

Skill uses

Investigative	No need to roll, they succeed. For every point spent, you gain extra info
General	You roll vs a Threshold (usually 3 or 4 on the die). Each point you spend is a +1

Even if you spend all your points in a skill of either type, you still have that skill, you just don't have points to spend on bonus info/roll bonuses

Combat Notes

Initiative	Combatants with drawn or natural weapons always go before unarmed combatants. Ranged goes before Melee Combatants act in descending order based on their relevant Combat Ability
Hit Threshold	Normally, you and your targets need a 3 or higher to hit. If you have an Athletics of 8+, targets need a 4 or better to hit you
Cover	Exposed = -1 on hit threshold Partial = no change to threshold Full cover = +1 to Hit Threshold and reduces weapon Lethality by 1 for the Lethality roll and damage calculation
Darkness	Flashlights reduce Darkness by 1 level, but remove the Hit Threshold bonus
- Night	+1 Stealth mod, -1 Alertness mod, +1 to Hit Thresh at Near or longer range, +1 to Visual Task Diff rating

Combat Notes (cont)

- Darkness	+2 Stealth mod, -2 Alertness mod, +1 to Hit Threshold at Close rng, +2 to Hit Thresh at Near or longer range, +2 to Visual Task Diff rating
- Pitch Black	+3 Stealth mod, -3 Alertness mod, +1 to Hit Threshold at Point Blank, +2 to Hit Threshold at Close rng, +3 to Hit Thresh at Near or longer range, +3 to Visual Task Diff rating
Disengaging	You can flee a combat by making an Athletics test. Base DN is 3, then +1 per enemy combatant (ex. 2 enemies means the roll DN is a 5)

Ability pool refreshes

General	Pools for the physical abilities of Athletics, Driving, Scuffling, and Shooting are fully restored whenever twenty-four hours of game-world time elapses since the last expenditure. The remaining general abilities refresh at the end of each case, like investigative abilities.
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Ability pool refreshes (cont)

Health pool	The Health pool refreshes over time, at a rate of 2 points per day of restful activity. (Wounded characters heal at a different rate, over a period of hospitalization.) Use of the Medic ability can restore a limited number of Health points in the course of a session.
Investigative	Usually they only refresh at the end of the investigation, though for long campaigns, the GM may determine milestone moments in the campaign where points refresh, such as in-between missions



By tangobreaker

cheatography.com/tangobreaker/

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Ability pool refreshes (cont)

Refresh Tokens (taken for Swords of the Serpen tine)

These are specific to Serpentine, but are good if you find players hoard their points. At GM's discretion, or when player's accomplish certain tasks, the GM puts a Refresh token (usually a poker chip) in the group pool. A player may take a token at any time and refresh ONE general ability pool back up to max

Safe Havens

At a safe haven, where you can rest for an hour, you refresh all points on up to three general abilities EXCEPT Bureaucracy, Health, Network, Sanity and Stability

PC advancement

At the end of each investigation, each player gets 2 build points for each session they participated in. (This assumes a small number of 3-4 hour sessions; if you play in shorter bursts, modify accordingly.) Players who had characters die in the course of the investigation only get points for each session involving their current character.

PC advancement (cont)

These build points can be spent to increase either investigative or general abilities. You may acquire new abilities or bolster existing ones. If necessary to preserve credibility, rationalize new abilities as areas of expertise you've had all along, but are only revealing later in the series.

Working together

Piggyback One leads and makes the test. The others spend 1 pt ea to boost the results, but they do not boost the roll!

Cooperate Each helper spends X points and adds x-1 to leader's roll

Combat Ranges

Shooting at extra long range Spend 2 points from Firearms pool to shoot at a target one range past weapon's maximum range

Scopes reduce this cost to 1 point

Point Blank All firearms get +2 damage, shotguns get +3 dmg

Close range (same room) shotguns +1 damage

This is the farthest range for thrown weapons like grenades

Sniping If you have a rifle, and Firearms is 8+, you can spend a round aiming. Reduces Hit Threshold by 1 if target is aware, 2 if not.

Combat Ranges (cont)

Grenades Throwing is an Athletics test. -2 for PB range, 3 for close, 5 for near

Aiming for a specific location is +1 diff for PB and close range, +2 for Near and Long.

Make a Diff 6 Athletics test to take 1/2 damage from grenade by diving for cover

Mental Effects/Horror

Stability Test is a threshold 4 for Ordinary horror, 5 for unnatural events.

On a failed Stability check, you lose a stated amount from your Stability pool.

