



# STRAIGHT TO VHS

VERSION 0.3.9



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Straight to VHS is a little indie game in beta (betamax?) and it needs your feedback in order to become the best game it can be.

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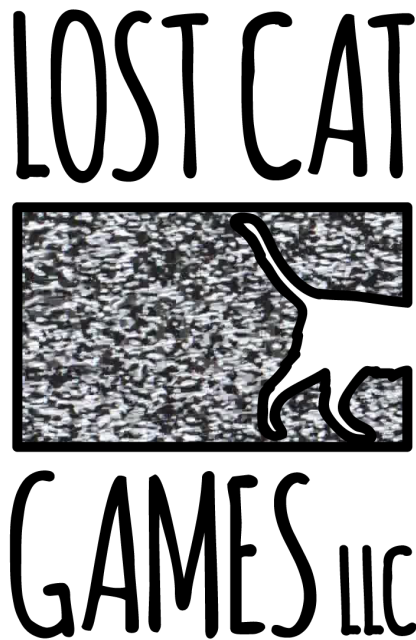
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# WHAT IS STRAIGHT TO VHS?

*A werewolf stalks the mean streets of Miami, but not for much longer. Not if a nun (and former prostitute) named Gloria Vendetta has anything to say about it. Gloria's cybernetically enhanced buddy in the precinct suspects the werewolf is being protected by Yakuza, but why? If only the retired heavyweight champion Tucker Smash could regain his memories. He was the only one who knew the antidote to lycanism, and now the plague is spreading.*

*Coming straight to VHS, it's...*

## **MIAMI FUZZ**



You and your friends can now indulge in your own ~~asinine~~ bitchin' story with Straight to VHS, an easy-to-learn and fast-paced tabletop RPG inspired by ridiculous and awesome movies of the VHS era. Do you wanna be a vampire cop, or maybe a skateboarding ninja from the future? Straight to VHS will let you. The Director (or "game master") will narrate the action and provide challenges and something resembling a plot for the characters to smash and seduce their way through. Players also get opportunities to tweak the Director's script for their gain and amusement.

**"SOUNDS BADASS! WHAT DO I NEED?"**  
**-THAT'S WHAT YOU SAY.**

You'll need some friends (including one who will be the Director), some pencils, a handful of coins (or rocks, or beer cans, or whatever you have handy), some twenty-sided dice and some character sheets printed from this rulebook.

Playing Straight to VHS usually takes at least a couple hours, and your group might choose to have an epic, ongoing game that you come back to again and again. Two to five players plus the Director is best, but any number is fine as long as the Director feels they can deal with it. The Director will have to get familiar with the rules and might want to do some preparation, so treat the Director real nice-like.



## **PICK ONE**

### **WAIT, IS THIS ONE OF THOSE NERD GAMES?**

*\*ahem\**... Yo, flat out, homebro. It's what us nerds call a tabletop RPG (or "role-playing game"), you dig? It's a bit like a videogame, but brosaUCE, instead of interacting with a computer and some code, you're going to be interacting with your friends and the human brain. If you don't think that's baller and dope, you're straight tripping.

In a videogame, you're limited to the sorts of actions and decisions that the game creators coded into the game. Check it, peeps: with RPGs, you have a level of creative input and freedom that no videogame or regular board game can replicate. That's hella fly *and* jiggy. It's part game, part collaborative storytelling, but with Straight to VHS those stories usually involve an inordinate amount of explosions and cheesy one-liners.

Straight to VHS is a good introduction to the format, thanks to easy and straightforward game mechanics that define your character and how you can interact with the game's world. In short, yeah it's nerdy, and it's also really fun. I mean, it's, uh, the sickest! It has...typhus or something.

### **I'M A DISCERNING RPG VETERAN. WHY SHOULD I PLAY THIS GAME?**

The "bad movie" theme is a blank check that says, "No pressure. Just have fun." Players will cash that check. This goes double for the Director. When the player characters are gangster preachers or ninja cops and when the expectation is for the story to be a schlocky mess, it's hard to not have a great time.

While veteran players hopefully find lots to like in StVHS' character creation and game mechanics, the game is also intended to be an excellent and low-pressure RPG for introducing new players to the hobby. The players are given clear gameplay tools and direction but are never buried with rules. Players are able to get hugely creative, but shouldn't feel forced to drive the storytelling.

The use of d20s raises some eyebrows at first, but the wild swing of the d20 is tamed by the players earning extra rolls called *epic dice*. Also, the differences between attacking and defending d20s are used as the amount of damage dealt, creating quick combat in which rolling a 19 is really almost as exciting as rolling a 20.

# HOW TO PLAY

Each player creates a B-movie character with various strengths and weaknesses by combining character options in this rulebook. Characters start with two *tropes* (which are big character options listed further in) and a single *perk* (a minor character option that you can earn more of). The Director and the other players collaborate to tell a tale befitting of a straight-to-VHS movie. The players control their own characters and the Director describes everything else, narrating the action and providing challenges for the players (oh, and sometimes the players get to hijack the narration). Hilarity and awesomeness ensues.

Don't worry about memorizing every rule. There will be reminders on your *character sheet*, and your Director will carry a lot of the weight (sorry, Director). If there is ever any doubt about how a rule ought to be implemented, the Director makes the final call.

Anytime you see white text in a red box like this, it's text that only the Director needs to read. Feel free to skip these boxes. There's also a section towards the end called "Directing 101", which only demands the attention of the Director.

## THE CENTRAL MECHANIC

When you want your character to attempt something that has a reasonable chance of failing (like rock climbing or punching someone in their commie mouth), roll a twenty-sided die (henceforth called a d20). The higher you roll, the better your character does. Your character will have *stats* like "Strength" and "Charisma" and each stat will have a number assigned to it (as in "Arnold has a Strength of 9"). Your d20 rolls get added to by your character's most relevant stat + any bonuses and/or penalties.

If a character is attacked, they automatically defend by rolling a d20 (+ their Defense stat + any bonuses and/or penalties). If the attack roll is higher than the defense roll, damage gets dealt. The amount of damage dealt is the difference between the two rolls. If a character takes too much damage, they die.

One more thing: rolling a 20 causes something especially rad for your character to happen (we call this a *lucky break*). Rolling a 1 causes something especially lame for your character to happen (a *tough break*).

A *lucky break* can be a direct result of whatever the character just did ("your attack cuts off Lord Scorn's weapon hand") or it could be a random stroke of luck ("while searching the archives, you find a \$50 bill tucked into the pages"). A *tough break* is the same idea, just negative for the character that rolled it. Maybe they shot their own foot, or an avalanche occurs. Basically, this is the game itself saying "make something happen". Let it play out and affect the scene (sometimes with fitting penalties, bonuses, or damage dealt).

Having trouble coming up with a fitting *lucky break* or *tough break*? Try asking the players what happens!



## ***LET'S SEE A STEP-BY-STEP EXAMPLE!***

Let's say you made a shotgun-toting character named Lexi. The Director says a chupacabra is about to leap at Lexi. On your turn, you may want Lexi to shoot the beast with her shotgun. Tell the Director and roll a d20! Let's say you rolled an **8**.

Add your most relevant [stat](#). We'll learn about stats soon. The relevant stat for shooting is ACC (Accuracy). Let's say Lexi's ACC is **+6**.

**8 (from the d20) + 6 (from Lexi's stat) = 14**

Now add any bonuses and penalties. Penalties are rare, and the Director will let you know if there is one. [Items](#) are a common way of getting a bonus. Let's say Lexi's shotgun gives a **+4** bonus.

That's **8 + 6 + 4**. Lexi's total attack roll was **18**.

The Director handles the rest. The Director rolls a defensive d20 for the chupacabra and will add its DEF (defense) stat and any bonuses and penalties.

If the chupacabra's total defense roll is equal to or higher than 18, Lexi's attack missed.

But let's say the chupacabra's total was 12. Because that is lower than Lexi's 18, the chupacabra takes damage from Lexi's attack. How much damage? It takes the difference between the two rolls.

$18 - 12 = 6$ , so the chupacabra takes 6 damage. The Director will narrate this result and let you know that 6 damage was dealt to the chupacabra.

If the chupacabra was attacking Lexi, the Director would roll an ATTACK d20 for the chupacabra, and you would roll a DEFENSIVE d20 for Lexi. If Lexi rolls higher, the chupacabra missed. If Lexi rolls lower, she takes damage.

Don't say, "OK, You do 6 damage". Try something like, "Lexi gets off the shot as the chupacabra starts to leap toward her, sending it flailing backward. It hisses in pain. That was 6 damage." Describe slow-mo shots, mention the crappy special effects in the "movie", have the bad guys talk some serious crap, make something explode! Craft the ultimate cheesy action scene.



## EPIC DICE

Rolling a d20 leaves an awful lot to chance. Wouldn't it be awesome if you could roll more than once and use the higher roll? Well, **when you use an *epic die*, roll an extra d20 and then choose the roll you like.** When playing Straight to VHS, put a pile of coins or some other sort of tokens near the center of the table. The Director may award you one of these *epic dice tokens* if you do something that is...

- **VERY TRUE TO YOUR CHARACTER.**
- **VERY TRUE TO THE SPIRIT OF THE VHS BARGAIN BIN.**
- **OR JUST FREAKING BADASS AND CREATIVE!**

Basically, if a player puts character motivations or story interests above all, or if the character does something that gets everyone at the table excited or laughing, they should get an *epic dice token*. Directors have a lot going on and might forget to award tokens, so players should feel free to suggest awarding a token to another player. However, the Director makes the final call.

A player can have up to five *epic dice tokens* stored at a time for later use. **At any time, turn in an *epic dice token* to get an *epic die* on a roll (do this before you roll, not after).** Alternatively, you can turn in an *epic dice token* to act faster at the start of an action sequence (we'll learn about action sequences soon). You can use more than one *epic dice token* at a time.



## FORTES AND BLOOPERS

When you make your character, they'll get *fortes* and *bloopers*. *Fortes* are subjects that your character has skill or knowledge with, like "Stealth", "Intimidation" or "Animals". When a *forte* is relevant to a roll you're making, you automatically get an *epic die* on that roll!

You might come up with a clever reason that a *forte* ought to help with *all* your attack rolls because of the item or technique you're using. Quit it! *Fortes* aren't meant to be a constant bonus to combat prowess. Your Director might let you use it once for your clever thinking though.

*Bloopers* are the negative counterpoints to *fortes*. When you roll for something that you have a *blooper* in, you roll an extra d20 and use the lower roll.

*Blooper dice* and *epic dice* sometimes end up in the same roll. In this case, they just cancel each other out, die for die.

There's one last thing. It's possible to end up with the same *forte* or *blooper* twice. For example, both the Werewolf *trope* and the Gangster *trope* give the *forte* "Intimidation". If you pick both of these *tropes*, you have the *forte* "Intimidation (x2)" which means you get to roll two extra dice!

## SCENES AND DAYS

Play is broken up into *scenes*. The Director determines when a *scene* is over, but it's usually just the duration that the characters stay in a general location or strive towards a particular goal. As a guideline, if a scene takes a whole hour, it's gone on too long.

Some character abilities and a little bit of the player characters' *HP* will recharge when a new *scene* begins. Similarly, all of the player characters' *HP* and some abilities recharge at the start of a new *day*. Usually this is a new in-game day, but depending on the nature of the story (for example, if everything happens in one day), the Director may use a different method, like once per *montage* or once per real-life day.

The important bit is that *days* are comprised of multiple *scenes*.

It's a good idea to clearly state when a *scene* or *day* has ended, especially if the characters are wounded or have used a bunch of their *cinematic actions*.

You can also use scene transitions to move the story forward or to give the players a chance to flesh-out their characters a bit. That was vague, so here's a quick and dirty example of both:

*"After Vinnie spills the beans, the cops come to secure the perimeter. Officer Jim congratulates you guys on a job well done. Do you wanna do anything else while you're here? ... Ok, that'll be the end of the scene. We cut to black and fade in on the next day. Where are you guys and what're you up to?"*

And now we're right to the next day, plus the players get to set the scene a bit with their characters. Slick! Now narrate that ominous phone call, or run-in with Vinnie's twin brother, or mutant outbreak or whatever it is that you wanna throw at the players next.



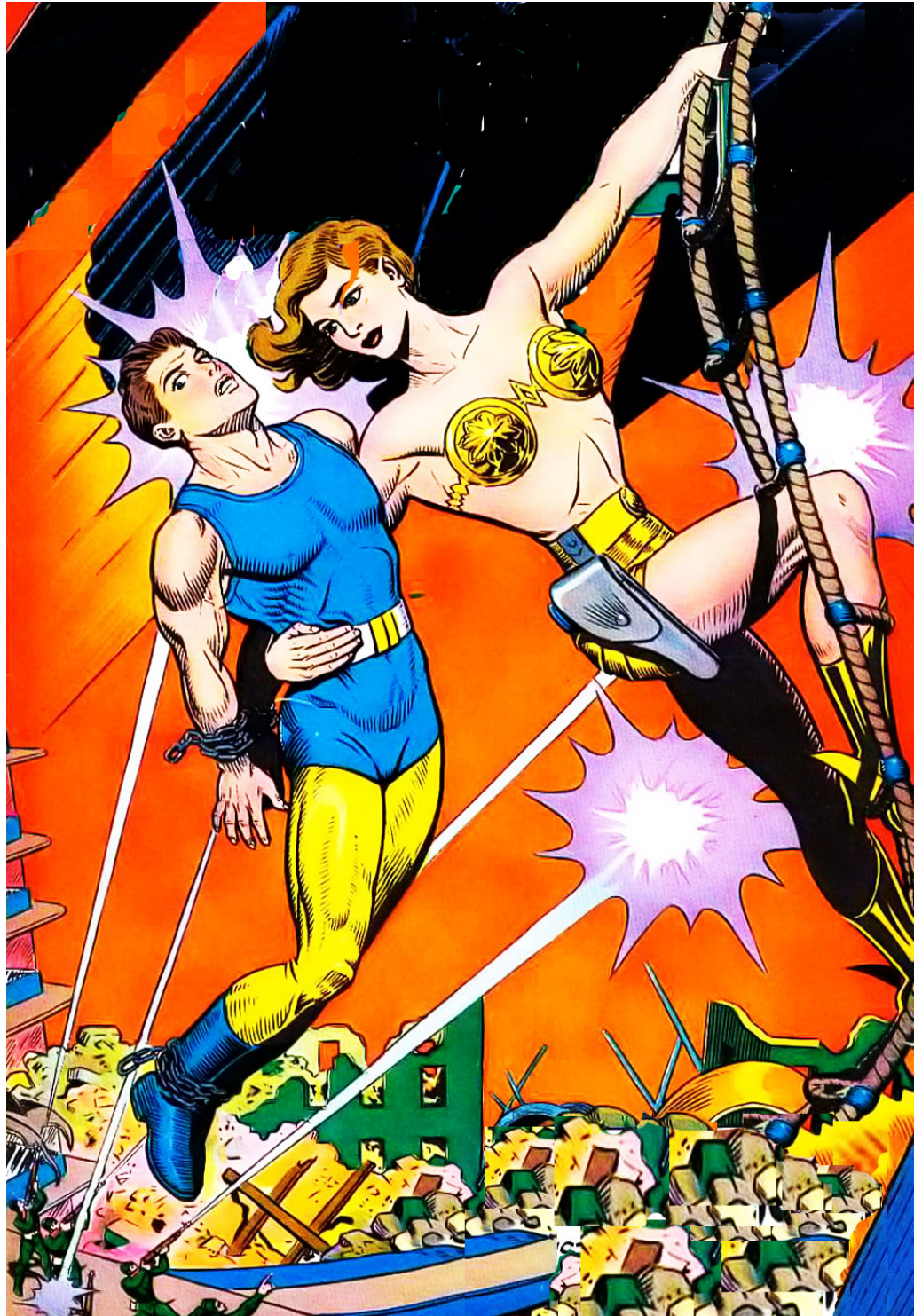
## MONTAGES

After several *scenes*, the Director may enact a *montage*. During a *montage*, your character gains a *perk*, and three different stats of your choice get raised by 1 (HP is the exception: it gets raised by 3 if chosen). You also get to erase any marks in your *death check* boxes.

If you describe how and/or why your character has become more capable (especially in a style evocative of a movie training-montage), the Director may award you an *epic dice token*. Some character options give you bonuses depending on how many *montages* you've had; for this purpose you start the game with 0 *montages*.

If your game will run so long that characters will end up with a dozen or more *montages*, consider granting *perks* every **other** *montage*. Otherwise, the characters can end up quite complicated.

The frequency of *montages* is up to the Director, as there are no “experience points” to keep track of. *Montages* probably should not happen every few *scenes* (too often), or only after several game sessions (too slow). Just figure out good timing for your players. If it seems like a good time to beef up the player characters, do it!





# ACTION SEQUENCES

In high-stakes action sequences (like fights or chases), characters take turns. **To determine the order, the Director compares the ATH (or “athletics” stat) of all participants.** The character with the highest ATH goes first, then the second-highest and so on, until the order starts over with a new *round*. Before the first turn starts, any player can choose to use an *epic die token* to react faster. When they do this, they roll and the number on the die gets added to their ATH score for a moment (but only to determine the turn order).

**On every character’s turn, they get 5 *action points*** (shortened to “AP”). Your character’s *tropes* and *perks* grant special *cinematic actions* with set AP costs. But this is an RPG, dammit! Your character can try to do anything a movie hero can try. So how can you know how much AP any of those infinitely varied actions will cost? Take a look at the following chart to find out.

<b><u>3 AP</u></b>	<b><u>2 AP</u></b>	<b><u>1 AP</u></b>	<b><u>0 AP</u></b>
Physical attempts to hinder or injure your enemies.	Psychological actions.	Quick actions that require little effort.	Asking the Director questions and doing cool stuff that isn’t really consequential.
Actions the Director deems difficult AND time-consuming.	Physical actions that don’t meet the 3 AP criteria.		
<i>Haul Ass</i> (move a second time)			<i>Move</i> (once per turn)

You may be thinking “super brilliant chart, but I’d love examples.” We got you covered.

<b><u>3 AP</u></b>	<b><u>2 AP</u></b>		<b><u>1 AP</u></b>	<b><u>0 AP</u></b>
Attack	Assist another character	Flip a table for cover	Hit a button or flip a switch	Sense the obvious “is there a window?”
Grab an enemy	Hide	Persuade	Scan surroundings	Witty banter
Pick Pocket	Escape a grab	Loot a fallen foe	Open an unlocked door	Pouring one out for your homies
Hack a computer	Taunt	Distract	Pick up an item	Flipping your hair
<i>Haul Ass</i> (move a second time)	<i>Pull it Together</i>	Break open a window	Enter or exit a vehicle	<i>Move</i> (once per turn)

If a you use all 5 AP on your turn, you’re done and it’s the next character’s turn. If you use some or none of your AP before passing to the next player, you can use the remaining AP at any time before the start of your next turn. When your next turn starts, you’re back to 5 AP.

There’s also a list of typical character actions and how to rule them on [page 51](#) in the *Directing 101* section. It’s a handy list to print and reference, especially when playing for the first time.

There are two types of actions that call for a little elaboration. Let's talk "attacking" and "movement".

**ATTACKING:** Attacks cost 3 AP. You can try to hit multiple targets with those 3 AP (because spraying bullets all over the room or spinning your axe in a circle is bad-ass!) but you can't hit the same target more than once in a single attack. **For each additional target, add a -2 to melee attacks and -4 to ranged attacks.** So if Astronaut Chip Human has three aliens surrounding him and he makes a melee attack in the hopes of hitting all three, Chip Human rolls a single attack roll and takes a -4 penalty. Each of the alien scumbags makes their own defense roll.

Also, if you describe a really brutal or ambitious attack, you can make your attack a **gamble**. The target of your *gamble* gets an *epic die* on their defense roll. If you still hit, your attack causes a *lucky break* informed by your description of the attack. If you went for the eyes, the Director might blind the target. If you say you wanna pin the target to a tree with your arrow, the Director might have exactly that happen. If you say you wanna make the baddie's head explode, well, the Director might do something a bit different. You can't expect something like an instant-kill because you used a *gamble*.

**MOVEMENT:** Characters have varying *move distances*, as you'll see when creating your first character. **Each turn, you get one free move action, and you can use a second move action if you spend 3 AP to haul ass.** If you move and then take a 3 AP action or pass your turn to someone else, your *move action* is over. For example, you can't move up to a zombie, hit it (a 3 AP action), and then move away as part of the same *move action*. But if you move a short distance and flip a lightswitch (a 1 AP action), the Director might determine you still can move a little further towards something else.

If you get knocked prone, it takes a *move action* to stand back up. While lying prone, your *move distance* is reduced to *very close* (if your *move distance* is already *very close*, you can barely move while prone).

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Overwhelmed by these rules and in a rush? All you really need to do is **describe what your character wants to do. The Director will adjudicate accordingly and you'll learn as you go.** Like so:

*"I go for a headshot on the yeti"*

*"I grab the curtain and try to climb up"*

*"I try to rip the wires right out of the computer"*

*"I give her the most intimidating stare I can muster"*

*"I try to stay still in the hopes that they don't notice me"*

*"I swing my sword as I spin around, trying to hit all three assassins at once"*

*"I line up my bow and arrow so the Olympic torch is between me and Mecha-Gator, hoping to hit him and set him on fire"*

You can do that. You've got this.

