

# NUMENÉRA

## PLAYER'S GUIDE



BY MONTE COOK



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For a free downloadable copy of the official Numenera character sheet and a step-by-step guide to character creation using this sheet, visit [www.numenera.com/charactersheet](http://www.numenera.com/charactersheet).

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*The older man stokes the fire, stirring the embers, some of which float into the night sky. The young girl's gaze follows them as the sparks join the panoply of stars.*

*"Our world is very young," the man says. He leans heavily on his gnarled wooden staff and adjusts his tattered cloak with one hand. "But it is built upon the bones of another, much older world."*

*The girl nods.*

*"Many worlds, actually. Most people say eight, but it could be more. They say eight so that they can call our world the Ninth World."*

*She nods again, but he can see that she doesn't truly understand. Does he? Can anyone comprehend such a passage of time? The face of the world had shifted so much. Even the stars were not untouched by the changing aeons.*

*"The people that came before us, if people they were, commanded great powers." He pulls from his leather pouch a thing made of metal and the light, smooth material called synth. He uses his thumb to touch the clear panel in well practiced, if not entirely understood, ways. The air around the device fills with light that dances and moves in symbols and pictures that mean nothing to him. The girl gasps and then laughs in delight.*

*"Some of their ancient powers remain, even though the people do not," he tells her. "And some bring wonder and beauty. But others bring deaths for which we have no name. Their legacy is a blessing and a curse."*

*"Magic," the girl whispers.*

*The man smiles. "We call it the numenera."*



Welcome to the Ninth World, where technology is magic and even our most distant future is still very much the past. The Ninth World is the setting of the roleplaying game **NUMENERA™**. This book is the *Numenera Player's Guide*, not the full rulebook. The *Player's Guide* offers a brief overview of the setting and the rules of the game, and it provides all the information you need to create a character so you can play Numenera, explore the Ninth World, and discover its wonders and dangers for yourself.

In a roleplaying game, the players take on the roles of people in a fictional world. Each player creates a character to portray, and together, the players create a story. In their imagination, the players experience the same challenges and rewards that their characters experience. To facilitate this, the rules of the game govern whether characters succeed or fail at what they try to do. This book sometimes refers to the player characters as PCs.

In addition to the players who are the characters in the story, there is another player—the game master—who is not only the arbiter of the rules but also the crafter of the narrative. The game master (sometimes referred to as the GM) introduces complications, enemies, allies, twists, and surprises into the story. He or she should have a copy of the full corebook—*Numenera*, which includes all the information from this book, plus much more. As a

player, you can read through the corebook if you wish, but everything you need is here.

Numenera is all about discovery. In the game, your character will discover wonders of the prior ages (our own world's far distant future) and a technology so advanced that, as author Arthur C. Clarke wrote, it is indistinguishable from magic. You will discover mysteries to solve and meet interesting people who populate this strange world. You will discover dangerous foes in the form of extraterrestrials, robots, mutants, or the genetic experiments of the past. You will discover technology called the numenera that will aid in your endeavors.

The key to playing Numenera is the story. The way to “win” this game is to come away with a great tale. Always remember that your character is one of the main heroes in a fabulous science-fantasy narrative. The Ninth World is a weird and wondrous place, and the trials and tribulations you face are part of that story. Through your character, you will discover things unlike anything you've dreamed of, and in so doing craft a tale with your friends that you'll always remember.

Read through the Numenera Overview (page 4), and then jump right in and make a character. You don't have to read through every character option right away—just choose a type, descriptor, and focus that sound interesting, and get going!

A whole new world awaits you.



# NUMENERA OVERVIEW

*“Any sufficiently advanced technology is indistinguishable from magic.”*  
—Arthur C. Clarke

*The key to playing Numenera is the story. The way to “win” this game is to come away with a great tale.*

There have been eight previous worlds. You may refer to them as ages, aeons, epochs, or eras, but it’s not wrong to think of each as its own individual world. Each former world stretched across vast millennia of time. Each played host to a race whose civilizations rose to supremacy but eventually died or scattered, disappeared or transcended. During the time that each world flourished, those that ruled it spoke to the stars, reengineered their physical bodies, and mastered form and essence, all in their own unique ways.

Each left behind remnants.

The Ninth World is built on the bones of the previous eight, and in particular the last four. Reach into the dust, and you’ll find that each particle has been worked, manufactured, or grown, and then ground back into *drit*—a fine, artificial soil—by the relentless power of time. Look to the horizon—is that a mountain, or part of an impossible monument to the forgotten emperor of a lost people? Feel that subtle vibration beneath your feet and know that ancient engines—vast machines the size of kingdoms—still operate in the bowels of the earth.

The Ninth World is about discovering the wonders of the worlds that came before it, not for their own sake, but as the means to improve the present and build a future.

Each of the prior eight worlds, in its own way, is too distant, too different, too incomprehensible. Life today is too dangerous to dwell on a past that cannot be understood. The people excavate and study the marvels of the prior epochs just enough to help them survive in the world they have been given. They know that energies and knowledge are suspended invisibly in the air, that reshaped continents of iron and glass—below, upon, and above the earth—hold vast treasures, and that secret doorways to stars and other dimensions and realms provide power and secrets and death. They sometimes call it magic, and who are we to say that they’re wrong?

More often, however, when they find leftovers of the old worlds—the devices, the vast machine complexes, the altered landscapes, the changes wrought upon living

creatures by ancient energies, the invisible nano-spirits hovering in the air in clouds called the Iron Wind, the information transmitted into the so-called datasphere, and the remnants of visitors from other dimensions and alien planets—they call these things *the numenera*. In the Ninth World, the numenera is both a boon and a bane. It makes life very different from any other time on Earth.

In a southern part of the vast, singular continent of the Ninth World lies a cluster of settled lands collectively called the Steadfast. Although each of the kingdoms and principalities of the Steadfast has its own ruler, a leader known as the Amber Pope guides the Order of Truth, an organization of Aeon Priests that commands a great deal of respect in the region. Thus, the Amber Pope is likely the most powerful ruler in the Steadfast even though he does not govern a single square foot of land. The Order of Truth reveres the people of the past and their knowledge on a quasireligious level of adoration and faith. It is a religion devoted to science.

Deeper in the wilds lies a region called the Beyond, where villages and communities are isolated and rare. Here, Aeon Priests still study the secrets of the past, but they do so cloistered in remote caves. These priests do little more than pay lip service to the Amber Pope, if that, and are not considered part of the Order of Truth. Like the regions in which they live, and the caves in which they work, they are isolated, islands unto themselves.

## THE PEOPLE OF THE NINTH WORLD

In the youth of an age, people use the resources they have on hand, coupled with whatever understanding of their world they can master, to carve out a life for themselves. In the Ninth World, the resources are the numenera—the detritus of the prior eras—and the people’s understanding of these resources is crude and incomplete. The Aeon Priests possess just enough discernment and knowledge to suggest possible uses for things, but so much remains to be discovered. Even



the creatures and plants of the Ninth World are strange by-products of the prior ages; the past left behind flora, fauna, and machines, some designed by lore or nature, others transplanted from distant stars or dimensions.

The people of the Ninth World clothe themselves in newly spun fabrics but weave the artifacts of the past into each garment. They forge armor, weapons, and tools from materials recovered from ancient structures and devices. Some of these materials are metals, but others are (or appear to be) glass, stone, bone, flesh, or substances that defy categorization and understanding.

Those who risk the mysterious dangers to recover the relics of the past provide a valuable service. Typically these brave souls—warrior glaives, science-wielding nanos, and wily jacks—bring their findings to the Aeon Priests, who use the artifacts to fashion tools, weapons, and other boons for the growing civilization. As time passes, more individuals learn to use the numenera, but it still remains a mystery to most people.

Who, then, are the people of the Ninth World? Most are humans, although not all that call themselves human truly are. There are likewise the abhumans: some mutants, crossbreeds, genetically engineered, and their offspring. And then there are the visitants, who are not native to the earth but who now call the Ninth World home, and who have no more understanding of the past (even their own) than anyone else.

## THE NUMENERA

People with knowledge of the relics of older worlds divide them into three types: artifacts, cyphers, and oddities.

**ARTIFACTS** are large devices that typically can be used more than once to produce the same result. An artifact

might be a belt that creates a shield of invisible force to protect the wearer or a flying skiff that carries people and cargo from one place to another. The term is almost always used for an item that has an obvious purpose—a weapon, a defense, a mode of transport, a means of communication or learning new information, a means of obtaining food or other necessities, and so forth. Artifacts make their users more powerful, or they make life easier or better.

**CYPHERS** are usually small, minor devices that most characters can coax a single effect from before they are depleted and become curiosities or decorations. They might include a quick injection designed to repair physical damage in a living creature or a handheld object that, when manipulated properly, becomes a weapon that explodes with tremendous force. However, cyphers are dangerous when gathered together because they create radiation and harmonic frequencies that are inimical to human life.

**ODDITIES** are the relics that are neither cyphers nor artifacts. They serve no obvious purpose but have strange functions that are at least curious, if not downright entertaining. Examples include a piece of glass in a metal frame that shows peculiar images or a box with three bells that ring at unpredictable times. Not everything from the prior worlds can be understood. In fact, much of it cannot.

## LOOKING AT THE NINTH WORLD FROM THE 21ST CENTURY

The Ninth World is a science-fantasy setting approximately a billion years in the future. The people of the world dwell amid the flotsam of impossible ultratech of eight prior



civilizations and call it magic. Unimaginably huge machines lie beneath the earth, and satellites orbit high above, transmitting a web of data and free energy. Nanotech, gravitic technology, genetic engineering, spatial warping, and superdense polymers allowed the inhabitants of the previous worlds to reshape the planet. Mass and energy were theirs to command.

In many ways, the Ninth World is a medieval fantasy setting without the historicity. When people who haven't done a lot of homework on the dark ages run a traditional fantasy game, they often insert modern sensibilities or developments such as democracy, hygiene, or matches. But in the Ninth World, these things, and more, make sense. Characters can have rain slickers, ink pens, zippers, and plastic bags, all left over from the prior eras (or fashioned from leavings of the past). They can understand how illnesses are transmitted or how socialism works. They can know that the earth revolves around the sun and be aware of other "anachronistic" bits of knowledge.

On the other hand, characters in Numenera don't refer to weapons as "guns" or vehicles as "cars." The technology in the Ninth World is too advanced and too alien for such terminology to have endured. Using 21st-century terms for weapons and vehicles is as inappropriate as using medieval terms. The numenera is weird—much of it wasn't created by humans or for humans. It isn't designed or presented in any way that might be familiar to the players or the characters. Only through experimentation, player insight, and character skill can the PCs identify, and possibly use, what they find.

Perhaps even more important, the artifacts, cyphers, and oddities that characters use probably aren't serving their original purpose. The explosive cypher that a character tosses at an enemy might have been the power source for a vehicle. The force field the enemy uses to protect herself from the blast might have been designed to contain the radiation of the fuel rods in a miniature nuclear reactor.

Welcome to the Ninth World, where every discovery might save you—or kill you. But you won't know until you try.



Throughout this book you'll find places where we suggest you ask your GM for additional information. The GM can find this information in the Numenera corebook.

## RULES OVERVIEW

Numenera uses a twenty-sided die (1d20) to determine the results of most actions. Whenever a *roll* of any kind is called for and no die is specified, roll a d20.

The game master sets a *difficulty* for any given task. There are 10 degrees of difficulty. Thus, the difficulty of a task can be rated on a scale of 1 to 10.

Each difficulty has a *target number* associated with it. The target number is always three times the task's difficulty, so a difficulty 4 task has a target number of 12. To succeed at the task, you must roll the target number or higher.

Character skills, favorable circumstances, or excellent equipment can decrease the difficulty of a task. For example, if a character is trained in climbing, she turns a difficulty 6 climb into a difficulty 5 climb. This is called *decreasing the difficulty by one step*. If she is specialized in climbing, she turns a difficulty 6 climb into a difficulty 4 climb. This is called *decreasing the difficulty by two steps*.

A *skill* is a category of knowledge, ability, or activity relating to a task, such as climbing, geography, or persuasiveness. A character who has a skill is better at completing related tasks than a character who lacks the skill. A character's level of skill is either *trained* (reasonably skilled) or *specialized* (very skilled).

If you are trained in a skill relating to a task, you decrease the difficulty of that task by one step. If you are specialized, you decrease the difficulty by two steps. A skill can never decrease a task's difficulty by more than two steps.

Anything else that reduces difficulty (help from an ally, a particular piece of equipment, or some other advantage) is referred to as an *asset*. Assets can never decrease a task's difficulty by more than two steps.

You can also decrease the difficulty of a given task by applying Effort. (Effort is described in more detail on page 11.)

## TASK DIFFICULTY

TASK DIFFICULTY	DESCRIPTION	TARGET NO.	GUIDANCE
0	Routine	0	Anyone can do this basically every time.
1	Simple	3	Most people can do this most of the time.
2	Standard	6	Typical task requiring focus, but most people can usually do this.
3	Demanding	9	Requires full attention; most people have a 50/50 chance to succeed.
4	Difficult	12	Trained people have a 50/50 chance to succeed.
5	Challenging	15	Even trained people often fail.
6	Intimidating	18	Normal people almost never succeed.
7	Formidable	21	Impossible without skills or great effort.
8	Heroic	24	A task worthy of tales told for years afterward.
9	Immortal	27	A task worthy of legends that last lifetimes.
10	Impossible	30	A task that normal humans couldn't consider (but one that doesn't break the laws of physics).





To sum up, three things can decrease a task's difficulty: skills, assets, and Effort.

If you can decrease a task's difficulty to 0, you automatically succeed and don't need to make a roll.

## WHEN DO YOU ROLL?

Any time your character attempts a task, the GM assigns a difficulty to that task, and you roll a d20 against the associated target number.

When you jump from a burning vehicle, swing a battleaxe at a mutant beast, swim across a raging river, identify a strange device, convince a merchant to give you a lower price, craft an object, use a power to control a foe's mind, or use a heat-beam emitter to carve a hole in a wall, you make a d20 roll.

However, if you attempt something that has a difficulty of 0, no roll is needed—you automatically succeed. Many actions have a difficulty of 0. Examples include walking across the room and opening a door, using a special ability to negate gravity so you can fly, using an ability to protect your friend from radiation, or activating a device (that you already understand) to erect a force field. These are all routine actions and don't require rolls.

Using skill, assets, and Effort, you can decrease the difficulty of potentially any task to 0 and thus negate the need for a roll. Walking across a narrow wooden beam is tricky for most people, but for an experienced gymnast, it's routine. You can even decrease the difficulty of an attack on a foe to 0 and succeed without rolling.

If there's no roll, there's no chance for failure. However, there's also no chance for remarkable success (in

Numenera, that usually means rolling a 19 or 20; see Special Rolls on page 8).

## COMBAT

Making an attack in combat works the same way as any other roll: the GM assigns a difficulty to the task, and you roll a d20 against the associated target number.

The difficulty of your attack roll depends on how powerful your opponent is. Just as tasks have a difficulty from 1 to 10, creatures have a level from 1 to 10. Most of the time, the difficulty of your attack roll is the same as the creature's level. For example, if you attack a level 2 bandit, it's a level 2 task, so your target number is 6.

It's worth noting that players make all die rolls. If a character attacks a creature, the player makes an attack roll. If a creature attacks a character, the player makes a defense roll.

The damage dealt by an attack is not determined by a roll—it's a flat number based on the weapon or attack used. For example, a spear always does 4 points of damage.

Your Armor characteristic reduces the damage you take from attacks directed at you. You get Armor from wearing physical armor (such as a sturdy leather jerkin or chainmail) or from special abilities. Like weapon damage, Armor is a flat number, not a roll. If you're attacked, subtract your Armor from the damage you take. For example, a leather jerkin gives you 1 point of Armor, meaning that you take 1 less point of damage from attacks. If a bandit hits you with a knife for 2 points of damage while you're wearing a leather jerkin, you take only 1 point of damage. If your Armor reduces the damage from an attack to 0, you take no damage from that attack.



When you see the word “Armor” capitalized in the game rules (other than as the name of a special ability), it refers to your Armor characteristic—the number you subtract from incoming damage. When you see the word “armor” with a lowercase “a,” it refers to any physical armor you might wear.

Typical physical weapons come in three categories: light, medium and heavy.

**LIGHT WEAPONS** inflict only 2 points of damage, but they reduce the difficulty of the attack roll by one step because they are fast and easy to use. Light weapons are punches, kicks, clubs, knives, handaxes, rapiers, and so on. Weapons that are particularly small are light weapons.

**MEDIUM WEAPONS** inflict 4 points of damage. Medium weapons include swords, battleaxes, maces, crossbows, spears, and so on. Most weapons are medium. Anything that could be used in one hand (even if it’s often used in two hands, such as a quarterstaff or spear) is a medium weapon.

**HEAVY WEAPONS** inflict 6 points of damage, and you must use two hands to attack with them. Heavy weapons are huge swords, great hammers, massive axes, halberds, heavy crossbows, and so on. Anything that must be used in two hands is a heavy weapon.

## BONUSES

Rarely, an ability or piece of equipment does not decrease a task’s difficulty but instead adds a bonus to the die roll. Bonuses always add together, so if you get a +1 bonus from two different sources, you have a +2 bonus. If you get enough bonuses to add up to a +3 bonus for a task, treat it as an asset: instead of adding the bonus to your roll, decrease the difficulty by one step. Therefore, you never add more than +1 or +2 to a die roll.

## SPECIAL ROLLS

When you roll a natural 19 (the d20 shows “19”) and the roll is a success, you also have a minor effect. In combat, a minor effect inflicts 3 additional points of damage with your attack, or, if you’d prefer a special result, you could decide instead that you knock the foe back, distract him, or something similar. When not in combat, a minor effect could mean that you perform the action with particular grace. For example, when jumping down from a ledge, you land smoothly on your feet, or when trying to persuade someone, you convince her that you’re smarter than you really are. In other words, you not only succeed but also go a bit further.

When you roll a natural 20 (the d20 shows “20”) and the roll is a success, you also have a major effect. This is similar to a minor effect, but the results are more remarkable. In combat, a major effect inflicts 4 additional points of



You don’t earn XP for killing foes or overcoming standard challenges in the course of play. Discovery is the soul of Numenera.

damage with your attack, but again, you can choose instead to introduce a dramatic event such as knocking down your foe, stunning him, or taking an extra action. Outside of combat, a major effect means that something beneficial happens based on the circumstance. For example, when climbing up a cliff wall, you make the ascent twice as fast. When a roll grants you a major effect, you can choose to use a minor effect instead if you prefer.

In combat (and only in combat), if you roll a natural 17 or 18 on your attack roll, you add 1 or 2 additional points of damage, respectively. Neither roll has any special effect options—just the extra damage.

Rolling a natural 1 is always bad. It means that the GM introduces a new complication into the encounter.

## RANGE AND SPEED

Distance is simplified into three categories: immediate, short, and long.

**IMMEDIATE DISTANCE** from a character is within reach or within a few steps. If a character stands in a small room, everything in the room is within immediate distance. At most, immediate distance is 10 feet (3 m).

**SHORT DISTANCE** is anything greater than immediate distance but less than 50 feet (15 m) or so.

**LONG DISTANCE** is anything greater than short distance but less than 100 feet (30 m) or so. (Beyond that range, distances are always specified—500 feet [152 m], a mile [1.6 km], and so on.)

The idea is that it’s not necessary to measure precise distances. Immediate distance is right there, practically next to the character. Short distance is nearby. Long distance is farther off.

All weapons and special abilities use these terms for ranges. For example, all melee weapons have immediate range—they are close-combat weapons, and you can use them to attack anyone within immediate distance of you. A thrown knife (and most other thrown weapons) has short range. A bow has long range. A nano’s Onslaught ability also has short range.

A character can move an immediate distance as part of another action. In other words, he can take a few steps over to the control panel and activate a switch. He can lunge across a small room to attack a foe. He can open a door and step through.

A character can move a short distance as his entire action for a turn. He can also try to move a long distance



as his entire action, but the player might have to roll to see if the character slips, trips, or stumbles as the result of moving so far so quickly.

For example, if the PCs are fighting a group of abhumans, any character can likely attack any abhuman in the general melee—they're all within immediate range. Exact positions aren't important. Creatures in a fight are always moving, shifting, and jostling, anyway. However, if one abhuman stayed back to use his crossbow, a character might have to use her entire action to move the short distance required to attack that foe. It doesn't matter if the abhuman is 20 feet (6 m) or 40 feet (12 m) away—it's simply considered short distance. It does matter if he's more than 50 feet (15 m) away because that distance would require a long move.

## EXPERIENCE POINTS

Experience points (XP) are rewards given to players when the GM intrudes on the story (this is called GM intrusion) with a new and unexpected challenge. For example, in the middle of combat, the GM might inform the player that he drops his weapon. However, to intrude in this manner, the GM must award the player 2 XP. The rewarded player, in turn, must immediately give one of those XP to another player and justify the gift (perhaps the other player had a good idea, told a funny joke, performed an action that saved a life, and so on).

Alternatively, the player can refuse the GM intrusion. If he does so, he doesn't get the 2 XP from the GM, and he must also spend 1 XP that he already has. If the player has no XP to spend, he can't refuse the intrusion.

The GM can also give players XP between sessions as a reward for recovering interesting artifacts or making discoveries during an adventure. You don't earn XP for killing foes or overcoming standard challenges in the course of play. Discovery is the soul of Numenera.

Experience points are used primarily for character advancement (for details, see Chapter 3: Creating Your Character, page 10), but a player can also spend 1 XP to reroll any die roll and take the better of the two rolls.

## CYPHERS

As explained in Chapter 2: Numenera Overview, cyphers are a type of numenera that have a single minor use. A character can carry cyphers and use them during the game. You can't bear many cyphers at a time because a large number of these weird items emit radiation or dangerous chemicals that



In Numenera, players make all die rolls. If a character attacks a creature, the player makes an attack roll. If a creature attacks a character, the player makes a defense roll.

don't mix well. Gathering cyphers together in one place is extraordinarily unhealthy.

Characters will find new cyphers frequently in the course of play, so players shouldn't hesitate to use their cypher abilities. Because cyphers are always different, the characters will always have new special powers to try.

There are two kinds of cyphers: *anoetic* and *occultic*.

**ANOETIC CYPHERS** are simple to use: a pill to swallow, a small handheld device with a switch to flip, or a bomb to throw.

**OCCULTIC CYPHERS** are more complex and more dangerous, but they often have better and more interesting effects. An occultic cypher counts as two cyphers for the purpose of determining how many you can bear at the same time.

## OTHER DICE

In addition to a d20, you'll need a d6 (a six-sided die). Rarely, you'll need to roll a number between 1 and 100 (often called a d100 or d% roll), which you can do by rolling a d20 twice, using the last digit of the first roll as the "tens" place and the last digit of the second roll as the "ones" place. For example, rolling a 17 and a 9 gives you 79, rolling a 3 and an 18 gives you 38, and rolling a 20 and a 10 gives you 00 (also known as 100). If you have a d10 (a ten-sided die), you can use it instead of the d20 to roll numbers between 1 and 100.



# CREATING YOUR CHARACTER

*This section explains how to create characters to play in a Numenera game. For a free downloadable copy of the official Numenera character sheet and a step-by-step guide to character creation using this sheet, visit [www.numenera.com/charactersheet](http://www.numenera.com/charactersheet).*

## CHARACTER STATS

Every player character has three defining characteristics, which are typically called “statistics” or “stats.” These stats are Might, Speed, and Intellect. They are broad categories that cover many different but related aspects of a character.

**MIGHT:** Might defines how strong and durable your character is. The concepts of strength, endurance, constitution, hardiness, and physical prowess are all folded into this one stat. Might isn’t relative to size; instead, it’s an absolute measurement. An elephant has more Might than the mightiest tiger, which has more Might than the mightiest rat, which has more Might than the mightiest spider.

Might governs actions from forcing doors open to walking for days without food to resisting disease. It’s also the primary means of determining how much damage your character can sustain in a dangerous situation. Physical characters, tough characters, and characters interested in fighting should focus on Might.

**SPEED:** Speed describes how fast and physically coordinated your character is. The stat embodies quickness, movement, dexterity, and reflexes. Speed governs such divergent actions as dodging attacks, sneaking around quietly, and throwing a ball accurately. It helps determine whether you can move farther on your turn. Nimble, fast, or sneaky characters will want good Speed stats, as will those interested in ranged combat.

