	May attack every foe who moves adjacent



Edge	Requirements (see footnote at end of table)	Effects
Fleet-footed	N, A d6	+2 pace, d10 running die instead of d6
Florentine	N, A d8, fighting d8	+1 vs foes with single weapon and no shield, ignore 1 point of gang up bonus
Followers	L, WC	Attract 5 henchmen
Frenzy	S, fighting d10	1 extra fighting attack at -2
Improved frenzy	V, frenzy	As above but no penalty
Gadgeteer	N, see text	May 'jury-rig' a device with any available power once per game session
Giant killer	V	+4 damage when attacking large creatures
Hard to kill	N, WC, Sp d8	Ignore wound penalties for vigour rolls made on the knockout or injury tables
Harder to kill	V, hard to kill	50% chance of surviving "death" by some means
Healer	N, Sp d8	+2 healing
Hold the line!	S, Sm d8, command	Troops have +1 toughness
Holy/unholy warrior	N, see text	Spend 1 power point to make evil creatures make spirit check or be shaken; roll of 1 kills goons, wounds villains; cost is 1 power point per creature affected
Inspire	S, command	+1 to spirit rolls of all troops in command
Investigator	N, Sm d8, investigation d8, streetwise d8	+2 investigation and streetwise
Jack-of-all-trades	N, Sm d10	No -2 for unskilled smarts based attempts
Level headed	S, Sm d8	Act on best of two cards in combat
Improved level headed	S, level headed	Act on best of three cards in combat
Luck*	N	+1 benny per session
Great luck*	N, luck	+2 bennies per session
Marksman	S	Get the aim manoeuvre (+2 shooting) if you do not move
McGyver	N, Sm d6, repair d6, notice d6	May improvise temporary gadgets
Mentalist	N, AB (psionics), Sm d8, psionics d6	+2 to any opposed psionics roll
Mighty blow	WC, S, fighting d10	Double melee damage when dealt joker
Mr. fix it	N, see text	+2 to repair rolls, halve normal repair time with raise
Natural leader	N, Sp d8, command	May give bennies to troops in command

Edge	Requirements (see footnote at end of table)	Effects
Nerves of steel	N, WC, V d8	Ignore 1 point of wound penalties
Improved nerves of steel	N, nerves of steel	Ignore 2 points of wound penalties
New power	N, AB	Character gains one new power
Noble*	N	Rich; +2 charisma; noble born with status and wealth
Power points	N, AB	+5 power points, once per rank only
Power surge	WC, S, any arcane skill d10	+2d6 power points when dealt a joker
Professional	L, d12 in attribute or skill	Attribute or skill becomes d12+1
Expert	L, professional	Attribute or skill becomes d12+2
Master	L, WC, expert	Wild die is d10 for one attribute or skill
Quick*	N	Discard draw of 5 or less for new card for initiative
Quick draw	N, A d8	May automatically draw weapon as a free action
Rapid recharge	S, Sp d6, AB	Regain 1 power point every 30 minutes
Improved rapid recharge	V, rapid recharge	Regain 1 power point every 15 minutes
Rich*	N	3× starting funds, £2,000 annual income
Filthy rich*	N, noble birth or rich	5× starting funds, £8,000 annual income
Scholar	N, d8 in affected skills	+2 to two different knowledge skills
Sidekick	L, WC	Character gains a novice WC sidekick
Soul drain	S, see text	Special
Steady hands	N, A d8	Ignore unstable platform penalty for mounts or vehicles
Sweep	N, St d8, fighting d8	Attack all adjacent foes at -2
Improved sweep	V, sweep	As above but with no penalty
Strong willed	N, intimidation d6, taunt d6	+2 intimidation and taunt, +2 to resist
Thief	N, A d8, climb d6, lock picking d6, stealth d8	+2 climb, lock picking, stealth or to disarm traps
Tough as nails	L	+1 toughness
Improved tough as nails	L, tough as nails	+1 toughness
Trademark weapon	N, fighting or shooting d10	+1 fighting or shooting with one particular weapon



Edge	Requirements (see footnote at end of table)	Effects
Improved trade- mark weapon	V, trademark weapon	+2 fighting or shooting with one particular weapon
Two-fisted	N, A d8	May attack with a weapon in each hand without multi- action penalty.
Weapon master	L, fighting d12	+1 parry
Master of arms	L, weapon master	+2 parry
Wizard	N, see text	Each spell casting raise reduces cost of spell by 1 point
Woodsman	N, Sp d6, survival d8, tracking d8	+2 tracking, survival, and stealth while in wilderness

\*Background edges—must be chosen during character creation

N: novice; S: seasoned; V: veteran; L: legendary; WC: wild card

A: agility; S: strength; Sm: smarts; Sp: spirit; V: vigour

AB: arcane background

Note that bonuses to attributes and skills from edges do not stack

## RULES

The following is a summary of the Savage World rules, for easy reference. The full rules are of course in the rulebook.