## CINEMATIC ACTIONS

*Cinematic actions* are special abilities that allow your character to do amazing things. Note that although most cinematic actions have AP costs, you can use them outside of action sequences too (with no need to worry about AP costs). The following two *cinematic actions* are on everyone's [character sheet](#):

- ◆ Once per *day*, you can ***Push It to the Limit*** by spending 1 AP. Explain how or why your character pushes on despite their injuries, or how they inspire an ally to do the same. The character heals by half their total HP and gains two *epic dice tokens*.
- ◆ Once per *scene*, you can use a ***Bad Edit*** to take a single extra action (that includes moving up to your *move distance*, or any one thing with an AP cost) at any time, on anybody's turn. So, if Mummy Abe Lincoln is about to place his curse on you, you can use a *Bad Edit* to sneak in one action before he completes his dire proclamation!

The [tropes](#) and [perks](#) you select will give you more *cinematic actions*, and there is a handy spot on your character sheet to write them down.





## SCRIPT CHANGES

*Script changes* let you get a moment in the Director's chair and make an addition to the current *scene*. Keep in mind, *script changes* should make at least a little bit of sense. If you say there's a time machine in the room, you ought to have a reason.

If the Director feels a *script change* is just too powerful, they add a complication. Complications should never "override" a *script change* or make the *script change* feel like a net negative. Complications are meant to keep things interesting and to temper audacious or "over-powered" script changes.

**In order to earn a *script change*, you need to do two things.** They can be done in either order.

***YOU NEED TO ROLL  
(AND USE) A 1 OR 20***

***AND YOU NEED TO  
"SHOW WEAKNESS"***

After doing one of those things, you pick a *script change concept* (listed on the next page and on your character sheet), which determines what kind of *script change* you can make. After you do the second thing, you can implement your *script change* at your convenience. Keep in mind, you can't start earning another *script change* while you have one ready to use.

**SHOWING WEAKNESS:** *Showing weakness* means you attempt a consequential roll with a *blooper* and/or your lowest *stat*. If you have stats tied for lowest, you must choose one that can be used to *show weakness*. If you roll to remember the order of the planets for no real reason, that is not a consequential roll. If you try to remember the order of the planets right before setting the course on a spaceship... Well, that's different. You'll know a consequential roll when you see it.

Automatic defense rolls, or any other roll that every player character must make (like if the Director has everyone make a SPY roll at once) can not count as *showing weakness*. If DEF is your lowest stat, you may *show weakness* when your HP is reduced to 10 HP or less.

Mostly, let your players go wild with *script changes*. They can be silly, surprising, coincidental, and wholly game-changing. But if it's just total nonsense and/or the other players aren't feeling it, you can veto a *script change*.

You might find that sometimes a player's *script change* doesn't really change things because of something the player wasn't aware of. Avoid making a *script change* pointless. Find a way to ensure it does something interesting. *Script changes* should always make a difference.

## SCRIPT CHANGE CONCEPTS:

A *script change* can be just about anything that can be summed up by your chosen *concept*, but it can't also include another *concept*. So, let's say you chose "Mishap" and you say "a ceiling tile smacks the gunman on the head as Grandpa Joe falls through from the floor above, giving the hostages a chance to flee." Unless the Director already established that Grandpa Joe was on the floor above, this would definitely fall under both the "Character" and "Mishap" *concepts* and would have to be changed accordingly. Basically you can't get two *concepts* for the price of one.

### 1: A **CHARACTER** arrives (in a non-lethal location).

*Examples: "We suddenly see Officer Friendly sneaking up behind the Anti-Easter Bunny. He's come to save us!" ... "I turn around and Kevin McSteamy is watching from the stands. He saw the whole thing."*

### 2: An **EMOTION** is felt (but don't dictate another player character's feeling).

*Examples: "Oh, this'll be good! OK, suddenly the sasquatch looks at me with my hairy legs and everything, and it's love at first sight." ... "The prison guard is filled with deep remorse. He suddenly feels that this isn't the right thing to do."*

### 3. A **MISHAP** or force of nature intrudes (but doesn't directly take out a major character).

*Examples: "Actually, the security camera DIDN'T see us. I'm using my script change. There's a quick shot of a guard tripping on a wire, unknowingly unplugging the security system." ... "When the alien goes to shoot Timmy, the gun just sparks and starts smoking."*

### 4: A **THING** is at hand (but not some sort of ultra weapon).

*Examples: "Script change time! There IS a helicopter on the roof." ... "I find a scroll with a clear English translation of the Egyptian hieroglyphics."*

### 5: A **TRUTH** is revealed (that won't change a character's game mechanics).

*Examples: "I pull from my pocket a crumpled photo of a woman and I show it to Dracula. I say to him, 'I bet she looks familiar. Your old flame, and my mother! Don't you see...Dad!?' ... "As the Mafia goons point their guns at us, I walk over to them, and aim my gun at you guys. The mob boss explains that I've been reporting back to them and that you've all been double crossed. But you notice that I sneak a little wink to you guys."*

Let's say your original vision was a simple tale of the players being terrorized by a sasquatch out in the woods. Now let's say a player's *script change* has resulted in the sasquatch falling in love with one of the players. This will require a rethink of your plans. If you're not sure how to work with a player's *script change*, you could call for a ten minute break so that you can figure out how to move forward.

Maybe Sasquatch goes "King Kong" and gets a bit too possessive. Maybe poachers come for the 'squatch. Maybe the sasquatch comes to trust the players and reveals his secret alter ego: Santa Claus. Now everyone must save Christmas. If you really can't think of anything satisfactory for your situation, you could veto the *script change* or suggest some sort of compromise.

# HOW TO PLAY... LIKE A BADASS

## THE BAD MOVIE MIND-SET

Let's imagine a horror movie. Our heroine stands in the woods at the mouth of a dark cave. A trail of blood leads into the cave. If she has any survival instincts or awareness of her existence in a horror movie, she's gonna turn around, go home and read a book. That's great for her, but it's not very interesting.

It might be tempting to make your character's survival your highest priority, but if you do so, you'll probably bore yourself. In the end, the goal of Straight to VHS isn't to "win." The goal is to share in some belly laughs and come away with a stupid, kick-ass story! **You should generally strive to make interesting choices, even if you know your character isn't making the smartest decisions. This will often be rewarded with *epic dice tokens*.** In general, act like someone in a horror movie. They aren't suicidal, but their sense of self-preservation is trumped by the desire to tell an entertaining story. Now go. Go explore that spooky cave! Take up the quarterback's challenge to a drag race! Decide you have to learn more about the aliens! Go skinny dipping in the lake! The audience demands it!

## RECOMMENDED VIEWING

To really get in the right mind-set, you might wanna watch some fine cinema. The movies listed below come from different decades, some are terrible and some are genuinely good, but all of them are a bit crazy and ought to provide top-notch inspiration for Straight to VHS stories and characters.

Army of Darkness ♦ Beastmaster 2: Through the Portal of Time ♦ Big Trouble in Little China  
Black Dynamite ♦ Bubba Hotep ♦ Cleopatra Jones ♦ Commando ♦ Dead Heat ♦ Deadly Prey  
Eliminators ♦ Escape From New York ♦ Escape From L.A. ♦ Future War ♦ Gymkata ♦ Hard Ticket to Hawaii  
Hell Comes to Frogtown ♦ Independence Day ♦ Killer Klowns From Outer Space ♦ Krull  
Laser Mission ♦ Latitude Zero ♦ Leprechaun (series) ♦ Masters of the Universe ♦ Miami Connection  
Mortal Kombat ♦ Never Too Young to Die ♦ Revenge of the Ninja ♦ The Road Warrior ♦ Samurai Cop  
Sharknado (series) ♦ Spacehunter: Adventures in the Forbidden Zone ♦ Starcrash ♦ Terrorvision  
The Last Dragon ♦ Thankskilling ♦ Tremors (series) ♦ Troll 2 ♦ Wolfcop

You can usually expect to find trailers for these movies online. If you're really not sure where to start, I find Beastmaster 2: Through the Portal of Time, Big Trouble in Little China, Hard Ticket to Hawaii and Starcrash to be particularly easy recommendations. Well, Starcrash might actually be too bad for some viewers...**YOU** will love it though, I can tell.

A quick note about Sharknado (and similar films): It's decent inspiration for Straight to VHS shenanigans, so it stays on the list. However it's our opinion that there is something to be said for sincerity. Our favorite films give the impression that at least someone was impassioned in its creation, even if their creativity was unhinged or their film-making amusingly naive. Sincere passion shows, and it makes us smile.



## GAINING THE UPPER HAND

The chance of success isn't only based on character stats and abilities. You can improve your character's odds of success by putting them in advantageous positions. Let's imagine a few scenarios.

**SCENARIO #1:** *You are facing down Jimmy the Knife and his goons. You shout "tell me who ordered the hit on the Vice President, or else!" in an attempt to intimidate Jimmy.*

**SCENARIO #2:** *You lean over the pile of defeated goons. To the now outnumbered Jimmy the Knife, you shout "tell me who ordered the hit on the Vice President, or else!" in an attempt to intimidate Jimmy.*

**SCENARIO #3:** *Jimmy's goons are defeated. The player characters surround the badly injured and disarmed Jimmy. You tell the director that your character holds a knife up to Jimmy's neck and through gritted teeth your character says "you wanna die here or do you wanna start getting real helpful?"*

In scenario #2, Jimmy is outnumbered and has probably just watched the player's character beat up some goons, so he should be more easily intimidated. The Director ought to give the player an [epic die](#) or other bonus on their intimidation roll.

In scenario #3, it's hard to imagine Jimmy holding out. The Director could just call it an automatic success. However, the player should still roll a **break check**. A *break check* is a roll that isn't being made to determine success, it's only to see if they happen to roll a 20 or 1 (along with a [lucky/tough break](#)). This also gives the player a chance to make progress towards a [script change](#).

## DON'T ATTACK... STRUGGLE!

Enemy encounters in Straight to VHS can be thrilling, dynamic and creative, but not if every round is a version of "I go up to the closest enemy and attack." There are far more options available to you, and the Director can and ought to reward creative thinking. So, what's a movie character to do?

- |                                     |  |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| ◆ Take cover! ( <i>read below</i> ) | ◆ Hide and get in position for a sneak-attack! ( <i>read below</i> )         |
| ◆ Start a fire!                     | ◆ Bluff! You're <i>totally</i> here to switch some lightbulbs.               |
| ◆ Knock over the bookcase!          | ◆ Make them an offer they can't refuse!                                      |
| ◆ Run away!                         | ◆ Push your enemy out a window!  |
| ◆ Try to intimidate!                | ◆ Protect the weak!  |
| ◆ Take a hostage!                   | ◆ Take advantage of your <a href="#">fortes</a> .                            |
| ◆ Disarm the enemy!                 | ◆ Grasp every advantage! Get the high ground! Set a trap!                    |
| ◆ Create a distraction!             | Utilize choke points! Engage in psychological warfare!                       |
| ◆ Go for the eyes!                  | ◆ And of course, don't forget about your <a href="#">cinematic actions</a> ! |

Make sure to ask the Director pointed questions about the area. Is the fence electrified? Is there a ceiling fan? Where's the light switch in this room? Your environment can be a powerful ally. Characters who are behind **cover** or otherwise concealed get an *epic die* on their defensive rolls. If the cover is absolute (like they are behind a concrete wall), the cover must be circumvented in order to attack at all.

You can also utilize cover or darkness to **hide**. Hiding isn't just useful for evading danger; you also get an *epic die* on attacks against targets that you are hidden from. For detailed rules on hiding, see [page 50](#).

# CHARACTER CREATION

Characters start with two *tropes*, a single *perk*, and \$200 to spend on *items*, but before you choose any of that stuff, let's learn about the character features they affect.

## STATS

**Accuracy (ACC):** Ranged attacks, dexterity, delicate procedures.

**Athletics (ATH):** Athleticism, reflexes, speed, *turn order* (and resisting exhaustion)

**Charisma (CHA):** Allure and strength of personality (and resisting despair).

**Defense (DEF):** Ability to dodge attacks and mitigate damage.

**Intellect (INT):** Problem solving and knowledge (and resisting coercion).

**Spycraft (SPY):** Perception, deceit, sneaking, lockpicking.

**Strength (STR):** Melee attacks, physical strength, intimidation (and resisting fear).

Your character will have a numerical value for each stat. When you make a roll, add the number for the stat that is most relevant to your roll. So, if you have a value of +6 on SPY and you're trying to read someone's lips; roll a d20 and add 6 to the result. When creating your character, every stat starts with a value of zero. Your *tropes*, *perks* and some *items* will change your stat values. Additionally, you get to implement your own *stat tweaks*. Just follow these simple instructions:

### **STAT TWEAKS:**

***GIVE ONE STAT A +4 AND GIVE ANOTHER STAT A +2***

***GIVE ONE STAT A -4 AND GIVE ANOTHER STAT A -2***

So, let's say you give your +2 *stat tweak* to INT, and you chose a *trope* that gives you +4 INT. Just add them up; your INT is +6.

Not all actions fit neatly into a single stat. In these situations, the players choose a stat that they feel is relevant, though they need to explain how it's going to help the character. Driving is a good example. Depending on the specifics, ATH, INT or ACC might be used. "I use INT to pull off some maneuvers to ditch the cops," or "I'll roll with ACC 'cause I'm trying to drift right between the two semi trucks," and so on.

## MOVE DISTANCE

While playing Straight to VHS, sometimes you need to know where things are in relation to your character. The Director's camera typically plays fast and loose with the exact distances involved, but still, some things are within the grasp of our heroes and some things are not. This becomes particularly important in [action sequences](#). We use the following terms to describe where things are in relation to the player characters.

Adjacent	You can reach out and touch it without moving.
Very Close	It's probably in the camera shot with you. You hardly need to move at all.
Close	The camera has to follow you or change shots, but it's still not far away.
Far	There is a meaningful distance between you and it.
Very Far	In the same general area as you, but just barely.
Off Camera	It's nowhere nearby, getting there would take significant time and travel.

Sometimes the exact distance that differentiates *close* and *far* (for example) might change. In the ancient and claustrophobic Egyptian tunnels, the Director might call 40 feet "*far*". But then, in the big battle across the open desert sands, the Director might call 80 feet "*close*". That's OK. Different scenes call for different scales. On a VHS tape, time and space are strange and amorphous things.

ATH	MOVE DISTANCE	WHAT IT MEANS
-2 or less	Very Close	You move methodically at best, sluggishly at worst.
-1 to +3	Close	You get around just fine.
+4 to +9	Far	The camera struggles to keep up with you sometimes.
+10 and higher	Very far	Wait, how the hell did you get over there?

The distance a character can travel in a [move action](#) is determined by their ATH [stat](#). Use the grid to the left to determine your character's *move distance*.

So if your character has an ATH stat of "+1" you can move to anything that is *close* or closer with one single *move action*. But if something is further, like a *very far* enemy ninja, it may take another couple *move actions* to get there (one for each additional level of distance is a good rule of thumb). Of course, the ninja might meet you halfway.

While taking turns, you get one *move action* each turn for free. You can also spend 3 [AP](#) to move a second time (there's a technical game term for this, and it is *hauling ass*).

If you're using a grid, point your players to the Optional Rules section for the alternative "Speed" system. It is far better suited for playing on a grid.



## HIT POINTS

**(HP)** HIT POINTS: How much damage and stress you can take. (HP starts with a value of 30.)

This is the number you subtract from when an attack against you is successful, though it never goes lower than 0. HP starts at 30, but some *tropes* and *perks* raise or lower HP. **HP is restored by 5 + your number of *montages* at the end of each *scene*. It goes back to its full value at the start of a new *day*.**

**While at 0 HP, you have a *very short* move distance and can only spend 3 AP on your turn. If you start your turn in an *action sequence* at 0 HP, mark a *death check* box on your character sheet. You must also mark a *death check* if you take damage while at 0 HP. You erase your death checks when you get a *montage*. If all your *death check* boxes are marked, your character is dead.** Give them some bitchin' last words and make a new character to play. Although, you may need to wait for a good opportunity for the Director to help introduce your new character in the story.

"Bad guys" have HP too, though sometimes it's a lot less or a lot more than 30. Also, if you knock a bad guy down to 0 HP, it's usually assumed they're dead unless you specify that you merely knocked them unconscious (an option you should always feel welcome to use).

Damage to HP doesn't need to always be narrated as literal damage to the character. It could be a near-miss, ripped clothes or anything else that shows a character is in danger. In movies, we feel characters are in danger when we see them under duress... "The slo-mo kicks in, we hear a heartbeat. You slump behind the barricade, but it starts to crumble from the rain of bullets. Subtract 5 HP."

## MAKING A CHARACTER IN 5 STEPS

**1:** Pick two *tropes*.

**2:** Pick a *perk*. Pick another one every time you get a *montage* (unless the Director says otherwise).

**3:** Pick out some *items*. Characters (usually) start with \$200. And remember, you don't have to spend all of it. It might be nice to have some cash for later.

**4:** Allocate the *stat tweaks*. Add up those numbers with the stat changes made by your *tropes*, *perks* and *items*. Voila! Final stats!

**5:** Give your character some **personality**! For a lot of players, this might be the first step. Create a backstory, goals and compulsions. Do they have a catchphrase or play in a rock band? Don't worry about being hammy; this is in the spirit of bad movies. Talk to the Director and other players and see if you want to weave your characters' histories together.

# TROPES

Pick two *tropes*. Your character is not exclusively defined by the *tropes* you pick. For example, if you pick Mad Scientist and Paid Sponsor as your *tropes*, your character could still be a robot as well. However, you won't get tangible in-game benefits for being a robot.

Each *trope* includes a line of red text. These are stat bonuses, stat penalties, *fortes*, and *epics* granted by the *trope*. Some of them will include combos like the following:

**+3 INT or CHA ✦ +2 to another stat**

Hopefully, it's clear enough that you can choose either INT or CHA to receive a +3 bonus. What might be less clear is that the "+2 to another stat" can not be applied to the stat you gave the +3 to. It can be used on any other stat, including whichever among INT and CHA that you didn't give +3.

Consider adjusting the "flavor" of a *trope* to fit your character idea. Let's say you want to make a wizard. Well, there really isn't a wizard *trope*. So, let's take a *trope* like "Batteries Included" and give it a little wizard flavor. Compare the following to "Batteries Included" on the next page.

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**Wizard (not Batteries Included):** You are a spell slinging weirdo. You have magically-infused blood which protects you from poison, radiation and asphyxiation. You can also see the glow of living things hidden by darkness or camouflage.

**+4 INT or DEF ✦ -4 to CHA, STR or SPY ✦ Forte: Magic Stuff ✦ Blooper: Technology**

**You get these Cinematic Actions**

**Snuff Out:** Once per *scene*, spend 1 AP to drain magic from a *very close* magical device or snuff out a small source of light from *far* range. The object might be drained permanently or just temporarily (Director discretion). This heals you by 5 + your number of *montages* or gives you two *epic dice tokens*.

**Telekinesis:** Once per *day*, spend 3 AP to magically pull one *close* metal object (less than 500lbs) to you, or pull yourself to it.

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It's mostly the same as the "Batteries Included" *trope*, just reflavored. A few things were tweaked though, so it'd be smart to have the Director OK it. Do the same with your second *trope* (or pick Psychic Mindfreaker which is already great for a Wizard) and before you know it... Wizard accomplished! See? We're flexible around here.

***ENOUGH EXPLAINING. LET'S SEE THE TROPES!***

**Batshit Crazy:** Some call you insane, and maybe they're right. But they'd be a bit mad too if they saw the world as clearly as you do... if they knew the things that you do.

**+3 to any two stats ♦ -2 CHA or INT ♦ Blooper: Acting "Normal"**

**You get these Cinematic Actions**

**Conspiracy Theorist:** Once per *scene*, turn in an *epic dice token* to ask the Director a question. The director rolls a d20 and keeps the result hidden. If the Director rolls 10 or higher, they answer your question truthfully. If the Director rolls 9 or less, they answer your question with a lie.

**Inappropriate:** Once per *scene*, spend 2 AP to gain an additional *epic dice token* by responding to a serious moment inappropriately.

**Train Wreck:** Once per *scene*, spend 3 AP to describe your character's crazy antics and roll with a bonus equal to your CHA or INT penalty (so a -4 gives you a +4 bonus. A positive stat gives +0) + your number of *montages*. One witness of your choice must roll INT in response. If they roll lower, they lose their next turn to astonishment (if done outside an action sequence, they get a blooper die to all rolls until the *scene* ends).

**Batteries Included:** You are a robot, android, automaton, or golem. You are unharmed by poison, radiation and asphyxiation. You can see in the dark and in infrared (heat-vision).

**+4 STR or DEF ♦ -4 to CHA, INT or SPY ♦ Forte: Computers, Robotics ♦ Blooper: Emotions**

**You get these Cinematic Actions**

**Electro-slurp:** Once per *scene*, spend 1 AP to touch a powered electrical device and drain its "electro-energy". The object might be drained permanently or just temporarily (Director discretion). This heals you by 5 + your number of *montages* or gives you an *epic dice token*.