**INTELLECT:** This stat determines how smart, knowledgeable, and likable your character is. It includes intelligence, wisdom, charisma, education, reasoning, wit, willpower, and charm. Intellect governs solving puzzles, remembering facts, telling convincing lies, and using mental powers. Characters interested in communicating effectively, being learned scholars, and wielding the numenera should stress their Intellect stat.

## POOL, EDGE, AND EFFORT

Each of these stats has two components: your Pool and your Edge. Your Pool represents your raw, innate ability, and your Edge represents knowing how to use what you have. A third element ties into this concept: Effort. When your character really needs to accomplish a task, you apply Effort.

### Pool

Your Pool is the most basic measurement of a stat. Comparing the Pools of two creatures will give you a general sense of which creature is superior in that stat. For example, a character who has a Might Pool of 16 is stronger (in a basic sense) than a character who has a Might Pool of 12. Most characters start with a Pool of 9 to 12 in most stats—that’s the average range.

When your character is injured, sickened, or attacked, you temporarily lose points from one of your stat Pools. The nature of the attack determines which Pool loses points. For example, physical damage from a sword reduces your Might Pool, a poison that makes you clumsy reduces your Speed Pool, and a psionic blast reduces your Intellect Pool. You can also spend points from one of your stat Pools to decrease a task’s difficulty (see Effort, next page). You can rest to regain lost points from a stat Pool (ask your GM for additional information), and some special abilities or numenera might allow you to recover lost points quickly.

### Edge

Although your Pool is the basic measurement of a stat, your Edge is also important. When something requires you to spend points from a stat Pool, your Edge for that stat reduces the cost. It also reduces the cost of applying Effort to a roll.

For example, let’s say you have a mental blast ability, and activating it costs 1 point from your Intellect Pool. Subtract your Intellect Edge from the activation cost, and the result is how many points you must spend to use the mental blast. If using your Edge reduces the cost to 0, you can use the ability for free.



Your Edge can be different for each stat. For example, you could have a Might Edge of 1, a Speed Edge of 1, and an Intellect Edge of 0. You'll always have an Edge of at least 1 in one stat. Your Edge for a stat reduces the cost of spending points from that stat Pool, but not from other Pools. Your Might Edge reduces the cost of spending points from your Might Pool, but it doesn't affect your Speed Pool or Intellect Pool. Once a stat's Edge reaches 3, you can apply one level of Effort for free.

A character who has a low Might Pool but a high Might Edge has the potential to perform Might actions consistently better than a character who has a Might Edge of 0. The high Edge will let her reduce the cost of spending points from the Pool, which means she'll have more points available to spend on applying Effort.

## Effort

When your character really needs to accomplish a task, you can apply Effort. For a beginning character, applying Effort requires spending 3 points from the stat Pool appropriate to the action. Thus, if your character tries to dodge an attack (a Speed roll) and wants to increase the chance for success, you can apply Effort by spending 3 points from your Speed Pool. Effort lowers the difficulty of the task by one step. This is called applying one level of Effort.

You don't have to apply Effort if you don't want to. If you

choose to apply Effort to a task, you must do it before you attempt the roll—you can't roll first and then decide to apply Effort if you rolled poorly.

Applying more Effort can lower a task's difficulty further: each additional level of Effort reduces the difficulty by another step. Applying one level of Effort lowers the difficulty by one step, applying two levels lowers the difficulty by two steps, and so on. However, each level of Effort after the first costs only 2 points from the stat Pool instead of 3. So applying two levels of Effort costs 5 points (3 for the first level plus 2 for the second level), applying three levels costs 7 points (3 plus 2 plus 2), and so on.

Every character has an Effort score, which indicates the maximum number of levels of Effort that can be applied to a roll. A beginning (first-tier) character has an Effort of 1, meaning you can apply only one level of Effort to a roll. A more experienced character has a higher Effort score and can apply more levels of Effort to a roll. For example, a character who has an Effort of 3 can apply up to three levels of Effort to reduce a task's difficulty.

When you apply Effort, subtract your relevant Edge from the total cost of applying Effort. For example, let's say you need to make a Speed roll. To increase your chance for success, you decide to apply one level of Effort, which will reduce the difficulty of the task by one step. Normally, that would cost 3 points from your Speed Pool. However, you



have a Speed Edge of 2, so you subtract that from the cost. Thus, applying Effort to the roll costs only 1 point from your Speed Pool.

What if you applied two levels of Effort to the Speed roll instead of just one? That would reduce the difficulty of the task by two steps. Normally, it would cost 5 points from your Speed Pool, but after subtracting your Speed Edge of 2, it costs only 3 points.

Once a stat's Edge reaches 3, you can apply one level of Effort for free. For example, if you have a Speed Edge of 3 and you apply one level of Effort to a Speed roll, it costs you 0 points from your Speed Pool. (Normally, applying one level of Effort would cost 3 points, but you subtract your Speed Edge from that cost, reducing it to 0.)

Skills and other advantages also decrease a task's difficulty, and you can use them in conjunction with Effort. In addition, your character might have special abilities or equipment that allow you to apply Effort to accomplish a special effect, such as knocking down a foe with an attack or affecting multiple targets with a power that normally affects only one.

## Effort and Damage

Instead of applying Effort to reduce the difficulty of your attack, you can apply Effort to increase the amount of damage you inflict with an attack. For each level of Effort you apply in this way, you inflict 3 additional points of damage. This works for any kind of attack that inflicts damage, whether a sword, a crossbow, a mind blast, or something else.

When using Effort to increase the damage of an area attack, such as the explosion created by a nano's Flash ability, you inflict 2 additional points of damage instead of 3 points. However, the additional points are dealt to all targets in the area. Further, even if one or more of the targets in the area resist the attack, you still inflict 1 point of damage to them.

## Multiple Uses of Effort and Edge

If your Effort is 2 or higher, you can apply Effort to multiple aspects of a single action. For example, if you make an attack, you can apply Effort to your attack roll and apply Effort to increase the damage.

The total amount of Effort you apply can't be higher than your Effort score. For example, if your Effort is 2, you can apply up to two levels of Effort. You could apply one level to an attack roll and one level to its damage, two levels to the attack and no levels to the damage, or no levels to the attack and two levels to the damage.

You can use Edge for a particular stat only once per action. For example, if you apply Effort to a Might attack roll and to your damage, you can use your Might Edge to reduce the cost of one of those uses of Effort, not both. If you spend 1 Intellect point to activate your mind blast and one level of Effort to decrease the difficulty of the attack roll,

you can use your Intellect Edge to reduce the cost of one of those things, not both.

## STAT EXAMPLES

A beginning character is fighting a creature called a broken hound. She stabs her spear at the broken hound, which is a level 2 creature and thus has a target number of 6. The character stands atop a boulder and strikes downward at the beast, and the GM rules that this helpful tactic is an asset that decreases the difficulty by one step (to difficulty 1). That lowers the target number to 3. Attacking with a spear is a Might action; the character has a Might Pool of 11 and a Might Edge of 0. Before making the roll, she decides to apply a level of Effort to decrease the difficulty of the attack. That costs 3 points from her Might Pool, reducing the Pool to 8. But they appear to be points well spent. Applying the Effort lowers the difficulty from 1 to 0, so no roll is needed—the attack automatically succeeds.

Another character is attempting to convince a guard to let him into a private office to speak to an influential noble. The GM rules that this is an Intellect action. The character is third tier and has an Effort of 3, an Intellect Pool of 13, and an Intellect Edge of 1. Before making the roll, he must decide whether to apply Effort. He can choose to apply one, two, or three levels of Effort, or apply none at all. This action is important to him, so he decides to apply two levels of Effort, decreasing the difficulty by two steps. Thanks to his Intellect Edge, applying the Effort costs only 4 points from his Intellect Pool (3 points for the first level of Effort plus 2 points for the second level minus 1 point for his Edge). Spending those points reduces his Intellect Pool to 9. The GM decides that convincing the guard is a difficulty 3 (demanding) task with a target number of 9; applying two levels of Effort reduces the difficulty to 1 (simple) and the target number to 3. The player rolls a d20 and gets an 8. Because this result is at least equal to the target number of the task, he succeeds. However, if he had not applied some Effort, he would have failed because his roll (8) would have been less than the task's original target number (9).

## CHARACTER TIERS AND BENEFITS

Every character starts the game at the first tier. Tier is a measurement of power, toughness, and ability. Characters can advance up to the sixth tier. As your character advances to higher tiers, you gain more abilities, increase your Effort, and can improve a stat's Edge or increase a stat. Generally speaking, even first tier characters are already quite capable. It's safe to assume that they've already got some experience under their belt. This is not a "zero to hero" progression, but rather an instance of competent people refining and honing their capabilities and knowledge. Advancing to higher tiers is not really the "goal" of Numenera characters, but rather a representation of how characters progress in a story.



Every character starts the game at the first tier. Tier is a measurement of power, toughness, and ability. Characters can advance up to the sixth tier.

To progress to the next tier, characters earn experience points (XP) by going on adventures and discovering new things—the Ninth World is about discovery of the past and what it means for the future. Experience points have many uses, and one use is to purchase character benefits. After your character purchases four character benefits, he or she goes up to the next tier. Each benefit costs 4 XP, and you can purchase them in any order, but you must purchase one of each kind of benefit (after which you advance to the next tier) before you can purchase the same benefit again. The four character benefits are as follows.

**INCREASING CAPABILITIES:** You gain 4 points to add to your stat Pools. You can allocate the points among the Pools however you wish.

**MOVING TOWARD PERFECTION:** You add 1 to your Might Edge, your Speed Edge, or your Intellect Edge (your choice).

**EXTRA EFFORT:** Your Effort score increases by 1.

**SKILLS:** You become trained in one skill of your choice, other than attacks or defense. As described in the Rules

Overview (page 6), a character trained in a skill treats the difficulty of a related task as one step lower than normal. The skill you choose for this benefit can be anything you wish, such as climbing, jumping, persuading, or sneaking. You can also choose to be knowledgeable in a certain area of lore, such as history or geology. You can even choose a skill based on your character's special abilities. For example, if your character can make an Intellect roll to blast an enemy with mental force, you can become trained in using that ability, treating its difficulty as one step lower than normal. If you choose a skill that you are already trained in, you become specialized in that skill, reducing the difficulty of related tasks by two steps instead of one.

Players can also spend 4 XP to purchase other special options in lieu of gaining a new skill. Selecting any of these options counts as the skill benefit necessary to advance to the next tier. The special options are as follows:

- Reduce the cost for wearing armor. This option lowers the Might cost by 1 and lowers the Speed reduction by 1.
- Add 2 to your recovery rolls.
- If you're a glaive, select a new fighting move. The move must be from your tier or a lower tier.
- If you're a nano, select a new esotery. The esotery must be from your tier or a lower tier.
- If you're a jack, select a new trick of the trade. The trick must be from your tier or a lower tier.





## SKILLS

Sometimes your character gains training in a specific skill or task. For example, your focus might mean that you're trained in sneaking, in climbing and jumping, or in social interactions. Other times, your character can choose a skill to become trained in, and you can pick a skill that relates to any task you think you might face.

The game has no definitive list of skills. However, the following list offers ideas:

Astronomy	Healing	Perception
Balancing	History	Persuasion
Biology	Identifying	Philosophy
Botany	Initiative	Pickpocketing
Carrying	Intimidation	Repairing
Climbing	Jumping	Riding
Deceiving	Leatherworking	Smashing
Escaping	Lockpicking	Sneaking
Geography	Metalworking	Swimming
Geology	Numenera	Woodworking

You could choose a skill that incorporates more than one of these areas (interacting might include deceiving, intimidating, and persuading) or is a more specific version of one (hiding might be sneaking when you're not moving). You could also make up more general, professional skills, such as baker, sailor, or lumberjack. If you want to choose a skill that's not on this list, it's probably best to run it past the GM first, but in general, the most important aspect is to choose skills that are appropriate to your character.

Remember that if you gain a skill that you're already trained in, you become specialized in that skill. Because skill descriptions can be nebulous, determining whether you're trained or specialized might take some thinking. For example, if you're trained in lying and later gain an ability that grants you skill with all social interactions, you become specialized in lying and trained in all other types of interactions. Being trained three times in a skill is no better than being trained twice (in other words, specialized is as good as it gets).

Only skills gained through character type abilities, such as the glaive's fighting moves focus abilities, or other rare instances allow you to become skilled with attack or defense tasks.

If you gain a special ability through your type, your focus, or some other aspect of your character, you can choose it in place of a skill and become trained or specialized in that ability. For example, if you have a mind blast, when it's time to choose a skill to be trained in, you can select your mind blast as your skill. That would reduce the difficulty every time you used it. Each ability you have counts as a separate skill for this purpose. You can't select "all mind powers" or "all esoterics" as one skill and become trained or specialized in such a broad category.

## CHARACTER DESCRIPTOR, TYPE, AND FOCUS

To create your character, you build a simple statement that describes him or her. The statement takes this form: "I am a [fill in an adjective here] [fill in a noun here] who [fill in a verb here]."

Thus: "I am an *adjective noun* who *verbs*." For example, you might say, "I am a Rugged glaive who Controls Beasts" or "I am a Charming nano who Focuses Mind over Matter."

In this sentence, the adjective is called your *descriptor*.

The noun is your *character type*.

The verb is called your *focus*.

Even though character type is in the middle of the sentence, that's where we'll start this discussion. (Just as in a sentence, the noun provides the foundation.)

Character type is the core of your character. In some roleplaying games, it might be called your character class.

Your type helps determine your character's place in the world and relationship with other people in the setting. It's the noun of the sentence "I am an *adjective noun* who *verbs*."

You can choose from three character types: glaive, jack, and nano.

Descriptor defines your character—it flavors everything you do. Your descriptor places your character in the situation (the first adventure, which starts the campaign) and helps provide motivation. It's the adjective of the sentence "I am an *adjective noun* who *verbs*."

You can choose from twelve character descriptors.

Focus is what your character does best. Focus gives your character specificity and provides interesting new abilities that might come in handy. Your focus also helps you understand how you relate with the other player characters in your group. It's the verb of the sentence "I am an *adjective noun* who *verbs*."

There are many character foci to choose from.





## SPECIAL ABILITIES

Character types and foci grant PCs special abilities at each new tier. Using these abilities usually costs points from your stat Pools; the cost is listed in parentheses after the ability name. Your Edge in the appropriate stat can reduce the cost of the ability, but remember that you can apply Edge only once per action. For example, let's say a nano with an Intellect Edge of 2 wants to use his Onslaught ability to create a bolt of force, which costs 1 Intellect point. He also wants to increase the damage from the attack by using a level of Effort, which costs 3 Intellect points. The total cost for his action is 2 points from his Intellect Pool (1 point for the bolt of force plus 3 points for using Effort minus 2 points from his Edge).

Sometimes the point cost for an ability has a + sign after the number. For example, the cost might be given as "2+ Intellect points." That means you can spend more points or more levels of Effort to improve the ability further.

Many special abilities grant a character the option to

perform an action that she couldn't normally do, such as projecting rays of cold or attacking multiple foes at once. Using one of these abilities is an action unto itself, and the end of the ability's description says "Action" to remind you. It also might provide more information about when or how you perform the action.

Some special abilities allow you to perform a familiar action—one that you can already do—in a different way. For example, an ability might let you wear heavy armor, reduce the difficulty of Speed defense rolls, or add 2 points of fire damage to your weapon damage. These abilities are called enablers. Using one of these abilities is not considered an action. Enablers either function constantly (such as being able to wear heavy armor, which isn't an action) or happen as part of another action (such as adding fire damage to your weapon damage, which happens as part of your attack action). If a special ability is an enabler, the end of the ability's description says "Enabler" to remind you.



# CHARACTER TYPE

*Character type is the core of your character. In some roleplaying games, it might be called your character class. Your type helps determine your character's place in the world and relationship with other people in the setting. It's the noun of the sentence "I am an adjective noun who verbs."*

*You can choose from three character types: glaive, nano, and jack.*

## GLAIVE

Glaives are the elite warriors of the Ninth World, using weapons and armor to fight their enemies. Hunters, guardians, and soldiers could be glaives. Sometimes scouts, warlords, bandits, and even athletes are glaives. "Glaive" is a common slang term used almost everywhere in the Steadfast and the Beyond for any person skilled with weapons or a martial art, but in truth, it applies only to the best of the best. Glaives are warriors who command abilities far beyond those of a typical person with a sword.

Most glaives are either strong—using the heaviest armor and weapons available and having a high Might—or fast, sticking with light weapons and armor and having a high Speed. A few attempt to use both Might and Speed and stay somewhere in the middle. Glaives also use ranged weapons such as bows or darts. Some don't rely on weapons at all, preferring to use their bodies in hand-to-hand combat—punching, kicking, grabbing, throwing, and so on.

**Glaives in Society:** In most cities and villages, people hold glaives in great esteem. Although a glaive could just as likely be a thug as a noble warrior, those who help protect their fellow humans from the dangers of the Ninth World are always treated with respect. There is no shame in getting paid for the use of one's skills, so being a blade for hire is a perfectly acceptable profession. Restrictions on carrying weapons openly are rare, and most glaives wear the tools of their trade with pride.

Not surprisingly, glaives often get along best with other glaives, or at least soldiers, guards, or similar comrades in arms. Nanos, scholars, and people who aren't terribly physical are less likely to mix well with glaives, but obviously not every glaive is the same. They focus on their bodies, but that doesn't mean they don't value more cerebral pursuits as well. A glaive need not follow the stereotype of the dumb bruiser with a sword or an axe.

## GLAIVE STAT POOLS

Stat	Pool Starting Value
Might	11
Speed	10
Intellect	7

You get 6 additional points to divide among your stat Pools however you wish.

**Glaives in the Group:** In a group of explorers, glaives typically take the lead. They're usually the most physically capable, the most durable, and the most ready to meet danger head-on. Sometimes they act protectively toward their companions; other times, they're more self-interested. Either way, a glaive's place is often in the middle of the fray.

**Glaives and the Numenera:** When it comes to the numenera, most glaives are interested in weapons, armor, or devices that aid them in combat. The ancients produced all sorts of incredibly durable substances, many of which can be made into armor that is lighter and more protective than steel. Sometimes, glaives can scavenge a suit of armor composed of these advanced materials, but more often they find the materials and then ask a crafter or smith to make the armor. Of course, the problem is that a substance that is difficult to damage is also hard to work.

As varied as armoring materials might be, numenera weaponry is infinitely more so. These items include melee weapons that shock, stun, or burn whatever they touch; and ranged weapons that blast projectiles with incredible power or bursts of strange energies. There are also bombs, damaging energy fields, poisonous gases, and far stranger weaponry, but some glaives find that such complex objects are better off in the hands of a nano. Maneuverability is just as important as attack or defense, however, so an item that allows a glaive to move quickly or negate gravity is a great prize.

As for cyphers, glaives prefer physically enhancing or



restorative objects, such as injections of chemicals that improve reaction time or pills with microscopic repair devices that heal wounds and restore fatigued muscle tissue. They use the nickname “boost” for any cypher that enhances their strength, stamina, reflexes, or other physical aspects, while one that repairs damage or alleviates fatigue is called a “treat.”

**Advanced Glaives:** As they progress, glaives become better combatants, often felling multiple foes in a single stroke. They gain special types of attacks and learn to use armor more efficiently to get the most out of the protection it offers.

## GLAIVE BACKGROUND

Glaives are no mere bandits or town guards. They stand head and shoulders above ordinary soldiers and brawlers. Something in your background—whether intensive training, inborn traits, or biomechanical modification—has made you more than the others around you. Choose one of those three options (described below) as the source of your skills, strength, reflexes, and stamina. It will provide the foundation of your background and give you an idea of how you can improve. The GM can use this information to develop adventures and quests that are specific to your character and play a role in your advancement.

### Intensive Training

You are strong, fast, or both, but what really separates you from the crowd is your training. Perhaps you ascended the highest peak of the Black Riage or sought the deepest sewers beneath Qi to find teachers who could show you how to move, fight, and endure beyond normal human limits. You know a thousand ways to kill a foe, most of them secret to all but a chosen few. You're privy to techniques and fighting styles that most people in the Ninth World have never seen. You have learned that the impossible is possible—as long as you know the secret. Your body is a weapon, and your weapon is part of your body. You have studied with the masters, and now you carry that regimen as you venture into the world.

**Advancement:** You need to train and practice constantly to hone your skills and develop new techniques, building on what you've been taught. Perhaps at some point you will return to your secret masters for further initiation or find new teachers or lessons that can take you to the next step.

When you gain additional points for your stat Pools, an increase to a stat's Edge, or an increase in the level of Effort you can apply, the benefit comes as the result of rigorous exercise and personal development. When you gain a new skill or glaive ability, it's the result of the martial arts you have studied.

### Inborn Traits

You've trained under excellent instructors and have experience in many dangerous situations, but what

makes you different is deep inside, entwined in your genetic heritage. Maybe it was the luck of being born fit. Maybe you're a hulking brute—a mountainous figure who commands attention when you enter a room. Or maybe your strength is more subtle; you might be the descendant of a bioengineered race bred (or designed) for perfection. Perhaps you're a mutant with psychic abilities that augment your physical nature; you guide and enhance your attacks with telekinesis, or you use a natural mutation in your brain to control matter on a molecular level to resist blows and inflict harm. Perhaps you're something wholly new: an aberration or a human so perfect that you're beyond human. You might be a posthuman—the next step toward the true destiny of the people of the Ninth World.

**Advancement:** You have talents of which you are only dimly aware. You must practice and experiment to find your limitations, if any. At some point in the future, you might have to seek out someone who can help you master your inherent abilities. You were born with great power—now you need to learn how to use that power, even if the education takes a lifetime.

When your stats improve, it's because you're tapping deeper into the unknown reserves within you. When you gain a new glaive ability, it's the result of your superhuman traits as much as it is about your study, practice, or knowledge. You can do things that other people simply cannot, no matter how hard they train.

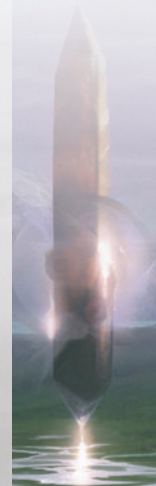
### Biomechanical Modification

You might be a fighter, but you're no archaic stereotype—this is the Ninth World, after all. Although you trained and gained your share of practical experience, you have the numenera on your side as well. Some of your knowledge of fighting techniques is implanted in your brain and spine, wired into your nerves and muscles. Your joints have surgically implanted servo motors. Subdermal plating makes you tougher than should be possible. Your muscle tissue is augmented with artificial fibers.

Perhaps your genetic code has been rewritten by engineered viruses, or the tissues in your body have been reworked by nanotech, turning you into an efficient battle machine. Or maybe you've been altered by strange science—radioactive treatments of bizarre energies, chemical compounds and drugs, or extradimensional enhancements—that makes you stronger, faster, tougher, and more proficient in attack and defense than anyone around you.

Whatever the case, you're the result of ancient knowledge made manifest in the present, and now you're shaping the future. Perhaps your modifications are obvious and visible; perhaps they're not. Regardless, you know that you're more than merely human.

**Advancement:** Your body is an ongoing project. In a way, it's a work of art, although its beauty comes not from its appearance but from what it can do. As you go forward,



you should keep an eye out at all times for new parts and systems that can be incorporated into your body, or new doses of drugs and supplements to maintain your abilities. You might need to seek out surgeons, mechanics, or bioenhancement specialists to take you to the next level. Perhaps the Aeon Priests can help. Perhaps the parts you need can be found only in the ruins of the past or the dangerous black market of a faraway city.

When your stats improve, it's because you literally have added something new to your body. When you gain a new ability, it's the direct result of a tangible change in your own physical being.

## GLAIVE TIERS

### First-Tier Glaive

First-tier glaives have the following abilities:

**Effort:** Your Effort is 1.

**Fighter:** You have a Might Edge of 1, a Speed Edge of 1, and an Intellect Edge of 0.

**Cypher Use:** You can bear two cyphers at a time.

**Practiced in Armor:** Glaives can wear armor for long periods of time without tiring and can compensate for slowed reactions from wearing armor. You can wear any kind of armor. You reduce the Might cost per hour for wearing armor and the Speed Pool reduction for wearing armor by 2. Enabler.

**Practiced With All Weapons:** You can use any weapon. Enabler.

**Physical Skills:** You are trained in your choice of one of the following: balancing, climbing, jumping, or swimming. Enabler.