### HEROES AND VILLAINS VS GOONS

Player characters and major villains are what are called ‘wild cards’, while average protagonists are ‘goons’ (or ‘extras’). Wild cards have the following advantages:

- ◆ You roll a wild die in addition to the regular die when making an attribute or skill test and take the better of the two. The wild die explodes, just like the regular dice, and can score raises. The wild die is also subject to all the modifiers the regular die is subject to. Note though that if you roll a 1 on both the regular die and the wild die, you suffer a critical failure of some sort.
- ◆ You have three wound levels instead of just one.

### BASIC TASK RESOLUTION

To make an attribute or skill roll, roll the appropriate die (e.g. if your attribute or skill

is rated d6, then you roll a d6). If you roll 4 or over, you are successful.

### Modifiers

Modifiers may be applied to your die roll, if appropriate. Generally if the task is somewhat easier, a modifier of +2 will apply. If the task is somewhat more difficult, a modifier of −2 will apply. Very easy or very difficult tasks may draw a modifier of +4 or −4.

### Unskilled attempts

If you don’t have the appropriate skill for an action you are attempting, you roll d4 and suffer a −2 penalty. This penalty applies at the very end and hence is applied to the wild die as well as the regular die.

### Exploding dice (ace)

Similar to the case in HackMaster, if you roll the maximum in your die roll (called an ace), you may roll again and add the two rolls together, continuing for as long as you roll maximum. Modifiers are applied once you have finished rolling.

## Raises

If you manage to roll 4 points higher than you need to (i.e. 8 in most cases), you score an exceptional success, called a raise. Each additional 4 points scores an additional raise.

## Opposed rolls

In a situation where you are directly competing with someone, such as wrestling, you and your opponent make 'opposed rolls'. In an opposed roll, whoever rolls the highest wins.

## Cooperative rolls

When a bunch of people combine their efforts, for example, a group of researchers looking for information in a library, one is designated the lead, then all the participants make a roll and the lead's roll is modified by +1 for every success and raise that the assistants scored.



## BENNIES

To give you some control over your fate, you start each game session

with three 'bennies' that signify a little bit of good luck or fate. I will give them to you as poker chips. You may also get more bennies for good role playing, overcoming major obstacles or even entertaining everyone with an outlandish action, side-splitting in-game joke or other memorable act.

You can use bennies to reroll any attribute or skill test. Make the entire roll from scratch. You can keep spending bennies and rerolling as long as you like, and take the best of your attempts. If you roll a 5, for example, and a benny gets you a 4, keep the original 5 instead.

Bennies cannot be spent on tables, fixed damage rolls or any other roll that isn't an attribute or skill roll. (Note that melee damage is a strength roll, so bennies may be spent on those.)

Bennies can also net you additional experience points.

In combat, bennies can also be used to avoid damage.

Note that some of your enemies will have bennies to spend as well.

# ADVANCEMENT

## EXPERIENCE POINTS

At the end of each session you will get 1 to 3 experience points.

## BENNIES

For each benny left unused at the end of a session, roll d6. If you roll a 5 or 6 you gain an extra experience point.

## ADVANCES

Each 5 experience points you accumulate you may take an advance.

- ◆ Gain a new edge
- ◆ Increase a skill that is at a level equal or above the linked attribute

- ◆ Increase two skills that are at a level below the linked attribute
- ◆ Buy a new skill at d4
- ◆ Raise an attribute by one die (once per rank)

## RANKS

Experience points	Rank
1–19	Novice
20–39	Seasoned
40–59	Veteran
60–79	Heroic
80+	Legendary

# COMBAT

## TIME

A round is about 6 seconds.

## INITIATIVE

Initiative is decided by playing cards. Each hero, villain and groups of goons gets a card. At the beginning of the round, the count-down starts from ace, down to deuce. Ties are broken by suits, in the order spades, hearts, diamonds, clubs.