**Magnetic Pull:** Once per *day*, spend 3 AP to activate a built-in magnet which can pull one *close* metal object (less than 500lbs) to you, or yourself to it.

**Blind Master:** Although you're a master at something (check out that stat bonus!), you are blind and take a *blooper die* on all rolls that would benefit from sight, including virtually all attack and defense rolls. Attack and defense rolls affected by your *sight blooper* don't count as *showing weakness*.

**+7 to any stat ♦ +3 to another stat ♦ Fortes: Hearing, Smell, Taste, Touch ♦ Blooper: Sight**

**You get this Cinematic Action**

**Heightened Senses:** Once per *scene*, spend 1 AP to focus on your surroundings. You won't take any *blooper dice* for being blind until the end of your next turn.

**Born Wild:** There's something wild about you. Anytime you'd like something to climb or swing on, it's conveniently there! It could be a chandelier, rope, cable, vine or so on. An animal (any type approved by the director) follows you and usually doesn't do much of consequence. It can't speak or use items. It has 20 HP, and can only be knocked unconscious, not killed. Three of its stats (your choice) are equal to 2 + your number of *montages*; the remaining stats are 0.

**+5 to ATH ♦ -3 CHA or INT ♦ Fortes: Animals, Plants ♦ Blooper: Technology, Blending In**

**You get this Cinematic Action**

**Beastmaster:** Once per *scene*, at any time, your animal companion can use up to 5 AP and use a *move action*. You can spend 2 *epic dice tokens* to use this ability a second time in the same *scene*.

**Critter Chatter:** Once per *scene*, you can pose a simple question to an animal and the Director will provide a simple answer which you somehow gathered from the animal. Animals are not all-knowing.



**Bravehearted:** You're often the first to rush into danger, but you are terrified of something; choose what it is and get Director approval. While confronted with your fear, you get a blooper die on all rolls and automatically *show weakness*. You also automatically *show weakness* when your HP is reduced to less than half your total HP.

+4 DEF ♦ +2 to another stat ♦ Forte: Resist Fear (excluding your one fear)

You get these Cinematic Actions

**Double Edged:** Once per *scene*, when you succeed on an action that hurts both you and an enemy (like pulling the enemy through a second-story window or setting off a nearby explosive), your enemy takes 10 + your number of *montages* in extra damage.

**Into the Fire:** Once per *scene*, get an additional *epic dice token* for acting recklessly and/or putting yourself directly in harm's way.

**You Owe Me One:** Once per *scene*, if you are within your *move distance* from an ally that has just taken damage, you can immediately move to their position and take the damage for them instead.

**Bumbling Sidekick:** You don't seem like a helpful member of the party. If anything, it seems the others keep you around so that they know what *not* to do. Anytime you attempt and fail at anything (combat included), the next person to try the same action (or one the Director deems very similar) gets an *epic die* on their attempt.

+5 DEF ♦ -1 to four stats ♦ Fortes: Children, Animals, Resist Despair ♦ Bloopers: Balance, Reflexes

You get these Cinematic Action

**Dumb Luck:** Once per *day*, turn a failed roll into a success, but you must explain how your success is due to your bumbling nature. You succeed by the amount you had originally failed.

**Whoops:** Once per *day*, explain how you manage to accidentally or haphazardly break one *close* object (not an entire structure or vehicle). The director can exempt one important doodad/artifact if they want.

**Chesty:** It's pretty clear why your character's actor/actress was cast...

+2 to any two stats ♦ -2 to any stat ♦ Fortes: Seduction, Intimidation ♦ Blooper: Book Smarts

You get these Cinematic Actions

**The Gun Show:** Once per *day*, take off an article of clothing by using 2 AP to get an *epic die* to STR rolls for the rest of the *scene*.

**The Talent Show:** Once per *day*, take off an article of clothing by using 2 AP to get an *epic die* to CHA rolls for the rest of the *scene*.

**Wet T-shirt Champ:** Once per *scene* gain an additional *epic dice token* when your clothes get wet.

**Coward:** Facing danger head-on is for dumb-dumbs. You get two *epic dice* on any attacks against enemies that you are hidden from or who are otherwise surprised by your attack.

+5 to SPY ♦ +4 to ATH, CHA, DEF or INT ♦ -3 to STR and ACC ♦ -8 HP ♦ Blooper: Resist Fear

You get these Cinematic Actions

**Have Mercy:** Once per *scene* you can cower until the start of your next turn by spending 3 AP. While you are cowering in this way, nobody will attack you.

**Meatshield:** Once per *scene*, when you take damage, turn in an *epic dice token* to make a *very close* person (who isn't the attacker) take the damage instead. If that person is an ally, you automatically *show weakness*.

**Crime Robber:** Roll a d20 when seen by police; on a 15+, they will attempt to apprehend you. You can attempt to pickpocket by spending only 2 AP, rather than 3 AP. Most importantly, you're skilled in all things "crime" (as in, you have a very useful *forte*).

**+4 SPY or ATH ♦ +2 to another stat ♦ Forte: Crime ♦ Bloopers: Authority Figures, Resist Coercion**

**You get these Cinematic Actions**

**Appraisal:** Once per *scene*, ask the director "what is the most valuable object I can see?" or "what is the most important object I can see?". The director must answer truthfully, excluding objects already in the possession of the players.

**Sticky Fingers:** Once per *scene*, earn an additional *epic dice token* by acting on criminal impulses.

**Cyborg:** You are part human, part machine. If you get wet or electrocuted, you automatically *show weakness* and add a *blooper die* to every roll for the remainder of the *scene*.

**+4 to ACC or STR ♦ +2 to ATH or SPY ♦ -2 to any stat ♦ Fortes: (Pick two senses), Biotechnology**

**You get these Cinematic Actions**

**Calibration:** Once per *day*, while not taking turns, roll INT to tune-up your hardware. You succeed if you roll higher than 10 + the value of the stat you're attempting to raise. On a success the stat is raised by 2 for the rest of the day, on a failure it is lowered by 2 for the rest of the day. You can choose to roll a *blooper die* on this to automatically *show weakness*.

**Grab-o-tron:** Once per *scene*, spend 1 AP to launch an arm extension that can reach anywhere within *close* distance (your hand still functions and can be retracted for 1 AP).

**Nowhere to Hide:** Once per *scene*, spend 2 AP to see through walls until the start of your next turn.

**Die Hardly:** A shark bite and a gunshot wound? Big deal! At the end of each *scene* you heal an additional 5 + your number of *montages*. At the start of any turn at 0 HP, roll a d20. If you rolled 10 or higher, you have your normal *move distance* and AP amount. Your natural resilience has led you to be a bit less observant of your surroundings.

**+10 HP ♦ +2 to a stat of your choice ♦ -4 to a stat of your choice ♦ Bloopers: Perception**

**You get these Cinematic Actions**

**Makin' Me Angry:** Once per *scene*, get two *epic dice tokens* when you drop to less than half your total HP.

**Come and Get It:** Once per *scene*, spend 1 AP to act totally nonchalant and earn an *epic dice token*. The rest of this turn's AP is deferred to your next turn.

**Doctor:** You carry around a bag filled with all sorts of "doctor stuff". At the end of each *scene*, you can allow yourself or a present ally to erase a *death check* or heal an additional 5 + your number of *montages*. If any ally dies in your presence, you automatically *show weakness*.

**+3 to any two stats ♦ -3 to any two stats ♦ Forte: Doctoring ♦ Bloopers: Manners**

**You get these Cinematic Actions**

**Check-Up:** Once per *scene*, spend 1 AP to visually examine an injured person. You know exactly how much HP they have left and you get an *epic die* on your next attack roll against them.

**Juiced Up:** Once per *day*, spend 2 AP to administer an adrenaline shot. The recipient gets 3 *epic dice tokens* and no token limit until the end of the *scene* (if the recipient has more than five tokens at the end of the *scene*, they lose the surplus).

**Patch Job:** Once per *scene*, spend 2 AP to administer first-aid on yourself or an *adjacent* ally, healing your target by 5 + your number of *montages*. If you also turn in an *epic dice token*, heal double that amount instead.

**Dual Wielding:** While holding only one weapon you get a *blooper die* to attack and defense rolls. If you miss an attack or get hit for this reason, you automatically *show weakness*.

**+3 ACC or STR, +2 to the other**

**You get these Cinematic Actions**

**And Some of This:** Once per *scene*, you can make a 1 AP attack with a weapon, but only if you already used another weapon on your current turn.

**Keep 'Em Coming:** Once per *scene*, make a special 5 AP attack. If this attack hits, you get to make a free attack (with a -1 penalty) with a second weapon. If that attack hits, you can make another free attack (with a -2 penalty) with the original weapon.

**Gangster:** Roll a d20 when seen by police; on 15+ they'll try to apprehend you. You are accompanied by a two-person entourage. Each of them has HP equal to 10 + your number of *montages*. If they would get killed, they are only knocked out until the end of the *scene*. Their stats equal your number of *montages*. They have +2 ranged and melee weapons. *Bad Edits* can be used on an entourage member.

**+2 to any two stats ♦ -2 to any two stats ♦ Fortes: Street Smarts, Intimidation ♦ Blooper: Lawful Society**

**You get these Cinematic Actions**

**Associate:** Once per *scene*, and at any time, member #1 of your entourage can take a *move action* and one additional action.

**Accomplice:** Once per *scene*, and at any time, member #2 of your entourage can take *move action* and one additional action.

**Special Mission:** Once per *scene*, assign one or both entourage members to an off-screen task that the Director must approve. The Director tells you how many *scenes* the task will take. When the entourage member/s return or when their success/failure can be known by the heroes, you must roll a d20 + your number of *montages* (get an *epic die* if you sent both entourage members). If you match or beat a *difficulty level* set by the Director, the task was successful, otherwise it fails. If you fail by 10 or more, the entourage member/s fail and are delayed for another *scene*.

**Gumshoe:** You are some sort of detective or private investigator. You've got a magnifying glass and binoculars (allowing you to notice things others can't), a camera (spend 3 AP to take a picture), and you have a kit which allows you to dust for (and transfer) fingerprints (a 5 AP process).

**+3 to INT or SPY, +1 to the other ♦ -3 to a stat ♦ Fortes: Investigation, Awareness ♦ Blooper: Friends and Family**

**You get these Cinematic Actions**

**Analytical:** Once per *scene*, add your INT or SPY as a bonus stat to a roll of yours (as well as the normal relevant stat, which must be different from the bonus stat). Explain how the action is aided by the bonus stat.

**Deduction!:** Once per *scene*, roll a d20. On a 10 or higher, pick a single person or thing you can currently see. The Director will tell you every single thing that could be humanly deduced about it.



**Haunted:** You are haunted by a ghost. It stays largely unseen and unheard, but appears when needed. Who they are and why they help out is up to you. The ghost has stat tweaks, two *perks* (excluding the *perk* “*Dramatic Reveal*”), 30 HP, and it raises stats as normal from *montages*, but doesn’t gain *perks*. It also has “*Forte*: Intimidation x2”. If it reaches 0 HP or less, the ghost disappears until the end of the *scene*. At the start of the next *scene*, it has healed back to full HP.

+2 to any two stats ♦ -2 to any stat ♦ **Forte: Ghosts** ♦ **Blooper: Animals**

**You get these Cinematic Actions**

**The Friendly Ghost:** Once per *scene*, use 1 AP to have the ghost appear anywhere within *very far* range, then direct the ghost to take an immediate turn (complete with 5 AP and a move action) before disappearing.

**Seance:** Once per *scene*, use 2 AP and an *epic dice token* to get in contact with any unseen spirits in the area. They may have useful information, but will almost never provide direct assistance.

**Hobo:** Subtract \$170 from your starting amount. Start with a bindle on a stick containing a knife (a +2 melee weapon that can be thrown at *close* range), a lighter, lighter fluid, a can opener, a flask and a flashlight.

+2 to any three stats ♦ **Fortes: Trains, Street smarts** ♦ **Blooper: High Society**

**You get these Cinematic Actions**

**Get Beaned!:** Once per *scene*, you can throw a can of beans (a *close* range thrown weapon with a +2 bonus) for 2 AP.

**Halitosis:** You suffer from bad breath. Once per *scene*, spend 2 AP to breathe on an *adjacent* enemy. This automatically succeeds in giving them a *blooper die* to their next roll.

**Jack Burtonesque:** Get a *blooper die* on all rolls, but when you roll a 20 you always get to use it (even when rolling *blooper dice*). You’re not one to flaunt weaknesses; you can “*show weakness*” anytime you roll an *epic die* from a *forte*.

+4 DEF ♦ +2 to any other two stats ♦ **Forte: Reflexes**

**You get these Cinematic Actions**

**I Was Born Ready:** Once per *scene*, spend 1 AP to say or do something cocky. Your enemies will completely ignore you until the start of your next turn.

**The Check is in the Mail:** Once per *day*, get an automatic 20 on a roll (complete with a *lucky break*).

**It’s All in the Reflexes:** Once per *day*, when you are hit, take zero damage and give the damage you would have taken to your attacker, but you must be able to explain this as being the result of good reflexes.

**Know-It-All:** You’re an egghead who knows a bunch of junk, and knowing is half the battle.

+5 to INT ♦ -2 to STR or ACC ♦ **Forte: Recalling Any Knowledge!** ♦ **Blooper: Social Interaction**

**You get these Cinematic Actions**

**Epiphany:** Once per *day*, dramatically remove your glasses or say some unwieldy exclamation (like “gadzooks!” or “excelsior!”) to have an epiphany (the Director reveals something to you).

**Get a Bead on ‘Em:** Once per *scene* spend 3 AP to get a read on a target, after doing so, you’ll receive an *epic die* to all rolls against the target until the end of the *scene*.

**Mad Scientist:** Your intensity and your zest for experimentation can be off-putting to others, but no one can doubt your ingenuity. After you or anyone else attempts something and fails, you gain a one-time *epic die* to attempting the same thing as long as you describe a more elaborate solution to the problem. You also get the “*Duct tape and Solder*” *perk* as a free bonus *perk*.

+5 INT ♦ +2 ACC or SPY ♦ -3 CHA or STR ♦ Forte: Science, Technology ♦ Blooper: Resist Despair, Pop Culture

**You get this Cinematic Action**

**Mwah Ha Ha!** Once per *scene*, you may spend 1 AP to gain an additional *epic die token* by laughing maniacally after you’ve succeeded at something.

**It’s Working!** Once per *day*, declare that you can create a device to serve one (semi-plausible and Director-approved) purpose. The Director describes a requirement for creating the device (such as a specific tool, location, or material). If the requirement is met, the mad scientist needs 4 hours of downtime to create the device.

**Man/Woman of Action:** Most of these other *tropes* are for eggheads and commies. You believe in the power of doing. “Doing” usually means kicking ass. Anytime you attack multiple targets with a single attack, reduce your total attack penalty by 2. You also get an *epic die token* whenever you use a *bad edit*.

+4 to ACC or STR ♦ -2 INT or SPY ♦ Forte: Destruction ♦ Blooper: Diplomacy

**You get these Cinematic Actions**

**Bloodlust:** Once per *scene*, when you reduce an enemy to 0 HP, gain 3 AP on your current or next turn.

**Bull in a China Shop:** Once per *scene*, when you break an object, gain an *epic die token*.

**Man/Woman of the Cloth:** You are some sort of religious authority. Years of espousing your religion have made you a gifted speaker.

+3 CHA ♦ +2 to another stat ♦ Fortes: Speaking, Religion ♦ Blooper: Romance

**You get this Cinematic Action**

**Faith Healer:** Once per *scene*, whether through the divine or the mundane, use 2 AP to heal yourself or an ally who can see and/or hear you by 5 + your number of *montages*.

**Gonna Need a Miracle:** Once per *day*, spend 1 AP to pray for a miracle. For the rest of the *scene* any 19 rolled by you or your allies becomes a 20, and any 1 rolled will *show weakness* for the character who rolled it

**Martial Artist:** You get +5 to STR attacks if you are unarmed. If you succeed by 5 or more when defending against a melee attack, you can move yourself or your opponent anywhere within *close* range.

+3 ATH ♦ -2 to any stat ♦ Forte: Acrobatics ♦ Blooper: Firearms

**You get this Cinematic Action**

**Kata:** Once per *scene*, spend 2 AP to put on an intimidating martial arts display that works as an *intimidate* action with an automatic *epic die*.

**Whirlwind:** Once per *day*, spend 3 AP to make a special melee attack. This melee attack has a *very close* range and suffers no penalty for attacking multiple targets.

**Net Hacker:** The digital webs are your playground. Computer systems are your play blocks. It's...playtime, or something. You have some sort of portable computer that allows you to wirelessly access all sorts of electronic systems and devices with your "Hackatronic" ability.

+3 INT ♦ +3 SPY or DEF ♦ -2 to STR or CHA ♦ **Forte: Electronics, Research** ♦ **Blooper: Nature, Being Cool**

**You get this Cinematic Action**

**Personality.exe:** Once per *scene*, earn an additional *epic dice token* by doing something that supports the cliché that hackers are nerdy, awkward and/or weird.

**Hackotronic:** Once per *scene*, spend 2 AP to access an electronic device that you have line-of-sight to. You have access to it and for the rest of the *scene* you can spend 2 AP to hack it in any way the Director considers remotely feasible (for example: overheat, extract information, reprogram, all sorts of stuff). Hacking military-grade equipment may require a roll against a *difficulty level* set by the director.

**Double Hack:** Once per *scene*, spend an *epic dice token* to gain another use of "Hackatronic".

**Ninja:** You're a damn deadly and silent shadow. You get an *epic die* to melee attacks made from above or below your target. You automatically *show weakness* when you fail a consequential acrobatics or stealth roll.

+3 to SPY and ATH ♦ -3 to any stat ♦ **Fortes: Acrobatics, Stealth** ♦ **Blooper: Computers**

**You get this Cinematic Action**

**Shadow Strike:** Once per *scene*, upon making a successful attack, describe a surprise second attack and roll a d20 (*epic die* rolls can not be applied). Your target takes the rolled number as additional damage.

**Smoke Bomb:** Once per *day*, spend 2 AP to create a momentary cloud of smoke. You then reappear anywhere within *far* range. If you reappear behind cover, you're automatically hidden.

**Nosy Reporter:** You're a determined journalist at a news publication. You have a press pass and a camera. Spend 2 AP to take a photo, spend 0 AP to declare that the people have a right to know!

+3 to two of the following: INT, CHA, SPY ♦ -4 to ACC or STR ♦ **Fortes: Interviews, Public Affairs, Research**

**You get these Cinematic Actions**

**What a Scoop!:** Once per *scene*, take decisive action in order to doggedly pursue a story at your own peril in order to earn an additional *epic dice token* or to *show weakness*.

**Flasher:** Once per *scene*, spend 2 AP to blind someone with your camera's flash, giving them a *blooper die* to all rolls until the start of your next turn.

**Mightier Than the Sword:** Once per *day*, spend 2 AP to show your press pass and make a persuasion roll with two *epic dice*, so long as you explain how you're using your profession to get what you want.

**Old Geezer:** You've been through a lot over the years and these whippersnappers shouldn't take you so lightly! You start out with an extra *perk*.

+2 to any four stats ♦ -3 ATH ♦ **Fortes: History** ♦ **Blooper: Hearing, Youth culture**

**You get these Cinematic Actions**

**Back in My Day:** Once per *scene*, earn an additional *epic dice token* when you do something to highlight your age and/or depth of experience.

**Go on Without Me:** Once per *day*, earn two *epic dice tokens* when you fend off danger so that others might flee or move forward. Afterwards, if no player characters can see you, the narration cuts away from you and you will simply rejoin the team in the next *scene* with a wild tale of how you survived.



**Paid Sponsor:** Add \$200 to your starting amount. You seem to solve a lot of your problems with one particular and spectacular product or brand.

**+2 to any two stats ♦ -2 to any stat**

**You get these Cinematic Actions**

**Shameless Plug:** Once per *scene*, use 1 AP to have a refreshing and/or relieving [INSERT PRODUCT] which can either heal HP by 5 + your number of *montages* or give you an *epic dice token*.

**Free Sample:** Once per *scene*, use 1 AP to use an [INSERT PRODUCT] on an ally within *close* range. The ally can heal HP by 5 + their number of *montages* or gain an *epic dice token*.

**Withdrawals:** Once per *day*, narrate your separation from (or inability to use) your product. You automatically *show weakness* and can't use your product. After you roll and use a 17 or higher, you can narrate your reunion with your product, and the next time you use *Shameless Plug* or *Free Sample* it either heals to full health or grants an automatic 20 (complete with a *lucky break*) on the user's next roll.

**Police Cop:** You start with a badge, a weapon worth up to \$230, and access to a cop car. You have some authority, but remember, the police chief and populace might not always be on your side.