**Starting Equipment:** You start with clothing, two weapons (or one weapon and a shield), light or medium armor, an explorer's pack, two cyphers (chosen for you by the GM), one oddity (chosen for you by the GM), and 5 shins (coins). If you start with a ranged weapon that requires ammunition (arrows, for example), you start with 12 of that type of ammunition. Before selecting your weapons, armor, and other gear, you might want to wait until after you've chosen your fighting moves, descriptor, and focus.

**Fighting Moves:** You have a special talent for combat and can perform feats that others can barely imagine. These feats are called . Some fighting moves are constant, ongoing effects, and others are specific actions that usually cost points from one of your stat Pools.

Choose two of the fighting moves described below. You can't choose the same fighting move more than once unless its description says otherwise.

- **Bash (1 Might point):** This is a pummeling melee attack. Your attack inflicts 1 less point of damage than normal, but dazes your target for one round, during which time the difficulty of all tasks it performs is modified by one step to its detriment.
- **No Need for Weapons:** When you make an unarmed

attack (such as a punch or kick), it counts as a medium weapon instead of a light weapon. Enabler.

- **Pierce (1 Speed point):** This is a well-aimed, penetrating ranged attack. You make an attack and inflict 1 additional point of damage if your weapon has a sharp point. Action.
- **Thrust (1 Might point):** This is a powerful melee stab. You make an attack and inflict 1 additional point of damage if your weapon has a sharp edge or point. Action.
- **Trained Without Armor:** You are trained in Speed defense actions when not wearing armor. Enabler.

### Second-Tier Glaive

Second-tier glaives have the following abilities:

**Skill With Attacks:** Choose one type of attack in which you are not already trained: light bashing, light bladed, light ranged, medium bashing, medium bladed, medium ranged, heavy bashing, heavy bladed, or heavy ranged. You are trained in attacks using that type of weapon. Enabler.

**Fighting Moves:** Choose one of the following fighting moves (or a move from a lower tier) to add to your repertoire. In addition, you can replace one of your first-tier fighting moves with a different first-tier fighting move.

- **Chop (2 Might points):** This is a heavy, powerful slice with a bladed weapon, probably overhand. You must grip your weapon with two hands to chop. When making this attack, you take a -1 penalty to the attack roll, and you inflict 3 additional points of damage. Action.
- **Crush (2 Might points):** This is a powerful pummeling attack with a bashing weapon, probably overhand. You must grip your weapon with two hands to crush. (If fighting unarmed, this attack is made with both fists or both feet together.) When making this attack, you take a -1 penalty to the attack roll, and you inflict 3 additional points of damage. Action.
- **Reload (1 Speed point):** When using a weapon that normally requires an action to reload, such as a heavy crossbow, you can reload and fire (or fire and reload) in the same action. Enabler.
- **Skill With Defense:** Choose one type of defense task in which you are not already trained: Might, Speed, or Intellect. You are trained in defense tasks of that type. Unlike most fighting moves, you can select this move up to three times. Each time you select it, you must choose a different type of defense task. Enabler.
- **Successive Attack (2 Speed points):** If you take down a foe, you can immediately make another attack on that same turn against a new foe within your reach. The second attack is part of the same action. You can use this fighting move with melee attacks and ranged attacks. Enabler.

### Third-Tier Glaive

Third-tier glaives have the following abilities:

**Expert Cypher Use:** You can bear three cyphers at a time.

**Skill With Attacks:** Choose one type of attack in which



## GLAIVE CONNECTION

Roll a d20 or choose from the following list to determine a specific fact about your background that provides a connection to the rest of the world. You can also create your own fact.

Roll	Background
1	You were in the military and have friends who still serve. Your former commander remembers you well.
2	You were the personal guard of a wealthy merchant who accused you of theft. You left her service in disgrace.
3	You were the bouncer in a local bar for a while, and the patrons there remember you.
4	You trained with a highly respected mentor. He regards you well, but he has many enemies.
5	You trained in an isolated monastery far away. The monks think of you as a brother, but you're a stranger to all others.
6	You have no formal training. Your abilities come to you naturally (or unnaturally).
7	You spent time on the streets and even were in prison for a while.
8	You were conscripted into military service, but you deserted before long.
9	You served as a bodyguard to a powerful criminal who now owes you his life.
10	You worked as a constable. Everyone knows you, but their opinions of you vary.
11	Your older sibling is an infamous glaive who has been disgraced.
12	You served as a caravan guard. You know a smattering of people in many cities and towns.
13	Your best friend is a sage and a scholar. She is a great source of knowledge.
14	You and a friend both smoke the same kind of rare, expensive tobacco. The two of you get together weekly to chat and smoke.
15	Your uncle runs a theater in town. You know all the actors and watch all the shows for free.
16	Your blacksmith friend sometimes calls on you for help at the forge. However, he pays you well.
17	Your mentor wrote a book on the martial arts. Sometimes other warriors seek you out to ask about its stranger passages.
18	A man you fought alongside in the military is now the mayor of a nearby town.
19	You saved the lives of a family when their house burned down. They're indebted to you, and their neighbors regard you as a hero.
20	Your old trainer still expects you to come back and sharpen her blades and clean up after her classes, but when you do, she occasionally shares interesting rumors.

you are not already trained: light bashing, light bladed, light ranged, medium bashing, medium bladed, medium ranged, heavy bashing, heavy bladed, or heavy ranged. You are trained in attacks using that type of weapon. Enabler.

**Fighting Moves:** Choose one of the following fighting moves (or a move from a lower tier) to add to your repertoire. In addition, you can also replace one of your lower-tier fighting moves with a different fighting move from the same lower tier.

- **Experienced With Armor:** The cost reduction from your Practiced in Armor ability improves. You now reduce the Might cost per hour and the Speed Pool reduction by 3. Enabler.
- **Lunge (2 Might points):** This move requires you to extend yourself for a powerful stab or smash. The awkward lunge increases the difficulty of the attack roll by one step. If your attack is successful, it inflicts 4 additional points of damage. Action.
- **Slice (2 Speed points):** This is a quick attack with a bladed or pointed weapon that is hard to defend against. The difficulty of the attack roll is decreased by one step. If the attack is successful, it deals 1 less point of damage than normal. Action.
- **Spray (2 Speed points):** If a weapon has the ability to fire rapid shots without reloading (usually called a rapid fire weapon, such as the crank crossbow), you

can spray multiple shots around your target to increase the chance of hitting. This move uses 1d6 + 1 rounds of ammo (or all the ammo in the weapon, if it has less than the number rolled). The difficulty of the attack roll is decreased by one step. If the attack is successful, it deals 1 less point of damage than normal. Action.

- **Trick Shot (2 Speed points):** As part of the same action, you make a ranged attack against two targets that are within immediate range of each other. Make a separate attack roll against each target. The difficulty of each attack roll is increased by one step. Action.

### Fourth-Tier Glaive

Fourth-tier glaives have the following abilities:

**Skill With Attacks:** Choose one type of attack in which you are not already trained: light bashing, light bladed, light ranged, medium bashing, medium bladed, medium ranged, heavy bashing, heavy bladed, or heavy ranged. You are trained in attacks using that type of weapon. Enabler.

**Fighting Moves:** Choose one of the following fighting moves (or a move from a lower tier) to add to your repertoire. In addition, you can also replace one of your lower-tier fighting moves with a different fighting move from the same lower tier.

- **Capable Warrior:** Your attacks deal 1 additional point of damage. Enabler.



- **Experienced Defender:** When wearing armor, you gain +1 to Armor. Enabler.
- **Feint (2 Speed points):** If you spend one action creating a misdirection or diversion, in the next round you can take advantage of your opponent's lowered defenses. Make a melee attack roll against that opponent. The difficulty of the roll is decreased by one step. If your attack is successful, it inflicts 4 additional points of damage. Action.
- **Minor to Major:** You treat rolls of natural 19 as rolls of natural 20 for Might attack rolls or Speed attack rolls (your choice when you gain this ability). This allows you to gain a major effect on a natural 19 or 20. Enabler.
- **Snipe (2 Speed points):** If you spend one action aiming, in the next round you can make a precise ranged attack. The difficulty of the attack roll is decreased by one step. If your attack is successful, it inflicts 4 additional points of damage. Action.

## Fifth-Tier Glaive

Fifth-tier glaives have the following abilities:

- **Adept Cypher Use:** You can bear four cyphers at a time.
- **Skill With Attacks:** Choose one type of attack, even one in which you are already trained: light bashing, light bladed, light ranged, medium bashing, medium bladed, medium ranged, heavy bashing, heavy bladed, or heavy ranged. You are trained in attacks using that type of weapon. If you're already trained in that type of attack, you instead become specialized in that type of attack. Enabler.
- **Fighting Moves:** Choose one of the following fighting moves (or a move from a lower tier) to add to your repertoire. In addition, you can also replace one of your lower-tier fighting moves with a different fighting move from the same lower tier.
- **Arc Spray (3 Speed points):** If a weapon has the ability to fire rapid shots without reloading (usually called a rapid fire weapon, such as the crank crossbow), you can fire your weapon at up to three targets (all next to one another) at once. Make a separate attack roll against each target. The difficulty of each attack is increased by one step. Action.
- **Jump Attack (5 Might points):** You attempt a difficulty 4 Might action to jump high into the air as part of your melee attack. If you succeed, your attack inflicts 3 additional points of damage and knocks the foe down. If you fail, you still make your normal attack roll, but you don't inflict the extra damage or knock down the opponent if you hit. Action.
- **Mastery With Armor:** When you wear any armor, you reduce the armor's penalties (Might cost and Speed reduction) to 0. If you select this fighting move and you already have the Experienced With Armor move, you should replace Experienced With Armor with a different third-tier move because Mastery With Armor is better. Enabler.
- **Mastery With Defense:** Choose one type of defense

task in which you are trained: Might, Speed, or Intellect. You are specialized in defense tasks of that type. Unlike most fighting moves, you can select this move up to three times. Each time you select it, you must choose a different type of defense task. Enabler.

- **Parry (5 Speed points):** You can deflect incoming attacks quickly. When you activate this move, for the next 10 rounds you reduce the difficulty for all Speed defense rolls by one step. Enabler.

## Sixth-Tier Glaive

Sixth-tier glaives have the following abilities:

• **Skill With Attacks:** Choose one type of attack, even one in which you are already trained: light bashing, light bladed, light ranged, medium bashing, medium bladed, medium ranged, heavy bashing, heavy bladed, or heavy ranged. You are trained in attacks using that type of weapon. If you're already trained in that type of attack, you instead are specialized in that type of attack. Enabler.

• **Fighting Moves:** Choose one of the following fighting moves (or a move from a lower tier) to add to your repertoire. In addition, you can also replace one of your lower-tier fighting moves with a different fighting move from the same lower tier.

- **Finishing Blow (5 Might points):** If your foe is prone, stunned, or somehow helpless or incapacitated when you strike, you inflict 6 additional points of damage on a successful hit. Enabler.
- **Slayer (3 Might points):** When you successfully strike an NPC or creature of level 5 or lower, make another roll (using whichever stat you used to attack). If you succeed on the second roll, you kill the target outright. If you use this fighting move against a PC of any tier and you succeed on the second roll, the character moves down one step on the damage track. Enabler.
- **Spin Attack (5 Speed points):** You stand still and make melee attacks against up to five foes within reach, all as part of the same action in one round. Make a separate attack roll for each foe. You remain limited by the amount of Effort you can apply on one action. Anything that modifies your attack or damage applies to all of these attacks. Action.
- **Weapon and Body (5 Speed points):** After making a melee weapon or ranged weapon attack, you follow up with a punch or kick as an additional attack, all as part of the same action in one round. The two attacks can be directed at different foes. Make a separate attack roll for each attack. You remain limited by the amount of Effort you can apply on one action. Anything that modifies your attack or damage applies to both attacks, unless it is tied specifically to your weapon. Action.

## GLAIVE EXAMPLE

Colin wants to create a glaive character who is fast and strong. He puts 3 of his additional points into his Might



Pool and 3 into his Speed Pool; his stat Pools are now Might 14, Speed 13, Intellect 7. As a first-tier character, his Effort is 1, his Might Edge and Speed Edge are 1, and his Intellect Edge is 0. His glaive is not particularly smart or charismatic.

He wants to use a broadsword (a medium weapon that inflicts 4 points of damage) and a heavy crossbow (a heavy weapon that inflicts 6 points of damage but requires the use of both hands). Colin decides not to wear armor, so for his first fighting move, he chooses Trained Without Armor so he reduces the difficulty of Speed defense actions. For his second fighting move, he chooses Thrust so he can inflict extra damage with his sword if he spends 1 point of Might. Since he has a Might Edge of 1, he can use Thrust for free if he doesn't use his Might for anything else that action.

The GM generously gives Colin an extra 10 shins because he chose to forgo armor, and he uses this money to buy more crossbow bolts. The glaive's starting equipment includes two cyphers, and the GM decides that Colin's cyphers are a pill that restores 6 points of Might when swallowed and a small device that explodes like a firebomb when thrown, inflicting 3 points of damage to all within immediate range. Colin chooses swimming for his trained physical skill.

He still needs to choose a descriptor and a focus. Looking ahead to the descriptor rules, Colin chooses Strong, which increases his Might Pool to 18. He also becomes trained in jumping and breaking inanimate objects. (If he had chosen

jumping as his physical skill, the Strong descriptor would have made him specialized in jumping instead of trained.) Being Strong also gives Colin an extra medium or heavy weapon. He chooses another broadsword as a backup blade. He decides that one sword is slightly smaller than the other, and he'll sheathe them together on his left side.

For his focus, Colin chooses Masters Weaponry. This gives him yet another weapon of high quality. He chooses a broadsword and asks the GM if his first sword can be a shield instead, which will reduce the difficulty of his Speed defense rolls (the shield counts as an asset). The GM agrees to the change. During the game, Colin's glaive will be hard to hit—he is trained in Speed defense rolls and his shield decreases the difficulty by another step.

Thanks to his focus, he also inflicts 1 additional point of damage with his chosen weapon. Now he inflicts 5 points of damage with his blade. Colin's character is a deadly combatant, likely starting the game with some amount of renown as a swordsman.

## NANO

Nanos are sometimes called mages, wizards, sorcerers, or witches by the people of the Ninth World. Nano-sorcerer is also a common term, with their abilities referred to as nano-sorcery. Some claim to be the representatives of gods or other supernatural agencies. Whatever they're called, nanos master the mysteries of the past to the degree that they seem to perform miracles. They tap into the numenera to alter reality or learn things that they couldn't otherwise know.



## NANO STAT POOLS

Stat	Pool Starting Value
Might	7
Speed	9
Intellect	12

You get 6 additional points to divide among your stat Pools however you wish.

The term “nano” is derived from the nanotechnology that is omnipresent throughout the Ninth World (whether anyone realizes it or not). Sometimes people call these invisible, numinous particles that infuse the landscape nano-spirits. Sometimes these spirits take on a devastating manifestation called the Iron Wind and move through the air in clouds, which can be far more dangerous than any conventional storm. In truth, nanites are literally everywhere.

Nanos wield their power in the form of what they call , although some prefer to call them spells, enchantments, or charms. Nanos are proficient with other devices as well, and sometimes their powers are actually the subtle use of such items hidden upon their person. All nanos call forth their power in slightly different ways.

Typically, nanos are intelligent, learned, and insightful. Most of the time, they devote themselves to the numenera and other esoterica rather than to purely physical pursuits. As a result, they're often well versed in the artifacts and leftovers of the previous eras.

**Nanos in Society:** Frequently, common folks fear nanos or look upon them with suspicion. It's easy to be afraid of a brute with an axe, but when it comes to someone who wields invisible powers—magic, for lack of a better term—too much is unknown. A nano's strange abilities are unsettling even to the bravest souls unless they have a modicum of knowledge about the numenera. That said, not everyone is frightened of or intimidated by nanos. There are other people and creatures that have capabilities far beyond the understanding of normal folks—things that even nanos might not understand. Things that even nanos might fear.

Like the wizards of fables, some nanos dwell in solitude to study and conduct odd experiments, while others gather in schools and teach those with potential to use their abilities. They enjoy time in the company of people with similar predilections and interests. Not every nano is a frail bookworm, however—that's just the stereotype placed upon them by society.

Sometimes, people view nanos as representatives of the powers that be: gods, demons, or spirits. That's not too surprising considering that they affect the world around them in ways that most people can't fathom. What's more surprising is that some nanos believe this to be true as well. They call themselves priests or shamans and treat their esoterics more like rituals, prayers, or invocations. When these nanos gather, they

do so in temples, but just as often one of them lives alone amid a flock of the faithful. Some of these loner nanos don't call themselves priests; they call themselves gods.

**Nanos in the Group:** Typically, a nano is the party member who keeps to the back of the group, as far from the danger as possible. Compared to their comrades, nanos are often a bit fragile and less well protected against threats. In addition, most of their abilities work best at range.

As useful and impressive as nanos' offensive powers can be, their knowledge is often most valuable to a group. When the party comes upon mysterious devices, weird creatures, or other aspects of the numenera, the nano is usually the one who knows how to identify or deal with the finds. He or she can best scavenge for new cyphers or figure out how to use artifacts from the past. Many nanos possess other valuable knowledge in areas such as geography, botany, medicine, and more.

**Nanos and the Numenera:** All nanos know a fair bit about the numenera. In many ways, it's their lifeblood. When a group finds a broken vehicle, an inactive automaton, or an ancient machine, the nano steps up and searches it for useful devices.

Almost any numenera item would be welcome, but generally, nanos are most interested in ranged weapons, protective devices other than armor, and devices that have interesting utility effects—using magnetism, creating force fields, healing wounds, reshaping flesh, creating or destroying matter, and so on. This is true of cyphers as well as artifacts.

**Advanced Nanos:** As nanos gain more experience, they typically learn new and more powerful esoterics. They begin their careers by making personal shields and blasting foes with energy, but eventually, they can fly through the air, disintegrate matter, teleport vast distances, and control the weather.

## NANO BACKGROUND

Nanos can do things that seem like magic to other people, but their powers aren't based on charms or spellcasting—the explanation is likely far stranger. Choose one of the three options described below as the source of your abilities. It will provide the foundation of your background and give you an idea of how you can improve. The GM can use this information to develop adventures and quests that are specific to your character and play a role in your advancement.

### Forbidden Knowledge

You understand the numenera far better than most people. You know that it isn't just strange machines buried in old ruins. The numenera is everywhere, beyond the perception





of humans. You know that microscopic machines called nanites are threaded through every inch of the world, waiting to be activated. You know that satellites in orbit are broadcasting information, waiting for someone to access it. Having studied long and hard, learning the proper ways to tap into the forces all around you, you know how to activate these machines and make them do what you wish, at least in limited, specific ways. These uses of power are called esoterics.

Through various tiny devices that you possess, which probably seem like magic charms to the uninitiated, you “conjure” energy. By accessing the datasphere transmitted across the world, you connect with machines—including the nanites—to change your environment.

**Advancement:** You must continue to study. There’s far more to the numenera than one person can ever know, but that doesn’t mean you shouldn’t try to learn it all. More secrets and more knowledge mean more power. At some point in your career, you might need to find a teacher or another source of knowledge. So many questions need answers.

When your stats improve or you learn new skills, it’s because you have mastered another new technique that taps into the secret world. When you gain a new esotery, it’s the result of long hours of study and practice in using your mysterious lore.

## Psionics

You know that the world is filled with ancient machines and their creations. Some of them are visible, but many are not. It’s not just skill or knowledge that allows you to gain access to them. You have a psychic talent to interface with the machines to produce various effects. Some of these machines are secreted about your person, and others are infused into the environment of the Ninth World.

You can’t conjure energy or warp matter on your own, but you have the rare and spectacular ability to control the invisible nano-machines that do it for you. Is this gift the natural result of extreme exposure to technology? Is it the fusion of the biological and mechanical? Is it the design of a genius architect, generations earlier, who manipulated the genetics of your family? Or is it just a random mutation? In any case, you’re the natural synthesis of human and machine, working as one.

**Advancement:** Understanding this natural talent took time and training, and more of both is needed to expand and refine your powers. In addition to seeking help with your instruction, you might need to find drugs, devices, or other external stimulation.

When aspects of your character improve or you learn new skills or esoterics, it’s because you have mastered a new facet of your psychic abilities or discovered an entirely new use for a machine in your environment.

## Ports and Plugs

You have a connection with machines for one clear reason: you’re practically a machine yourself. Your nervous system is laced with circuitry, and your body has implanted jacks and ports where you plug in modules and other technological bits that provide your capabilities. When you produce effects or manipulate nanites, you do so through your body’s direct mechanical interface. Your force blasts might come from a device implanted in your palm or fingertip. Your ability to tap into the datasphere might come from the receiver plugged into a port you built in the back of your neck.

Obviously, to become a nano, you have undergone numerous surgeries and procedures (either willingly or unwillingly). You are forever changed. Some people treat you with disdain or derision, but perhaps most of your modifications can be hidden by a hooded cloak or similar garment.

**Advancement:** Do you want to gain more abilities? Just find new hardware and plug it in. Although talent and practice are still involved, physical upgrades are your primary means of picking up new tricks. Adding points to your stat Pools might mean undergoing new procedures. Adding a new esotery might require putting an implant in your head, although changing one esotery to another could be as simple as unplugging one module and jacking in a replacement.

## NANO TIERS

### First-Tier Nano

First-tier nanos have the following abilities:

**Effort:** Your Effort is 1.

**Genius:** You have an Intellect Edge of 1, a Might Edge of 0, and a Speed Edge of 0.

**Expert Cypher Use:** You can bear three cyphers at a time.

**Practiced With Light Weapons:** You can use light weapons without penalty. If you wield a medium weapon, increase the difficulty of the attack by one step. If you wield a heavy weapon, increase it by two steps.

**Numenera Training:** You are trained in the numenera and can attempt to understand and identify its properties.

**Starting Equipment:** You start with clothing, one weapon, a book about the numenera, three cyphers (chosen for you by the GM), one oddity (chosen for you by the GM), and 4 shins (coins). Before selecting your weapons, armor, and other gear, you might want to wait until after you’ve chosen your esoterics, descriptor, and focus.

**Esoterics:** You can tap into the numenera to reshape the world around you. Similar in appearance to the way a fabled wizard might seem to cast spells, these expressions of your knowledge are called esoterics. People who are not nanos sometimes call them spells or charms.

Most esoterics must be activated, which requires that you have a free hand and spend 1 or more Intellect points. If no Intellect point cost is given for an esotery, it functions



continuously without needing to be activated. Some esoterics specify a duration, but you can always end one of your own esoterics anytime you wish.

Choose two of the esoterics described below. You can't choose the same esotery more than once unless its description says otherwise.

- **Hedge Magic (1 Intellect point):** You can perform small tricks: temporarily change the color or basic appearance of a small object, cause small objects to float through the air, clean a small area, mend a broken object, prepare (but not create) food, and so on. You can't use hedge magic to harm another creature or object. Action.
- **Onslaught (1 Intellect point):** You attack a foe using energies that assail either his physical form or his mind. In either case, you must be able to see your target. If the attack is physical, you emit a short-range ray of force that inflicts 4 points of damage. If the attack is mental, you focus your mental energy to blast the thought processes of another creature within short range. This mindslice inflicts 2 points of Intellect damage (and thus ignores Armor). Some creatures without minds (such as automatons) might be immune to mindslice. Action.
- **Push (2 Intellect points):** You push a creature or object an immediate distance in any direction you wish. You must be able to see the target, which must be your size or smaller, must not be affixed to anything, and must be within short range. The push is quick, and the force is too crude to be manipulated. For example, you can't use this esotery to pull a lever or even close a door. Action.
- **Scan (2 Intellect points):** You scan an area equal in size to a 10-foot (1-meter) cube, including all objects or creatures within that area. The area must be within short range. Scanning a creature or object always reveals its level (a measure of how powerful, dangerous, or difficult it is). You also learn whatever facts the GM feels are pertinent about the matter and energy in that area. For example, you might learn that the wooden box contains a device of metal and synth. You might learn that the glass cylinder is full of poisonous gas, and that its metal stand has an electrical field running through it that connects to a metal mesh in the floor. You might learn that the creature standing before you is a mammal with a small brain. However, this esotery doesn't tell you what the information means. Thus, in the first example, you don't know what the metal and synth device does. In the second, you don't know if stepping on the floor causes the cylinder to release the gas. In the third, you might suspect that the creature is not very intelligent, but scans, like looks, can be deceiving. Many materials and energy fields prevent or resist scanning. Action.
- **Ward:** You have a shield of energy around you at all times that helps deflect attacks. You gain +1 to Armor. Enabler.