If you are dealt the joker you can act at any time and gain +2 to attribute, skill and damage rolls for this round. You can even act to interrupt someone else's action by acting just before they do.

You may choose to 'hold' and act later in the round. You can try to interrupt someone else's action by winning an opposed agility roll with your opponent. If you hold till the end of the round, you can use your card the next round.

The cards are shuffled whenever a joker is dealt.

## MULTIPLE ACTIONS

You cannot do the same thing twice in a round, but you can combine different actions if they are not unreasonable, including shooting a gun in one hand and attacking with a knife in the other.

Every additional action in a round gives a -2 penalty.

## COMBAT ACTIONS

### Ready weapon

Drawing a weapon is an action, but can be combined with other actions with a -2 penalty.

### Fighting

The target number for a melee attack is the targets parry.

If you score a raise, you add d6 damage to your attack.

### Shooting

The target number for shooting at short range is 4. Medium range incurs a penalty of -2 and long range -4.

You can choose to aim for a round for a bonus of +2 the next round.

If you score a raise, you add d6 damage to your attack.

## DAMAGE

Damage works a little differently in Savage Worlds than in many games. Most significantly, there are no hit points.

Hurting your average goon basically boils down to doing more damage than their toughness. If this doesn't kill them outright they are 'shaken' and liable to be incapacitated by the next decent blow.

### Weapon damage

Hand-to-hand weapons do damage equal to your strength die + the weapon's bonus damage.

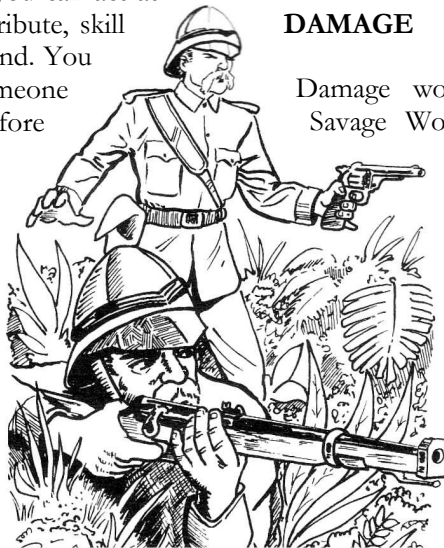
Ranged weapons do a fixed amount of damage. Note that you don't get your wild die for ranged weapon damage, nor can you use a benny on your roll.

### Bonus damage

If you score a raise when attacking, you can add d6 bonus damage. You only get this once, regardless of how many raises you score.

### Hurting someone

To have a measurable effect on someone, you must roll damage equal or greater than their toughness. Damage less than their



toughness represents merely small cuts and bruises.

If your opponent was formerly healthy and you do damage exceeding their toughness, they are now shaken. If they were shaken, you have wounded them. Goons only have one wound level, so they will be incapacitated when wounded.

If you score a raise with your damage, you automatically score a wound; in fact, each raise causes a wound.

In summary then:

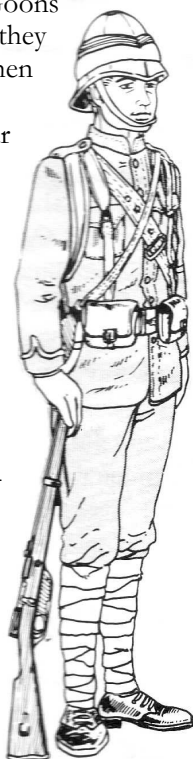
- ◆ Do more damage than your opponent's toughness to hurt them.
- ◆ A fine combatant becomes shaken.
- ◆ A shaken combatant becomes wounded (and maybe incapacitated).
- ◆ A raise is an automatic wound.

### Shaken

Combatants will be in one of three states in general: fine, shaken and incapacitated.

Shaken characters are knocked about, in pain, stunned or otherwise at a disadvantage.

A shaken character can only move at half their pace. The only actions a shaken character can perform are moving and trying to shake off their shakiness (see below). If a shaken character is hit by a damaging attack, they are wounded.



On your action, you can attempt to recover from being shaken by making a spirit roll.

### Wounds

Goons have only one wound, while wild cards have three.

If you are wounded you are at -1 to all attribute and skill rolls per wound. Also, once you take a wound you become shaken.

### Incapacitated

Once a goon has been wounded they are incapacitated. They have been knocked out, killed or taken out of the combat somehow.