Shaken Stability at 0 to -5, same penalties as a Hurt PC

Shattered Stability -6 to -11, fight or flight mode only, lose 1 Stab permanently AND take a mental disorder

At -12, permanently insane.

Refreshing Stability A PC can make a Psychoanalysis spend/test to help another. On success, other Pc gains 2 Stability back

To refresh your own Stability points by 1d6 by making an appropriate INVESTIGATIVE points spend



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Injuries, lethality, and death

Normal damage	Subtract from Health pool
0-5 health (Hurt)	Roll to stay conscious with your current Health value as the DN. All diff at +1, invest spends are impossible
	Test vs diff = value of your health to stay conscious
-6 to -11 (Seriously wounded)	no actions possible, make a 2nd consciousness test
-12 (dead)	

Lethality

Compare damage roll results to Lethality rating. Ex. L2 level weapon, on a 1-2 on the dmg die, insta-death, otherwise 5xL rating + (dmg die roll)

If damage roll <= Lethality rating, target goes immediately to -12 health.

if damage roll > Lethality, multiply Lethality by 5 and add damage roll to it.

First Aid	1 point of First aid = 2 points Health healed on someone else, or 1 point on yourself.
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Injuries, lethality, and death (cont)

Spend 2 points of First Aid to stabilize someone who is 0 to -11 health

You can spend points from your health pool to boost your chances of staying conscious, but that counts as damage.

Character Elements/RP

Drives PCs have a drive pushing them into investigating things. Fighting the Drive costs 4 stability or 1/3 their current pool, whichever is worse

Following a drive refreshes 1 or 2 points.

Sanity Losses are permanent when failing Stability tests. At 0, you're out of the game

Bonds Start with 3 Bonds

Spend points from a Bond for a bonus in a Stability check

After taking Stability damage, you can burn 2 bond points to gain 1 stability back

Stability Loss of Stability = in shock, panicked, or gone. Based on level of loss

Sanity At zero Sanity, you've entirely lost touch with reality and cannot be recovered

Contests and special situations

Contested rolls Each party makes the test. Keep going until someone fails.

Contests and special situations (cont)

Alertness modifier Add this number to the PCs Stealth Test difficulty rating. Ex. NPC has Alertness of +3 and a base threshold of 4, PC will need to roll a 7 or better on their Stealth roll to sneak by

Stealth Modifier When an enemy tries to sneak, this comes into play. NPC doesn't make a Stealth roll, instead, PC observing makes a Sense Trouble roll vs. Diff 4, adjusted for the Stealth Modifier

Surprise Go last in combat. +2 to all General Ability thresholds for any actions they take on the first combat round

Damage

Base 1d6 modified by type of weapon

Armor subtracts from total damage

Hand attack -2 damage

Small and improv. weapons -1 damage

Bat, machete, pistol regular 1d6 damage

Axe, heavy gun +1 dmg

.50 cal or heavy weapon +2

Point blank weapon +2



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Damage (cont)

Unskilled shooter You can still use a gun without the skill, but even on a hit, you do -2 damage to the roll

Sanity and Stability Loss Flow

Stability Measures your resistance to trauma. Like a HP pool for mental and emotional health. Refreshes over time, a short term measure of mental health, eroding over a single mission. — "How close are you to snapping today"

Sanity Your belief in reality. Sanity erodes over multiple missions. — "How close are you to seeing the Truth forever"

Threats to Stability Violence

Helplessness

the Unnatural

Checks for Stability Most every threat requires a Stability check of DN 4 (see p. 116)

You can spend from the Stability pool to boost roll

You can spend into negative amounts, but this also damages your Stability

Sanity and Stability Loss Flow (cont)

If the cause of the check is based on one of your phobias or mental issues, you make another check if you fail the first to see how you react.

If you have successfully avoided becoming Shaken by either Violence or Helplessness three times, you are HARDENED against it, and DN checks are a 2

Burning bonds to save Stability you can spend points from any Bond to boost a Stability check roll

If you fail a stability check, you can burn Bond points at a 2:1 ratio to recover Stability

Threats to Sanity Any time you are Shaken due to loss of Stability by the Unnatural,, you lose 1 pt of Sanity

Any time your Stability is Shattered by the Unnatural, you lose 2 Sanity

Gaining Back Sanity Denial - If, at the end of the operation, you've destroyed all the evidence, you gain 1 Sanity back

Sanity and Stability Loss Flow (cont)

Fainting - You can declare the horror you are seeing causes you to pass out, losing only 1 Sanity point. But you cannot do anything else in the scene.

Destroy the Unnatural - Get rid of the bad guy/thing permanently. Gain 1 Sanity if this is to protect the Innocent, 2 points if you're protecting your entire country (the US)

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