## Second-Tier Nano

Second-tier nanos have the following abilities:

**Esoterics:** Choose one of the following esoterics (or an esotery from a lower tier) to add to your repertoire. In addition, you can replace one of your first-tier esoterics with a different first-tier esotery.

- **Adaptation (2+ Intellect points):** You adapt to a hostile environment for 28 hours. As a result, you can breathe safely, the temperature doesn't kill you (though it might be extremely uncomfortable or debilitating), crushing gravity doesn't incapacitate or harm you (though, again, you might be seriously hindered), and so on. In extreme environments, the GM might increase the cost of activating this esotery to a maximum cost of 10 Intellect points. Roughly speaking, the cost should equal the amount of damage you would sustain in a given round. For example, if you enter a hostile environment that would normally deal 6 points of damage per round, using Adaptation to avoid that damage costs 6 points. You can protect other creatures in addition to yourself, but each additional creature costs you the same number of Intellect points as it costs to protect you. Thus, if it costs 6 points to protect yourself, it costs 12 more to protect two other people. This esotery never protects against quick, instantaneous threats, like an attack with a weapon or a sudden explosion of fire. Action to initiate.
- **Flash (4 Intellect points):** You create an explosion of energy at a point within close range, affecting an area up to immediate range from that point. You must be able to see the location where you intend to center the explosion. The blast inflicts 2 points of damage to all creatures or objects within the area. Because this is an area attack, adding Effort to increase your damage works differently than it does for single-target attacks: if you apply a level of Effort to increase the damage, add 2 points of damage for each target, and even if you fail your attack roll, all targets in the area still take 1 point of damage. Action.
- **Hover (2 Intellect points):** You float slowly into the air. As your action, you can concentrate to remain motionless in the air, or float up to a short distance, but no more; otherwise, you drift with the wind or with any momentum you have gained. This effect lasts for up to ten minutes. Action to initiate.
- **Mind Reading (4 Intellect points):** You can read the surface thoughts of a creature within short range of you, even if the target doesn't want you to. You must be able to see the target. Once you have established contact, you can read the target's thoughts for up to one minute. If you or the target move out of range, the connection is broken. Action to initiate.
- **Stasis (3 Intellect points):** You surround a foe of your size or smaller with scintillating energy, keeping it from moving or acting for one minute, as if frozen solid. You must be able to see the target, and it must be within short range. While in stasis, the target is impervious to harm, cannot be moved, and is immune to all effects. Action.



## NANO CONNECTION

Roll a d20 or choose from the following list to determine a specific fact about your background that provides a connection to the rest of the world. You can also create your own fact.

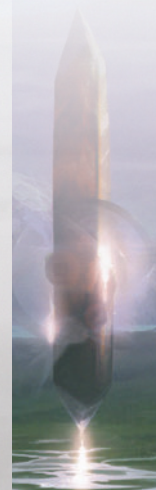
### Roll Background

- 1 You served as an apprentice for a nano-sorcerer respected and feared by many people. Now you bear his mark.
- 2 You studied in a school infamous for its dark, brooding instructors and graduates.
- 3 You learned nano-sorcery (or gained your modifications) in the temple of an obscure god. Its priests and worshippers, although small in number, respect and admire your talents and potential.
- 4 While traveling alone, you saved the life of a powerful abhuman brute. Although unwilling to accompany you on your journey, he remains indebted to you.
- 5 Your mother was a powerful nano while she lived, helpful to many locals. They look upon you kindly, but they also expect much from you.
- 6 You owe money to a number of people around town and don't have the funds to pay your debts.
- 7 You failed disgracefully at your initial studies with your teacher and now proceed on your own.
- 8 You learned your skills faster than your teachers had ever seen before. The powers that be took notice and are paying close attention.
- 9 You killed a well-known criminal in self-defense, earning the respect of many and the enmity of a dangerous few.
- 10 You trained as a glaive, but your skills with the numenera and other types of lore eventually led you down a different path. Your former comrades don't understand you, but they respect you.
- 11 While studying to be a nano, you worked as an assistant for a seamstress, making friends with the owner and the clientele.
- 12 Your family owns a large vineyard nearby known to all for its fine wine and fair business dealings.
- 13 You trained for a time with a group of Aeon Priests, and they still look upon you with fondness.
- 14 You worked the gardens in the palace of an influential noble. She wouldn't remember you, but you made friends with her young daughter.
- 15 An experiment you conducted in the past went horribly awry. The locals remember you as a dangerous and foolhardy individual.
- 16 You hail from a distant land where you were well known and regarded, but people here treat you with suspicion.
- 17 People you meet seem put off by the strange birthmark on your face.
- 18 Your best friend is also a nano. You and she share discoveries and secrets readily.
- 19 You know a local merchant very well. Since you give him so much business, he offers you discounts and special treatment.
- 20 You belong to a secretive social club that gathers monthly to drink and talk.

## Third-Tier Nano

Third-tier nanos have the following abilities:

- **Adept Cypher Use:** You can bear four cyphers at a time.
- **Esoterics:** Choose one of the following esoterics (or an esotery from a lower tier) to add to your repertoire. In addition, you can replace one of your lower-tier esoterics with a different esotery from the same lower tier.
- **Barrier (3+ Intellect points):** You create an opaque, stationary barrier of solid energy within immediate range. The barrier is 10 feet by 10 feet (3 m by 3 m) and of negligible thickness. It is a level 2 barrier and lasts for ten minutes. It can be placed anywhere it fits, whether against a solid object (including the ground) or floating in the air. Each level of Effort you apply strengthens the barrier by one level. For example, applying two levels of Effort creates a level 4 barrier. Action.
- **Countermeasures (4 Intellect points):** You immediately end one ongoing numenera effect (such as an effect created by an esotery) within immediate range. Alternatively, you can use this as a defense action to cancel any incoming esotery targeted at you, or you can cancel any numenera device or the effect of any numenera device for 1d6 rounds. You must touch the effect or device to cancel it. Action.
- **Energy Protection (3+ Intellect points):** Choose a discrete type of energy that you have experience with (such as heat, sonic, electricity, and so on). You gain +10 to Armor against damage from that type of energy for ten minutes. Alternatively, you gain +1 to Armor against damage from that energy for 28 hours. You must be familiar with the type of energy; for example, if you have no experience with a certain kind of extradimensional energy, you can't protect against it. Instead of applying Effort to decrease the difficulty of this esotery, you can apply Effort to protect more targets, with each level of Effort affecting up to two additional targets. You must touch additional targets to protect them. Action to initiate.
- **Sensor (4 Intellect points):** You create an immobile, invisible sensor within immediate range that lasts for 28 hours. At any time during that duration, you can concentrate to see, hear, and smell through the sensor, no matter how far you move from it. The sensor doesn't grant you sensory capabilities beyond the norm. Action to create; action to check.



- **Targeting Eye:** You are trained in any physical ranged attack that is an esotery or comes from a numenera device. For example, you are trained when using an Onslaught force blast because it's a physical attack, but not when using an Onslaught mindslice because it's a mental attack. Enabler.

## Fourth-Tier Nano

Fourth-tier nanos have the following abilities:

- **Esoterics:** Choose one of the following esoterics (or an esotery from a lower tier) to add to your repertoire. In addition, you can replace one of your lower-tier esoterics with a different esotery from the same lower tier.
- **Invisibility (4 Intellect points):** You become invisible for ten minutes. While invisible, you are specialized in stealth and Speed defense tasks. This effect ends if you do something to reveal your presence or position—attacking, performing an esotery, using an ability, moving a large object, and so on. If this occurs, you can regain the remaining invisibility effect by taking an action to focus on hiding your position. Action to initiate or reinstate.
- **Mind Control (6+ Intellect points):** You control the actions of another creature you touch. This effect lasts for ten minutes. The target must be level 2 or lower. Once you have established control, you maintain mental contact with the target and sense what it senses. You can allow it to act freely or override its control on a case-by-case basis. Instead of applying Effort to decrease the difficulty, you can apply Effort to increase the maximum level of the target. Thus, to control the mind of a level 5 target (three levels above the normal limit), you must apply three levels of Effort. Smart nanos use the Scan esotery on a creature to learn its level before trying to control its mind. When the Mind Control esotery ends, the creature doesn't remember being controlled or anything it did while under your command. Action to initiate.
- **Regeneration (6 Intellect points):** You restore points to a target's Might or Speed Pool in one of two ways: either the chosen Pool regains up to 6 points, or it is restored to a total value of 12. You make this decision when you initiate this esotery. Points are regenerated at a rate of 1 point each round. You must maintain contact with the target the whole time. In no case can this raise a Pool higher than its maximum. Action.
- **Reshape (5 Intellect points):** You reshape matter within short range in an area no larger than a 5-foot (.5 m) cube. If you spend only one action on this esotery, the changes you make are crude at best. If you spend at least ten minutes and succeed at an appropriate crafting task (with a difficulty at least one step higher than normal, due to the circumstances), you can make complex changes to the material. You can't change the nature of the material, only its shape. Thus, you can make a hole in a wall or floor, or you can seal one up. You can fashion a rudimentary sword from a large piece of iron. You can break or repair a chain. With multiple uses of this

esotery, you could bring about large changes, making a bridge, a wall, or a similar structure. Action.

- **Slay (6 Intellect points):** You gather disrupting energy in your fingertip and touch a creature. If the target is an NPC or a creature of level 3 or lower, it dies. If the target is a PC of any tier, he moves down one step on the damage track. Action.

## Fifth-Tier Nano

Fifth-tier nanos have the following abilities:

- **Master Cypher Use:** You can bear five cyphers at a time.
- **Esoterics:** Choose one of the following esoterics (or an esotery from a lower tier) to add to your repertoire. In addition, you can replace one of your lower-tier esoterics with a different esotery from the same lower tier.
- **Absorb Energy (7 Intellect points):** You touch an object and absorb its energy. If you touch a cypher, you render it useless. If you touch an artifact, roll on the artifact's depletion. If you touch another kind of powered machine or device, the GM determines whether its power is fully drained. In any case, you absorb energy from the object touched and regain 1d10 Intellect points. If this would give you more Intellect than your Pool's maximum, the extra points are lost, and you must make a Might defense roll. The difficulty of the roll is equal to the number of points over your maximum you absorbed. If you fail the roll, you take 5 points of damage and are unable to act for one round. You can use this esotery as a defense action when you're the target of an incoming esotery. Doing so cancels the incoming esotery, and you absorb the energy as if it were a device. Action.
- **Dust to Dust (7 Intellect points):** You disintegrate one nonliving object that is smaller than you and whose level is less than or equal to your tier. You must touch the object to affect it. If the GM feels it appropriate to the circumstances, you can disintegrate a portion of an object (the total volume of which is smaller than you) rather than the entire thing. Action.
- **Knowing the Unknown (6 Intellect points):** Tapping into the datasphere, you can ask the GM one question and get a general answer. The GM assigns a level to the question, so the more obscure the answer, the more difficult the task. Generally, knowledge that you could find by looking somewhere other than your current location is level 1, and obscure knowledge of the past is level 7. Gaining knowledge of the future is impossible. Action.
- **Teleportation (6+ Intellect points):** You instantaneously transmit yourself to any location that you have seen or been to, no matter the distance, as long as it is on Earth (or whatever world you're currently on). Instead of applying Effort to decrease the difficulty, you can apply Effort to bring other people with you, with each level of Effort affecting up to three additional targets. You must touch any additional targets. Action.



- **True Senses:** You can see in complete darkness up to 50 feet (15 m) as if it were dim light. You recognize holograms, disguises, optical illusions, sound mimicry, and other such tricks (for all senses) for what they are. Enabler.

### Sixth-Tier Nano

Sixth-tier nanos have the following abilities:

- **Esoterics:** Choose one of the following esoterics (or an esotery from a lower tier) to add to your repertoire. In addition, you can replace one of your lower-tier esoterics with a different esotery from the same lower tier.
- **Control Weather (10 Intellect points):** You change the weather in your general region. If performed indoors, this esotery creates only minor weather effects, such as mist, mild temperature changes, and so on. If performed outside, you can create rain, fog, snow, wind, or any other kind of normal (not overly severe) weather. The change lasts for a natural length of time, so a storm might last for an hour, fog for two or three hours, and snow for a few hours (or for ten minutes if it's out of season). For the first ten minutes after activating this esotery, you can create more dramatic and specific effects, such as lightning strikes, giant hailstones, twisters, hurricane force winds, and so on. These effects must occur within 1,000 feet (305 m) of your location. You must spend your turn concentrating to create an effect or to maintain it in a new round. These effects inflict 6 points of damage each round. Action.
- **Move Mountains (9 Intellect points):** You exert a tremendous amount of physical force within 250 feet

(76 m) of you. You can push up to 10 tons (9.1 t) of material up to 50 feet (15 m). This force can collapse buildings, redirect small rivers, or perform other dramatic effects. Action.

- **Traverse the Worlds (8+ Intellect points):** You instantaneously transmit yourself to another planet, dimension, plane, or level of reality. You must know that the destination exists; the GM will decide if you have enough information to confirm its existence and what the level of difficulty might be to reach the destination. Instead of applying Effort to decrease the difficulty, you can apply Effort to bring other people with you, with each level of Effort affecting up to three additional targets. You must touch any additional targets. Action.
- **Usurp Cypher:** Choose one cypher that you carry. The cypher must have an effect that is not instantaneous. You destroy the cypher and gain its power, which functions for you continuously. You can choose a cypher when you gain this ability, or you can wait and make the choice later. However, once you usurp a cypher's power, you cannot later switch to a different cypher—the esotery works only once. Action to initiate.

### NANO EXAMPLE

Shanna wants to create a nano. She decides to be somewhat well rounded, so she puts 2 of her additional points into each stat Pool, giving her a Might Pool of 9, a Speed Pool of 11, and an Intellect Pool of 14. Her nano is smart and quick. She has an Intellect Edge of 1, a Might Edge of 0, and a Speed Edge of 0. As a first-tier character,



her Effort is 1. She is trained in the numenera. As her initial esoterics, she chooses Onslaught and Ward, giving her a strong offense and defense.

She can bear three cyphers, but the GM gives her two: an occultic cypher (which counts as two cyphers for this purpose) and an anoetic cypher, which together count as three. The occultic cypher is a handheld, short-range teleporter, and the anoetic cypher is a device that explodes like a fiery bomb. For her weapon, Shanna chooses a knife, which is a light weapon.

For her descriptor, Shanna chooses Graceful, which adds 3 points to her Speed Pool, bringing it to 14. That descriptor means she is trained in balancing and anything requiring careful movements, physical performing arts, and Speed defense tasks. Perhaps she is a dancer. In fact, she begins to develop a backstory that involves graceful, lithe movements that she incorporates into her esotery performance.

For her focus, she chooses Rides the Lightning. This gives her Shock, another offensive power, which she plans on using with the knife if she ever gets into hand-to-hand combat (though she'll try to avoid that). She also gains Charge, which will come in handy when she finds more numenera artifacts in her explorations.

Her esoterics and focus abilities cost Intellect points to activate, so she's glad to have a lot of points in her Intellect Pool. In addition, her Intellect Edge will help reduce those costs. If she uses her Onslaught force blast without applying Effort, it costs her 0 Intellect points and deals 4 points of damage. Likewise, using her Shock ability without applying Effort costs 0 Intellect points. Her Intellect Edge will allow her to save points to devote toward applying Effort for other purposes, perhaps to boost the accuracy of her Onslaught or Shock abilities.

## JACK

Jacks are intrepid explorers and adventurers. They are jacks of all trades—hence the name—although the word also harkens back to fables involving a wily, resourceful hero who always seems to be named Jack. Used as a verb, “to jack” means to steal, to deceive, or to get out of a tight scrape through ingenuity or luck.

Jacks don't use one skill or tactic exclusively; they use whatever weapons, armor, esoterics, or anything else that might help them. They are hunters (particularly treasure hunters), con artists, skalds, rogues, scouts, and experts in a variety of fields.

**Jacks in Society:** Jacks are crafters, entertainers, leaders, and thieves. They're architects, engineers, con artists, salespeople, and teachers. This diversity doesn't mean that the jack is the archetypal everyman—that kind of simple categorization would diminish the character type. Jacks are remarkable in that they can do so many different things, and some do multiple things. If one jack is an artist and another is an explorer, there's likely a third who is both at once.

## JACK STAT POOLS

Stat	Pool Starting Value
Might	10
Speed	10
Intellect	10

You get 6 additional points to divide among your stat Pools however you wish.

Skilled and learned jacks who share their gifts with others are prized members of society, well respected for what they know and can do. A village might be protected by warriors, but it's the jack who makes everything run smoothly by repairing or building whatever is needed, handling disputes, investigating mysteries, and so on. On the other hand, jacks who use their varied abilities to benefit only themselves are distrusted at best and reviled at worst. The murderers and thieves of a community are likely jacks.

**Jacks in the Group:** Jacks fill in the space between the extremes of nanos and glaives. They frequently do a little of everything and know a little of everything. They can fight alongside a glaive or have a scholarly talk with a nano. There are no right or wrong places, actions, or roles for jacks. They can hold their own in combat or other dangerous situations, but they excel at many assorted tasks like searching for clues, using diplomacy with the locals, or repairing a piece of broken gear. The drawback, of course, is that jacks are rarely the best fighters in combat or the best handlers of the numenera. They might, however, be the best at more specialized skills. They're the most likely characters to know how to climb, how to stand watch effectively, how to jimmy a lock, and how to jury-rig a makeshift shelter or snare trap.

**Jacks and the Numenera:** Jacks gravitate toward cyphers or artifacts that expand their array of options even further. An enhanced piece of armor might be fine for a glaive, but many jacks would rather have an object that allows them to communicate at a distance, walk through walls, or put foes to sleep.

**Advanced Jacks:** Jacks are the most flexible of the character types, and advanced jacks are no different. Some learn esoterics, as nanos do. Others hone their combat abilities. Some jacks do both, gaining more skills and improving at, well, a little bit of everything.

## JACK BACKGROUND

You might hear people say that a jack is just the typical everyman (or everyperson), but don't believe it. You aren't like anyone else. You can do things that no one else can do because you do so things. You're a warrior, you're a thief, you're a diplomat, you're a sage, and you're a spy.

When you choose jack as your character type, come up with an explanation for how you learned your wide variety of talents. Choose one of the three options described



below. It will provide the foundation of your background and give you an idea of how you can improve. The GM can use this information to develop adventures and quests that are specific to your character and play a role in your advancement.

### Born Lucky

You seem to be better than most people because you are. Your ancestors were part of a genetic experiment, and your genes are superior to those of the average human. You're smarter, stronger, more dexterous, and able to learn mental and physical skills more quickly. Folks might call you charismatic, blessed, divinely gifted, or just plain lucky. They probably said the same thing about your parents, their parents, and so on. Some of your genetic advantage might even grant you low-level psychic abilities that greatly resemble the "miracles" performed by nanos.

**Advancement:** You might be a superhuman, but you're still limited by what you learn and experience. Therefore, you must continue to train and study. Practice is the key—it just comes easier for you than it does for others.

When you improve, it's because you have honed your natural abilities or unlocked heretofore unknown genetic traits.

### School of Hard Knocks

You learned things the hard way—on your own. Adaptive and canny, you express the true strengths of humanity in your ability to adjust quickly to circumstances, pick up new tricks to succeed, and ultimately survive when you probably should be dead.

Most likely, you grew up on your own, perhaps on the streets, in the wilderness, or amid ruins. The details don't really matter. What's important is that you taught yourself how to overcome whatever challenges came along.

**Advancement:** Just keep on keeping on. You got to where you are by observing, learning, adapting, and adopting. To advance, you need to do more of the same. Constant wariness coupled (somewhat paradoxically) with constant curiosity allows you to hone your skills and new capabilities.

### A Cobbled Jumble

You're the product of generations of eugenics, bolstered by minor cybernetic enhancements, a few small psychic abilities, and the lessons of secret masters. In other words, you don't have one source of power or one explanation for your abilities—you have many, and as far as you're concerned, that's the best formula for success. You don't put all your eggs in a single proverbial basket. To really get ahead, you must rely on multiple strengths.

You've always got an unexpected trick up your sleeve or a fallback contingency. For example, you might have subdermal implants that make you more resilient, your training might let you sense a foe's attack before he strikes, and your psychic abilities could allow you to push your

enemy's blade slightly to the left so you can just barely dodge it. In the end, you're simply hard to hurt.

**Advancement:** You have chosen every path, so you must travel each of them. Training and drugs fuel your body and mind, brain implants grant you additional skills, and devices hidden in your palms give you fresh abilities. Advancement means new teachers and technicians, strange substances and radiations, and an ever-increasing need to discover the secrets of the past that will prove essential for your future.

## JACK TIERS

### First-Tier Jack

First-tier jacks have the following abilities:

**Effort:** Your Effort is 1.

**Jack of All Trades:** You have an Edge of 1 for one stat of your choice: Might, Speed, or Intellect. You have an Edge of 0 for the other two stats.

**Cypher Use:** You can bear two cyphers at a time.

**Practiced With Light and Medium Weapons:** You can use light and medium weapons without penalty. If you wield a heavy weapon, increase the difficulty of the attack by one step.

**Skills:** You are trained in one task of your choosing (other than attacks or defense).

**Flex Skill:** At the beginning of each day, choose one task (other than attacks or defense) on which you will concentrate. For the rest of that day, you're trained in that task. You can't use this ability with a skill you're already trained in to become specialized.

**Starting Equipment:** You start with clothing, two weapons, light armor, an explorer's pack, a pack of light tools, two cyphers (chosen for you by the GM), one oddity (chosen by the GM), and 8 shins. Before selecting your weapons, armor, and other gear, you might want to wait until after you've chosen your tricks of the trade, descriptor, and focus.

**Tricks of the Trade:** You have a wide range of abilities that keep people guessing. Some of these tricks of the trade are technically esoterics, using the numenera, while others are more mundane. Some tricks are constant, ongoing effects; others are specific actions that usually cost points from one of your stat Pools.

Choose two of the tricks described below. You can't choose the same trick more than once unless its description says otherwise.

- **Bash (1 Might point):** This is a pummeling melee attack. You make an attack and inflict 1 additional point of damage using almost any weapon except the lightest (such as a whip or a small knife). Action.
- **Hedge Magic (1 Intellect point):** You can perform small tricks: temporarily change the color or basic appearance of a small object, cause small objects to float through the air, clean a small area, mend a broken object, prepare (but not create) food, and so on. You can't use hedge magic to harm another creature or object. Action.



- **Pierce (1 Speed point):** This is a well-aimed, penetrating ranged attack. You make an attack and inflict 1 additional point of damage if your weapon has a sharp point. Action.
- **Practiced in Armor:** Jacks can wear armor for reasonable periods of time without tiring and can compensate for slowed reactions from wearing armor. You can wear any kind of armor. You reduce the Might cost per hour for wearing armor and the Speed Pool reduction for wearing armor by 2. Enabler.
- **Skill With Defense:** Choose one type of defense task in which you are not already trained: Might, Speed, or Intellect. You are trained in defense tasks of that type. Unlike most tricks of the trade, you can select this trick up to three times. Each time you select it, you must choose a different type of defense task. Enabler.
- **Thrust (1 Might point):** This is a powerful melee stab. You make an attack and inflict 1 additional point of damage if your weapon has a sharp edge or point. Action.
- **Trained Without Armor:** You are trained in Speed defense actions when not wearing armor. Enabler.

## Second-Tier Jack

Second-tier jacks have the following abilities:

**Skills:** You are trained in one task of your choosing (other than attacks or defense). If you choose a task you're already trained in, you become specialized in that task. You can't choose a task you're already specialized in.

**Tricks of the Trade:** Choose one of the following tricks (or a trick from a lower tier) to add to your repertoire. In addition, you can replace one of your first-tier tricks with a different first-tier trick.