**+2 to any stat ♦ -2 to any stat ♦ Fortes: Police Work, Persuasion ♦ Blooper: Criminal Society**

**You get these Cinematic Actions**

**Freeze!:** Once per *scene*, spend 1 AP to show your badge to an intelligent target and say something commanding like "hold it, dirtbag!". If you're taking turns, the target will only have 2 AP on their next turn and can only move within *very close* range. If you're not taking turns, your target will take a *blooper die* to their next two rolls in the same *scene*.

**Lay Down the Law:** Once per *day*, spend 2 AP to call for backup. Two cops with +3 ranged weapons enter the combat order right before your next turn and leave at the end of the *scene*. Each cop has 1 HP, and each of their stats equal your number of *montages*... If the story disallows backup arriving, you can instead spend 2 AP once per *day* to have 7 AP on your turn (starting on your next turn) for the rest of the *scene*.

**Protagonist:** You're the star, so nothing bad will happen to you, right? You automatically *show weakness* when a *Push it to the Limit* is used to heal your injuries. You also gain "No Body, No Death" as a bonus *perk*.

**+3 DEF ♦ Forte: Passionate Speeches**

**You get these Cinematic Actions**

**Plot Sword:** Once per *day*, turn a roll into a 20 complete with a *lucky break*.

**Plot Armor:** Once per *day*, turn a roll into a 1 complete with a *tough break*.

**Captive Audience:** Once per *day*, spend 3 AP to goad a character into monologuing instead of actually doing anything on their next turn (or if not in an action sequence, they get "Blooper: Perception[x2]" for the rest of the *scene*).

**Psychic Mindfreaker:** You can use telekinesis on anything you see that weighs less than 50 pounds (or 100 kilograms) for 2 AP, moving the object up to *far* range. It costs 3 AP to telekinetically use an item to attack (use INT as the attack stat). If you use a weapon like this, it's considered an **improvised weapon** and the item bonus can't be higher than +3 (see the "Items" section for more info on improvised weapons). For heavier things, you must make an INT roll equal to or higher than the object's weight in pounds divided by five (for kilograms, divide by ten). Also, whenever you roll and use a 13, you automatically *show weakness* and you experience a debilitating "mind-storm" that keeps you from using psychic powers for the rest of the *scene*.

**+3 INT ♦ Forte: Persuasion**

**You get these Cinematic Actions**

**Psychic:** Once per *scene*, spend 2 AP and an *epic dice token* to psychically hear someone's thoughts and sense their mood.

**Mindfreaker:** Once per *scene*, spend 1 AP to psychically freak someone's mind. Roll d20 + INT. Your target does the same. If you roll higher, the difference is a penalty to your target's next roll.

**Road Rash:** You get an *epic die* to attack and defense rolls while riding a motorcycle. Getting on or off motorcycles doesn't cost you any AP and you look cool doing it. If you get knocked off a motorcycle or if a motorcycle you're using gets destroyed, you automatically *show weakness*.

**+2 to any two stats ♦ -3 to a stat ♦ Forte: Biker Culture, Mechanical Stuff ♦ Blooper: Four-Wheel Vehicles**

**You get these Cinematic Actions**

**Get to tha Choppa!:** Once per *scene*, spend 1 AP to spot a nearby motorcycle with keys in the ignition. The Director may decide where the motorcycle is exactly.

**Back in the Saddle:** Once per *day*, after going through an *action sequence* without a motorcycle, you automatically *show weakness* and the next roll you make while on a motorcycle gets three *epic dice*.

**Rock and Roller:** You carry a boombox or instrument wherever you go. You probably wear leather and sunglasses which may or may not ever cover your eyes. Some people think you look pretty hardcore.

**+2 to any two stats ♦ -2 to one stat ♦ Fortes: Youth Culture, Intimidation ♦ Blooper: Polite Society**

**You get these Cinematic Actions**

**Get Pumped:** Once per *scene*, you can use 2 AP to blast some tunes. You and your present allies get pumped up and each of you get an *epic die* to your next roll.

**Get Rocked:** Once per *day*, you can use 2 AP to sonically assault an opponent, causing them to miss their next turn (if done outside an action sequence, they get a blooper die to all rolls until the *scene* ends).

**Get Down:** Once per *scene*, when you try to party or otherwise try to turn the situation into a rockin' good time, earn an additional *epic dice token*.

**Sentimentalist:** You carry a trinket with you that has sentimental meaning, like a flask, locket, shrapnel in your chest, lucky coin, etc. At any time, you can turn in an *epic dice token* and reveal a detail about your sentimental past to another character in order to *show weakness*.

**+3 to any two stats ♦ Forte: Emotions**

**You get these Cinematic Actions**

**Pocket Protector:** Once per *day*, when you receive damage that would take you to 0 HP or less, the trinket deflects that damage.

**Never Let Go:** Once per *scene*, gaze meaningfully upon your trinket to gain an *epic dice token*.

**Shredmeister:** Anytime you want there to be a "shred machine" (a skateboard, surfboard, snowboard, BMX bike, rollerblades or similar) to be nearby, there is. All shred machines increase your *move distance* to the next furthest distance (topping out at *very far*). You can get on and off of shred machines for 0 AP (instead of 1 AP). Like other characters, you have "*blooper: stealth*" while on a shred machine, but unlike other characters, you do not have "*blooper: melee defense*" while on a shred machine. If you ever go through an *action sequence* without a shred machine, you automatically *show weakness*.

+3 to ATH or ACC ♦ -1 to any stat ♦ Forte: The youth ♦ Blooper: Old fogies

**You get these Cinematic Actions**

**The World is a Playground:** Once per *scene*, add a ramp, rail, half-pipe or another common feature of a skate-park to the *scene*, but the Director chooses where (not that you can't suggest). Gain two *epic dice tokens* when you first make use of the skate-park feature while shredding. One caveat: If this is used outside an *action sequence*, using the skate-park feature must serve an appreciable purpose.

**Freestyle:** Once per *scene*, spend 3 AP to make a special attack while riding on a shred machine. Get an *epic die* on the attack and take a free *move action*, even if you've already done so.

**Sniper:** You're a damn fine shot and also skilled at concealing yourself and your weapon. Hopefully you don't ever have to fight in close quarters combat. Subtract \$100 from your starting amount, but you have a +6 sniper rifle in your possession which costs 5 AP to shoot.

+3 ACC ♦ +2 SPY ♦ -2 to any stat ♦ Forte: Stealth ♦ Blooper: Melee defense, Melee offense

**You get these Cinematic Actions**

**Called Shot:** Once per *scene*, your target doesn't get an *epic die* on their defense roll when you make a *gamble* attack.

**On the Exhale:** Once per *scene*, spend 5 AP to make a sniper rifle attack with an automatic *epic die*.

**Snot-Nosed Brat:** You can't vote, drink, or serve in the military... might as well embark on a perilous adventure! Subtract \$100 from your starting amount. At the end of each *scene* you may erase a *death check*.

+4 to DEF ♦ -2 to INT or STR ♦ Fortes: Hiding, Youth Culture ♦ Bloopers: Grown-Up Stuff, Intimidation

**You get these Cinematic Actions**

**Young and Dumb:** Once per *scene*, earn an additional *epic dice token* when you do something to highlight your age and/or lack of experience.

**Childish Wiles:** Once per *scene*, gain an *epic die* on an attempt to deceive or charm.

**Ankle Biter:** Once per *scene*, gain an *epic die* on an attack that could be described as fighting dirty. If the attack is successful, the target also gets a *blooper die* to all rolls until the end of their next turn.



**Sophisticated:** You're well-connected, affluent and of proper taste. You're likely well-dressed and almost certainly British. Do be a dear and start with an extra \$300.

+4 to CHA or INT ♦ -3 to ACC or STR ♦ Fortes: High Society, Persuasion ♦ Bloopers: Roughin' It

**You get these Cinematic Actions**

**Well-Connected:** Once per *day*, turn in an *epic dice token* and state the name of a new character that your character is acquainted with and two facts about them, like "She is the director of the C.I.A. and she owes me a favor". The Director then asks you a revealing question about the character, like "why do you two no longer get along?" or "Why is she checked into the hospital?" Answer the question. The character exists somewhere *off camera* and is under the control of the Director.

**Well-Endowed:** Once per *day*, turn in an *epic dice token* and state that you own an item, like "I own a private jumbo jet", and state whether the item is *off camera* or not. If the item is *off camera*, the Director makes one statement about the item. If the item isn't *off camera*, the Director makes two statements. Statements should generally put limitations or caveats on the item, like "you'll need a trained pilot to fly it" or "you've only got enough fuel to get to Kyoto". The item exists and its exact location is determined by the Director.

**Upper Crust:** Once per *scene* earn an additional *epic dice token* by doing something to highlight your civility and/or snobbery.

**Stoner:** You're the sort who enjoys blazing up some of that weed pot. This basically defines everything about you as a movie character. You'll surely provide comic relief, questionable insight, and maybe some hip lingo. Most importantly, your probable death will serve as a fine cautionary tale for the youths.

+3 to any stat ♦ +2 to another stat ♦ Forte: Stoner Culture ♦ Bloopers: Authority Figures, Fear

**You get these Cinematic Actions**

**High-Jinx:** Once per *day*, spend 2 AP to do some heavy weed smoke. You automatically *show weakness*. Until the end of the *scene*, get three *blooper dice* on all rolls (that's four dice total). If any of the dice results match, turn your roll into a 20.

**Munchies:** Once per *scene*, If you find and eat a snack, get an *epic dice token* immediately and heal an extra 5 (+ your number of *montages*) HP at the end of the *scene*. You never think to bring snacks with you.

**Puff, Puff, Pass:** Once per *scene*, dispense some stoner wisdom to an ally, who then gets an *epic dice token*.

**Talking Animal:** You're a strangely intelligent animal who can talk. For some reason, this doesn't elicit as much surprise as it should. You can also talk to other animals, but they're usually not as smart as you.

+4 ATH or CHA ♦ +2 to DEF or STR ♦ Fortes: Smell, Digging ♦ Blooper: Things Meant for Human Hands

**You get this Cinematic Action**

**Wild Thing:** Once per *scene*, earn an additional *epic dice token* by acting on your animal instincts.

**Looney:** Once per *day*, you can successfully do something that should only work in a cartoon. It could involve ignoring physics, unnatural speed, improbable deceit, and/or breaking the fourth wall. This can't be used to directly hinder or damage an opponent. Some Director discretion applies.

**Thou Art From the Future:** You are a warrior from the relative future who has been transported to... whenever your game takes place. You have no money but start with a ranged weapon worth up to \$230.

**+3 ACC ♦ +2 to another stat ♦ -2 STR or CHA ♦ Bloopers: Current Events, Nature, Etiquette**

**You get these Cinematic Actions**

**Déjà Vu:** Once per *day*, the forces of time may tug on you, revealing a possible vision of the near future (the Director reveals something).

**From the Future:** Once per *scene*, gain an additional *epic dice token* by doing something that highlights your lack of familiarity with the present era.

**Temporal Shift:** Once per *day*, spend 2 AP to unexpectedly phase in and out of time, making yourself untouchable until the start of your next turn.

**Thou Art From the Past:** You are a warrior from the relative past who has been transported to... whenever your game takes place. You have no money but start with a melee weapon worth up to \$150.

**+3 STR ♦ +2 to another stat ♦ -2 ACC or INT ♦ Bloopers: Current Events, Pop Culture, Technology**

**You get these Cinematic Actions**

**Relativity:** Once per *scene*, the forces of time may tug on you, dealing 2 damage to you, but slowing your surroundings and granting you an extra 2 AP on your current turn.

**From the Past:** Once per *scene*, gain an additional *epic dice token* by doing something that highlights your lack of familiarity with the present era.

**Temporal Shift:** Once per *day*, spend 2 AP to unexpectedly phase in and out of time, making yourself untouchable until the start of your next turn.

**Troubled Athlete:** Coach always said you could become one of the greats, if only you could find your confidence. After you roll and use a 20, you gain "the touch". While you have the touch you are brimming with confidence and get an *epic die* on all ATH and STR rolls. The touch lasts until you roll and use a 1, shattering your confidence and *showing weakness*.

**+4 ATH ♦ +2 CHA or STR ♦ -3 INT or SPY ♦ Forte: The World of Sports ♦ Blooper: Book Smarts**

**You get this Cinematic Action**

**It's Like Coach Says:** Once per *scene*, spend 1 AP to compare a challenge you face to a sport; you'll get two *epic dice* to the next relevant roll in the same *scene*.

**Vampire:** Each round, take damage equal to 5 + your number of *montages* when your skin is exposed to any of the following: crosses, garlic, holy water, wooden stakes, and direct sunlight. If you take two rounds of damage in this way in one *scene*, you automatically *show weakness*. You own a full-body cloak which protects you from the sun, but you have "*Blooper: Charisma*" while wearing it.

**+2 to three stats ♦ Forte: Persuasion**

**You get this Cinematic Action**

**Bat Form:** Once per *day*, spend 2 AP to turn into a bat until the end of the *scene* or until you want to transform back. As a bat you can fit through small spaces, you can fly, you have "*Forte: Stealth*", and you have a second once-per-*scene* use of Blood Sucker.

**Blood Sucker:** Once per *scene*, spend 3 AP to make a melee attack with no item bonus. Add both STR and ACC to the attack roll. Heal yourself by the amount of damage dealt.

**Voodoo Master:** You have a Voodoo doll, some glue, a pair of scissors and mystic powers! You are hounded by ill fate, and any time you use a die roll of “13” you automatically *show weakness* and treat the roll as if you had rolled a 1.

**+3 INT or CHA ♦ +2 to another stat ♦ Forte: The Supernatural**

**You get these Cinematic Actions**

**All Dolled Up:** If you collect some hair from someone and attach it to the doll: Once per *day* for 2 AP, roll a d20 and the hair donor takes damage equal to the amount shown on the d20 + your number of *montages*.

**Hypnosis:** Once per *day*, spend 3 AP to hypnotize someone who can see you. Roll INT or CHA, your target defends with INT. On a success, hypnotize your target into immediately doing one action of your choice.

**Voodoo Hex:** Once per *scene*, spend 2 AP to hex someone who can see you. Pick a stat; your target gets a *blooper die* to all rolls that use that stat until they succeed with that stat.

**Werewolf:** In moonlight (full or otherwise), you turn into a werewolf with +10 max HP, “*Forte: All STR and ATH rolls*” and “*Blooper: All CHA and INT rolls*”... Turning into a werewolf heals 10 HP. As a werewolf, you can’t use weapons except your own claws and teeth which give +2 to attacks. You turn back after an hour out of the moonlight. Your hunter instincts tell you when an enemy is reduced to half their HP or less (the Director must tell you when asked). Animals act with unease in your presence.

**+2 to any two stats ♦ -2 to any stat ♦ Forte: Intimidation, Smell ♦ Blooper: Animals**

**You get this Cinematic Action**

**Awoool!:** Once per *scene*, As a werewolf, you can earn two *epic dice* token by spending 1 AP to howl.

**Bloodfrenzy:** Once per *scene*, when an enemy has half their HP or less, get two *epic dice* on a single attack or another highly physical action.

**Wheelman:** You start with a 1969 Dodge Charger (or a similarly sweet ride) and you can automatically hotwire any vehicle. While driving a vehicle, spend 5AP to use it as a melee weapon with a +6 bonus. You never take damage from a vehicle crash. If you go through an entire *action sequence* without utilizing a vehicle, you automatically *show weakness*.

**+2 CHA ♦ +2 to STR or ACC ♦ -4 to any stat ♦ Forte: Vehicles (not attacking with vehicles)**

**You get these Cinematic Actions**

**Behind the Wheel:** Once per *scene*, get an *epic die* on a ACC, CHA, or STR roll made on or in a vehicle.

**Insurance Payment:** Once per *scene*, get two *epic dice* on a roll against someone who touched your ride during this *scene*.

**Wrestler:** You’re either a professional wrestler or simply played by one. Either way, you’ve got a theatrical flair that leaves you hesitant to use weapons other than your body and *improvised weapons*. When a *Push it to the Limit* is used on you, you get two *epic dice* on your next roll. You can also *grab* opponents by spending only 2 AP instead of 3 AP.

**+4 STR ♦ +2 to ATH or DEF ♦ -2 to any two stats ♦ Blooper: Non-Improvised Weapons**

**You get these Cinematic Actions**

**Signature Move:** Once per *scene*, spend 3 AP to bust out your “signature move”. Whatever this move is, it’s an unarmed melee attack that leaves your enemy lying prone. It gets two *epic dice*, but it must be used on an opponent you’ve already damaged in this *scene*.

**Fan Favorite:** Once per *scene*, spend 1 AP to use a signature phrase or gesture. Gain an *epic dice* token.

## PERKS

Pick one perk when creating a character, and gain more when you earn *montages*. You can take most perks twice; exemptions have an asterisk next to their names. When you take a perk a second time, double the value of the underlined words and/or numbers. When you choose a perk twice and it has underlined fortes or bloopers, they become “(x2)” and thus call for a second epic/blooper die!

**Adrenaline Rush:** Gain this *cinematic action*: **Adrenaline Rush:** Once per scene, you get one epic die on a STR roll.

**Aspiring Script Writer\*:** When it's time to pick a *script change concept*, pick two instead. When it's time to use your *script change* you can choose either, not both. You don't keep the one you didn't use.

**Calmly Walk Away:** You get one epic die on DEF rolls against explosions if you are not looking at the explosion. You get a ±1 to all explosive attacks.

**Crunch Time:** As long as you aren't in a high-pressure situation, you are good at figuring things out. +2 INT when you aren't taking turns (such as in combat).

**Deceitful:** You are skilled at misleading others. (Fortes: Lying, Sleight of Hand)

**Domino Strike:** Gain this *cinematic action*: **Domino Strike:** Once per scene, upon defeating an enemy with a melee attack, you can send the defeated enemy hurtling at another target within *far* distance as a 0 AP ranged attack with a “weapon” bonus equal to your number of *montages*.

**Dramatic Reveal\*:** Choose a third *trope*. However, you no longer heal between *scenes*.

**Druid, or Possibly Farmer:** In any case, you've been getting in touch with nature. While outside, you can successfully predict the weather for the following 24 hours. (Fortes: Plants & Animals, Living off the Land)

**Duct Tape and Solder\*:** In 10 minutes, you can combine any two weapons together. The resulting weapon has the properties of one of the weapons (your choice) and gets an additional +1. If you combine a melee weapon and a ranged weapon, the resulting weapon can switch between melee and ranged by spending 1 AP. And no, you can't keep combining already-combined weapons to get bigger and bigger bonuses. Nice try, though.

**Eagle-Eyed:** Little escapes your steely and bird-like gaze. (+1 ACC, Forte: Sight)

**Elite Shooter\*:** Enemies don't benefit from cover against you unless the cover is absolute. (+1 ACC)

**Evil Eye:** Gain this *cinematic action*: **Evil Eye:** Once per scene, you can spend 1 AP to give someone the evil eye. Roll a d20. On a 1-5, the target focuses on you. On a 6-10, the target avoids you. On an 11-15, the target gets a *blooper die* on their next roll. On a 16-20, the target loses their next turn, paralyzed with fear.

**Explosives Expert:** Get a +2 bonus to attacks with explosives.



**Fight Me Like a Man:** While fighting unarmed, you disarm your opponent if you roll an 18+ on your attack roll, placing the weapon anywhere on the ground within *very close* range. (+1 STR)  
(When taken a second time, you disarm your opponent on a 16+)

**Float Like a Butterfly:** Gain this *cinematic action*: **Float Like a Butterfly:** Once per *day*, you can tap into a heightened level of self-preservation. For the rest of the *scene*, get a +2 to DEF.

**Glancing Blows:** If you miss with an attack, deal 2 damage anyway. If you attacked multiple targets with your attack, you only deal 2 damage to one of them.

**Good Judge of Character:** You've been around the block and tend to know a shady character when you see one. (Fortes: Sense Motives, Lie Detection)

**Hell of an Arm:** You can throw with great strength, gaining +2 on attacks with throwables. You can throw normal throwables at *far* range.

**High Five of Life:** Gain this *cinematic action*: **High Five of Life:** Once per *scene*, for 1 AP, giving an ally a high five heals 3 HP for you and the ally.

**I'm Not Supposed to Die Like This:** Choose one of the following categories. You get +2 to DEF rolls against that category.

- ◆ Projectiles (bullets, arrows, thrown bricks and so on)
- ◆ Melee weapons and explosives (swords, chainsaws, grenades, rockets and so on)
- ◆ Natural weapons (fists, feet, teeth, claws, elbows and so on)

**John Woo:** Gain this *cinematic action*: **John Woo:** Once per *scene*, you get a +4 bonus to ACC if you jump into or out of cover this turn. You seem to attract and then startle doves, giving you Blooper: Stealth

**Laser Focus:** Gain this *cinematic action*: **Laser Focus:** Once per *scene*, you get one epic die on an ACC roll.

**Leap of Faith:** Gain this *cinematic action*: **Leap of Faith:** Once per *day*, when you would take damage from a fall, something lucky happens and you end up not taking damage. Jump away! (+1 ATH)

**Masochistic:** After taking damage, get a +2 to one roll on your next turn. Receiving damage more than once does not cause the bonus to increase.