### Knockout blows

Once a wild card receives a blow that takes them past three wounds, they have suffered a knockout blow. The effect of the blow is given in the table below.

## COMBAT OPTIONS

When you are fighting opponents with high parry and toughness, combats can get rather bogged down. Combat options give you some opportunities to overcome the advantages of tougher opponents. The table at the end of this section shows you when they might be used to best advantage.

Knockout blow	Effect
1 Wound	<b>Battered &amp; bruised</b> You have had the wind knocked out of you. Make a spirit roll at the beginning of each round to become only shaken.
2 Wounds	<b>Incapacitated</b> You have been badly beaten. You're incapacitated and must roll on the injury table.
3 Wounds	<b>Bleeding</b> You are incapacitated and bleeding. Roll on the injury table and make a vigour roll at the start of each combat round. If you fail, you become mortally wounded. If you succeed, you keep bleeding and must roll again next round. With a raise or successful healing, you stop bleeding but remain incapacitated.

**4+ Wounds    Mortal Wound**

You have suffered a life-threatening wound and will not recover without aid. You are incapacitated and must roll on the injury table. You must also make a vigour roll at the start of each round or die. Healing stabilizes you but leaves you incapacitated.

**2d6    Injury**

2    **Unmentionables:** You suffer an embarrassing and painful wound to the groin. If the injury is permanent, reproduction is out of the question without miracle surgery or magic.

3–4    **Arm:** You catch one in the left or right arm, rendering it useless.

5–9    **Guts:** You catch one somewhere between the crotch and the chin. Roll 1d6:

1–2    **Broken:** Agility is reduced by a die type (min. d4).

3–4    **Battered:** Vigour is reduced by a die type (min. d4).

5–6    **Busted:** Strength is reduced by a die type (min. d4).

10    **Leg:** Your left or right leg is crushed, broken or mangled. Your pace is reduced by 1.

11–12    **Head:** You have suffered a grievous injury to your head. Roll 1d6:

1–2    **Hideous Scar:** You now have the ugly hindrance.

3–4    **Blinded:** One of your eyes was damaged. You gain the one eye (or blind) hindrance.

5–6    **Brain Damage:** You suffer massive trauma to the head. Your smarts is reduced one die type (min. d4).

Combat option	Effect
Aim	+2 shooting/throwing if you do not move
Called shots	Limb            –2 attack
	Head            –4 attack, +4 damage
	Small target    –4 attack
	Tiny target     –6 attack
Defend	+2 parry; may take no other actions
Disarm	–2 attack; defender must make a Str roll vs damage or drop weapon
The drop	+4 attack and damage
Ganging up	+1 fighting per additional attacker; maximum of +4
Grappling	Fighting roll to grapple, on a raise opponent shaken; defender can make opposed strength or agility to break free (any other action made at –4); attacker can make opposed strength or agility to damage victim
Nonlethal damage	Opponent is knocked out for 1d6 hours instead of wounded
Surprise	Start combat on ‘hold’
Test of will	Successfully using taunt (resisted by smarts) or intimidate (resisted by spirit) give +2 next action; raise shakes opponent
Trick	Describe action; make opposed agility or smarts roll; opponent is –2 parry until next action; with a raise, the foe is –2 parry and shaken
Unarmed defender	Armed attackers gain +2 fighting
Wild attack	+2 fighting; +2 damage; –2 parry until next action
Withdrawing from close combat	Adjacent foes get one free attack at retreating

If you are having problems:	And...	then try...
Hitting your opponent (high parry)	Your team outnumbered your opponent	Ganging up
	You are more agile than your opponent	An agility trick (e.g. throwing sand in their face)
	You are smarter than your opponent	A smarts trick (e.g. "Look behind you!")
	You are quick-witted (have the taunt skill)	Taunting (e.g. "You're so ugly...")
	You are fearsome (have the intimidate skill) or your foe is cowardly	Intimidating (e.g. flex muscles or give a war cry.)
	You are okay with lowering your defences until next action	A wild attack
	You are using a ranged weapon	Aiming
	You are using a melee weapon	Switching to a ranged attack
Damaging your opponent (high toughness)	You are going to die if you keep fighting	Withdrawing from combat to fight another day
	You are not having problems hitting your opponent	A called shot to unarmoured areas or head/vitals
	You are okay with lowering your defences until next action	A wild attack