- **Brute Finesse:** Sometimes a swift kick is just the trick to popping open a lock or starting a reluctant piece of machinery. When you apply Effort to a noncombat Speed task, you can spend points from your Might Pool as if they came from your Speed Pool. For example, you could spend 3 Might points and 2 Speed points to apply two levels of Effort to picking a lock. Enabler.
- **Experienced Adventurer:** When you use a noncombat skill successfully, if you didn't roll a natural 19 or 20, you can apply a level of Effort (after the roll) to get a minor special effect. The stat points spent for this level of Effort must come from the same stat as the one used for the skill. Thus, if you made a Speed roll, the cost of the Effort comes from your Speed Pool. Applying the Effort doesn't modify the difficulty of the task—it only creates the minor effect. Enabler.
- **No Need for Weapons:** When you make an unarmed attack (such as a punch or kick), it counts as a medium weapon instead of a light weapon. Enabler.
- **Push (2 Intellect points):** You push a creature or object an immediate distance in any direction you wish. You must be able to see the target, which must be your size or smaller, must not be affixed to anything, and must be within short

range. The push is quick, and the force is too crude to be manipulated. For example, you can't use this trick to pull a lever or even close a door. Action.

- **Reload (1 Speed point):** When using a weapon that normally requires an action to reload, you can reload and fire (or fire and reload) in the same action. Enabler.
- **Ward:** You have a shield of energy around you at all times that helps deflect attacks. You gain +1 to Armor. Enabler.

## Third-Tier Jack

Third-tier jacks have the following abilities:

**Expert Cypher Use:** You can bear three cyphers at a time.

**Skills:** You are trained in one task of your choosing (other than attacks or defense). If you choose a task you're already trained in, you become specialized in that task. You can't choose a task you're already specialized in.

**Tricks of the Trade:** Choose one of the following tricks (or a trick from a lower tier) to add to your repertoire. In addition, you can replace one of your lower-tier tricks with a different trick from the same lower tier.

- **Enhancement (4 Intellect points):** You gain a +1 bonus to the Edge for one stat of your choice (Might, Speed, or Intellect) for ten minutes. You can have only one version of this trick in effect at a time. Action to initiate.
- **Hover (3 Intellect points):** You float slowly into the air. If you concentrate, you can control your movement to remain motionless in the air, or float up to a short distance as your action, but no more; otherwise, you drift with the wind or with any momentum you have gained. This effect lasts for up to ten minutes. Action to initiate.
- **Mind Reading (4 Intellect points):** You can read the surface thoughts of a creature within short range of you, even if the subject doesn't want you to. You must be able to see the target. Once you have established contact, you can read the target's thoughts for up to one minute. If you or the target move out of range, the connection is broken. Action to initiate.
- **Onslaught (2 Intellect points):** You attack a foe using energies that assail either his physical form or his mind. In either case, you must be able to see your target. If the attack is physical, you emit a short-range, invisible ray of force that inflicts 4 points of damage. If the attack is mental, you focus your mental energy to blast the thought processes of another creature within short range. This mindslice inflicts 2 points of Intellect damage (and thus ignores Armor). Some creatures without minds (such as automatons) might be immune to mindslice. Action.
- **Skill With Attacks:** Choose one type of attack in which you are not already trained: light bashing, light bladed, light ranged, medium bashing, medium bladed, medium ranged, heavy bashing, heavy bladed, or heavy ranged. You are trained in attacks using that type of weapon. Enabler.





## JACK CONNECTION

Roll a d20 or choose from the following list to determine a specific fact about your background that provides a connection to the rest of the world. You can also create your own fact.

### Roll Background

- 1 You come from a large family and had to fend for yourself from an early age.
- 2 Your older sister is a skilled nano. You weren't able to follow her path, but the numenera is not unknown to you.
- 3 You're a member of a guild of explorers who specialize in uncovering ancient mysteries.
- 4 You worked alongside your father, who was skilled in many things, until he disappeared one day with no explanation.
- 5 You grew up on the streets and studied at the school of hard knocks.
- 6 You remember little of your past, which has always seemed strange to you.
- 7 You came of age in the wild and are used to living rough.
- 8 Your family is wealthy but earns little respect from the locals.
- 9 You're friends with many people in the community and are generally well regarded.
- 10 You have an annoying rival who always seems to get in your way or foil your plans.
- 11 You're in love with a local shopkeeper, but that person shows little interest in you.
- 12 Several expeditions preparing to explore old ruins and odd mysteries would like you to join them because you seem like a promising addition to the team.
- 13 Your best friend from childhood is now an Aeon Priest.
- 14 You come from a nearby community, but the locals consider the folk of your hometown to be untrustworthy rivals.
- 15 You're close friends with a local married couple, both of whom are experienced nanos.
- 16 You're drinking buddies with a number of the local guards and glaives.
- 17 You once saved the child of a local noble from a fire, and she is very grateful.
- 18 You used to work with a troupe of traveling minstrels and performers, and they remember you fondly (as do people in the places you visited).
- 19 You're wanted for a crime you didn't commit.
- 20 You have a friend with an extensive library, plenty of food and drink, and a comfortable home—and the door is always open to you.

## Fourth-Tier Jack

Fourth-tier jacks have the following abilities:

**Skills:** You are trained in one task of your choosing (other than attacks or defense). If you choose a task you're already trained in, you become specialized in that task. You can't choose a task you're already specialized in.

**Tricks of the Trade:** Choose one of the following tricks (or a trick from a lower tier) to add to your repertoire. In addition, you can replace one of your lower-tier tricks with a different trick from the same lower tier.

- **Analytical Combat:** Sometimes the most important muscle in a fight is your brain. If you can predict where an opponent will move next or see her weak spot, you can be a more successful combatant. When you apply Effort to a combat Might task or Speed task, you can also spend points from your Intellect Pool as if they came from your Might Pool or Speed Pool. For example, you could spend 3 Intellect points and 2 Might points to apply two levels of Effort to attacking with a sword. Enabler.
- **Lunge (2 Might points):** This move requires you to extend yourself for a powerful stab or smash. The awkward lunge increases the difficulty of the attack roll by one step. If your attack is successful, it inflicts 4 additional points of damage. Action.
- **Slice (2 Speed points):** This is a quick attack with a bladed or pointed weapon that is hard to defend

against. The difficulty of the attack roll is decreased by one step. If the attack is successful, it deals 1 less point of damage than normal. Action.

- **Spray (2 Speed points):** If a weapon has the ability to fire rapid shots without reloading (usually called a rapid fire weapon, such as the crank crossbow), you can spray multiple shots around your target to increase the chance of hitting. This move uses 1d6 + 1 rounds of ammo (or all the ammo in the weapon, if it has less than the number rolled). The difficulty of the attack roll is decreased by one step. If the attack is successful, it deals 1 less point of damage than normal. Action.
- **Transdimensional Weapon (3 Intellect points):** One melee weapon that you touch vibrates on a dimensional frequency so that it spans into other dimensions for one hour. During this time, it inflicts 1 additional point of damage on a successful hit and affects targets that can only be affected by special transdimensional effects, such as those that are out of phase. Action to initiate.

## Fifth-Tier Jack

Fifth-tier jacks have the following abilities:

**Adept Cypher Use:** You can bear four cyphers at a time.

**Skills:** You are trained in one task of your choosing (other than attacks or defense). If you choose a task you're already





trained in, you become specialized in that task. You can't choose a task you're already specialized in.

**Tricks of the Trade:** Choose one of the following tricks (or a trick from a lower tier) to add to your repertoire. In addition, you can replace one of your lower-tier tricks with a different trick from the same lower tier.

- **Feint (3 Speed points):** If you spend one action creating a misdirection or diversion, in the next round you can take advantage of your opponent's lowered defenses. Make a melee attack roll against that opponent. The difficulty of the roll is decreased by one step. If your attack is successful, it inflicts 4 additional points of damage. Action.
- **Snipe (3 Speed points):** If you spend one action aiming, in the next round you can make a precise ranged attack. The difficulty of the attack roll is decreased by one step. If your attack is successful, it inflicts 4 additional points of damage. Action.
- **Successive Attack (2 Speed points):** If you take down a foe, you can immediately make another attack on that same turn against a new foe within your reach. The second attack is part of the same action. You can use this trick with melee attacks and ranged attacks. Enabler.
- **Targeting Eye:** You are trained in any physical ranged attack that is a trick of the trade or comes from a numenera device. For example, you are trained when using an Onslaught force blast because it's a physical attack, but not when using an Onslaught mindslice because it's a mental attack. You are trained when attacking with a death ray emitter because it comes from a numenera device, but not when using a crossbow because it's a mundane weapon. Enabler.
- **Mastery With Defense:** Choose one type of defense task

in which you are trained: Might, Speed, or Intellect. You become specialized in defense tasks of that type. Unlike most tricks of the trade, you can select this trick up to three times. Each time you select it, you must choose a different type of defense task. Enabler.

## Sixth-Tier Jack

Sixth-tier jacks have the following abilities:

**Skills:** You are trained in one task of your choosing (other than attacks or defense). If you choose a task you're already trained in, you become specialized in that task. You can't choose a task you're already specialized in.

**Tricks of the Trade:** Choose one of the following tricks (or a trick from a lower tier) to add to your repertoire. In addition, you can replace one of your lower-tier tricks with a different trick from the same lower tier.

- **Energy Protection (4+ Intellect points):** Choose a discrete type of energy you have experience with (such as heat, sonic, electricity, and so on). You gain +10 to Armor against damage from that type of energy for ten minutes. Alternatively, you gain +1 to Armor against damage from that energy for 28 hours. You must be familiar with the type of energy; for example, if you have no experience with a certain kind of extradimensional energy, you can't protect against it. Instead of applying Effort to decrease the difficulty, you can apply Effort to protect more targets, with each level of Effort affecting up to two additional targets. You must touch additional targets to protect them. Action to initiate.
- **Invisibility (5 Intellect points):** You become invisible for ten minutes. While invisible, you are specialized in stealth and Speed defense tasks. This effect ends if you do something to reveal your presence or position—



attacking, performing an esotery, using an ability, moving a large object, and so on. If this occurs, you can regain the remaining invisibility effect by taking an action to focus on hiding your position. Action to initiate or reinstate.

- **Parry (6 Speed points):** You can deflect incoming attacks quickly. When you activate this trick, for the next 10 rounds you reduce the difficulty for all Speed defense rolls by one step. Enabler.
- **Spin Attack (6 Speed points):** You stand still and make melee attacks against up to five foes within reach, all as part of the same action in one round. Make a separate attack roll for each foe. You remain limited by the amount of Effort you can apply on one action. Anything that modifies your attack or damage applies to all of these attacks. Action.
- **True Senses:** You can see in complete darkness up to 50 feet (15 m) as if it were dim light. You recognize holograms, disguises, optical illusions, sound mimicry, and other such tricks (for all senses) for what they are. Enabler.

### JACK EXAMPLE

James wants to play a jack. He likes the idea of being crafty, sneaky, and maybe a little devious. He puts 4 of his additional points in his Intellect Pool (raising it to 14) and 2 points in his Speed Pool (raising it to 12). This leaves his Might Pool at 10. He decides to have a Speed Edge of 1, but it was a hard choice—he was tempted to put his Edge point in Intellect. As a first-tier character, his Effort is 1.

James chooses a quarterstaff and a dart thrower for his weapons. The staff is a medium weapon that inflicts 4 points of damage. The dart thrower is a light weapon, so he decreases the difficulty of attack rolls with it, but each shot inflicts only 2 points of damage. The dart thrower comes with 12 darts.

He wears a leather jerkin that gives him 1 point of Armor, so James subtracts 1 from all damage he takes. This type of armor normally reduces the wearer's Speed Pool by 2 and costs 1 point of Might per hour worn. To compensate, James chooses Practiced in Armor as one of his tricks of the trade, which reduces both costs by 2 (meaning they both become 0).

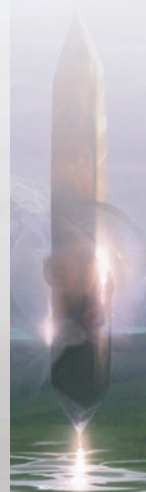
For his other trick, he chooses Skill With Defense and selects Speed tasks. James is very defensive minded.

He also chooses a skill to be trained in. James decides to go with stealth so that whenever he tries to hide, move quietly, or slip something into his pocket unnoticed, he reduces the difficulty of the task by one step. In addition, his flex skill lets him choose another skill each day, so he has many options.

His character can bear two cyphers. The GM decides that one item is an injector that gives James a temporary +1 bonus to his Speed Edge for one hour, and the other is a belt-mounted device that projects a force shield around him for ten minutes and grants +3 to his Armor.

James still needs to choose his descriptor and focus. For his descriptor, he picks Clever to complement his “devious” theme, so he adds 3 to his Intellect Pool, raising it to 17. The Clever descriptor also means he is trained in lies and trickery (which is fitting for his character), defense rolls against mental effects, and identifying or assessing things. Basically, his jack is good at figuring out whatever situation he lands in. Conversely, he doesn't excel at reading books, studying, or remembering details. Finally, the descriptor gives James some extra starting money—probably from being so clever.

For his focus, he makes a choice that's devious but overt: Crafts Illusions. At first tier, he can spend 1 point from his Intellect Pool to create minor images. The focus also grants him a strange oddity that involves images in a piece of glass. James will use these abilities to create a con artist character who is careful and clever and backs up his lies with illusions.



# CHARACTER DESCRIPTOR

*Your descriptor defines your character—it flavors everything you do. The differences between a Charming glaive and a Graceful glaive are considerable. The descriptor changes the way those characters go about every action. Your descriptor places your character in the situation (the first adventure, which starts the campaign) and helps provide motivation. It is the adjective of the sentence “I am an adjective noun who verbs.”*

Descriptors offer a one-time package of extra abilities, skills, or modifications to your stat Pools. Not all of a descriptor’s offerings are positive character modifications. For example, some descriptors have inabilities—tasks that a character isn’t good at. You can think of inabilities as “negative skills”—instead of being one step better at that kind of task, you’re one step worse. If you become skilled at a task that you have an inability with, they cancel out. Remember that characters are defined as much by what they’re *not* good at as what they *are* good at.

Descriptors also offer a few brief suggestions of how your character got involved with the rest of the group on their first adventure. You can use these, or not, as you wish.

This section details the following descriptors: Charming, Clever, Graceful, Intelligent, Learned, Mystical/Mechanical, Rugged, Stealthy, Strong, Strong-Willed, Swift, and Tough. Choose one of them for your character. You can pick any descriptor you wish regardless of whether you’re a glaive, nano, or jack.

## CHARMING

You’re a smooth talker and a charmer. Whether through seemingly supernatural means or just a way with words, you can convince others to do as you wish. Most likely, you’re physically attractive or at least highly charismatic, and others enjoy listening to your voice. You probably pay attention to your appearance, keeping yourself well groomed. You make friends easily.

You play up the personality facet of your Intellect stat; intelligence is not your strong suit. You’re personable, not necessarily studious or strong-willed.

You gain the following benefits:

**Personable:** +2 to your Intellect Pool.

**Skill:** You’re trained in all tasks involving positive or pleasant social interaction.

**Skill:** You’re trained when using esoterics or special abilities that influence the minds of others.



## DESCRIPTORS

Charming	Rugged
Clever	Stealthy
Graceful	Strong
Intelligent	Strong-Willed
Learned	Swift
Mystical/Mechanical	Tough

**Contact:** You have an important contact who is in an influential position, such as a minor noble, the captain of the town guard, an Aeon Priest, or the head of a large gang of thieves. You and the GM should work out the details together.

**Inability:** You were never good at studying or retaining facts. The difficulty of any task involving lore, knowledge, or understanding is increased by one step.

**Inability:** Your willpower is not one of your strong points. Whenever you try to resist a mental attack, the difficulty is increased by one step.

**Additional Equipment:** You’ve managed to talk your way into some decent discounts and bonuses in recent weeks. As a result, you have 10 extra shins jangling in your pocket.

**Initial Link to the Starting Adventure:** From the following list of options, choose how you became involved in the first adventure.

1. You convinced one of the other PCs to tell you what he was doing.
2. You instigated the whole thing and convinced the others to join you.
3. One of the other PCs did a favor for you, and now you’re repaying that obligation by helping her with the task at hand.
4. There is reward involved, and you need the money.

## CLEVER

You’re quick-witted, thinking well on your feet. You understand people, so you can fool them but are rarely



fooled. Because you easily see things for what they are, you get the lay of the land swiftly, size up threats and allies, and assess situations with accuracy. Perhaps you're physically attractive, or maybe you use your wit to overcome any physical or mental imperfections.

You gain the following benefits:

**Smart:** +2 to your Intellect Pool.

**Skill:** You're trained in all interactions involving lies or trickery.

**Skill:** You're trained in defense rolls to resist mental effects.

**Skill:** You're trained in all tasks involving, identifying or assessing danger, lies, quality, importance, function, or power.

**Inability:** You were never good at studying or retaining trivial knowledge. The difficulty of any task involving lore, knowledge, or understanding is increased by one step.

**Additional Equipment:** You see through the schemes of others and occasionally convince them to believe you—even when, perhaps, they should not. Thanks to your clever behavior, you have 10 extra shins.

**Initial Link to the Starting Adventure:** From the following list of options, choose how you became involved in the first adventure.

1. You convinced one of the other PCs to tell you what he was doing.
2. From afar, you observed that something interesting was going on.
3. You talked your way into the situation because you thought it might earn some money.
4. You suspect that the other PCs won't succeed without you.

## GRACEFUL

You have a perfect sense of balance, moving and speaking with grace and beauty. You're quick, lithe, flexible, and dexterous. Your body is perfectly suited to dance, and you use that advantage in combat to dodge blows. You might wear garments that enhance your agile movement and sense of style.

You gain the following benefits:

**Agile:** +2 to your Speed Pool.

**Skill:** You're trained in all tasks involving balance and careful movement.

**Skill:** You're trained in all tasks involving physical performing arts.

**Skill:** You're trained in all Speed defense tasks.

**Initial Link to the Starting Adventure:** From the following list of options, choose how you became involved in the first adventure.

1. Against your better judgment, you joined the other PCs because you saw that they were in danger.
2. One of the other PCs convinced you that joining the group would be in your best interest.
3. You're afraid of what might happen if the other PCs fail.
4. There is reward involved, and you need the money.

## INTELLIGENT

You're quite smart. Your memory is sharp, and you easily grasp concepts that others might struggle with. This aptitude doesn't necessarily mean that you've had years of formal education, but you have learned a great deal in your life, primarily because you pick things up quickly and retain so much.

You gain the following benefits:

**Smart:** +2 to your Intellect Pool.

**Skill:** You're trained in an area of knowledge of your choice.

**Skill:** You're trained in all actions that involve remembering or memorizing things you experience directly. For example, instead of being good at recalling details of geography that you read about in a book, you can remember a path through a set of tunnels that you've explored before.

**Initial Link to the Starting Adventure:** From the following list of options, choose how you became involved in the first adventure.

1. One of the other PCs asked your opinion of the mission, knowing that if you thought it was a good idea, it probably was.
2. You saw value in what the other PCs were doing.
3. You believed that the task might lead to important and interesting discoveries.
4. A colleague requested that you take part in the mission as a favor.

## LEARNED

You have studied, either on your own or with an instructor. You know many things and are an expert on a few topics, such as history, biology, geography, the numenera, nature, or any other area of study. Learned characters typically carry a few books around with them and spend their spare time reading.

You gain the following benefits:

**Smart:** +2 to your Intellect Pool.

**Skill:** You're trained in three areas of knowledge of your choice.

**Inability:** You have few social graces. The difficulty of any task involving charm, persuasion, or etiquette is increased by one step.

**Additional Equipment:** You have two additional books on topics of your choice.

**Initial Link to the Starting Adventure:** From the following list of options, choose how you became involved in the first adventure.

1. One of the other PCs asked you to come along because of your knowledge.
2. You need money to fund your studies.
3. You believed that the task might lead to important and interesting discoveries.
4. A colleague requested that you take part in the mission as a favor.





## MYSTICAL/MECHANICAL

You have a special talent that can be viewed in two ways. You might think of yourself as “mystical,” and thus attuned with the mysterious and the paranormal, or you might think of yourself as “mechanical,” and thus adept with devices and machines. In either case, your true talents lie with the numenera. You likely have experience with ancient lore, and you can sense and wield the numenera—though whether that means “magic” or “technology” is up to you (and probably up to those around you as well). Mystical characters often wear jewelry, such as a ring or an amulet, or have tattoos or other marks that show their interests. Mechanical characters tend to carry a lot of tools and treat them almost like talismans.

You gain the following benefits:

**Smart:** +2 to your Intellect Pool.

**Skill:** You’re trained in all actions involving identifying or understanding the numenera.

**Sense “magic”:** You can sense whether the numenera is active in situations where its presence is not obvious. You must study an object or location closely for a minute to get a feel for whether the touch of the ancients is at work.

**Esotery:** You can perform the esotery known as Hedge Magic when you have a free hand and can pay the Intellect point cost.

• **Hedge Magic (1 Intellect point):** You can perform small tricks: temporarily change the color or basic appearance of a small object, cause small objects to float through the air, clean a small area, mend a broken object, prepare (but not create) food, and so on. You can’t use hedge magic to harm another creature or object. Action.

**Inability:** You have a manner or an aura that others find a bit unnerving. The difficulty of any task involving charm, persuasion, or deception is increased by one step.

**Additional Equipment:** You have an extra oddity, determined by the GM.

**Initial Link to the Starting Adventure:** From the following list of options, choose how you became involved in the first adventure.

1. A dream guided you to this point.
2. You need money to fund your studies.
3. You believed the mission would be a great way to learn more about the numenera.
4. Various signs and portents led you here.

## RUGGED

You’re a nature lover accustomed to living rough, pitting your wits against the elements. Most likely, you’re a skilled hunter, gatherer, or naturalist. Years of living in the wild have left their mark with a worn countenance, wild hair, or scars. Your clothing is probably much less refined than the garments worn by city dwellers.

You gain the following benefits:

**Skill:** You’re trained in all tasks involving climbing, jumping, running, and swimming.

**Skill:** You’re trained in all tasks involving training, riding, or placating natural animals.

**Skill:** You’re trained in all tasks involving identifying or using natural plants.

**Inability:** You have no social graces and prefer animals to people. The difficulty of any task involving charm, persuasion, etiquette, or deception is increased by one step.

**Additional Equipment:** You carry an explorer’s pack. If you already have one, you can instead take 50 extra feet (15 m) of rope, two more days’ worth of rations, and an extra ranged weapon.

**Initial Link to the Starting Adventure:** From the following list of options, choose how you became involved in the first adventure.

1. Against your better judgment, you joined the other PCs because you saw that they were in danger.
2. One of the other PCs convinced you that joining the group would be in your best interest.
3. You’re afraid of what might happen if the other PCs fail.
4. There is reward involved, and you need the money.

## STEALTHY

You’re sneaky, slippery, and fast. These talents help you hide, move quietly, and pull off tricks that require sleight of hand. Most likely, you’re wiry and small. However, you’re not much



of a sprinter—you're more dexterous than fleet of foot.

You gain the following benefits:

**Quick:** +2 to your Speed Pool.

**Skill:** You're trained in all stealthy tasks.

**Skill:** You're trained in all interactions involving lies or trickery.

**Skill:** You're trained in all esoterics or special abilities involving illusions or trickery.

**Inability:** You're sneaky but not fast. The difficulty of all movement-related tasks is one step higher for you.

**Initial Link to the Starting Adventure:** From the following list of options, choose how you became involved in the first adventure.

1. You attempted to steal from one of the other PCs. That character caught you and forced you to come along with her.
2. You were tailing one of the other PCs for reasons of your own, which brought you into the action.
3. An NPC employer secretly paid you to get involved.
4. You overheard the other PCs talking about a topic that interested you, so you decided to approach the group.

## STRONG

You're extremely strong and physically powerful, and you use these qualities well, whether through violence or feats of prowess. You likely have a brawny build and impressive muscles.

You gain the following benefits:

**Very Powerful:** +4 to your Might Pool.

**Skill:** You're trained in all actions involving breaking inanimate objects.

**Skill:** You're trained in all jumping actions.

**Additional Equipment:** You have an extra medium weapon or heavy weapon.

**Initial Link to the Starting Adventure:** From the following list of options, choose how you became involved in the first adventure.

1. Against your better judgment, you joined the other PCs because you saw that they were in danger.
2. One of the other PCs convinced you that joining the group would be in your best interest.
3. You're afraid of what might happen if the other PCs fail.
4. There is reward involved, and you need the money.

## STRONG-WILLED

You're tough-minded, willful, and independent. No one can talk you into anything or change your mind when you don't want it changed. This quality doesn't necessarily make you smart, but it does make you a bastion of willpower and resolve. You likely dress and act with unique style and flair, not caring what others think.