**Mass Destruction:** When you attack multiple targets in the same action, reduce your total attack penalty by 1.

**Master of Disguise:** You're skilled at changing your mannerisms, voice and appearance to seem like a different person. (Forte: Disguises & Mimickry)

**Mr. Roy Rogers\*:** Your bullets tend to ricochet to exactly where you want them, negating any cover your enemies might be using.

**My Body Is a Weapon:** All of your unarmed attacks get a +2.

**My Body is Literally a Weapon:** You've attached a weapon onto your body in place of one of your hands or feet. The weapon gets a +2 bonus, but you receive penalties on actions that the Director believes would be aided by having the hand or foot instead. It takes 3 AP to remove the weapon from your stub, and 3 AP to mount a new weapon or artificial limb.

**No Body, No Death\*:** Gain this *cinematic action*: **No Body, No Death:** Once per *day*, use this cinematic action and you can put yourself in as dire a situation as you can imagine, but as long as none of the other player characters actually witness your "inevitable" death, you will simply rejoin the team in the next *scene* with a wild tale of how you survived.

**Noooooo!:** Gain this *cinematic action*: **Noooooo!:** Once per *scene*, when an ally takes 10 + their number of *montages* in damage all at once, or are knocked down to 0 HP, dramatically shout in slow motion and get an epic die to your next roll.

**Payday:** Get paid. \$500 (this *perk* can be taken as many times as you like).

**Photographic Memory:** Once per *scene* you can make a perception roll on an area or object you have seen in the past, just as though you were looking at it now. (+1 SPY)

**Point Blank\*:** You can use ranged weapons in an enemy's melee range with no penalty.

**Push It Real Good:** Your "Push It to the Limit" heals an extra 5 HP.

**Ricochet:** Gain this *cinematic action*: **Ricochet:** Once per *scene*, when an opponent's ranged attack misses you, roll a d20. On a 10+, the attack hit an opponent, dealing damage equal to the amount it missed you by.

**Sexual Tyrannosaurus:** You get +2 to CHA with anyone attracted to your gender (or one you're projecting). Also, no matter what hell you go through, you always look great.

**Sexy Nerd:** You wear glasses, which means you're smart and a nerd. If you take off your glasses, you get a bopper die to all rolls that would be aided by sight. However, you gain an epic die to CHA rolls while your glasses are off. Putting on and removing your glasses costs 3 AP (because you always make such a big deal about it). (+1 INT, -1 CHA)

**Shock Absorber:** Gain this *cinematic action*: **Shock Absorber:** Once per *scene*, when you are hit, explain how the hit reduces your highest stat (choose in the case of a tie) by any amount that doesn't reduce it below zero. The stat stays at the reduced value until the end of the *scene*. Reduce the HP damage the hit inflicted by double the amount your stat was lowered.

**Sleeper Hold:** Gain this *cinematic action*: **Sleeper Hold:** Once per *scene*, if you can get behind an opponent, you can make a melee attack with a *bopper die*. If successful, the opponent falls unconscious. Each round, the opponent rolls a d20, and they wake up on a 17+.

**Smack-Talkin':** Gain this *cinematic action*: **Smack-Talkin':** Once per *scene*, you can smack-talk to someone for 1 AP, giving them a -2 to the rest of their rolls in the *scene*, unless those rolls target you. The penalty goes away if you are knocked unconscious.

**Small but Fierce:** At any time you can ask the Director if someone has higher STR than you. The director answers honestly, but doesn't tell you how much higher it is. Gain this *cinematic action*:

**Small but Fierce:** Once per *day*, get a bonus to an attack against an enemy with higher STR than you. The bonus is the difference between your target's STR and your STR.

**Speed of Plot:** Gain this *cinematic action*: **Speed of Plot:** Once per *day*, an event or action of your choice takes three times longer than it ought to. (Examples: someone falling from a building, a bomb about to explode, a door shutting, a particular combat action. Some Director discretion required.)

**Spray and Pray:** Gain this *cinematic action*: **Spray and Pray:** Once per *scene*, you can spend 2 AP to wildly fire a ranged weapon, suppressing enemy action. Enemies within your weapon's range take a blooper die to any attack rolls on their next turn.

**Still Breathing:** You don't die as easily as some. You have one additional *death check* box.

**The More the Merrier:** When you have 2 or more active enemies adjacent to you, you get a +2 bonus to all rolls.

**Trenchcoat\*:** You wear a trenchcoat in which you can visually conceal anything smaller than you. Gain this *cinematic action*: **Trenchcoat:** Once per *day*, pop the collar to gain an *epic die* on a CHA roll.

**Under the Radar:** If you didn't attack anyone on your last turn, you have a +2 to DEF until the start of your next turn.

**Warrior Training:** You dodged the rocks the sensei was throwing at you as you ran up and down the 5,000 steps. You are ready. +1 ATH, +1 DEF, but the experience made you kinda bitter, giving you Blooper: Charm.

**Where's My Mark?:** You get a +1 to all rolls made by using a *Bad Edit*. Each *day*, you receive one additional *Bad Edit*.

**Why Didn't You Say So?:** Gain this *cinematic action*: **Why Didn't You Say So?:** Once per *scene*, when any other character mentions the need for an item that isn't a weapon or extremely rare, you can roll a d20. If you rolled 12+, that item is within arm's reach.

**Wildcard\*:** It seems things tend to either go amazingly or horribly for you. You get a *lucky break* when you roll an 18, 19 or 20. You get a *tough break* when you roll a 1 or 2.

**Winning Smile:** +2 CHA against targets that aren't hostile towards you.

**Wire Work:** Gain this *cinematic action*: **Wire Work:** Once per scene, get two *epic dice* on an ATH roll to climb or jump.

**Words of Wisdom:** Gain this *cinematic action*: **Words of Wisdom:** Once per day, give advice to another party member. If your advice is followed, you gain two *epic dice tokens*. If your advice is ignored, the other party member gets two *epic dice tokens*.

**You Never Know:** Choose 2 of the following *fortes*: Animal Calls, Astronomy, Balance, Bartering, Chemicals, Cuisine, Current Affairs, Dancing, Dinosaurs, Diseases, Drugs, Eavesdropping, The Forest, Forgery, Gambling, Geopolitics, Hacking, History, Hunting, Jumping, Lock-picking, Lying, Music, Nuclear Energy, The Ocean, Parkour, Pop Culture, Religion, Reptiles, Ropes, Seduction, Singing, Stealing, Surgery, or something else that your Director approves. **(When taken a second time, simply pick two new *fortes*, or double down on the ones you already picked.)**

**You Sick Sonovabitch:** Any time you deal damage to somebody or mentally mess with them enough that they start taking penalties, you heal 1 HP.

**You Thought I Was Down\*:** Upon marking all your *death check* boxes, you seemingly die. However, you pull yourself up when your next turn would have come. You then get a full turn as if you were above 0 HP and you receive two *epic dice* to all rolls. If you're still at 0 HP when this turn ends, you die.

## ITEMS

Be default, characters start out with \$200 to spend. Don't take the item names too seriously. "Brass Knuckles" could just as well be "Ring of Power" or "False Fingernails." Feel free to re flavor items to be unique to your character.

The following are just examples. In your game, the players might need to get scuba gear, potions of anti-fairy, wooden stakes or a trampoline. Just create any relevant stats and costs and go wild! Starting characters with \$200 is just a suggestion, and depending on the plot, you might go with something very different. Just be sure to adjust relevant *tropes* and *perks* appropriately. You'll likely want to give players options for getting new items, either through finding them and/or purchasing them. If your players have the option of buying items, provide opportunities for characters to get money. Money could be earned from Director-controlled characters for completing tasks, it could be found on defeated enemies or it could even be stolen or extorted from Director-controlled characters. Money could be a central goal for the characters.

Characters can have their items taken or broken, but items are a way for players to customize their characters. As such, only smite a player's item when the character's actions really call for it, and give the character a chance to avoid it, repair it or replace it.



**MELEE WEAPONS** can only be used on *adjacent* targets. However, some melee weapons allow you to attack *very close* targets.

When attacking more than one target in a single action, melee attacks take a -2 penalty per additional target.

<b>BONUS</b>	<b>NAME</b>	<b>SPECIAL</b>	<b>PRICE</b>
+1	Brass Knuckles	<i>counts as unarmed</i>	\$15
+1	Zapper	<i>blooper die to target's next roll when this weapon deals 5 or more damage</i>	\$50
+2	Baseball Bat		\$20
+2	Knife or Dagger	<i>can be thrown at close range</i>	\$45
+2	Walking Cane	<i>If you deal 5 or more damage, you can move your enemy anywhere within very close range.</i>	\$60
+3	Machete		\$60
+3	Scimitar	<i>Reduce total penalty for attacking multiple targets by 2</i>	\$120
+3	Whip	<i>Can attack at very close range</i>	\$180
+3	Championship Ring	<i>counts as unarmed</i>	\$180
+4	Sledgehammer	<i>Cost 4 AP to use.</i>	\$120
+4	Flying V Guitar		\$150
+4	Axe	<i>Reduce total penalty for attacking multiple targets by 1</i>	\$225
+5	Heavy Luggage	<i>Cost 4 AP to use. Penalty for each additional target is -4.</i>	\$220
+5	Sword		\$340
+5	Chainsaw	<i>Loud!</i>	\$290
+6	Katana		\$700
+6	Cyber Halberd	<i>Can attack at very close range</i>	\$2,100
+7	Battleaxe		\$1,300
+8	Lasersword		\$2,200
+9	Poseidon's Trident		\$3,300

**RANGED WEAPONS** attack best at (or closer than) their listed “range”. However, you can use them at the next furthest range, but doing so adds a blooper die to the attack. Also, if you are in an enemy’s melee range, your ranged attacks against them get a blooper die.

When attacking more than one target in a single action, take a -4 penalty per additional target. Some weapons attack an area (for example: “attacks all targets very close to the blast”). This means you attack an entire area of that size and everyone in it, with no penalty for multiple targets.

One last thing, unless the weapon has the “quiet” feature, ranged weapons make loud noises and are likely to spoil attempts at quiet infiltration.

<b>BONUS</b>	<b>NAME</b>	<b>RANGE</b>	<b>SPECIAL</b>	<b>PRICE</b>
+1	Rock	close	Thrown, must be retrieved to reuse.	free
+1	BB Gun	far		\$10
+1	Mind Laser	very far	Quiet. No melee range penalty.	\$20
+2	Shuriken	far	Thrown, must be retrieved to reuse.	\$15
+2	Laser Blaster	far		\$30
+2	Blowdart	far	Quiet.	\$40
+2	Wimpy Submachine Gun	far	Reduce total penalty for attacking multiple targets by 2	\$60
+2	Magic Wand	close	Costs 4 AP to use. Get a free attack on a different target within range if your die rolled a 15 or higher, and repeat...	\$85
+3	Molotov Cocktail	close	Thrown, one-time-use, attacks all targets very close to the blast.	\$35
+3	Old Hunting Rifle	very far	Costs 4 AP to use. -5 penalty per additional target (instead of -4)	\$85
+3	Handgun	far		\$90
+3	Mystic Ankh	close	Costs 5 AP to use. Blooper die to target’s next roll when this weapon deals 5 or more damage	\$245
+3	Flamethrower	close	-2 penalty per additional target (instead of -4)	\$200
+4	Six Shooter	far		\$230
+4	Bow and Arrow	far	quiet	\$300

+4	Hunting Rifle	<i>very far</i>		\$300
+4	Hand Grenade	<i>close</i>	<i>thrown, one-time-use, attacks all targets very close to the blast</i>	\$85
+5	Uzi	<i>far</i>		\$510
+5	Sawed-off Shotgun	<i>close</i>	<i>no melee-range penalty</i>	\$690
+5	Grenade Launcher	<i>far</i>	<i>Costs 4 AP to use. Attacks all targets very close to the blast</i>	\$1,630
+6	Sniper Rifle	<i>very far</i>	<i>Costs 5 AP to use.</i>	\$820
+6	Combat Rifle	<i>far</i>		\$1,050
+7	Grandpa's Revolver	<i>far</i>	<i>Costs 4 AP to use. Penalty for each additional target is -5</i>	\$1,405
+8	Gattling Gun	<i>far</i>		\$3,300
+9	Zanrethi Alliance Vectorgun	<i>far</i>		\$4,950
+9	Rocket Launcher	<i>far</i>	<i>Costs 5 AP to use. One-time-use, attacks all targets close to the blast</i>	\$1,780

**IMPROVISED WEAPONS** sometimes the best weapon is whatever is at hand. Each time an improvised weapon is used, its attack bonus is lowered by 1. So a +1 improvised weapon can only be used once before becoming useless. You can think of this as the item breaking, but the real reason for this is because movie fights are more interesting when the hero is moving from one prop to another. See any Jackie Chan action sequence for proof.

Note the baseball as an example of a +1 item, and a “baseball signed by a legend of the game” as an example of a powerful item. With this sorta thing, an item’s narrative punch matters more than its physical punch. In VHS land, a signed baseball simply hurts more.

<b>BONUS</b>	<b>CATEGORY</b>	<b>EXAMPLES</b>
+1	Looks slapstick	<i>Baseball, frozen fish, beer bottle, folding chair, garden hose, spatula, potted plant, tennis racquet</i>
+2	Looks sweet	<i>Pool cue, broken beer bottle, guitar, car door, T-rex bones</i>
+3	Looks deadly	<i>Meat hook, mounted swordfish, nail gun, a red-hot fire poker</i>
Higher	Looks important	<i>The compound's security laser, The Dagger Throne of Vardoom, baseball signed by a legend of the game</i>

## OTHER ITEMS:

<i>NAME</i>	<i>ABOUT</i>	<i>PRICE</i>
Armor (poor)	+1 to DEF, -1 ATH	\$80
Armor (average)	+2 to DEF, -1 ATH	\$240
Armor (good)	+3 to DEF, -1 ATH	\$600
Camera	Spend 3 AP to take a picture	\$70
Climbing Gear	3 AP to set up and retrieve. While using, gain Forte: Climbing[x2]	\$80
Clothing (nice)	+1 CHA	\$70
Clothing (stylish)	+2 CHA	\$210
Clothing (stunning)	+3 CHA	\$525
Defib Paddles	Revive someone who has died this <i>scene</i> . They now have 1 HP and may erase a <i>death check</i> .	\$800
Fine Fragrance	Forte: Seduction	\$100
Flashlight	See in a narrow swath in the dark. Also, be seen.	\$20
Line Launcher	3 AP to shoot a 150ft cable in two opposite directions. It anchors on both sides. Up to two people can use the launcher itself to ride the line downward.	\$130
Mace Spray	Very close range (no melee penalty). 3 AP attack with +2 item bonus: On a hit, instead of dealing damage, the target gets a blooper die on all rolls until the end of their next turn	\$80
Night Vision Goggles	See in the dark, hands-free and stealthy!	\$80
"Protein" Pills	+1 to all STR rolls for the rest of the <i>day</i>	\$60
Rope	50ft of the stuff. Maybe you've got a plan for it	\$20
Safe-Cracker's Tools	Fortes: Lockpicking, Listening Through Walls	\$100
Silky Short Shorts	You can spend 2 AP to stand up	\$40
Skateboard	1 AP to mount or dismount. While riding, your move distance increases to the next furthest distance (maxing out at <i>very far</i> ). <i>Bloopers</i> while riding: Melee defense, Stealth.	\$80



Smoke Bomb (one-time use)	3 AP to arm and throw. Anyone close to the bomb can barely see, gets a blooper die on attack rolls, and an epic die to stealth and defense rolls. The smoke remains for three minutes.	\$60
“Study” Pills	+1 to all ACC rolls for the rest of the <i>day</i>	\$60
Super Duper Glue	Spend 2 AP to make something super sticky	\$25
Toolkit	A box or belt of typical tools. Might be handy.	\$40
Walkie Talkies	5-mile radius. Don’t forget to push to talk.	\$60
Welding and Cutting Torch	A portable torch used to weld and cut metal.	\$70

## WEAPON WORKSHOP

Perhaps you’d like to start the game with a custom weapon. The next page gives you tools to do so. It’s a simple process, but you’ll probably want a calculator to add up the item’s final price tag (round to the nearest 5). Pick the “Melee” or “Ranged” column on the next page and just follow the instructions. You can then describe the weapon as anything that reasonably fits the features you’ve chosen.

After the game has started, your character can augment an existing weapon, but they’ll need to have the knowledge and materials needed to do so (this might be as simple as buying a Frankenweapon magazine and a screwdriver. Or it might require breaking into the Pentagon.) Alternatively, you can take it to an expert, though you’ll likely be asked to pay for the upgrade.

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## ***HOW TO USE THE WEAPON WORKSHOP***

So if we want to make a “laser whip” we’ll pick an attack bonus in the Melee column. Let’s say we go with +3, which has a price of \$60.

That’s a finished weapon right there. But let’s say we wanna get fancy with it and we want the laser whip to attack from *very close* range. The *very close* range option has this next to it: [x2]. That’s the price multiplier. So our new price is \$120 (\$60 x 2).

And let’s say we wanna lower that price a bit. We could add a “sucky feature” to the weapon. Let’s say that the laser whip constantly hums and makes laser sounds (making it harder to be sneaky). We can give it the “Loud” feature which has a multiplier of [x0.85]. So, \$120 x 0.85 = \$102  
We’ll round to the nearest 5 for a final price of \$100. That’s as hard as it gets.

## MELEE

### PICK AN ATTACK BONUS

+1: [\$5]      +4: [\$150]      +7: [\$1,300]  
+2: [\$20]      +5: [\$340]      +8: [\$2,200]  
+3: [\$60]      +6: [\$700]      +9: [\$3,300]

### PICK ONE

- *Adjacent* melee [free]
- *Very close* range [x2.5]

### BADASS FEATURES (pick any or none)

- Can be thrown at *close* range [x1.5]
- Reduce total penalty for attacking multiple targets by 1 [x1.5]
- Reduce total penalty for attacking multiple targets by 2 [x2]
- Counts as unarmed [x3]
- If you deal 5 or more damage, you can move your enemy anywhere within *very close* range. [x3]
- *Blooper die* to target's next roll when this weapon deals 5 or more damage. [x5]

### SUCKY FEATURES (pick any or none)

- Penalty for each additional target is -3 [x0.9]
- Penalty for each additional target is -4 [x0.8]
- Loud [x0.85]
- Costs 4 AP to use [x0.8]
- One-time-use [x0.1]

## RANGED

### PICK AN ATTACK BONUS

+1: [\$10]      +4: [\$230]      +7: [\$1,950]  
+2: [\$30]      +5: [\$510]      +8: [\$3,300]  
+3: [\$90]      +6: [\$1,050]      +9: [\$4,950]

### PICK ONE

- *Close* range [x0.9]
- *Far* range [free]
- *Very far* range [x1.3]

### PICK ONE

- One-time-use [x0.1]
- Must retrieve to use again [x0.5]
- Fires some sort of ammo/energy [free]

### BADASS FEATURES (pick any or none)

- Quiet [x1.3]
- No melee range penalty [x1.5]
- Arc: Free attack on a different target within *close* range if your die rolled a 15 or higher on your attack roll, and repeat... [x4]
- Reduce total penalty for attacking multiple targets by 1 [x1.5]
- Reduce total penalty for attacking multiple targets by 2 [x2.5]
- Explosive ammunition attacks all targets *very close* to the blast [x4]
- Explosive ammunition attacks all targets *close* to the blast [x6]
- *Blooper die* to target's next roll when this weapon deals 5 or more damage. [x5]

### SUCKY FEATURES (pick any or none)

- Costs 4 AP to use [x0.8]
- Costs 5 AP to use [x0.6]
- Penalty for each additional target is -5 [x0.9]

## OPTIONAL RULES

### DIRECTOR NOTES:

At the beginning of a *scene*, the Director can lay out something that they'd like to see happen in this *scene*. These requests shouldn't point the players towards important decisions. Instead they should steer towards certain moods or interesting moments. If the Director feels the request has been satisfactorily fulfilled, all the players receive an *epic dice token*. Now, let's see some examples of good and bad Director Notes.

<i><b>GOOD!</b></i>	<i><b>BAD!</b></i>
In this scene... <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>♦ I want something expensive to break.</li><li>♦ I want some romance.</li><li>♦ I want a friendship to be tested.</li><li>♦ I want an explosion.</li><li>♦ I want a sassy one-liner.</li></ul>	In this scene... <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>♦ I want you to chase the baron.</li><li>♦ I want a hostage-taking.</li><li>♦ I want you to find a secret entrance.</li><li>♦ I want someone to search the office.</li><li>♦ I want someone to use a <i>script change</i>.</li></ul>

### FLANKING:

When two allied characters are on opposite sides of a bad guy and are both in melee range, they get an *epic die* to their attack rolls against that bad guy. Of course, bad guys can use this strategy too. This rule works best when you're also using a grid. Speaking of which...

### USING A GRID:

What's a grid? It's simply a grid of squares that you use to map out the physical location the characters are in. You can use something to represent the characters, like a coin or a miniature figure. It just needs to be small enough that it doesn't take up more than one square on the grid. Using a grid can give everyone a firmer grasp on what's happening on the battlefield.