You gain the following benefits:

**Willful:** +4 to your Intellect Pool.

**Skill:** You're trained in resisting mental effects.

**Skill:** You're trained in tasks requiring incredible focus or concentration.

**Inability:** Willful doesn't mean brilliant. The difficulty of any task that involves figuring out puzzles or problems, memorizing things, or using lore is increased by one step.

**Initial Link to the Starting Adventure:** From the following list of options, choose how you became involved in the first adventure.

1. Against your better judgment, you joined the other PCs because you saw that they were in danger.
2. One of the other PCs convinced you that joining the group would be in your best interest.
3. You're afraid of what might happen if the other PCs fail.
4. There is reward involved, and you need the money.

## SWIFT

You move quickly, able to sprint in short bursts and work with your hands with dexterity. You're great at crossing distances quickly but not always smoothly. You are likely slim and muscular.

You gain the following benefits:

**Fast:** +4 to your Speed Pool.

**Skill:** You're trained in initiative actions (to determine who goes first in combat).

**Skill:** You're trained in running actions.

**Inability:** You're fast but not necessarily graceful. The difficulty of any task involving balance is increased by one step.

**Initial Link to the Starting Adventure:** From the following list of options, choose how you became involved in the first adventure.

1. Against your better judgment, you joined the other PCs because you saw that they were in danger.
2. One of the other PCs convinced you that joining the group would be in your best interest.
3. You're afraid of what might happen if the other PCs fail.
4. There is reward involved, and you need the money.

## TOUGH

You're strong and can take a lot of physical punishment. You might have a large frame and a square jaw. Tough characters frequently have visible scars.

You gain the following benefits:

**Resilient:** +1 to Armor.

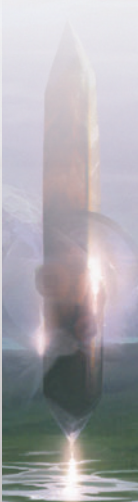
**Healthy:** Add 1 to the points you regain when you make a recovery roll.

**Skill:** You're trained in Might defense actions.

**Additional Equipment:** You have an extra light weapon.

**Initial Link to the Starting Adventure:** From the following list of options, choose how you became involved in the first adventure.

1. You're acting as a bodyguard for one of the other PCs.
2. One of the PCs is your sibling, and you came along to watch out for her.
3. You need money because your family is in debt.
4. You stepped in to defend one of the PCs when that character was threatened. While talking to him afterward, you heard about the group's task.



# CHARACTER FOCUS

*Focus is what makes your character unique. No two PCs in a group should have the same focus. Your focus gives you benefits when you create your character and each time you ascend to the next tier. It's the verb of the sentence "I am an adjective noun who verbs."*

When you choose a character focus, you get a special connection to one or more of your fellow PCs, a first-tier ability, and perhaps additional starting equipment. A few foci offer slight alterations of esoterics or tricks for nanos and jacks. Each focus also offers suggestions to the GM and the player for possible effects or consequences of really good or really bad die rolls.

As you progress to a new tier, your focus grants you more abilities. Each tier's benefit is usually labeled *Action* or *Enabler*. If an ability is labeled Action, you must take an action to use it. If an ability is labeled Enabler, it makes other actions better or gives some other benefit, but it's not an action. An ability that allows you to blast foes with lasers is an action. An ability that grants you additional damage when you make attacks is an enabler. You can use an enabler in the same turn as you perform another action.

Each tier's benefits are independent of and cumulative with benefits from other tiers (unless indicated otherwise). So if your first-tier ability grants you +1 to Armor and your fourth-tier ability also grants you +1 to Armor, when you reach fourth tier, you have a total of +2 to Armor.

## BEARS A HALO OF FIRE

You can create a sheath of flames around your body. You leave scorch marks wherever you go, and you can't handle combustible objects without first dousing your inherent flames. If you perform esoterics (or similar effects beyond the abilities of normal humans), all your effects are tainted with flame. Fiery visuals accompany your powers, and in some cases, your predilection for flame actually reshapes your abilities to take on a fiery nature where none existed before.

You probably wear red and yellow, or perhaps black.

Although most of those who take up this mantle are nanos, flame-wielding glaives and jacks are fearsome indeed.

**Connection:** Pick one other PC. Through a quirk of fate, your fire cannot harm that character.

### FOCI

Bears a Halo of Fire	Hunts With Great Skill
Carries a Quiver	Leads
Commands Mental Powers	Lives in the Wilderness
Controls Beasts	Masters Defense
Controls Gravity	Masters Weaponry
Crafts Illusions	Murders
Crafts Unique Objects	Rages
Employs Magnetism	Rides the Lightning
Entertains	Talks to Machines
Exists Partially Out of Phase	Wears a Sheen of Ice
Explores Dark Places	Wields Power With Precision
Fights With Panache	Wields Two Weapons at Once
Focuses Mind Over Matter	Works Miracles
Fuses Flesh and Steel	Works the Back Alleys
Howls at the Moon	

**Additional Equipment:** You have an artifact—a device that sprays inanimate objects to make them fire-resistant. All your starting gear has already been treated unless you don't want it to be.

**Fire Esoterics:** If you perform esoterics, those that would normally use force or other energy (such as electricity) instead use fire. For example, force blasts from Onslaught are blasts of flame, and Flash is a burst of fire. These alterations change nothing except the type of damage and the fact that it might start fires. As another example, Barrier produces a wall of roaring flames. In this case, the alteration changes the esotery so that the barrier is not solid but instead inflicts 1 point of damage to anything that touches it and 4 points of damage to anyone who passes through it.

**Minor Effect Suggestions:** The target or something near the target catches fire.

**Major Effect Suggestions:** An important item on the target's person is destroyed.





## ORIGIN OF SPECIAL POWERS

If you want an explanation for some of the more supernatural powers provided by your focus, roll d100 and check the following table, discarding results that don't fit logic.

Roll	Explanation
01–05	Natural mutation
06–09	Unexpected viral reconstruction of your body
10–15	Mutation due to ancestral exposure to chemicals, radiation, or virus
16–21	Mutation due to experimental science performed on your ancestor(s)
22–27	An encounter with the Iron Wind (unexpected nanotech reconstruction of your body)
28	Abduction by extraterrestrial(s) who experimented or performed surgery on you
29	Abduction by rogue scientist(s) who experimented or performed surgery on you
30	Abduction by machine intelligence that experimented or performed surgery on you
31	An encounter with an ultraterrestrial entity that mysteriously changed you
32–35	Intentional or accidental fusion/implantation with mechanical devices in fingertips
36–39	Intentional or accidental fusion/implantation with mechanical devices in palms
40–43	Intentional or accidental fusion/implantation with mechanical device in head or eye
44–47	Intentional or accidental fusion/implantation with mechanical device in chest
48–51	Intentional or accidental immersion or treatment with ancient chemicals or radiation
52–56	Hidden artifact(s) secreted on your person
57–60	Cloud of nanotech that follows and responds to you for reasons unknown
61–64	Implant or mutation that provides knowledge and power from the datasphere
65–66	Drugs
67	Training by extraterrestrial entities in strange and mysterious devotions
68–69	Training by secret order that has mastered mysteries passed down from the ancients
70	Training by machine intelligence that shared inhuman knowledge
71–80	Confluence: Roll twice and combine results
81–00	Unknown (GM can secretly roll again and keep the result hidden)

### Tier 1: Shroud of Flame (1 Intellect point).

At your command, your entire body becomes shrouded in flames that last up to ten minutes. The fire doesn't burn you, but it automatically inflicts 2 points of damage to anyone who tries to touch you or strike you with a melee attack. Flames from another source can still hurt you. While the shroud is active, you gain +2 points of Armor that protect only against damage from fire from another source. Enabler.

**Tier 2: Hurl Flame (2 Intellect points).** While your Shroud of Flame is active, you can reach into your halo and hurl a handful of fire at a target. This is a ranged attack with short range that deals 4 points of fire damage. Action.

**Fiery Power.** When you use the Onslaught force blast esotery or the Flash esotery, increase the damage by 1 point. If you don't have either of those abilities, this ability has no effect. Fiery Power does not affect damage from the Onslaught mindslice. Enabler.

**Tier 3: Fiery Hand of Doom (3 Intellect points).** While your Shroud of Flame is active, you can reach into your halo and produce a hand made of animate flame that is twice the size of a human's hand. The hand acts as you direct, floating in the air. Directing the hand is an action. Without a command, the hand does nothing. It can move a long distance in a round, but it never moves farther away from you than long range. The

hand can grab, move, and carry things, but anything it touches takes 1 point of damage per round from the heat. The hand can also attack. It's a level 3 creature and deals 1 extra point of damage from fire when it attacks. Once created, the hand lasts for ten minutes. Action to create; action to direct.

**Tier 4: Flameblade (4 Intellect points).** When you wish it, you extend your halo of fire to cover a weapon you wield in flame for one hour. The flame ends if you stop holding or carrying the weapon. While the flame lasts, the weapon inflicts 2 additional points of damage. Enabler.

**Tier 5: Fire Tendrils (5 Intellect points).** When you wish it, your halo sprouts three tendrils of flame that last for up to ten minutes. As an action, you can use the tendrils to attack, making a separate attack roll for each. Each tendril inflicts 4 points of damage. Otherwise, the attacks function as standard attacks. If you don't use the tendrils to attack, they remain but do nothing. Enabler.

**Tier 6: Fire Servant (6 Intellect points).** You reach into your halo and produce an automaton of fire that is your general shape and size. It acts as you direct each round. Directing the servant is an action, and you can command it only when you are within long range of it. Without a command, the servant continues to follow your previous command. You can



also give it a simple programmed action, such as “Wait here, and attack anyone who comes within short range until they’re dead.” The servant lasts for ten minutes, is a level 5 creature, and deals 1 extra point of damage from fire when it attacks. Action to create; action to direct.

## CARRIES A QUIVER

The archer is a skilled combatant, deadly in any fight. With a keen eye and quick reflexes, you can eliminate foes at range before they reach you. A good archer also learns to make his own arrows and bows.

You probably wear no more than light armor so you can move quickly when needed.

Many glaives and jacks are archers.

You can use this focus with crossbows instead of bows if you wish.

**Connection:** Pick one other PC to be the true friend who gave you the excellent bow that you currently use. Secretly pick a second PC (preferably one who is likely to get in the way of your attacks). When you miss with a bow and the GM rules that you struck someone other than your target, you hit the second character, if possible.

**Additional Equipment:** You start with a well-made bow and two dozen arrows.

**Minor Effect Suggestions:** Hit in a tendon or muscle, the target takes 2 points of Speed damage as well as normal damage.

**Major Effect Suggestions:** The target is pinned in place with an arrow.

**Tier 1: Archer.** To be truly deadly with a bow, you must know where to aim. You can spend points from either your Speed Pool or your Intellect Pool to apply levels of Effort to increase your bow damage. Each level of Effort adds 3 points of damage to a successful attack. Enabler.

**Fletcher.** You are trained in making arrows. Enabler.

**Tier 2: Covering Fire (1 Speed point).** In a round where you attack with your bow, if you fire an additional arrow, the difficulty of attacks and special abilities used by the target is increased by one step. Enabler.

**Bowyer.** You are trained in making bows. Enabler.

**Tier 3: Trained Archer.** You are trained in using bows. Enabler.

**Master Fletcher.** You are specialized in making arrows. Enabler.

**Tier 4: Quick Shot.** If you roll a natural 17 or higher with a bow attack, instead of adding damage or a minor or major effect, you can make another attack with your bow. This attack reuses the same Effort and bonuses (if any) from the first attack. Enabler.

**Master Bowyer.** You are specialized in making bows. Enabler.

**Tier 5: Phenomenal Archer.** You are specialized in using bows. Enabler.

**Tier 6: Powerful Shot (2 Might points).** You inflict 3 additional points of damage with a bow. The Might points spent to use this ability are in addition to any Speed points spent on the attack. Enabler.

## COMMANDS MENTAL POWERS

You have always had special abilities that others didn’t seem to share. Through practice and devotion, you have honed this unique talent so that you can harness the power of your mind to perform deeds.

No one can tell that you have this ability just by looking at you, although you wear a crystal or jewel somewhere on your head to help focus your power. Either this focusing object was given to you by someone who recognized your ability, or you came upon it by accident and it triggered your abilities. Some people with mental powers—often called psychics or psionics by ordinary folks—are secretive and a little paranoid.

Although nanos frequently command mental powers, psionic glaives or jacks are not uncommon.

**Connection:** Pick one other PC. You have found that this character is particularly tuned into your mental powers. While you’re within short range of him, the two of you are always in telepathic contact, and he is never harmed by your Psychic Bursts.

**Additional Equipment:** You have a crystal or jewel artifact that, when worn against your forehead or temple, adds 1 point to your Intellect Pool. If you’re ever without the artifact, subtract 5 points from your Intellect Pool; the points are restored if you regain the item.

**Mental Esoterics:** If you have the Mind Control esotery or the Mind Reading esotery, you’re automatically trained in it. If you have both esoterics, you’re trained in both. Enabler.

**Minor Effect Suggestions:** The range or duration of the mental power is doubled.

**Major Effect Suggestions:** You can take another action on that same turn.

**Tier 1: Telepathic (1+ Intellect point).** You can speak telepathically with others who are within short range. Communication is two-way, but the other party must be willing and able to communicate. You don’t have to see the target, but you must know that it’s within range. You can have more than one active contact at once, but you must establish contact with each target individually. Each contact lasts up to ten minutes. If you apply a level of Effort to increase the duration rather than affect the difficulty, the contact lasts for 28 hours. Action to establish contact.

**Tier 2: Mind Reading (2 Intellect points).** You can read the surface thoughts of a creature within short range, even if the target doesn’t want you to. You must be able to see your target. Once you have established contact, you can read the target’s thoughts for up to one minute. If you also have the Mind Reading esotery or trick of the trade, you can use this



ability at long range, and you don't need to be able to see the target (but you do have to know that the target is within range). Action to initiate.

**Tier 3: Psychic Burst (3+ Intellect points).** You blast waves of mental force into the minds of up to three targets within short range (make an Intellect roll against each target). This burst inflicts 3 points of Intellect damage (and thus ignores Armor). For each 2 additional Intellect points you spend, you can make an Intellect attack roll against an additional target. Action.

**Tier 4: Use Senses of Others (4 Intellect points).** You can see, hear, smell, touch, and taste through the senses of anyone with whom you have telepathic contact. You can attempt to use this ability on a willing or unwilling target within long range; an unwilling target can try to resist. You don't need to see the target, but you must know that it's within range. Your shared senses last ten minutes. Action to establish.

**Tier 5: Mind Control (6+ Intellect points):** You control the actions of another creature you touch. This effect lasts for ten minutes. The target must be level 2 or lower. Once you have established control, you maintain mental contact with the target and sense what it senses. You can allow it to act freely or override its control on a case-by-case basis. Instead of applying Effort to decrease the difficulty, you can apply Effort to increase the maximum level of the target. Thus, to control the mind of a level 5 target (three levels above the normal limit), you must apply three levels of Effort. If you also have the Mind Control esotery, the normal level limit is

3 rather than 2. When the effect ends, the creature doesn't remember being controlled or anything it did while under your command. Action to initiate.

**Tier 6: Telepathic Network (0+ Intellect points).** When you wish it, you can contact up to ten creatures known to you, no matter where they are. All targets must be willing and able to communicate. You automatically succeed at establishing a telepathic network; no roll is required. All creatures in the network are linked and can communicate telepathically with one another. They can also "overhear" anything said in the network, if they wish. Activating this ability doesn't require an action and doesn't cost Intellect points; to you, it's as easy as speaking out loud. The network lasts until you choose to end it. If you spend 5 Intellect points, you can contact twenty creatures at once, and for every 1 Intellect point you spend above that, you can add ten more creatures to the network. These larger networks last for ten minutes. Creating a network of twenty or more creatures does require an action to establish contact. Enabler.

## CONTROLS BEASTS

To say that you have a way with animals and nonhuman creatures doesn't begin to cover it. Your mastery and communication with beasts is positively uncanny. They come to you fearlessly, and it's not uncommon for birds to alight on your shoulder or for small animals to climb up your arms or legs.

You probably wear tough clothing and have a disheveled or grizzled appearance that suggests a rugged, outdoor life. Perhaps you even smell like an animal.

Any type of character is likely to have this focus.



**Connection:** Pick one other PC. That character seems to disturb your creatures in a way that you can't explain. You know that you must keep your animals away from him if possible, or you might lose control of them.

**Additional Equipment:** You have three days' worth of food for your beast companion, plus a harness, collar, or similar accouterment.

**Minor Effect Suggestions:** The duration of calmness or control is doubled.

**Major Effect Suggestions:** The duration of calmness or control extends to 28 hours.

**Tier 1: Beast Companion.** A level 2 creature of your size or smaller accompanies you and follows your instructions. You and the GM must work out the details of your creature, and you'll probably make rolls for it in combat or when it takes actions. The beast companion acts on your turn. As a level 2 creature, it has a target number of 6 and a health of 6, and it inflicts 2 points of damage. Its movement is based on its creature type (avian, swimmer, and so on). If your beast companion dies, you can hunt in the wild for 1d6 days to find a new companion. Enabler.

**Tier 2: Soothe the Savage (2 Intellect points).** You calm a nonhuman beast within 30 feet (9 m). You must speak to it (although it doesn't need to understand your words), and it must see you. It remains calm for one minute or for as long

as you focus all your attention on it. The GM has final say over what counts as a nonhuman beast, but unless some kind of deception is at work, you should know whether you can affect a creature before you attempt to use this ability on it. Aliens, extradimensional entities, very intelligent creatures, and automatons never count. Action.

**Communication (2 Intellect points).** You can convey a basic concept to a creature that normally can't speak or understand speech. The creature can also give you a very basic answer to a simple question. Action.

**Tier 3: Mount.** A level 3 creature serves you as a mount and follows your instructions. While you're mounted on it, the creature can move and you can attack on your turn, or it can attack foes when you do. You and the GM must work out the details of the creature, and you'll probably make rolls for it in combat or when it takes actions. The mount acts on your turn. If your mount dies, you can hunt in the wild for 3d6 days to find a new one. Enabler.

**Tier 4: Beast Eyes (3 Intellect points).** You can sense through your beast companion's senses if it is within 1 mile (1.6 km) of you. This effect lasts up to ten minutes. Action to establish.

**Improved Companion.** Your beast companion increases to level 4. As a level 4 creature, it has a target number of 12 and a health of 12, and it inflicts 4 points of damage. Enabler.

**Tier 5: Beast Call (5 Intellect points).** You summon a horde of small animals or a single level 4 beast to help you temporarily. These creatures do your bidding for as long as you focus your attention, but you must use your action each turn to direct them. Creatures are native to the area and arrive under their own power, so if you're in an unreachable place, this ability won't work. Action.

**Tier 6: Control the Savage (6 Intellect points).** You can control a calm nonhuman beast within 30 feet (9 m). You control it for as long as you focus all your attention on it, using your turn each round. The GM has final say over what counts as a nonhuman beast, but unless some kind of deception is at work, you should know whether you can affect a creature before you attempt to use this ability on it. Aliens, extradimensional entities, very intelligent creatures, and automatons never count. Action.

**Improved Companion.** Your beast companion increases to level 5. As a level 5 creature, it has a target number of 15 and a health of 15, and it inflicts 5 points of damage. Enabler.

## CONTROLS GRAVITY

Gravity must have been quite a concern for the people of prior epochs because there are many paths within the numenera to control it. Through a quirk of fate, some unique device(s), or supreme devotion (or a combination





of all three), you have learned to tap into the power of gravity. With one foot planted in the distant past, you are a mysterious individual. Most likely, you are also older, having spent much of your life honing your odd, ancient talents.

You might prefer billowy garments that display your mastery of gravity's pull and conceal your identity and intentions.

No one type of character is more likely to control gravity than another, but the power is rare.

**Connection:** Pick one other PC. In the recent past, while using your gravitational powers, you accidentally sent that character hurtling into the air or plummeting toward the ground. Either way, she barely survived. It is up to the player of that character to decide whether she resents, fears, or forgives you.

**Additional Equipment:** You have a pen-sized oddity that tells the weight of whatever you point it at (within short range). The weight is displayed on a small glass plate in runes that only you can decipher.

**Minor Effect Suggestions:** The duration of the effect is doubled.

**Major Effect Suggestions:** An important item on the target's person is destroyed.

**Tier 1: Hover (1 Intellect point):** You float slowly into the air. If you concentrate to remain motionless in the air, or float up to a short distance as your action, but no more; otherwise, you drift with the wind or with any momentum you have gained. This effect lasts for up to ten minutes. If you also have the Hover esotery or trick of the trade, you can hover for twenty minutes and move your normal speed. Action to initiate.

**Tier 2: Lessening Gravity's Pull.** By manipulating gravity's pull on yourself, you gain +1 to your Speed Edge. Enabler.

**Tier 3: Gravity Cleave (3 Intellect points).** You can harm a target within short range by rapidly increasing gravity's pull on one portion of the target and decreasing it on another, inflicting 6 points of damage. Action.

**Tier 4: Field of Gravity (4 Intellect points).** When you wish it, a field of manipulated gravity around you pulls incoming ranged projectile attacks to the ground. You are immune to such attacks until your turn in the next round. You must be aware of an attack to foil it. This ability does not work on energy attacks. Enabler.

**Tier 5: Flight (4+ Intellect points).** You can float and fly through the air for one hour. For each level of Effort applied, you can affect one additional creature of your size or smaller. You must touch the creature to bestow the power of flight. You direct the other creature's movement, and while flying, it must remain within sight of you or fall. In terms of overland movement, a flying creature moves about 20 miles (32 km) per hour and is not affected by terrain. Action to initiate.

**Tier 6: Weight of the World (6+ Intellect points).** You can increase a target's weight dramatically. The target is pulled to the ground and can't move physically under its own power for one minute. The target must be within short range. For each level of Effort applied, you can affect one additional creature. Action.

## CRAFTS ILLUSIONS

You use the numenera to create holographic images that appear real. You are, in effect, an artist—a crafter of light and sound. Holographic images can never inflict direct harm or exert real force, but they can fool creatures, changing opinions and even behaviors if you craft them cleverly.

You likely dress with flair and color. The appearance of things is important to you, both their beauty and their ugliness. You are a visual performer who can entertain, terrify, or fool everyone you encounter.

A nano is the most likely character to be an illusionist, but jacks find illusions to be helpful as well. The rare glaive illusionist can find ways to use tricks in battle.

**Connection:** Pick one other PC. This character is never fooled by your illusions and is never affected by the trickery of your special abilities. You can choose whether or not you know this fact.

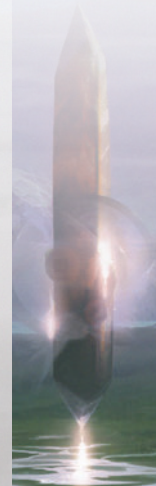
**Additional Equipment:** You have an oddity that appears to be a piece of clear glass in a synth frame. By manipulating hidden switches on the frame, you can make random moving images appear on the glass. The images are usually strange and sometimes incomprehensible.

**Psychedelic Esoterics:** If you perform esoterics, they take on flamboyant visual and auditory qualities of your choosing. This alteration changes nothing other than the appearance of the effects. For example, your attack esoterics might look like monsters made of energy that assail your foes. Your Stasis esotery might look like a tentacled beast that holds the victim in place. Your Teleportation esotery might seem like a hole in space opens up and swallows you.

**Minor Effect Suggestions:** Your illusion has a special quality to it—perhaps an observer sees an image of something from his past.

**Major Effect Suggestions:** The illusion lasts for one hour, or if it already lasts that long, it lasts for 28 hours.

**Tier 1: Minor Illusion (1 Intellect point).** You create a single image of a creature or object within immediate range. The image must fit within a 10-foot (3-meter) cube. The image can move (for example, you could make the illusion of a person walk or attack), but it can't leave the area defined by the cube. The illusion includes sound but not smell. It lasts for ten minutes, but if you want to change the original illusion significantly—such as making a creature appear to be wounded—you must concentrate on it again (though doing so doesn't cost additional Intellect points). If you move beyond immediate range of the cube, the illusion vanishes. Action to create; action to modify.



**Tier 2: Disguise (2+ Intellect points).** You appear to be someone or something else, roughly of your size and shape, for up to one hour. Once created, the disguise requires no concentration. For each additional Intellect point you spend, you can disguise one other creature. All disguised creatures must stay within sight of you or lose their disguise. Action to create.

**Tier 3: Major Illusion (3 Intellect points).** You create a complex scene of images within immediate range. The entire scene must fit within a 100-foot (30-meter) cube. The images can move, but they can't leave the area defined by the cube. The illusion includes sound and smell. It lasts for ten minutes and changes as you direct (no concentration is needed). If you move beyond immediate range of the cube, the illusion vanishes. Action to create.

**Tier 4: Illusory Selves (4 Intellect points).** You create four holographic duplicates of yourself within short range. The duplicates last for one minute. You mentally direct their actions, and the duplicates aren't mirror images—each one can do different things. If struck violently, they either disappear permanently or freeze motionless (your choice). Action to create.

**Tier 5: Terrifying Image (6 Intellect points).** You use a bit of subtle telepathy to learn which images would appear terrifying to creatures that you choose within long range. Those images appear within that area and menace the appropriate creatures. Make an Intellect attack roll against each creature you want to affect. Success means the creature flees in terror for one minute, pursued by its nightmares. Failure means the creature ignores the images, which do not hamper it in any way. Action.

**Tier 6: Grandiose Illusion (8 Intellect points).** You create a fantastically complex scene of images that fit within a 1-mile (1.6-km) cube that you are also within. You must be able to see the images when you create them. The images can move in the cube and act in accordance with your desires. They can also act logically (such as reacting appropriately to fire or attacks) when you aren't directly observing them. The illusion includes sound and smell. For example, armies can clash in battle, with air support from machines or flying creatures, on and above terrain of your creation. The illusion lasts for one hour (or longer, if you concentrate on it after that time). Action.

## CRAFTS UNIQUE OBJECTS

With the remains of previous civilizations all around, the raw materials for a crafter offer themselves to those who know where to look. You are a maker, a crafter, and a builder. You might start out working with wood or metal as understood by the people of the Ninth World, but eventually

you will master even the mysteries of the ancients. Call it magic or call it technology—you know that you can master it and use it for your own designs.

You likely carry a wide array of tools and spare parts wherever you go. Your work apron is probably a mainstay of your wardrobe, its pockets and loops brimming with the instruments of your trade. Your calloused fingers might be stained with grease that will never come completely clean, but these marks are badges of honor among your kind.

Nanos make interesting crafters, supplementing their esoterics with tools and devices. A glaive builder likely focuses on weapons or armor. Jacks might be the most common crafters, making things that work in a variety of ways for a variety of uses.

**Connection:** Pick one other PC. The character has an extra item of regular equipment that you fashioned for her. (She chooses the item.)

**Additional Equipment:** You begin the game with a bag of light tools, the tools needed to make your first-tier crafts, and any normal item (of level 1 or 2) that you can make with your skills. You also have an additional oddity.

**Minor Effect Suggestions:** Any rolls you make regarding that artifact gain a +1 bonus for 28 hours.

**Major Effect Suggestions:** Any rolls you make regarding that artifact gain a +2 bonus for 28 hours.

**Tier 1: Crafter.** You are trained in the crafting of two kinds of items. Enabler.

**Master Identifier.** You are trained in identifying the function of any kind of device. Enabler.

**Tier 2: Tinkerer.** If you spend at least one day tinkering with an artifact in your possession, it functions at one level higher than normal. This applies to all artifacts in your possession, but they retain this bonus only for you. Enabler.

**Quick Work (3+ Intellect points).** One use of any artifact (or one minute of its continuous function) is increased by one level if you use it within the next minute. If you spend 4 additional Intellect points, the use is increased by two levels if you use it within the next minute. Action.

**Tier 3: Master Crafter.** You are trained in the crafting of two more kinds of items, or you are specialized in two kinds of items that you are already trained in. Enabler.

**Tier 4: Cyphersmith.** All cyphers you use function at one level higher than normal. If given a week and the right tools, chemicals, and parts, you can tinker with one of your cyphers, transforming it into another cypher of the same type (anoetic or occultic) that you had in the past. The GM and player should collaborate to ensure that the transformation is logical—for example, you probably can't transform a pill into a helmet. Enabler.



**Tier 5: Innovator.** You can modify any artifact to give it different or better abilities as if that artifact were one level lower than normal, and doing so takes half the normal time to modify a device. Enabler.

**Tier 6: Inventor.** You can create new artifacts in half the time, as if they were two levels lower, by spending half the normal XP. Enabler.

## EMPLOYS MAGNETISM

Electromagnetism is a fundamental force in the universe, and it is yours to command. You are a master of metal.

You probably wear a lot of metal, perhaps as part of your clothing or armor, as part of your accessories (such as jewelry or piercings), embedded into your body surgically, or in some combination of these options.

No one type of character is more likely than any other to employ magnetism, although glaives who wield weapons and wear armor will find it an interesting complement to their powers.

**Connection:** Pick one other PC. Whenever you use your powers, the metallic items on that character's body shudder, rattle, clink, and shake if he is within short range.

**Minor Effect Suggestions:** The duration of the effect is doubled.

**Major Effect Suggestions:** An important item on the target's person is destroyed.

**Tier 1: Move Metal (1 Intellect point).** You can exert force on metal objects within short range for one round. Once activated, your power has an effective Might Pool of 10, a Might Edge of 1, and an Effort of 2 (approximately equal to the strength of a fit, capable, adult human), and you can use it to move metal objects, push against metal objects,

and so on. For example, in your round, you could lift and pull a light metal object anywhere within range to yourself or move a heavy object (like a piece of furniture) about 10 feet (3 m). This power lacks the fine control to wield a weapon or move objects with much speed, so in most situations, it's not a means of attack. You can't use this ability on your own body. Action.

**Tier 2: Repel Metal.** By manipulating magnetism, you are trained in Speed defense tasks against any incoming attack that uses metal. Enabler.

**Tier 3: Destroy Metal (3 Intellect points).** You instantly tear, rip, or burst a metal object that is within sight, within short range, and no bigger than half your size. Make an Intellect roll to destroy the object; the difficulty of this task is decreased by three steps (compared to breaking it with brute strength). Action.

**Tier 4: Magnetic Field (4 Intellect points).** When you wish it, a field of magnetism around you pulls incoming, ranged, metallic projectile attacks (such as arrows, bullets, a thrown metal knife, and so on) to the ground. You are immune to such attacks for one round. You must be aware of an attack to foil it. Enabler.

**Tier 5: Command Metal (5 Intellect points).** You reshape a metallic item as you desire. The item must be within sight and within short range, and its mass can be no greater than your own. You can affect multiple items at once as long as their combined mass falls within these limits. You can fuse multiple items together. You can use this power to destroy a metal object (as the Destroy Metal ability), or you can craft it into another desired shape (crudely, unless



you have the proper crafting skills). You can then move the new object anywhere within range. For example, you could take a few metal shields, fuse them together, and use the resulting shape to block a doorway. You can use this ability to make an attack—causing a foe’s armor to constrict, rendering a metal item into shards that you fling across the battlefield, and so on—against one target within short range. Regardless of the form of the attack, it is an Intellect action that deals 7 points of damage. Action.

**Tier 6: Diamagnetism.** You magnetize any nonmetallic object within short range so that it can be affected by your other powers. Thus, with Move Metal, you can move any object. With Repel Metal, you are trained in all Speed defense tasks, regardless of whether the incoming attack uses metal. And so on. Enabler.

## ENTERTAINS

You are an entertainer: a singer, dancer, poet, storyteller, or something similar. You perform for the benefit of others. Naturally charismatic and talented, you have also studied to master your art. You know all the old poems, songs, jokes, and stories, and you’re skilled at creating new ones, too.

You probably wear flamboyant or at least fashionable clothes and use cosmetics, tattoos, or hair stylings for dramatic effect.

The role of the entertainer fits the jack best, but glaives and nanos sometimes entertain as well.

**Connection:** Pick one other PC. This character is your worst critic. Your abilities to help or inspire others don’t function for her.

**Additional Equipment:** You start with a musical instrument or other tools needed to perform.

**Minor Effect Suggestions:** You enchant the target, who remains enchanted as long as you focus all your attention on keeping her that way.

**Major Effect Suggestions:** The target is forever favorably disposed toward you.

**Tier 1: Levity.** Through wit, charm, humor, and grace, you are trained in all social interactions other than those involving coercion or intimidation. During rests, you put friends and comrades at ease so much that they gain +1 to their recovery rolls. Enabler.

**Tier 2: Inspiration.** Through stories, songs, art, or other forms of entertainment, you inspire your friends. After spending 28 hours with you, once per day each of your friends can decrease the difficulty of a task by one step. This benefit is ongoing while you remain in the friend’s company. It ends if you leave, but it resumes if you return to the friend’s company within 28 hours. If you leave the friend’s company for more than 28 hours, you must spend another 28 hours together to reactivate the benefit. Enabler.

**Tier 3: Knowledge.** Your stories and songs contain truth. You are trained in two areas of knowledge of your choosing. Enabler.

**Tier 4: Calm (3 Intellect points).** Through jokes, song, or other art, you prevent a living foe from attacking anyone or anything for one round. Action.

**Tier 5: Able Assistance.** When you help someone with a task, you always reduce the difficulty of the task by one step regardless of your own skill at that task. Enabler.

**Tier 6: Master Entertainer.** Your Inspiration ability works more effectively, allowing your friends to decrease the difficulty of a task by two steps rather than one step. Enabler.

## EXISTS PARTIALLY OUT OF PHASE

You have the ability to change your phase state. In fact, you’re always slightly out of phase, giving you a ghostly translucence. With concentration, you can pass your hand through a solid object, allow a solid object to pass harmlessly through you, or literally walk through walls. However, moving in and out of different phase states requires extreme force of will and can be mentally taxing. The explanation for your strange power lies within some aspect of the numenera. Perhaps the ability emerged through the use of (or exposure to) lingering transdimensional technology or as the result of an encounter with a creature not native to this world or dimension. Perhaps one of your ancestors first developed the power and passed it down through generations.

You might do whatever you can to play up your translucent appearance by wearing diaphanous, billowy clothing, or, depending on your personality, you might do just the opposite.

Jacks enjoy the infiltration possibilities of changing their phase state, and nanos appreciate the defensive capabilities. Glaives can use the offensive and defensive aspects but might find them a bit hindering as well.

**Connection:** Pick one other PC. You have known that character for a while, and he helped you gain control of your phase states.

**Minor Effect Suggestions:** While out of phase, you also gain +1 to all Speed defense tasks.

**Major Effect Suggestions:** While out of phase, you are also invisible.

**Tier 1: Walk Through Walls (2 Intellect points).** You can slowly pass through physical barriers at a rate of 1 inch (2.5 cm) per round (minimum of one round to pass through any barrier). You can’t act (other than moving) or perceive anything until you pass entirely through the barrier. You can’t pass through energy barriers. Action.

**Tier 2: Defensive Phasing (2 Intellect points).** You can change your phase so that some attacks pass through you harmlessly.





For the next ten minutes, reduce the difficulty of all your Speed defensive tasks by one step, but during this time you lose any benefit from armor you wear. Action to initiate.

**Tier 3: Phased Attack (3 Intellect points).** The attack you make on this turn ignores your foe's armor. The ability works for whatever kind of attack you use (melee, ranged, energy, and so on). Enabler.

**Tier 4: Ghost (4 Intellect points).** For the next ten minutes, you are trained in sneaking tasks. During this time, you can move through solid barriers (but not energy barriers) at a rate of 1 foot (30 cm) per round, and you can perceive while phased within a barrier or object, which allows you to peek through walls. Action to initiate.

**Tier 5: Untouchable (6 Intellect points).** You change your phase state for the next one minute so that you can't affect or be affected by normal matter or energy. Only mental attacks and special transdimensional energies, devices, or abilities can affect you, but likewise you can't attack, touch, or otherwise affect anything. Action to initiate.

**Tier 6: Enhanced Phased Attack (5 Intellect points).** This ability works like the third-tier Phased Attack ability except that your attack also disrupts the foe's vitals, dealing an additional 5 points of damage. Enabler.

## EXPLORES DARK PLACES

You explore the foreboding ruins and mysterious locales of the ancient eras, trained in such activities by those who have gone before you. You're the archetypical treasure hunter, scavenger, and finder of lost things. You spend so much of your time in the dark that you slowly adapt to it, almost becoming a creature of the gloom yourself. Even in civilized areas, you prefer to keep to the shadows.

Most likely, you wear dark clothing to help you blend into the blackness. On the other hand, you might wear sensible garments and gear because you have serious and dangerous business to attend to in the dark.

Jacks in particular are suited to exploring dark places; those who do so are called shadowjacks. Glaives who follow this path are known as shadow warriors, and nanos are called shadowcasters.

**Connection:** Pick one other PC. This character has been your adventuring partner in previous expeditions, and the two of you work so well together that you both gain +1 to any die rolls when you collaborate on the same task, fight the same foe, and so on.

**Additional Equipment:** You start with an explorer's pack. If you already have one, you can instead take 50 extra feet (15 m) of rope, rations for two more days, and two minor glowglobes.

**Dark Esoterics:** If you perform esoterics, they make almost no sound, and whatever visual displays they

produce are dark and shadowy. These alterations change nothing other than the appearance of the effects. A Flash esotery is a silent burst of shadows, a Barrier esotery is a mass of shadowy wisps, and so on.

**Minor Effect Suggestions:** The target is also dazed for one round, during which time the difficulty of all tasks it performs is modified by one step to its detriment.

**Major Effect Suggestions:** The target is also stunned and loses its next turn.

**Tier 1: Trained Explorer.** You are trained in searching, listening, climbing, balancing, and jumping tasks. Enabler.

**Tier 2: Trained Infiltrator.** You are trained in lockpicking and tinkering with devices. Enabler.

**Eyes Adjusted.** You can see in extremely dim light as though it were bright light. You can see in total darkness as if it were extremely dim. Enabler.

**Tier 3: Slippery Customer.** You are trained in escaping from bonds, fitting in tight spaces, and other contortionist tasks. Thanks to your experience, you also are trained in Speed defense tasks while wearing light armor or no armor. Enabler.

**Tier 4: Resilient.** In your explorations of dark places, you've been exposed to all sorts of terrible things and are developing a general resistance. You gain +1 to Armor and are trained in Might defense tasks. Enabler.

**Tier 5: Dark Explorer.** You ignore penalties for any action (including fighting) in extremely dim light or in cramped spaces. Combined with your Eyes Adjusted ability, you can act without penalty even in total darkness. You are also trained in sneaking tasks while in dim or no light. Enabler.

**Tier 6: Blinding Attack (3 Speed points).** If you have a source of light, you can use it to make a melee attack against a target. If successful, the attack deals no damage, but the target is blinded for one minute. Action.

## FIGHTS WITH PANACHE

You know that style is at least as important as substance. Defeating foes is secondary to looking good while doing it. Some might call you a swashbuckler or daredevil. You leap through the air, make a flourish with your weapon, and attack, usually with a clever, biting show of wit. Your enemies hate you, but your allies adore you. Just watching you fight is entertaining.

You very likely wear no armor, instead preferring stylish clothing—perhaps even a hat with a feather.

Jacks and glaives make the best swashbucklers, and they are the most common types of character to fight with panache.

**Connection:** Pick one other PC. You're always trying to impress this character with your skill, wit, appearance,

or bravado. Perhaps she is a rival, perhaps you need her respect, or perhaps you're romantically interested in her.

**Additional Equipment:** You begin with a set of extremely stylish clothes and a jeweled weapon.

**Minor Effect Suggestions:** The target is so dazzled by your style that it is dazed for one round, during which time the difficulty of all tasks it performs is modified by one step to its detriment.

**Major Effect Suggestions:** Make an additional attack with your weapon on your turn.

**Tier 1: Attack Flourish.** With your attack, you add stylish moves, entertaining quips, or a certain "something" that entertains or impresses others. Choose any number of creatures within short range who can see you; each of them gains a +1 bonus to its next die roll. Enabler.

**Tier 2: Quick Block.** If you use a light or medium weapon, you decrease the difficulty of your Speed defense actions by one step. Enabler.

**Tier 3: Acrobatic Attack (3 Speed points).** You leap into the attack, twisting or flipping through the air. This motion decreases the difficulty of your attack by one step. If you roll a natural 17 or 18, you can choose to have a minor effect rather than deal extra damage. You can't use this ability if your Speed is reduced from wearing armor. Enabler.

**Tier 4: Mobile Fighter (3 Speed points).** As part of your attack, you can leap on or over obstacles, swing from ropes, run along narrow surfaces, or otherwise move around the battlefield at your normal speed as if such tasks were routine (difficulty 0). You can't use this ability if your Speed is reduced from wearing armor. Enabler.

**Tier 5: Block for Another.** If you use a light or medium weapon, you can block attacks made against an ally near you. Choose one creature within immediate range. You decrease the difficulty of that creature's Speed defense actions by one step. You can't use Quick Block while using Block for Another. Enabler.

**Tier 6: Agile Wit.** When attempting a Speed task, you instead can roll (and spend points) as if it were an Intellect action. If you apply Effort to this task, you can spend points from your Intellect Pool instead of your Speed Pool (in which case you also use your Intellect Edge instead of your Speed Edge). Enabler.

## FOCUSES MIND OVER MATTER

Telekinesis. Psychokinesis. Mind over matter. The power has many names, but in the end, it all boils down to one thing—the molecules that make up all matter are yours to command. You likely call yourself a telekinetic or just a TK.

Many telekinetics prefer to wear tight clothing without much accouterment so there is little another TK could

grab hold of psychically. On the other hand, you have the power to create very minor telekinetic effects at will, so your hair might always be in motion, you could have a few tiny objects floating around you, or you might wear a long cape that's always billowing.

Jacks are the most likely characters to be telekinetics, but glaves find that the abilities add to their combat prowess, and nanos, of course, appreciate the additional power.

**Connection:** Pick one other PC. This character can cause your telekinetic powers to act oddly. Every once in a while, if he stands directly next to you, your powers are cancelled, but at other times, they seem improved when used near him.

**Mental Esoterics:** If you perform esoterics, those that would normally use force or other energy instead use telekinetic force. For example, a Flash or an Onslaught force blast is a telekinetic blast from your mind. This alteration changes nothing except that you don't need a free hand to perform esoterics. Enabler.

**Minor Effect Suggestions:** An object moves faster or more efficiently.

**Major Effect Suggestions:** You can move or affect twice as much as normal.

**Tier 1: Deflect Attacks (1 Intellect point).** Using your mind, you protect yourself from incoming attacks. For the next ten minutes, you are trained in Speed defense tasks. Action to initiate.

**Tier 2: Telekinesis (2 Intellect points).** You can exert force on objects within short range. Once activated, your power has an effective Might Pool of 10, a Might Edge of 1, and an Effort of 2 (approximately equal to the strength of a fit, capable, adult human), and you can use it to move objects, push against objects, and so on. For example, you could lift and pull a light object (like a piece of furniture) about 10 feet (3 m). This power lacks the fine control to wield a weapon or move objects with much speed, so in most situations, it's not a means of attack. You can't use this ability on your own body. The power lasts for one hour or until its Might Pool is depleted—whichever comes first. Action.

**Tier 3: Enhance Strength (3 Intellect points).** For the next ten minutes, tasks that depend on brute force—such as moving a heavy object, smashing down a door, or hitting someone with a melee weapon—are easier for you. The difficulty of all such tasks is decreased by one step. Action to initiate.

**Tier 4: Apportation (4 Intellect points).** You call a physical object to you. You can choose any piece of normal equipment on the standard equipment list, or (no more than once per day) you can allow the GM to determine the object randomly. If you call a random object, it has a 10 percent chance of being a cypher or artifact, a 10 percent chance of being an oddity, a 40 percent chance of being a



piece of standard equipment, and a 40 percent chance of being a bit of worthless junk. You can't use this ability to take an item held by another creature. Action.

**Tier 5: Psychokinetic Attack (5 Intellect points).** You can use this attack in one of two ways. The first way is to pick up a heavy object and hurl it at someone within short range. This attack is an Intellect action, and if successful, it deals 6 points of damage to the target and to the hurled object (which could be another foe, although that would require two rolls—one roll to grab the first foe and another roll to hit the second foe with the first). The second way is to unleash a shattering burst of power that works only against an inanimate object no larger than half your size. Make an Intellect roll to instantly destroy the object; the difficulty of this task is decreased by three steps (compared to breaking it with brute strength). Action.

**Tier 6: Reshape Matter (6 Intellect points).** Your mastery of telekinesis is so great that you can reshape objects on a molecular level. You can affect a single object no larger than you, and the object must be visible and close enough for you to touch. You can use this ability to damage the object (as if using Psychokinetic Attack, except the difficulty of the task is decreased by four steps instead of three), or you can attempt a crafting task to reshape the object into another form. Reshaping an object usually has a difficulty equal to 1 plus the level of the finished object.

## FUSES FLESH AND STEEL

At some point in your past, some of your organic parts were replaced with artificial components. (Alternatively, you belong to a secret race of biomechanical hybrids.) These artificial components might be subdermal, or they might resemble more overt metal or synth plating on your skin. They can also take the form of threadlike tendrils of circuitry winding across your flesh. Whatever their appearance, these components give you special abilities. As you advance, you can add to, modify, or discover new functions for them. Unfortunately, your artificial body also has special requirements when it takes damage.

You probably wear a cloak with a hood or something similar to hide your artificial parts from those who would persecute you. Because your components are tricky to repair, as time goes on, it might become more difficult to conceal your true nature, with exposed circuitry, metal plates, and more in a state of partial disassembly.

Anyone—glaive, jack, or nano—might be a cybernetic organism.

**Connection:** Pick one other PC. This character knows your true nature, even if no one else does. If your components are not particularly hidden, she knows a different secret of yours, such as a preprogrammed word that will shut you down for ten minutes.

**Additional Equipment:** You have a bag of light tools and a variety of parts to repair yourself.

**Minor Effect Suggestions:** Your servos learn from your successful actions. You gain a +1 bonus to similar actions involving the same task (such as making attacks against the same foe or operating the same device).

**Major Effect Suggestions:** You discharge a small pulse of power into your foe. Make an immediate attack against that foe (using the same stat as the action that caused the major effect). If the attack succeeds, it deals 4 points of electrical damage.

**Tier 1: Enhanced Body.** You gain +1 to Armor, +3 to your Might Pool, and +3 to your Speed Pool. Enabler.

**Special Healing.** Traditional healing skills, medicines, and techniques work only half as well for you. Each time you start at full health, the first 5 points of damage you take can never be healed in these ways or recovered normally. Instead, you must use repairing skills and abilities to restore those points. For example, if you start with a full Might Pool of 10 and take 8 points of damage, you can use recovery rolls to restore 3 points, but the remaining 5 points must be restored using repairing methods.

**Tier 2: Interface.** By directly plugging into a device, you can identify and learn to operate it as though the task were one level lower. Enabler.

**Tier 3: Weaponization.** One light or medium melee weapon of your choice is built into your body, and you are trained in this weapon (even if you are not trained in other weapons of that type). The weapon is concealed until you wish to use it. Enabler.

**Tier 4: Fusion.** You can fuse your cyphers and artifacts with your body. These fused devices function as if they were one level higher. Enabler.



**Tier 5: Deep Reserves.** Once each day, you can transfer up to 5 points between your Pools in any combination, at a rate of 1 point per round. For example, you could transfer 3 points of Might to Speed and 2 points of Intellect to Speed, which would take a total of five rounds. Action.

**Tier 6: Ultra Enhancement.** You gain +1 to Armor and +5 to each of your three stat Pools. Enabler.

## HOWLS AT THE MOON

Sometimes the numenera is a double-edged sword. You are cursed and blessed to be able to transform into a powerful creature, drawing additional mass from a transdimensional source. You and the GM should work out the exact nature of the creature, including its appearance, but it's a wild beast of rage and blood—at least until you learn to control it. Creatures like you are often called “lycanthropes.”

Style and appearance are probably low on your list of concerns. Your clothes might be ragged because your transformation is hard on them (or they're cheap because you know they'll be destroyed the next time you transform).

Anyone—glaive, jack, or nano—can be a lycanthrope, although a glaive likely benefits the most from the transformation.

**Connection:** Pick one other PC. That character is able to soothe you when you're in beast form. You'll never attack him while transformed, and if he spends three consecutive turns using his action to calm you down, you can revert to your normal form without having to make a roll.