If you are drawing out the layout of a location, make sure to tell your players that there may be details present that you haven't included. This might sound unnecessary, but I highly recommend it. Why? Because a creative player might ask if there's a ventilation shaft she can crawl in, and you might think something like "yeah, you know what? There totally is!" You want to always leave room for good player ideas.

When playing on a grid, Straight to VHS' *move distance* system doesn't quite work. Instead, use the *speed* system outlined on the next page.

<b>ATH</b>	<b>SPEED</b>
-8 or less	2 squares
-7, -6, -5	3 squares
-4, -3, -2	4 squares
-1, 0, 1	5 squares
2, 3, 4	6 squares
5, 6, 7	7 squares
8, 9, 10	8 squares
11, 12, 13	9 squares
14, 15, 16	10 squares
and so on	...

### **SPEED:**

When playing with a grid, characters have a *speed* measured in squares, instead of a *move distance*. A character's *speed* is determined by their ATH [stat](#). See the chart to the left to determine your character's *speed*.

*Speed* tells you how many squares you can travel with a *move action*. Movement can occur diagonally on the grid. For narrative purposes, a square can be thought of as a five-foot cube.

Throughout the rulebook, you'll run into *move distance* terms like "*close*" or "*very far*". To convert those terms to the grid-friendly *speed* system, see the conversions below. The rest of the rules regarding movement still apply as normal.

Move Distance ➡ Speed

Adjacent ➡ In an adjacent square (easy!)

Very Close ➡ Up to 3 squares away

Close ➡ Up to 5 squares away

Far ➡ Up to 10 squares away\*

Very Far ➡ Up to 20 squares away\*

\*For the *speed* of Bad Guys and Villains, convert the *move distances* of "*far*" and "*very far*" as follows:

Far ➡ Up to 7 squares away

Very Far ➡ Up to 9 squares away



# DIRECTING 101

This entire section only needs to be read by the Director. If you aren't the Director, the only thing you still need to check out is the [character sheet](#) on the last two pages. Bye players!

Now, let's learn the most important rule of all: "If everyone is having fun, you're doing it right." You might not need to pause the game to find out the nitty gritty rules in the book, not if you already have a fun solution in mind. If everyone is having fun, you're doing it right.

## SETTING UP THE MOVIE

Assuming you don't already have ideas on how to setup and structure your movie adventure, here is a suggestion. Prior to play, come up with a "setup" and a "problem". The setup explains how the movie starts and suggests why the player characters might work together. The problem fuels the action from there. Share the set-up with the players before they make their characters, but keep the problem to yourself. Let's see a couple examples.

**The setup:** The Heroes are all on a plane that crash lands on an island.

**The problem:** The island is isolated and populated with violent drug-smugglers.

**The set-up:** In World War III, the commies blew up the moon, leading to a meteor-strewn global apocalypse that saw the world's nations crumble. But the remnants of the U.S. Government have a crackerjack team of operatives working to restore order. They call them... D.O.O.M. Squad!

**The problem:** D.O.O.M. squad is tasked with retrieving the remains of a top secret pre-war satellite. Of course, the damn thing fell in commie territory.

If you're feeling ambitious, you could add a third part, typically a "twist". But don't be too surprised if the players lead the story to a different twist than you initially imagined.

Next, create a few characters to insert into the game world. Characters are easy; you just have to give each character a few things.

**A role:** What's their role in the movie? Maybe they're a "cop" or "the villain's right-hand man".

**A name:** Make it nice and cheesy.

**A motive:** What drives their actions? Maybe they "will stop at nothing to claim the Destiny Stone" or maybe they're "just trying to do as little as possible at the office".

**Traits:** Give them a couple unique traits like "great moustache", "drunk" or "talks really fast".

Locations and items help too. You don't have to know exactly how you'll use these things, but having such details ready to go can do a lot to put some meat on your story's bones. When the players hear about something detailed and unique, they'll become more interested and you might be surprised at what becomes important to the players.

Once the players finish their characters, take a look at their sheets. Ask yourself how their characters might fit into the larger picture. If your “problem” involves invading aliens and a player made a psychic werewolf, you might decide that werewolves are part of an ancient alien breeding program! Remember, this is a bad movie, so feel free to get pretty wild with the story. Also take note of their *fortes* and *bloopers*. That way, you can try to work them into the game whenever possible. Consider making a sheet of notes like the following:

CHARACTER	OVERVIEW	FORTES	BLOOPERS	PLOTTING
Jonathan Payback (played by Lavon)	Loose-cannon cop with a missing daughter	Police work Persuasion Emotions	Criminal Society	Gets missing persons case to kick off alien abduction plot. Daughter = abductee?
Sasha Azarov (Played by Sue)	Retired thief, now a police contact. Slain dojo-master left her a necklace	Crime Acrobatics Stealth	Authority figures Resist coercion Computers	Alien methods baffle police, Sasha tapped to assist. The necklace should be some sorta mystic key!
Justice Unit 1499 (played by Kate)	Robot bounty hunter from the future with robo-amnesia	Computers Robotics	Current events Nature Etiquette Emotions	Oh! Maybe the necklace is part of J.U.1499’s mission. Sent back in time to thwart alien victory over earth?

## CREATING AND RULING CHALLENGES

**DIFFICULTY LEVELS:** Attack rolls go up against defense rolls, but what about when a character is trying to do something like karate chop a door open or do a backflip on their motorcycle? There’s no defense roll for this sort of thing. Instead, choose a number that the character’s roll needs to match or exceed. We call this number the *difficulty level* (or the DL). How high should you set the *difficulty level*? Check out the chart!

D.L.	WHAT IT MEANS
4 or less*	Eh. Don’t bother rolling.
5-8*	Success is <i>almost</i> a sure thing.
9-12*	Likely success for most.
13-16*	Uncertain. Likely success for experts.*
17-20*	Likely failure. Uncertain for experts.
21-24*	Requires skill and luck.
25-28*	Requires considerable skill and luck.
29-32*	Almost impossible.

\* Add the number of *montages* the player characters have had.

\* “Experts” means anyone with a very high relevant stat and/or forte.

When the player characters fail at something, avoid results where nothing happens like “No, you failed to unlock the door, but you can just try again”. Instead, have them fail and have things get worse: The cops show up, something breaks, an alarm goes off or they get ridiculed by another character.

Allow dice rolls to change the situation beyond mere successes and failures. In short, make stuff happen, even if it’s not stuff you were planning on.

**SUCCESS POINTS:** Some actions might take a while, like computer hacking, chopping down a tree, or taming a unicorn. For these actions you can require a certain amount of *success points*. Let's say you set a *difficulty level* of 18 for defusing a bomb and you require 10 *success points*. If a character rolls a 24, they overshoot the *difficulty level* by 6, thus earning 6 *success points*. Now only 4 more *success points* are needed. This is a very handy trick for when you want to create a beat-the-clock sort of scenario, or if the player-characters are trying to do something important while being attacked.

## DRAMATIC EFFECTS

Movie characters face emotional and psychological trials, not just physical ones. They can get scared, tempted, conflicted and much else. That's where *dramatic effects* come into play. As Director, you can imagine any penalizing effect that could befall a player character due to the in-game situation. Create a *difficulty level* and have the player/s roll against it, using whatever stat you think is appropriate (usually ATH, CHA, INT or STR, which grant resistance to "exhaustion", "despair", "coercion", and "fear" respectively).

Let's say the bad guy just revealed that he is a player character's father. Now let's say your desired *dramatic effect* is to make the player character take a penalty to attacking the bad guy because of their conflicted emotions. This is a top-notch psych-out, so we'll set the *difficulty level* up at 25! The player rolls a 16, thus failing by 9. The penalizing effect affects them by the amount they failed. So, the player character will take a -9 penalty to attacks against that bad guy. If they had rolled 25 or higher, they would've taken no penalty.

Let's have some more examples: *Take a penalty to actions taken before going to sleep, because you've been on the run for 28 hours. Take a penalty to balance because the rickety rope bridge is freaking you out. Take a penalty to any action that isn't taking the diamond skull, because its mystical power calls to you. Take a penalty to anything that isn't some sort of action against the duke because of his stinging insults.*

Keep in mind, that this doesn't and shouldn't force the character to act a certain way. **If the player still wants to attack their bad-guy father, they can, but if they fail, it should be narrated that they failed because of the *dramatic effect*:** "Bucky swings half-heartedly. He misses badly, unable to fully commit to killing his father." *Dramatic effects* help steer the characters' actions towards cinematic motivations and drama without dictating what your players do. Still, it's best to use a light touch with them in order to keep things moving speedily and smoothly. Most *scenes* will work just fine without them, sometimes entire sessions.

*Dramatic effects* should never stack up and build. If it really makes sense for a player to have to defend against a *dramatic effect* more than once, just use the newest result. Don't add them together.

Let's learn **how characters can overcome *dramatic effects***. There are lots of ways: Another character might make a rousing speech, the bad-guy father might do something to cheapen his own words, the affected character might spend an action to strengthen their own resolve. If an action seems like it might work in a movie to break the *dramatic effect*, it counts as a *Pull it Together* action as described on [page 52](#).

Some *dramatic effects* can be overcome more directly. If you're being penalized because you haven't slept, simply sleep. If you're not on the rickety bridge, it is no longer freaking you out. Simple!

## ACTION GUIDE

Characters can do all sorts of stuff! So much stuff, in fact, that it would be foolish to make a list. After all, it's the high degree of freedom and infinite possibilities that draw us to tabletop RPGs. On that note, I'm about to give you a list.

The players don't need to be familiar with this list and you don't need to have it all committed to memory. However, it's nice to have this list at hand for those moments when you wonder something like "hmm, how should I rule an attempt at disarming?"

Remember what we told the players before: "describe what your character wants to do. The Director will adjudicate accordingly." This list doesn't include getting in tune with your spirit animal, but that doesn't mean a character shouldn't try and do exactly that, and it doesn't mean the Director shouldn't make up some numbers or mechanics to go along with it. Anyway, here's the list:

**ASSIST (2 AP)** As long as you can plausibly explain how you're assisting, you can assist another character with a specific task. They will receive a +2 bonus on their next relevant roll. If you have a relevant *forte*, you grant a +4 bonus instead.

**ATTACK MELEE (3 AP)** Roll **STR**. Your target rolls DEF. If you roll higher, you deal damage equal to the difference between the rolls. Take a -2 penalty for each additional target you include in your attack.

**ATTACK RANGED (3 AP)** Roll **ACC**. Your target rolls DEF. On a success, you deal damage equal to the difference between the rolls. Take a -4 penalty for each additional target you include in your attack.

**DISARM (3 AP)** Roll **ACC** or **STR**. Your target rolls DEF or STR and gets an *epic die*. On a success you take their weapon. If your hands are full, the weapon is flung somewhere *very close*.

**DISTRACT (2 AP)** Roll **CHA**. Your target rolls INT. If you succeed, your target gets a *blooper die* on their next roll.

**ESCAPE GRAB (2 AP)** Roll **DEF** or **ATH**. Your target rolls STR. If you succeed, you escape the grab and are *adjacent* to the target in the direction of your choosing.

**GRAB (3 AP)** Roll **STR**. Your target rolls ATH or DEF. On a success, you grab your target. While grabbed, the target takes a *blooper die* to attack rolls and defense rolls. While the grab persists, the character with lower STR can't move, and the character with higher STR has their *move distance* reduced to the next closest distance. If tied, the grabber's STR is considered higher.

**HIDE (2 AP)** To hide, you must utilize darkness, camouflage, or cover. Roll **SPY**. Anyone you want to hide from rolls SPY too. If a target rolls lower than you, you are hidden from them until you move out of cover/darkness, or until after you attack or something else draws attention to you. You get an *epic die* to attacks against targets you are hidden from.



**INTIMIDATE\* (2 AP)** Roll **STR** or **CHA**. Your target rolls STR. Large bonuses or penalties may apply depending on the situation and the goal of the intimidation.

**MOVE DIFFICULT (0 AP)** When climbing, balancing, swimming up-current or doing something similar, the Director might reduce your *move distance*. The Director will ask for an **ATH** roll against a *difficulty level*. Rolling under the *difficulty level* results in a lack of progress or significant failure (like a fall).

**PERSUADE\* (2 AP)** Roll **CHA**. Your target rolls INT. Large bonuses or penalties may apply depending on the situation and the goal of the persuasion.

**PICK-POCKET (3 AP)** Roll **SPY** against an adjacent target. Your target rolls SPY. On a success, take an item from them that they aren't holding (for that, see *Disarm*). Large bonuses or penalties may apply depending on the item and how it is or isn't secured.

**PULL IT TOGETHER (2 AP)** Explain what your character says or does to overcome (or help another character overcome) the penalty from a *dramatic effect* or a hindrance imposed by an enemy. Roll with the most relevant stat. If you roll higher than the size of the penalty, subtract the difference from the penalty.

**PUSH (3 AP)** Roll **STR**. Your target rolls STR or ATH. On a success, you can move the target to any *very close* location.

**TACKLE (3 AP)** Must be preceded by a *move action* (standing up doesn't count). Roll **STR** or **ATH**. Your target rolls STR or ATH. On a success, the difference between the rolls is damage dealt and you move the target to any *very close* position. Both you and the target end up lying prone on the floor.

**TAUNT (2 AP)** Roll **CHA**. Your target rolls INT. On a success, the target is taunted until the start of your next turn. While taunted, your target takes a *blooper die* to rolls that don't deal with you, and an *epic die* to rolls that do deal with you.

*\*Note that when an Intimidate or Persuade succeeds against a player character, a suitable *dramatic effect* is used, rather than directly forcing the actions of the player character.*

## BAD GUYS

In this section, you'll find some premade bad guys to throw at the player-characters. Players might surprise you with the trouble they get into, and you may need to quickly invent a new bad guy. If you're in a rush, make numbers for their attack bonus, HP and DEF. The other stats you can wing if need be. Feel free to get creative with enemy abilities; they can be as wild or wilder than the player-characters' *cinematic actions*. You could also make use of *tropes* and/or *perks* when creating bad guys.

Don't forget to give your baddies some style and personality. Nobody likes fighting numbers. Give them an enemy! To make a fight really interesting, have something else occurring at the same time. Perhaps a missile is about to be fired and some codes must be entered into the command console. Maybe there are hostages in the mix and everyone is in a burning building. Go nuts!


**THREAT:** To measure the strength of the bad guys on the following pages, we use *threat*. Every bad guy has a *threat* number; higher numbers mean a greater challenge. A player-character who hasn't had any *montages* is ideally matched up against about 40 *threat*. Thus, a party of three new player-characters is a good match-up against about 120 *threat*. When a character gets a *montage* (raising their stats and gaining a perk), their ideal enemy *threat* goes up by about 5.


For most fights, I'd recommend putting the players up against something like 70% of their ideal threat, but ramping up to 100% for epic showdowns (even at 100%, the players have a slight upper hand). If players face a series of tough fights without a chance to start a new *day* and regain their expended *cinematic actions*, they'll have an especially hard time,


You'll want to make considerations for player-characters that aren't combat-focused, or for characters that are solely focused on combat. Individual characters can vary in combat prowess quite a bit. It's usually best to make the first tussle with the bad guys a bit easy so you can judge the capabilities of the player-characters.

...

**OH!** One more thing! Some baddies have abilities that can saddle the player characters with penalties to their rolls (see the Ghost's "Ghastliness" ability for an example). The first time you use something like this on the players, let them know that they can spend 2 AP on a *Pull it Together* action ([page 51](#)) to try to reduce or eliminate the penalty.

The  symbol indicates a ranged attack. Unless otherwise noted, these have a *far* range.

The  symbol indicates a melee attack. Unless otherwise noted, these can only attack *adjacent* targets.

The  icon indicates an ability that merely requires the target to be in the bad guy's presence.


### HENCHPERSON


*We used to call these henchmen, but that's pretty sexist. Ladies can hench too. This is your typical henchperson, but they come in all flavors (ex: Henchmerperson).*

9 Threat

Move Distance: Close

**HP: 1**    **ACC: 2**    **ATH: 0**    **CHA: -2**  
**DEF: -2**    **INT: -2**    **SPY: -2**    **STR: 3**

**Uzi:** 3 AP,  +5 vs DEF  
Deal damage.

**Fist Punch:** 3 AP,  +3 vs DEF  
Deal damage.


### RUSSIAN HENCHPERSON


*Russians henchpeople are much like your typical henchperson, but with better training facilities. Fact: Russians are born with cool scars.*

19 Threat

Move Distance: Close

**HP: 1**    **ACC: 2**    **ATH: 0**    **CHA: 0**  
**DEF: 0**    **INT: 0**    **SPY: 1**    **STR: 3**

**AK-47:** 3 AP,  +7 vs DEF  
Deal damage.

**Knife:** 3 AP,  +5 vs DEF  
Deal damage.

**Info:** Speaks Russian and English. Russians like to check on each other, so they carry walkie talkies.

*Forte: Resisting Interrogation.*


### ZOMBIE


*These things have a way of getting into everything.*

20 Threat

Move Distance: Close

**HP: 6**    **ACC: -2**    **ATH: -2**    **CHA: -8**  
**DEF: 0**    **INT: -8**    **SPY: -2**    **STR: 3**

**Claw:** 3 AP,  +3 vs DEF  
Deal damage.

**Grab:** 3 AP,  +3 vs DEF or ATH  
Grab the target. While grabbed, the target takes a *blooper die* to attack rolls and defense rolls. While the grab persists, the character with lower STR can't move, and the character with higher STR has their *move distance* reduced to the next closest distance. If STR is tied, the grabber's STR is considered higher.

**Info:** If a zombie reduces a character's HP to 5 or less, that character is infected and will die and become a zombie at the start of the next *scene*.

Zombies are typically mindless and have only the barest of self-preservation skills.


### GHOST


*Ghosts just can't get the hang of staying dead. Sometimes they go away when you burn their teddy bear or whatever.*

22 Threat

Move Distance: Very Close

**HP: 12**    **ACC: -2**    **ATH: -2**    **CHA: -3**  
**DEF: 2**    **INT: 0**    **SPY: 4**    **STR: 3**

**Ghostly Gouging:** 3 AP,  +5 vs DEF  
Deal damage.

**Ghastliness [FEAR]:** 2 AP,  +6 vs STR  
Once per *scene*. No multi-target penalty. On a hit, the size of the success is the penalty the target takes for the rest of the *scene* to all rolls before obstructing, hiding, or moving away from the ghost in the same round.

**Info:** Ghosts might go away for a bit if you roundhouse kick them to 0 HP, but they tend to show back up in another *scene*. Often, there's some special method for putting them down for good.

Ghosts can go through stuff, but are too restless to stay safely inside the walls longer than a single round.

### JUNGLE CAT

Mature and solitary jungle cat. No fleas. Tired of the same old boars. Hunting for something new. Maybe you're the one?

25 Threat

Move Distance: Far

**HP: 16**   **ACC: 0**   **ATH: 8**   **CHA: 0**  
**DEF: -2**   **INT: -5**   **SPY: 5**   **STR: 4**

**Tooth & Nail:** 3 AP,  +6

Deal damage.

**Jungle Meow [FEAR]:** 1 AP,  +5 vs STR

Once per scene, no multi-target penalty. If hit, a target gets a *blooper die* on their next roll.

*Fortes: Perception, Stealth, Climbing*


### FOOTBALL TEAM CAPTAIN

Not so bad on his own, but beware the never-ending supply of goons! Never eats in the cafeteria.

28 Threat

Move Distance: Far

**HP: 30**   **ACC: 2**   **ATH: 4**   **CHA: 4**  
**DEF: -2**   **INT: -2**   **SPY: -4**   **STR: 4**

**Fist Punch:** 3 AP,  +4 vs DEF

Deal damage.

**No "I" in Team:** 2 AP

Call teammates. Roll a d20. On 5 or less, nobody comes. On 6-14, one teammate is on their way. On 15+, two teammates show up next round. The teammates have 0 in all stats, 1 HP and a *close move distance*.

*Fortes: Throwing Stuff, Sports*

### SNIPER

Dangerous from afar, but deadmeat otherwise.

32 Threat

Move Distance: Close


**HP: 1**   **ACC: 6**   **ATH: 0**   **CHA: 0**  
**DEF: 2**   **INT: 0**   **SPY: 4**   **STR: 0**

**Sniper Rifle:** 5 AP, Very Far  +11 vs DEF

Deal damage.

**On the Exhale:** 5 AP, Very Far  +11 vs DEF

Deal damage. Get an automatic epic die on this attack.

**Combat Knife:** 3 AP,  +4 vs DEF

Deal damage.

**Info:** Hugely disadvantaged in melee combat due to the bloopers listed below.

*Epics: Stealth*

*Bloopers: Melee Defense, Melee Offense*


### LASER HAWK

Take a hawk, strap a laser onto it and fill it with unbridled hatred. Now you've got a laser hawk. You're probably also dead.

34 Threat

Move Distance: Far

**HP: 8**   **ACC: 5**   **ATH: 8**   **CHA: 0**  
**DEF: 3**   **INT: -5**   **SPY: 8**   **STR: 0**

**Laser Blast:** 3 AP,  +8 vs DEF

Deal damage.

**Talanted:** 3 AP,  +3 vs DEF

Deal damage.

**Info:** Like laserless hawks, laser hawks are expert flyers.

*Forte: Eyesight*


## NINJA


Ninjas like being sneaky and will use any excuse to do flips and climb stuff. Also, they rarely enter buildings through the front door.

38 Threat

Move Distance: Far

**HP: 12**   **ACC: 2**   **ATH: 5**   **CHA: 0**  
**DEF: 3**   **INT: 0**   **SPY: 6**   **STR: 4**

**Katana:** 3 AP,  +8 vs DEF  
Deal damage.

**Shuriken:** 3 AP, Close  +4 vs DEF  
Deal damage.

**Info:** Ninjas get an *epic die* to any attacks made from above or below their target.

*Fortes: Acrobatics, Stealth*


## WEREWOLF


These guys can be pretty cool and sometimes they make great basketball players. This one is a jerk.

45 Threat

Move Distance: Far

**HP: 30**   **ACC: 0**   **ATH: 7**   **CHA: -4**  
**DEF: -2**   **INT: -4**   **SPY: 0**   **STR: 8**

**Tooth and Nail:** 3AP,  +10 vs. DEF  
Deal damage.

**Scarewolf [FEAR]:** 2 AP,  +5 vs STR.  
Targets one person. On a hit, the size of the success is the penalty the target takes for the rest of the *scene* to all rolls before obstructing, hiding, or moving away from the werewolf in the same round.

**Info:** This werewolf turns into a typical henchperson after spending a couple hours out of the moonlight.

*Fortes: Intimidation, Smell*  
*Blooper: Animals*


## VAMPIRE


You'll probably come up with your own take on these guys. Hopefully you go with capes.


50 Threat


Move Distance: Close

**HP: 32**   **ACC: 4**   **ATH: 3**   **CHA: 5**  
**DEF: 0**   **INT: 3**   **SPY: 3**   **STR: 6**

**Goth Pistol:** 3 AP,  +8 vs DEF  
Deal damage.

**Wrestling Move:** 3 AP,  +8 vs DEF  
Deal damage. Describe as a wrestling move for hilarity.

**Blood Sucking:** 3 AP,  +5 vs DEF  
Deal damage. Heal by half the amount of damage.

**Enthrall [COERCE]:** 2 AP,  +5 vs INT  
Targets one person. Once per *scene*. On a hit, the size of the success is a penalty the target takes to all rolls directly opposing the vampire.

**Bat Form:** 1 AP  
Once per *day*, turn into a bat. While you are a bat, the only attack you can make is *Blood Sucking*.

**Info:** Take 5 damage each turn in direct sunlight.  
Double damage from wooden stakes.

*Forte: Persuasion*  
*Blooper: Animals*




### S.W.A.T. TEAM MEMBER


Highly trained and heavily armed, but basically faceless so... probably gonna go down like a chump.

54 Threat


Move Distance: Close


**HP: 6**    **ACC: 7**    **ATH: 3**    **CHA: 0**  
**DEF: 2**    **INT: 0**    **SPY: 2**    **STR: 5**

**Real Serious Gun:** 3 AP,  +11 vs DEF  
Deal damage.

**Combat Knife:** 3 AP,  +9 vs DEF  
Deal damage.

**Each S.W.A.T. Team Member gets one of the following grenades, not both.**

**Stun Grenade:** 3 AP, Close  +7 vs DEF  
Once per scene, attack everyone close to the blast. If hit, targets only get 2 AP at the start of their next turn.

**Tear Gas:** 3 AP, Close  +7 vs DEF  
Once per scene, an area close to the tear gas grenade is filled with thick, noxious smoke. For the rest of the scene (or 3 minutes, whichever ends first) any rolls made in the affected area take a *blooper die* (using a gas mask or being artificial exempts you).

**Tactical Gear:**  
Has access to night vision goggles, rappelling gear, battering rams, gas masks, and much else!

### CONJOINED MUMMY


When you have a conjoined twin you never have to be alone while murderously stalking the living.


61 Threat

Move Distance: Very Close

**HP: 52**    **ACC: 2**    **ATH: -2**    **CHA: -5**  
**DEF: -2**    **INT: -4**    **SPY: 5**    **STR: 7**

**Mummy Claws:** 3 AP,  +8 vs DEF  
Deal damage.

**Bile Blast:** 3 AP, Close  +5 vs DEF  
Deal damage.

**Mummy Curse [DESPAIR]:** 5 AP,  +7 vs CHA  
Targets one person. On a hit: until the end of the scene, the target can not heal and gets *unlucky breaks* on rolls of 3 or less.

**Info:** The Conjoined Mummy has 7 AP each turn!


### ENGLISHMAN

Englishmen drink tea and they act all friendly and charming, but the fact is that Americans don't drink tea because they're pretty sure Englishmen poisoned theirs.

66 Threat


Move Distance: Close

**HP: 48**    **ACC: 6**    **ATH: 0**    **CHA: 4**  
**DEF: 4**    **INT: 6**    **SPY: 4**    **STR: 3**

**Tommy Gun:** 3 AP,  +9 vs DEF  
Deal damage.

**Cane/Secret sword:** 3 AP,  +6 vs DEF  
Deal damage.

**Patch Job:** 3 AP  
Once per scene, administer first-aid on self or adjacent ally, healing ½ total HP.

**An Offer [COERCE]:** 3 AP,  +6 vs INT  
Targets one person. Once per scene. The englishman says something specific and coercive. On a hit, the size of the success is a penalty the target takes to all rolls related to the englishman's words.

*Fortes: Sense Motive, Hide Motive, Surprised Enemies*


## SPECTER


A specter is basically a ghost with the most.

68 Threat

Move Distance: Close

**HP: 30**    **ACC: 0**    **ATH: 0**    **CHA: 0**  
**DEF: 0**    **INT: 0**    **SPY: 5**    **STR: 9**

**Spectral Slap:** 3 AP,  +9 vs DEF  
Deal damage.

**Ghastliness [FEAR]:** 2 AP,  +11 vs STR  
Once per *scene*. No multi-target penalty. On a hit, the size of the success is the penalty the target takes for the rest of the *scene* to all rolls before obstructing, hiding, or moving away from the specter in the same round.

**Transparency:** 1 AP  
Once per *scene*. The specter becomes nearly invisible and gets "Epic: Stealth [x2]" until it uses Spectral Slap.

**Poltergeist:** 2 AP  
Once per *scene*. The specter becomes invisible and possesses a *close* object. While possessing an object, the specter can use Spectral Slap or Ghastliness even if already used this *scene*. Using either ends the possession and the specter reappears *close* by.

**Info:** Specters might go away for a bit if you roundhouse kick them to 0 HP, but they tend to show back up in another *scene*. Often, there's some special method for putting them down for good.

Specters can go through stuff, but are too restless to stay safely inside the walls longer than a single round.


## YETI


This guy is so big, yeti has managed to stay hidden.

71 Threat

Move Distance: Far

**HP: 56**    **ACC: 3**    **ATH: 6**    **CHA: -5**  
**DEF: -2**    **INT: -3**    **SPY: 3**    **STR: 8**

**Tooth & Nail:** 3 AP,  +10 vs DEF  
Deal damage.

**Huck:** 5 AP, **Close**  +6 vs DEF  
Deal damage. The yeti lifts and hucks a chunk of terrain.

**Info:** So long as the temperature is below freezing, the yeti has 7 AP on its turn. The yeti is also unaffected by any hampering from deep snow.

*Forte: Stealth*

## POSSESSED MONSTER TRUCK


You're gonna die on SUNDAY SUNDAY SUNDAY!!!


79 Threat

Move Distance: Far

**HP: 50**    **ACC: 0**    **ATH: 8**    **CHA: -3**  
**DEF: 4**    **INT: 0**    **SPY: -5**    **STR: 8**

**Ramming Attack:** 3 AP,  +11 vs DEF  
Deal damage.

**Doorcheck:** 2 AP,  +6 vs DEF  
Twice per *scene*, deal damage.

**Possession [COERCE]:** 5 AP,  +8 vs INT  
Targets one person. Once per *scene*. On a hit, the truck goes still, and when the target would act next, they will be controlled by the spirit of the truck. It takes a 5 AP turn but can not use the target's *cinematic actions*.

*Fortes: Perception (mirrors!), Destroying stuff*  
*Blooper: Stealth*


## APACHE HELICOPTER


Thupthupthupthupthupthupthupthupthupthup...


82 Threat

Move Distance: Very Far

**HP: 46**    **ACC: 0**    **ATH: 16**    **CHA: 0**  
**DEF: 3**    **INT: 0**    **SPY: 0**    **STR: 0**

**Mini Gun:** 3 AP,  +7 vs DEF

**Missile:** 3 AP, **Very Far**  +12 vs DEF  
Four times a *day*. Deal damage.

**Crashplosion:** 0 AP,  +7 vs DEF  
Targets a 40x40ft area chosen based off how cool it will be. This attack is automatically triggered when the helicopter's HP or its pilot's HP is reduced to 0. The helicopter crashes and is destroyed.

**Info:** Inside is a fleshy henchperson (or similar). If there were some way to circumvent the bulletproof glass...

The apache will typically be flying well out of melee range. That said, movie helicopter pilots are usually a bit cocky and often fly much closer than they should.

Has night vision imaging.

*Blooper: Stealth*

### BEEFCAKE WARRIOR

The bulging muscles are striking, sure. The hair though... The beautiful hair is what sticks with you.


85 Threat

Move Distance: Far

**HP: 44**   **ACC: 6**   **ATH: 6**   **CHA: 5**  
**DEF: 2**   **INT: -2**   **SPY: 3**   **STR: 11**

**Muscle Fu:** 3 AP,  +11 vs DEF

Deal damage. Only take a -1 penalty for each additional target.

**Like a Ragdoll:** 3 AP,  +11 vs DEF

Once per *scene*. Deal damage. On a hit the target is moved up to a *close* amount of distance and is knocked down.

#### Rock Hard:

Beefcake Warriors get two *epic dice* to every DEF roll they make **until** an attack deals damage to them.

#### Shot Put:

When a Beefcake Warrior throws any improvised weapon, the attack gets an *epic die*.


### GIANT KILLER ROBOT

Rumor has it that these guys don't survive exposure to paradoxes, but violence just seems more reliable.

87 Threat

Move Distance: Close

**HP: 42**   **ACC: 6**   **ATH: 0**   **CHA: -4**  
**DEF: 8**   **INT: -2**   **SPY: -4**   **STR: 9**

**Rocket Fist:** 3 AP, **Very Close**  +12 vs DEF

Deal damage.

**Laser Blast:** 3 AP,  +9 vs DEF

Deal damage.

**Electro Sucker:** 2 AP

Once per *scene*, drain a nearby device of electricity. It is fried or temporarily drained.

Heal 10 HP.

**Magnetic Pull:** 3 AP

Once per *scene*, activate a built-in magnet which can pull one *close* metal object (less than 500lbs) to you, or yourself to it.

**Info:** Giant Killer Robots have some sort of weak spot somewhere on their body that might need to be exposed or discovered. Attacks on this spot go against a DEF of 0.

Giant Killer Robots aren't subject to hazards that would only affect biological creatures.

### TYRANNOSAURUS REX

You are so lucky this thing has stupid arms. Still, you better have a plan if you're gonna take this guy on!


91 Threat

Move Distance: Far

**HP: 64**   **ACC: 0**   **ATH: 8**   **CHA: 0**  
**DEF: 2**   **INT: -5**   **SPY: -5**   **STR: 11**

**Tooth & Nail:** 3 AP, **Very Close**  +13 vs DEF

Deal damage.

**Tail Swipe:** 2 AP, **Very Close**  +9 vs DEF

Twice per *scene*. Deal damage.

**Pants-Filling Roar [FEAR]:** 1 AP,  +8 vs STR

Once per *scene*, no multi-target penalty. If hit, target poops pants and gets a *blooper die* on next roll.

*Fortes:* Intimidation, Destroying stuff

*Blooper:* Arms


## MECHA-DRAGON


Apparently regular dragons weren't bad enough. It does look pretty rad though. Lots of chrome and a bitchin' rear spoiler.


100 Threat

Move Distance: Far

**HP: 80**   **ACC: 5**   **ATH: 8**   **CHA: 0**  
**DEF: 3**   **INT: 0**   **SPY: 4**   **STR: 9**

**Tooth & Tail:** 3 AP, Very Close  +11 vs DEF  
Deal damage.

**Laser Cannon:** 3 AP,  +8 vs DEF  
Deal damage.

**Flame Jet:** 2 AP, Close  +8 vs DEF  
Once per scene. Deal damage. This attack gets no multi-target penalty, but targets should all be in the same general direction.

**Info:** Mecha-dragons can fly and aren't subject to hazards that would only affect biological creatures.


## VEXIUS

Just look at the name. Whether Vexius is a demon, alien or sorcerer, we all know what Vexius is all about: seething confidence.


122 Threat

Move Distance: Far

**HP: 88**   **ACC: 8**   **ATH: 8**   **CHA: 8**  
**DEF: 8**   **INT: 8**   **SPY: 8**   **STR: 8**

**Vexing Strike:** 3 AP,  +10 vs DEF  
Deal damage.

**Missile of Vexation:** 3 AP,  +10 vs DEF  
Deal damage.

**Disenvexment [DESPAIR]:** 3 AP,  +10 vs CHA  
Take a -2 penalty for each additional target. Once per scene. Vexius says/shows/does something really messed-up. On a hit, the size of the success is a penalty the target takes to all rolls.

**Vexiplication:** 2 AP  
Once per scene. Create two illusory duplicates of Vexius. The duplicates acts convincingly but can't physically interact with anything. They disappear the next time the real Vexius takes damage.

**Vexipate:** 2 AP  
Once per scene. Go invisible until the end of your next turn. While invisible, your attack and defense rolls get an epic die. Plus, you're frickin' invisible!

**Info:** 1 Bad Edit per scene  
1 Push it to the Limit ever

*Blooper: The power of love*



# VILLAINS

Sometimes a movie is only as good as its villain. Of course villains aren't good at all. They're bad. Fortunately, this is Straight to VHS. The badder the better.

Take a look over the villains on the following pages. Maybe you'll want to use (and possibly tweak) one of them, or you might just get inspired to create your own show-stealing villain!

Villains are different from your typical bad guy, not just because they are tougher, but because they are more important to the plot. Often, villains are expected to be an ongoing presence throughout a story. You might hope to have the villain terrorize the players early on as a force they should flee from or merely beat back in a temporary manner. That's how it works in a bunch of movies, after all.

In a game, this sorta thing can feel unfair and inconsistent to players. It feels lame being put in a situation where you're "supposed to lose" only to get a chance to win when the director finally deems it to be OK. Players appreciate knowing that they're up against consistent rules and that their actions are creating real progress.

So, how do you use a villain in a fair and consistent way without the villain (or the players) getting defeated way too early on? You must activate... *slasher mode*!

**SLASHER MODE:** On the villain's first turn, they get one *epic dice token*. On their second turn, they get two more, and so on. The Director may use these tokens in any way they like. In this way, the villain tends to get more powerful the longer the fight goes on (villains have no maximum amount of *epic dice tokens*). This process should not be hidden from the players. Here's the important part, the villain loses all *epic dice tokens* at the end of the *scene*. At the end of the *scene*, the villain heals 10 + the number of *montages* the players have gone through, but otherwise keeps the damage inflicted. If encountered in a later *scene*, the villain starts over at one *epic dice token* on their first turn.

The players will have made lasting progress by eating into the villain's HP, but they'll be encouraged to escape or impede the villain rather than try to take 'em out in one go. There is one pitfall you wanna make sure to avoid when using *slasher mode*: don't make each encounter feel the same. The final encounter in particular needs to not feel like "the same fight, but this time the villain will probably die". Add additional enemies, light everything on fire, add a thick fog, set it in a crashing airplane, use clever tactics, get everyone on snowboards trying to outrace an avalanche.

When using *slasher mode*, The Director would do well to provide the players with methods of escape as well as possible distractions or goals that might eventually pull the villain away from the players. It should also be noted that the villains' *threat* numbers barely apply when using *slasher mode*. So be mindful.



**BEARBORG** is a huge, cybernetically enhanced grizzly bear, engineered to be the perfect weapon. Bearborg has sawblade teeth, enhanced cognitive abilities, pneumatic space-age limbs, baleful lasers, and advanced imaging systems. In short, keeping your food in sealed containers won't save you.

Bearborg might have broken out of a secret government lab. Or perhaps Bearborg has been sent back in time to fulfill an assassination contract. Either way, Bearborg is totally merciless. The cyborgification took away that last little bit of a bear that would maybe show mercy.

Because Bearborg's behaviour is likely pretty straight-forward, it's best used as a villain for only a session or two. Creature films usually spend a lot of screen time with the heroes being outmatched by a terrifyingly powerful creature. Consider having your players start without many resources (even by limiting their characters' starting cash). This way, they'll feel initially unprepared to deal with Bearborg early on and may seek to gain the upper-hand over time.

#### Potential Bearborg plot points:

- ◆ Bearborg's creators and/or its handlers are looking for it. Can they be trusted?
- ◆ Bearborg seems to be hunting down specific targets. Why?
- ◆ A local doesn't believe this "cyborg" nonsense and sets out to hunt the bear.
- ◆ A small piece of Bearborg falls off. Maybe something can be learned from it.
- ◆ Bearborg is drawn to other bears and it might mate and spread its cyborgified DNA.
- ◆ Bearborg didn't break out of containment. Someone let it out. But who and to what end?

#### Bearborg tactics:

- ◆ Break things
- ◆ Separate the party
- ◆ Utilize x-ray imaging, heat imaging and sense of smell to gain the upper hand

#### BEARBORG

*Bearborg is clever. Bearborg is strong. Bearborg can smell your fear.*

149 Threat

Move Distance: Far

**HP: 140**

**DEF: 4**

**ACC: 5**

**INT: 0**

**ATH: 6**

**SPY: 2**

**CHA: 0**

**STR: 8**

**Bear Arms:** 3 AP,  +11 vs DEF

Deal damage

**Laser Eye:** 3 AP,  +7 vs DEF

Deal damage.

**Info:** After taking 40 damage, Bearborg remembers that it has "Xtreme Laser Breath".

**Xtreme Laser Breath:** 5 AP,  +9 vs DEF

Deal damage. This attack only takes a -2 penalty for each additional target. Targets need to be in the same general direction.

After taking 80 damage, Bearborg remembers that it has rocket boosters which allows Bearborg to fly up to its *move distance* once per turn and then land.

Bearborg has x-ray vision and heat vision.

1 Bad Edit per scene

1 Push it to the Limit ever

*Epics: Smell (x2), Destruction*

#### Grizzly bear facts that some scientist or park ranger would totally bust out in a Bearborg movie:

- ◆ Grizzlies can run up to 30mph
- ◆ Grizzlies can weigh well over 1,000 lbs
- ◆ Grizzlies have a sense of smell about 7 times more powerful than a bloodhound's.
- ◆ The force of a grizzly's bite can reach 8,000,000 pascals. Enough to crush a damn bowling ball!
- ◆ "And that's just for regular sorts of bear. Lord knows what this cyber bear is capable of!"

#### Bearborg likes:

- ◆ Picnic baskets
- ◆ Berries
- ◆ Honey
- ◆ Salmon
- ◆ Batteries

A **DIMENSIONAL DOORWAY** is a tear in the universe through which strange forces and beings emerge. The Dimensional Doorway itself isn't just an unfortunate supernatural phenomenon, it appears to be actively malevolent!

Most of the time, a Dimensional Doorway is nearly invisible and acts in only the subtlest of ways (so no attacks). Even while quiet, the Dimensional Doorway might leak interdimensional magic which can wreak havoc. Latent magic in our heroes' world is roused, and those with dark purpose feel its pull. Furthermore, beings from the other side may slip through with dire agendas for the mortal plane.

When the Dimensional Doorway is under any sort of attack or opposition it may choose to become active. An Active Dimensional Doorway is clearly visible and can choose to use its attacks. It's also rarely alone.

#### Potential Dimensional Doorway plot points:

- ✦ The party is tasked with finding components for a spell that will close the doorway.
- ✦ The doorway is leaking magic that is causing all sorts of weird happenings.
- ✦ The portal didn't just appear. Someone created or summoned it.
- ✦ An invasion of dark creatures erupts from the doorway and more are on the way.
- ✦ The key to closing the doorway can only be found on the other side.
- ✦ Not everything that comes through is bad. A PC or NPC ally could have come through too.
- ✦ Evil doppelgangers emerge from the doorway, seeking to take over this new world.
- ✦ Someone foolishly protects/hides the portal so that they may learn its secrets.

#### The Dimensional Doorway leads to:

- ✦ A plane of Lovecraftian horror.
- ✦ A parallel universe.
- ✦ A fantasy realm of sword and sorcery.
- ✦ A grim future ruled by cruel robots.
- ✦ The Door Dimension which leads to all others.
- ✦ Who knows? Things only come out, never in.

#### ACTIVE DIMENSIONAL DOORWAY

*There's somebody at the door.*

133 Threat

Move Distance: N/A

**HP: 160**  
**DEF: 3**


**ACC: 5**  
**INT: 0**

**ATH: N/A**  
**SPY: 8**

**CHA: 4**  
**STR: 7**

**Door Slam:** 3 AP,  +8 vs DEF


Deal damage.

**Energy Arc:** 3 AP, **Close**  +6 vs DEF

Deal damage. Get a free attack on a different target within 25ft if your die rolled a 15 or higher on your attack roll, and repeat...

**Dimension Drain:** 2 AP,  +10 vs ATH or STR

No multi-target penalty. Any hit targets are pulled a *very close* distance towards the doorway.

**Scary Door [FEAR]:** 3 AP, **Very Close**  +6 vs STR

Once per *scene*. No multi-target penalty. On a hit, targets take damage and are beset by illusory horror, rendering them unable to attack on their next turn.

**Promises [COERCE]:** 2 AP,  +7 vs INT

Twice per *scene*. On a hit, the size of the success is a penalty the target takes to all rolls directly opposing the doorway.

**Info:** Can not be moved or grabbed.

1 Bad Edit per *scene*.

#### Do you have a special Doorway?

- ✦ What does it take to close the Doorway once and for all? Does it require a sacrifice?
- ✦ Is secret knowledge needed to pass through the portal, or can somebody just walk right through? Does the portal need to be "active"?
- ✦ Does the Doorway need to be activated or weakened before it can be destroyed?
- ✦ Can you see what is on the other side, or does it appear as a whirling vortex or black void?
- ✦ Does the Doorway speak? Does it read minds? Does it deceive and scheme?
- ✦ Did the doorway appear where it did due to random chance or was there a reason?
- ✦ Why is its image seared onto one of the player character's left hand?

**THE INVADER** is a large, nightmarish creature from parts unknown! It is highly aggressive and seems to enjoy eating people. The invader can be described any way you like, but it should be rather alien in design.

The invader is drawn to a particular source of energy that it needs in order to replicate. Let's have a list of some possible energy sources for you to use:

- ◆ Electricity
- ◆ Radiation
- ◆ Blood
- ◆ Alcohol
- ◆ Dreams

Exposure to its energy source allows The invader to create invaderlings which quickly gestate in some sort of egg (or inside of people if you wanna get grisly). You might choose for the invader to have a nesting area, and perhaps it saves some live prey there to be savored later (for itself or its progeny). This way, you could have a character who needs rescuing.

Crucially, The invader and its kin are weakened when exposed to something. It shouldn't be so common that The invaders are easily rendered useless (like water) or so rare that the characters will never figure it out (like radiation). Here are some possibilities:

- ◆ Freezing temperatures
- ◆ Rock & roll music
- ◆ Camera flashes and other bright lights
- ◆ Spicy foods
- ◆ Alcohol
- ◆ True Love

**When exposed to its weakness, The invader's DEF drops to zero** (same for the Invaderlings). Before the invader is weakened, it is nearly untouchable. Before it's weakened, always give your players escape routes and things to focus on aside from directly confronting the invader (such as convincing and evacuating locals, enlisting weapons and personnel, cutting off the invader's power source, discovering and collecting its weakness).

To add a layer of complexity, add a group of shadowy government agents who will stop at nothing to capture (recapture?) the creature alive. Naturally, they should be doomed to fail. They may decide that the player-characters know too much. Or worse yet, they might call in a bomb strike to wipe out the whole area!

## THE INVADER

*It is unknowable, unimaginable and nigh unstoppable!*

170 Threat (90 Threat when weakened)

Move Distance: Close

**HP: 90**

**DEF: 20**

**ACC: 0**

**INT: 0**

**ATH: 2**

**SPY: 0**

**CHA: 0**

**STR: 9**

**Tentacle:** 3 AP, Close  +10 vs DEF

Deal damage.

**Info:** The invader has 7 AP on its turn.

The invader's long tentacles can worm their way through tight spaces and can sense movement.

1 Bad Edit per scene

*Fortes: Jumping, Destroying stuff*

Consider starting the invader off with a weaker attack bonus which builds as the invader feasts.

## INVADERLING

*Smaller and weaker, but still plenty horrifying.*

12 Threat

Move Distance: Very Close

**HP: 12**

**DEF: 0**

**ACC: 0**

**INT: 0**

**ATH: -2**

**SPY: 0**

**CHA: 0**

**STR: 3**

**Tendrill:** 3 AP,  +4 vs DEF

Deal damage.

**Info:** Invaderlings seem to find their way through tight spaces and have a tendency to travel along walls and ceilings.

*Epics: Climbing*

## MATURING INVADERLING

*Less smaller and less weaker. Surprisingly, it's almost cute in this stage... in a weird sorta way.*

48 Threat

Move Distance: Close

**HP: 35**

**DEF: 10**

**ACC: 0**


**INT: 0**

**ATH: 0**

**SPY: 0**

**CHA: 0**

**STR: 6**

**Tendracle:** 3 AP, Very Close  +7 vs DEF

Deal damage.

*Epics: Climbing, Jumping, Destroying Stuff*

The formidable **NINJA BOSS** can be easily distinguished from their many ninja underlings by a slightly more ornate outfit, or maybe just a differently colored one. We also might see the ninja boss' face at some point (maybe it's someone we know?).

Ninja bosses have a lot on their plate. They've got innumerable ninja trainees to boss, schemes to hatch, clients to please (and eventually betray), plus non-stop training. So, when some scrappy heroes come along and throw a wrench in the plans, ninja bosses get understandably pissed off for real!

Ninja bosses won't even hesitate to stand around in the background while sending countless mooks to their death. And when it's finally time to say "looks like I'll have to deal with you myself", you can bet the ninja boss will get right to hiding and stabbing folks from the shadows. Ninja bosses are not out to make friends.

Ninja Bosses can be used in all sorts of plots, either as the self-motivated main villain or a secondary villain working as a mercenary for Villain #1. As long as the ninja boss is getting payment and respect, the ninja boss will get themselves and all their minions involved in just about anything.

#### Motivations:

- ◆ Have disposable employees do all the real work for as long as possible (it culls the weak ones).
- ◆ Get vengeance for even the tiniest slight.
- ◆ Crush any and all competition.
- ◆ Serve a rich and/or powerful sleazebag.
- ◆ Betray a rich and/or powerful sleazebag to show how a real sleazebag does it.
- ◆ Display the superiority of the ninja arts.
- ◆ Highlight the weakness and foolishness of compassion.

#### Tactics:

- ◆ Enter scenes unseen.
- ◆ Wait for the perfect moment to strike.
- ◆ Keep a few underlings around as bodyguards.
- ◆ Use the "Smoke Bomb" ability to retreat.
- ◆ Hide above or below targets, in order to get multiple epic dice when attacking.
- ◆ Trap someone into a 1-on-1 duel to the death.
- ◆ Lead enemies to a chosen location for battle.

### NINJA BOSS

*A master of stealth, espionage and deadly martial arts. Also, just the biggest jerkface you can imagine.*

120 Threat


Move Distance: Very Far

**HP: 90**  
**DEF: 5**


**ACC: 6**  
**INT: 4**

**ATH: 10**  
**SPY: 10**

**CHA: 0**  
**STR: 4**

**Blade:** 3 AP,  +9

Deal damage (swords, hidden shoe blades, claws)

**Projectile:** 3 AP,  +6

Deal damage (shurikens, knives, even fireworks)

**Paralyzing Strike:** 3 AP,  +7

Once per *scene*, use this ancient technique to deal damage and briefly paralyze. If someone is hit by this attack, they get 0 AP next round (*bad edits* may be used).

**Caltrops:** 2 AP

Once per *scene*, when noone is looking, lay spiky caltrops on the ground, filling an area whose edges are *very close* to each other. Caltrops can be noticed with a SPY roll of 10 (in bright light) to 20 (in darkness). If someone walks on them, roll a +7 melee attack against them.

**Smoke Bomb:** 2 AP

Once per *scene*, create a momentary cloud of smoke and reappear anywhere within *far* range. If you reappear behind cover, you're automatically hidden.

**Derisive Echoing Laughter:** 1 AP

Once per *scene*, while hidden, your laughter rings out and echoes in every direction, as if you are everywhere. Every target you are hidden from gets a *blooper die* on their next roll.

**Info:** The Ninja Boss gets an *epic die* on any attacks made from above or below their target.

1 Bad Edit per *scene*

*Fortes:* Acrobatics, Perception, Stealth

#### The Weapons of a Ninja Boss:

Ninja Bosses have a sacred duty to show off lots of hidden weapons. Blades hide in shoes and in the handles of other blades. Projectiles include shurikens, throwing knives, bolts from tiny crossbows, and firework-like rockets shot from the wrist. The Ninja Boss always aims to surprise and deceive.

**TOMMY SNIZ** is a clever and charismatic criminal with lots of cash and connections.

Tommy practically has the whole damn city in his pocket. How? By subjugating one important person at a time. That might not sound easy, but for a clever dirtbag like Tommy Sniz it's as simple as utilizing some hired muscle, some blackmail, the occasional charitable donations with strings attached and by having no problems with doing the wrong thing.

When the player-characters are at odds with Tommy Sniz, there's always a chance that they're being watched by one of his agents, or that a supposed ally has actually been working for Tommy all along.

Tommy can be a main villain, or he could be a rival who is working towards the same general goal as the players... of course Tommy probably has a more nefarious purpose and won't hesitate to directly take out his competition. Then again, he might let the players do all the hard work, keeping tabs on them all the while so that he can get what he wants with minimal effort.

Tommy is never really alone. His men are just a signal away and he usually has options available for a quick getaway.

If things start looking grim for himself, Tommy will attempt to bargain with the player-characters.

Interactions with Tommy should be pleasant on the surface. He offers drinks, gives compliments, jokes around and generally tries to ingratiate himself.

If any of the player-characters seem to be remotely falling for it, consider rolling CHA for Tommy (with an epic die from his Coercion *forte*) against the character's INT. If Tommy succeeds, the player character takes a *dramatic effect* penalty (the size of Tommy's success) to actions meant to hurt Tommy. To read more about *dramatic effects*, see [page 48](#).

### TOMMY SNIZ

*Tommy Sniz wants a piece of everything, and everybody wants a piece of Tommy Sniz.*

90 Threat


Move Distance: Close

**HP: 60**  
**DEF: 4**


**ACC: 6**  
**INT: 8**

**ATH: 3**  
**SPY: 6**

**CHA: 8**  
**STR: 3**

**Brass Knuckles:** 3 AP,  +6 vs DEF  
Deal damage.

**Magnum Revolver:** 3 AP,  +10 vs DEF  
Deal damage.

**Hand Grenade:** 3 AP, Close  +8 vs DEF  
Once per *day*. Deal damage on a 30x30ft target.

**Meat Shield:** 0 AP  
Once per *day*, when you take damage, make an adjacent person (but not the attacker) take the damage instead.

**Info:** Tommy gets an extra *epic die* against enemies that he is hidden from.

1 Bad Edit per *scene*

1 Push it to the Limit ever

*Fortes: Crime, Business, Deceit, Coercion*

### Assets:

- ◆ A few million bucks to throw around.
- ◆ His own personal helicopter
- ◆ A sizable crew of henchmen and specialists
- ◆ Eyes and ears in the police department
- ◆ Private investigators, skilled at gathering material for blackmail.
- ◆ Blackmailed officials on whom he can call for a favor.

### Likes:

- ◆ Memorabilia from Hollywood's golden age
- ◆ Blondes in glasses
- ◆ Information
- ◆ Cocaine

### Dislikes:

- ◆ Competition
- ◆ Peanuts (allergic)
- ◆ Being touched



**TORFF, THE WARLOCK** has traveled through centuries, and possibly dimensions. He's not about to let a ragtag group of misfits stop him now.

Torff seeks some relic that was lost to him in his own time. Let's see some possibilities:

- ◆ The Jade Eye of Destiny (allows the wielder to change fate once per day, with a cost paid proportional to the change in fate.)
- ◆ The Staff of Iknus (a powerful and sentient weapon. The thing doesn't shut up!)
- ◆ The Nightkey. An onyx crystal, which will allow Torff to free his eldritch master!

In his own time, this relic is guarded by sacred warriors or some such. However, by scrying the future, Torff has discovered the relic under comparably pitiful security in a modern museum or private collection.

Alternatively, Torff has discovered that there is a prophesied warrior in this time (probably one of the player-characters). If Torff can defeat them in battle, he shall grow even more powerful.

In either case, traveling through time has left Torff weakened and disoriented. Mechanically speaking, he's getting a blooper die to all attack rolls. He also might find himself unprepared for the challenges of the modern world. This ought to result in Torff not quite accomplishing his goals on his first try, giving the player-characters a chance to encounter him early and drive him off (he can get himself out of a losing situation thanks to his high HP and teleportation ability). At this point, the players might prepare for his return, or try to hunt him down before he has time to recuperate.

Torff might have arrived with buddies, but he might also attempt to enlist modern help with the aid of his genuine gold coins and impressive powers. One method of recruitment would be his necromancy, with which he can raise the dead as loyal servants.

Players could have their character/s be the last of the protectors of the relic (or keepers of the prophecy). Other characters could be the owner or discoverer of the relic, or the figure in the prophecy.

Or do something totally different: Maybe Torff is a vengeful hippie with a spell book. I mean, what am I? The boss of you? Get weird with it.

## TORFF, THE WARLOCK

"Check the freakazoid in the cape! Hey! Weirdo! Who let you in h-AAAAAUGGGGHHH!!! ... Ribbit."

103 Threat


Move Distance: Close


**HP: 110**  
**DEF: 4**


**ACC: 3**  
**INT: 5**

**ATH: 0**  
**SPY: 5**


**CHA: 0**  
**STR: 2**

**Staff Thwack:** 3 AP, **Very Close**  +5 vs DEF  
Deal damage.

**Magic Staff Bolt:** 3 AP, **Very Far**  +8 vs DEF  
Deal damage.

**Transmogrify:** 3 AP, **Close**  +5 vs DEF

Once per *scene*. On a success, the target turns into a woodland critter until the end of the scene. Woodland critters can't use items and have a STR of -5.

**Feargasm [FEAR]:** 2 AP,  +7 vs STR

Once per *scene*. Take a -3 penalty for each additional target. On a success, the target is overcome with terrible visions. For the rest of the *scene*, the target takes a penalty the size of Torff's success to all rolls made before obstructing, hiding, or moving away from Torff in the same round.

**Necromancy:** 3 AP

Once per *scene*, turn an adjacent corpse into an undead servant. The undead servant has the same stats they had in life except their HP is halved and they take a blooper die on all rolls. They enter combat next round.

**Teleport:** 2 AP

Once per *scene*, teleport to any open spot within *far* range.

**Bolster:** 3 AP

Once per *scene*. Bolstering gives two *epic dice* on a roll next round.

**Double Down:** 0 AP.

Once per *scene*, regain an expended "Once per *scene*" ability.

*Fortes:* Mysticism,

*Blooper:* Current Events, Pop Culture, Technology

Each *scene*, after the party has run afoul of Torff, the Director rolls a d20. On an 18 or higher, Torff has witnessed the scene in his magic crystal.

# CREATIVE PROMPTS

*This section is here to provide optional prompts for character personalities and backgrounds as well as elements for the Director to use. Basically, these are just here to get you thinking.*

## **CHARACTER TRAITS::**

1. You are/used to be a priest or nun. Lately your faith has been challenged.
2. You're smoking that reefer any chance you can get.
3. You've come from another planet to learn about this "love."
4. You served in 'Nam and saw some shit, man.
5. You are an "Indian shaman," supposedly.
6. You don't let people get close to you. People who do always end up getting hurt.
7. You are/were working for the Kremlin, but the tides are changing.
8. You are a hot tub salesperson always looking for clients.
9. You are/were a crooked cop with conflicting loyalties.
10. You are a carnie. No one just stops being a carnie.
11. You are a virgin and lie about it.
12. You are a disgraced former member of the Secret Service seeking redemption.
13. You are a chainsmoker trying to kick the habit.
14. You are an Olympic athlete, cheated out of the gold.
15. You are an incorrigible pervert, looking for love.
16. You've come from the future, but you can't remember why or much of anything.
17. You have face cancer and time is running out.
18. You are in the witness protection program, but your old life has come knocking.
19. You have a child somewhere out there, but you couldn't be there for them.
20. You are/were a prostitute. You, of course, have a heart of gold.
21. You ain't got time for these damn kids.
22. You have just woken from a coma and are suffering from amnesia.
23. No one knows that you're...The Steely Shadow.
24. You make drinking look fun and wholesome.
25. You're the only one that gets it. They're already here, man! They are among us!
26. You have/are an evil twin, raised in Quebec by gypsies.
27. You are suffering from a recurring nightmare; bits are coming true.
28. You are a bounty hunter. Your latest target: Your sister.
29. You have given up a life of crime...or have you?
30. You have multiple personalities and one speaks only Spanish.
31. You've been married four times. They all had the same name.
32. You are in a rock band, but are looking to go solo.
33. Your sensei was murdered. He was going to teach you the ultimate technique.
34. You've fallen on hard times. But you know the gold is buried somewhere 'round here!
35. You never knew your real parents. You wonder if they too had the gift.

## BAD MOVIE PLOT ELEMENTS:

- |                             |                                    |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1. Aliens                   | 30. Kung fu                        |
| 2. Alternate histories      | 31. Lost islands                   |
| 3. Androids                 | 32. Mafia                          |
| 4. Antichrist               | 33. Military occupation            |
| 5. Apocalyptic wastelands   | 34. Monsters                       |
| 6. Assassination            | 35. Mutant anything!               |
| 7. Asteroids                | 36. Natural disasters              |
| 8. Bank robberies           | 37. Nuclear launch codes           |
| 9. Bioweapons               | 38. Parallel universes             |
| 10. Casinos                 | 39. Planetary colonization         |
| 11. Circuses                | 40. Prophecy                       |
| 12. Crooked cops            | 41. Psychic powers                 |
| 13. Cults                   | 42. Road Trips                     |
| 14. Curses                  | 43. Robots                         |
| 15. Dance competitions      | 44. Saving the holidays            |
| 16. Demons and/or the devil | 45. School dances                  |
| 17. Digital worlds          | 46. Scientific experiments         |
| 18. Dinosaurs               | 47. Sewer mutants                  |
| 19. Drug lords              | 48. Square school deans            |
| 20. Evil communists         | 49. Street gangs                   |
| 21. Federal agents          | 50. Time travelers                 |
| 22. Giant animals           | 51. Totalitarianism                |
| 23. Goblins                 | 52. "Unlocking 100% of your brain" |
| 24. Heists                  | 53. Vampires                       |
| 25. Hypnotists              | 54. Werewolves                     |
| 26. Indian burial grounds   | 55. Wild West                      |
| 27. International spies     | 56. Witchcraft                     |
| 28. Jazz clubs              | 57. Worldwide conspiracies         |
| 29. Hybrid creatures        | 58. Zombies                        |

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The following two pages are extremely important! They're the Straight to VHS character sheet. Print out both pages for each player and have them fill in the values as indicated by the *tropes*, *perks* and *items* they've picked for their character. And don't forget to include the *stat tweaks*! That's it. You know it all.

Thanks for checking out Straight to VHS. We hope you'll check out [lostcatgames.com](http://lostcatgames.com) or subscribe to the [r/StraightToVHS](https://www.reddit.com/r/StraightToVHS) subreddit to keep up with the game's ongoing development.

You may copy, print, edit or distribute the next two pages in any way you like.

**STRAIGHT TO VHS** 

NUMBER OF MONTAGES:

CHARACTER NAME:

MOVE DISTANCE:

MAX HP	CURRENT HP

**HEAL 5 + # OF MONTAGES AFTER EACH SCENE.**

DEATH CHECKS		

**MARK A BOX IF YOU  
START A TURN AT 0 HP  
OR TAKE DAMAGE AT 0  
HP.**

***CLEAR DEATH CHECKS IF YOU GET A MONTAGE.***

WORKSPACE FOR STAT BONUSES FROM TROPES/TWEAKS/ETC...					
ACC					
ATH					
CHA					
DEF					
INT					
SPY					
STR					

**ACC + RANGED WEAPON = \_\_\_\_\_**

**STR + MELEE WEAPON = \_\_\_\_\_**

FORTES	BLOOPERS

**USED?**

## CINEMATIC ACTIONS

[illegible]

## TROPE AND PERK FEATURES

[illegible]

ITEMS: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**-SCRIPT CHANGES-****CHECK THIS BOX WHEN  
YOU ROLL A 1 OR 20**☐**CHECK THIS BOX WHEN  
YOU SHOW WEAKNESS**☐**WHEN ONE BOX IS CHECKED,  
SELECT A CONCEPT.****WHEN BOTH ARE CHECKED,  
YOUR SCRIPT CHANGE IS  
READY TO USE.****SCRIPT CHANGE CONCEPTS**

<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>A CHARACTER ARRIVES</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>AN EMOTION IS FELT</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>A MISHAP OCCURS</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>A THING IS AT HAND</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>A TRUTH IS REVEALED</b>

WHAT DO YOU LOOK LIKE?: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

WHAT'S INCREDIBLE ABOUT YOU?: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

WHAT'S NORMAL ABOUT YOU?: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

TELL US MORE!: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_