**Additional Equipment:** You have an accurate chronometer artifact that always lets you know when the next transformation is coming.

**Minor Effect Suggestions:** The target is so intimidated by your bestial attack that it is dazed for one round, during which time the difficulty of all tasks it performs is modified by one step to its detriment.

**Major Effect Suggestions:** Your attack conveys a small bit of your lycanthropy. If your foe survives, one month later, he transforms into an uncontrolled beast. The GM decides what happens from there.

**Tier 1: Beast Form.** On five consecutive nights each month, you change into a monstrous beast for up to one hour each night. In this new form, you gain +8 to your Might Pool, +1 to your Might Edge, +2 to your Speed Pool, and +1 to your Speed Edge. While in beast form, you can't spend Intellect points for any reason other than to try to change to your normal form before the one-hour duration is over (a difficulty 2 task). In addition, you attack any and every living creature within short range. After you revert to your normal form, you take a -1 penalty to all rolls for one hour. If you did not kill and eat at least one substantial creature while in beast form, the penalty increases to -2 and affects all your rolls for the next 28 hours. Action to change back.

**Tier 2: Controlled Change.** You can try to change into your beast form on any night you wish (a difficulty 3 Intellect task). Any transformations you make using this power are in addition to the five nights per month that you change involuntarily. Action to change.

**Tier 3: Greater Beast Form.** Your beast form gains the following additional bonuses: +1 to your Might Edge, +2 to your Speed Pool, and +1 to your Speed Edge. Enabler.

**Tier 4: Greater Controlled Change.** You no longer change into your beast form unless you want to. Transforming into your beast form or back to your normal form is now a difficulty 1 Intellect task. Enabler.

**Tier 5: Enhanced Beast Form.** Your beast form gains the following additional bonuses: +3 to your Might Pool, +2 to your Speed Pool, and +2 to Armor. Enabler.

**Tier 6: Perfect Control.** You no longer need to make a roll to change into your beast form or your normal form. You can change back and forth as your action. When you return to your normal form, you no longer take a penalty to your rolls. Enabler.

## HUNTS WITH GREAT SKILL

You are a tracker. Perhaps you hunt animals or more deadly creatures. Perhaps you go after people as a bounty hunter, law enforcer, or killer for hire. Whatever form your hunting takes, you are trained in stalking your quarry and bringing it down. You are a dangerous individual.

If you hunt animals or creatures, you might carry the trophies of past kills, such as teeth or skins. If you're a bounty hunter, you probably wear whatever your quarry would find most intimidating so it feels as though it has no chance of getting away from you.

Most hunters are glaives, but jacks and nanos bring unique skills to the chase.

**Connection:** Pick one other PC. That person once saw you show surprising mercy toward your prey, and now you hope she keeps that information quiet—it might harm your reputation.

**Additional Equipment:** You wear boots that muffle your footsteps, giving you a +1 bonus to any roll made involving sneaky movement.

**Minor Effect Suggestions:** You can attempt an intimidating task to cause your foe to immediately surrender.

**Major Effect Suggestions:** Your foe pauses, terrified by your prowess, and takes no action on his turn.

**Tier 1: Tracker.** You are trained in following and identifying tracks. Enabler.

**Stalker.** You are trained in all types of movement tasks (including climbing, swimming, jumping, and balancing). Enabler.



**Tier 2: Sneak.** You are trained in stealth and initiative tasks. Enabler.

**Sprint and Grab (2 Speed points).** You can run a short distance and make a melee attack to grab a foe of your size or smaller. A successful attack means you grab the foe and bring it to a halt if it was moving (this can be treated as a tackle, if appropriate). Action.

**Tier 3: Quarry (2 Intellect points).** Choose a quarry (a single individual creature that you can see). You are trained in all tasks involving following, understanding, interacting with, or fighting that creature. You can have only one quarry at a time. Action to initiate.

**Tier 4: Surprise Attack.** If attacking from a hidden vantage, with surprise, or before your opponent has acted, you decrease the difficulty of your attack by one step. On a successful hit, you inflict 2 additional points of damage. Enabler.

**Tier 5: Hunter's Drive (5 Intellect points).** Through force of will, when you wish it, you grant yourself greater prowess in the hunt for ten minutes. During this time, you decrease the difficulty of all tasks involving your quarry, including attacks, by one step. Your quarry is the creature you selected with your third-tier ability. Enabler.

**Tier 6: Multiple Quarry (6 Intellect points).** This ability functions like the third-tier Quarry ability except that you can select up to three creatures as quarry. You must be able to see all three creatures when you initiate this ability. Your Hunter's Drive ability applies to all three creatures. Action to initiate.

## LEADS

Using charisma, natural leadership, and perhaps some training, you command the actions of others, who follow you willingly. You are a commander, a captain, a leader, or a general. Your skills allow you to make people do what you want, but you also have the wisdom to know what actions would be best for your followers and allies.

Since you need the respect of others, you probably dress and carry yourself in such a way that inspires, endears, or intimidates. You have a voice suited to barking orders that can be heard even on a noisy battlefield.

Glaives make excellent military leaders, but a jack could easily lead a group of explorers or a den of thieves. A nano might be the head of a group of "mages" or scholars, or she might have a gang of bodyguards as followers.

**Connection:** Pick one other PC. That character was once a follower of yours, but you have since grown to think of him as a peer.

**Additional Equipment:** You have an artifact that allows you to tag up to seven followers. By looking into the glass plate on the device, you can determine their distance and direction relative to you. The tagging process is somewhat demeaning, so it is likely that only your followers would ever submit to it.

**Minor Effect Suggestions:** The next time you attempt to command, captivate, or otherwise influence the same foe, the difficulty of the task is decreased by one step.

**Major Effect Suggestions:** The foe is influenced, captivated, or otherwise affected by your ability for twice as long as normal.

**Tier 1: Natural Charisma.** You are trained in all social interactions, whether they involve charm, learning a person's secrets, or intimidating others. Enabler.

**Good Advice (1 Intellect point).** You have a clear mind for determining the best way to proceed. When you give another character a suggestion involving his next action, the character is trained in that action for one round. Action.

**Tier 2: Follower.** You gain a level 2 NPC follower who is completely devoted to you. You and the GM must work out the details of the follower and you'll probably make rolls for it in combat or when it takes actions. The follower acts on your turn. As a level 2 follower, it has a target number of 6 and a health of 6, and it inflicts 2 points of damage. If the follower dies, you gain a new one after at least two weeks and proper recruitment. Enabler.

**Tier 3: Command (3 Intellect points).** Through sheer force of will and charisma, you issue a simple command to a single living creature, which attempts to carry out your command as its next action. The creature must be within short range and be able to understand you. The command can't inflict direct harm on the creature or its allies, so "Commit suicide" won't work, but "Flee" might. In addition, the command can require the creature to take only one action, so "Open the door" might work, but "Open the door and run through it" won't. Action.

**Capable Follower.** Your first follower increases to level 3. As a level 3 follower, it has a target number of 9 and a health of 9, and it inflicts 3 points of damage. Enabler.

**Tier 4: Captivate or Inspire (4 Intellect points).** You can use this ability in one of two ways. Either your words keep the attention of all NPCs that hear them for as long as you speak, or your words inspire all NPCs (of your choosing) that hear them to function as if they were one level higher for the next hour. Action.

**Capable Follower.** Your first follower increases to level 4. As a level 4 follower, it has a target number of 12 and a health of 12, and it inflicts 4 points of damage. Enabler.

**Tier 5: Band of Followers.** You gain six level 2 NPC followers who are completely devoted to you. (They are in addition to the follower you gained at second tier.) You and the GM must work out the details of these followers. If a follower dies, you gain a new one after at least two weeks and proper recruitment. Enabler.



**Tier 6: Mind of a Leader (6 Intellect points).** When you develop a plan that involves your followers, you can ask the GM one very general question about what is likely to happen if you carry out the plan, and you will get a simple, brief answer. Action.

**Capable Followers.** Your first follower increases to level 5. As a level 5 follower, it has a target number of 15 and a health of 15, and it inflicts 5 points of damage. Each of your level 2 followers increases to level 3. Enabler.

## LIVES IN THE WILDERNESS

You dwell in the wilds. You probably have done so most, if not all, of your life, coming to understand the mysteries of nature, weather, and survival. The ways of flora and fauna are your ways.

Your rough, rugged clothing shows little concern for style. Most of the time, covering yourself in natural smells to keep your scent from arousing suspicion in the wilderness is more important than bathing to keep yourself presentable to other humans.

Glaives and jacks are the most likely characters to live in the wilderness, perhaps working as guides, hunters, trappers, scouts, or trackers. A nano that does so might be seen as a nature priest or wild wizard.

**Connection:** Pick one other PC who isn't from the wilderness. You can't help but feel a little contempt for that character and her "civilized" ways, which show disdain for all things natural and (to your mind) true.

**Additional Equipment:** You have a directional compass.

**Minor Effect Suggestions:** A foe that is a natural creature flees rather than continue to fight you.

**Major Effect Suggestions:** A foe that is a natural creature becomes warily passive.

**Tier 1: Wilderness Life.** You are trained in climbing and swimming tasks. Enabler.

**Wilderness Lore.** You are trained in wilderness navigation and in identifying plants and creatures. Enabler.

**Tier 2: Living off the Land.** Given an hour or so, you can always find edible food and potable water in the wilderness. You can even find enough for a small group of people, if need be. Further, since you're so hardy and have gained resistance over time, the difficulty of resisting the effects of natural poisons (such as those from plants or living creatures) is decreased by one step. You're also immune to natural diseases. Enabler.

**Tier 3: Animal Senses and Sensibilities.** You are trained in listening and spotting things. In addition, most of the time, the GM should alert you if you're about to walk into an ambush or a trap that is lower than level 3. Enabler.

**Wilderness Explorer.** While taking any action (including fighting) in the wild, you ignore any penalties due to natural causes such as tall grass, thick brush, rugged terrain, weather, and so on. Enabler.

**Tier 4: Wilderness Awareness (4 Intellect points).** Your connection to the natural world extends to a degree that some would call supernatural. While in the wilderness, you can extend your senses up to a mile in any direction and ask the GM a very simple, general question about that area, such as "Where is the margr camp?" or "Is my friend Deithan still alive?" If the answer you seek is not in the area, you receive no information. Action.

**Tier 5: The Wild Is on Your Side (5 Intellect points).** While you're in the wilderness, foes within short range are tripped by rocks, tangled in vines, bitten by insects, and distracted or confused by small animals. The difficulty of any tasks performed by those foes is increased by one step. This effect lasts for ten minutes. Action to initiate.

**Tier 6: One With the Wild (6 Intellect points).** For the next ten minutes, natural animals and plants within long range will not knowingly harm you or those you designate. Action.

**Master of the Wild.** While you're in the wilderness, your Might Edge, Speed Edge, and Intellect Edge increase by 1. When you make a recovery roll in the wilderness, you recover twice as many points. Enabler.

## MASTERS DEFENSE

Protecting yourself is obviously important in dangerous situations, and you are particularly good at it. Cautious and prudent, you learn techniques to defend against all kinds of attacks, both physical and mental. The winner is often the last person standing, and you've done all you can to ensure that person will be you.

You carry a shield and probably wear the best armor you can find.

Glaives make excellent defensive masters, but jacks and nanos also find at least some of these skills of great value.

**Connection:** Pick one other PC. This character protected you from harm recently, and you feel indebted to him for saving your life.

**Additional Equipment:** You have a shield.

**Minor Effect Suggestions:** You gain a +1 bonus to Speed defense rolls for one round.

**Major Effect Suggestions:** You gain a +2 bonus to Speed defense rolls for one round.

**Tier 1: Shield Master.** When you use a shield, in addition to the asset it gives you (lowering the difficulty of Speed defense tasks by one step), you can act as if you are trained in Speed defense tasks. However, in any round in which you use this benefit, the difficulty of your attacks increases by one step. Enabler.

**Tier 2: Sturdy.** You are trained in Might defense tasks. Enabler.

**Armor Expert.** When you wear any armor, you reduce the armor's penalties (Might cost per hour and Speed reduction) by 1. Enabler.



**Tier 3: Dodge and Resist (3 Speed points).** You can reroll any of your Might, Speed, or Intellect defensive rolls and take the better of the two results. Enabler.

**Tier 4: Tower of Will.** You are trained in Intellect defense tasks. Enabler.

**Armor Master.** When you wear any armor, you reduce the armor's penalties (Might cost per hour and Speed reduction) to 0. Enabler.

**Tier 5: Nothing but Defend.** If you do nothing on your turn other than defend, you are specialized in all defensive tasks for that one round. Action.

**Tier 6: Defense Master.** Every time you succeed at a Speed defense task, you can make an immediate attack against your foe. Your attack must be the same type (melee weapon, ranged weapon, or unarmed) as the attack you defend against. If you don't have an appropriate type of weapon ready, you can't use this ability. Enabler.

## MASTERS WEAPONRY

You have worked long and hard with one particular type of weapon: swords, axes, daggers, whips, or whatever you choose. Thus, you are a swordsman, an axemaster, a mistress of knives, or whatever is appropriate to your chosen weapon. A master of the rapier is different from a master of the warhammer.

You might wear a symbol—a badge, a pin, a tattoo, an amulet, certain colors, and so on—that indicates the school

in which you trained, the style of fighting you have mastered, or the name of your mentor. Your weapon is almost certainly your finest possession. Not only is it well cared for and of high quality, but you probably keep it in a beautiful scabbard, harness, belt, case, or something similar.

Many glaives are weapon masters, but sometimes a jack might choose this path, particularly with lighter weapons.

**Connection:** Pick one other PC. That character shows potential in the use of your weapon. You would like to train her, but you're not necessarily qualified to teach (that's up to you), and she might not be interested (that's up to her).

**Additional Equipment:** You have a high-quality weapon of your choosing.

**Weaponry Esoterics:** If you perform esoterics, your attacks always look like your chosen weapon. So the force blast of the Onslaught esotery appears to be a large weapon made of force, and the Flash esotery produces a flurry of weaponry. These alterations change nothing other than the appearance of the effects. As another example, Barrier becomes a wall of swirling blades of energy. This alteration changes the esotery such that it is not a solid barrier but rather inflicts 1 point of damage to anyone who touches it and 4 points of damage to anyone who passes through it.

**Minor Effect Suggestions:** The target is so dazzled by your expertise that it is dazed for one round, during which time the difficulty of all tasks it performs is modified by one step to its detriment.

**Major Effect Suggestions:** Make an immediate additional attack with the weapon as part of your turn.



**Tier 1: Weapon Master.** You gain a +1 bonus to damage with your chosen weapon. Enabler.

**Tier 2: Weapon Defense.** While your chosen weapon is in your hand or hands, you are trained in Speed defense rolls. Enabler.

**Tier 3: Rapid Attack (3 Speed points).** Once per round, you can make an additional attack with your chosen weapon. Enabler.

**Tier 4: Never Fumble.** If you roll a natural 1 when attacking with your chosen weapon, you can ignore or countermand the GM's intrusion for that roll. You can never be disarmed of your chosen weapon, nor will you ever drop it accidentally. Enabler.

**Tier 5: Extreme Mastery (4 Might points).** When using your chosen weapon, you can reroll any attack roll you wish and take the better of the two results. Enabler.

**Tier 6: Damage Dealer.** You gain a +2 bonus to damage with your chosen weapon. This bonus adds to the one from the Weapon Master ability, giving you a total bonus of +3. Enabler.

**Death Dealer (5 Might points).** If you strike a foe of level 3 or less with your chosen weapon, you kill the target instantly. Action.

## MURDERS

The murderous assassin is a master of dealing death. No one is better at sneaking into a location, eliminating a target, and slipping out again. Obviously, a professional killer is not likely to have a lot of friends.

You probably wear dark colors—black, charcoal grey, or midnight blue—to help blend into the shadows. But since you're also a master of disguise, in truth you could look like anyone.

Any character could be an assassin. Jacks are the most likely choice, but nanos with their esoterics or glaives with their combat abilities would make efficient killers as well.

**Connection:** Pick one other PC. That character knows your real identity, profession, and background. To all others, the truth about you is a closely guarded secret.

**Additional Equipment:** You start with a disguise kit and three doses of a level 2 blade poison that inflicts 5 points of damage.

**Minor Effect Suggestions:** No one but the foe notices that you make the attack.

**Major Effect Suggestions:** If you have poison amid your belongings, you were able to apply it just before the strike, adding the poison's effects to the normal attack damage.

**Tier 1: Surprise Attack.** If attacking from a hidden vantage, with surprise, or before an opponent has acted, you reduce the difficulty of your attack by one step. On a successful hit with this surprise attack, you inflict 2 additional points of damage. Enabler.

**Trained Assassin.** You are trained in stealth and disguise tasks. Enabler.

**Tier 2: Quick Death (2 Speed points).** You know how to kill quickly. When you hit with a melee or ranged attack, you deal 4 additional points of damage. You can't make this attack in two consecutive rounds. Action.

**Tier 3: Poison Crafter.** You are trained in crafting, sensing, identifying, and resisting poisons. Enabler.

**Trained Infiltrator.** You are trained in all interactions involving lies or trickery. Enabler.

**Tier 4: Better Surprise Attack.** If attacking from a hidden vantage, with surprise, or before an opponent has acted, you reduce the difficulty of your attack by one step. On a successful hit with this surprise attack, you inflict 2 additional points of damage. These effects add to those from Surprise Attack, giving you a total decrease of two steps and a total of 4 additional points of damage. Enabler.

**Tier 5: Slayer (5 Speed points).** With a swift and sudden attack, you strike a foe in a vital spot. If the target is level 3 or less, it is slain outright. Action.

**Tier 6: Escape Plan.** When you kill a foe, you can attempt a sneaking action to immediately hide from anyone around, assuming that a suitable hiding place is nearby. Enabler.

## RAGES

The berserker is a feared fighter who cannot be stopped. You put yourself into a howling battle frenzy that can make you a terror on the battlefield. You might hail from a less civilized society, perhaps even a tribal one.

You likely wear little or no armor so as not to restrict your speed or maneuverability. Your clothing is probably simple and utilitarian.

Glaives make the best berserkers.

**Connection:** Choose one other PC. You feel strangely protective toward that character and don't want to see her come to harm.

**Minor Effect Suggestions:** When fighting multiple foes, you knock one into another, putting both off balance. As a result, treat both foes as one level lower for one round.

**Major Effect Suggestions:** Your foe is terrified of your rage and uses his next two actions to flee.

**Tier 1: Frenzy (1 Intellect point).** When you wish, while in combat, you can enter a state of frenzy. While in this state, you can't use Intellect points, but you gain +1 to your Might Edge and your Speed Edge. This effect lasts for as long as you wish, but it ends if no combat is taking place within range of your senses. Enabler.

**Tier 2: Hardy.** You gain +5 to your Might Pool. These additional points can be used only to absorb damage. You





can't spend them to apply Effort to rolls. Enabler.

**Mobile Fighter:** You are trained in climbing and jumping tasks. Enabler.

**Tier 3: Power Strike (3+ Might points).** If you successfully attack a target, you knock it prone in addition to inflicting damage. The target must be your size or smaller. You can knock down a target larger than you if you apply a level of Effort to do so (rather than to decrease the difficulty of the attack). Enabler.

**Unarmored Fighter.** While unarmored, you are trained in Speed defense tasks. Enabler.

**Tier 4: Greater Frenzy (4 Intellect points).** When you wish, while in combat, you can enter a state of frenzy. While in this state, you can't use Intellect points, but you gain +2 to your Might Edge and your Speed Edge. This effect lasts for as long as you wish, but it ends if no combat is taking place within range of your senses. You can use this ability or your first-tier Frenzy ability, but you can't use both at the same time. Enabler.

**Tier 5: Attack and Attack Again.** Rather than granting additional damage or a minor or major effect, a natural 17 or higher on your attack roll allows you the option of immediately making another attack. Enabler.

**Tier 6: Tough and Fast.** You gain +6 to your Might Pool and your Speed Pool. Enabler.

## RIDES THE LIGHTNING

The ancients harnessed electricity in strange and wonderful

ways. Through practice and inherent ability (or the subtle use of hidden or implanted devices), you control the same energy. Not only can you create and discharge electrical power, but you can eventually learn to use it to transport yourself.

You probably wear tight-fitting clothing that allows you to move quickly. Your garments might be blue and black, perhaps with a lightning-bolt motif.

Although nanos seem most suited to wielding lightning, jacks can make good use of the varied lightning abilities.

**Connection:** Pick one other PC. This character has been your friend for a long time, and you have learned to bring her along when you ride the lightning. If the character is standing right next to you, you can take her with you when you use the Bolt Rider or Electrical Flight powers. (Normally, neither ability allows you to transport other creatures.)

**Additional Equipment:** You have a bag of miscellaneous batteries and power cells. Whenever you find a new device that operates on batteries or cells (GM discretion), there is a 75 percent chance that the bag contains one that will power it if it depletes.

**Electrical Esoterics:** If you perform esoterics, those that would normally use force or other energy instead use electricity. For example, a Flash or an Onslaught force blast is a blast of lightning. This alteration changes nothing other than the type of damage and the fact that it might start fires.

**Minor Effect Suggestions:** The target is dazed by electricity for one round, during which time the difficulty of all tasks it performs is modified by one step to its detriment. Electricity can also shut down an android, robot, or other automaton for one round.



**Major Effect Suggestions:** Devices filled with electrical power explode. You can target and destroy an artifact that a foe is holding or wearing.

**Tier 1: Shock (1 Intellect point).** Your hands crackle with electricity, and the next time you touch a creature, you inflict 3 points of damage. Alternatively, if you wield a weapon, for ten minutes it crackles with electricity and inflicts 1 additional point of damage per attack. Action for touch; enabler for weapon.

**Charge (1+ Intellect points).** You can charge an artifact or other device (except a cypher) so that it can be used once. The cost is 1 Intellect point plus 1 point per level of the device. Action.

**Tier 2: Bolt Rider (4 Intellect points).** You can move a long distance from one location to another almost instantaneously, carried by a bolt of lightning. You must be able to see the new location, and there must be no intervening barriers. Action.

**Tier 3: Lightning Swift.** You gain +3 to your Speed Pool and +1 to your Speed Edge. Enabler.

**Drain Charge.** You can drain the power from an artifact or device, allowing you to regain 1 Intellect point per level of the device. You regain points at the rate of 1 point per round and must give your full concentration to the process each round. The GM determines whether the device is fully drained (likely true of most handheld or smaller devices) or retains some power (likely true of large machines). Action to initiate; action each round to drain.

**Tier 4: Bolts of Power (5+ Intellect points).** You blast a fan of lightning out to short range in an arc that is approximately 50 feet (15 m) wide at the end. This discharge inflicts 4 points of damage. If you apply Effort to increase the damage rather than to decrease the difficulty, you deal 2 additional points of damage per level of Effort (instead of 3 points); however, targets in the area take 1 point of damage even if you fail the attack roll. Action.

**Tier 5: Electrical Flight (5 Intellect points).** You exude an aura of crackling electricity that lets you fly for ten minutes. You can't carry other creatures with you. Action to activate.

**Tier 6: Wall of Lightning (6 Intellect points).** You create a barrier of crackling electricity up to 2,500 square feet (230 sq. m) in size, shaped as you wish. The wall is a level 7 barrier. Anyone within immediate distance of the wall automatically takes 10 points of damage. The wall lasts for one hour. Action to create.

## TALKS TO MACHINES

Since you were young, you had an affinity for machines. It seemed almost like you were speaking to them.

You were. You have the ability to use your organic brain like a computer, interfacing “wirelessly” with any electronic device. You can control and influence them in ways that others can't. Computers are your friends and companions. You have also learned to repair machines of all kinds because the better they work, the better off you are as well.

You likely wear a tool belt full of various implements, and machine oils stain your clothes and fingertips.

All types of characters can spend their time talking to machines, although this practice fits the nano best of all.

**Connection:** Pick one other PC. That character seems to have a terrible relationship with machines—or at least the machines that you communicate with. If she is next to a machine that you interact with in a friendly manner, that machine is treated in all ways as being one level lower than normal (unless doing so benefits you or her, in which case the level does not change).

**Additional Equipment:** A bag of small tools.

**Minor Effect Suggestions:** The duration of influence or control is doubled.

**Major Effect Suggestions:** The duration of influence or control becomes 28 hours.

**Tier 1: Machine Affinity.** You are trained in all tasks involving electrical machines. Enabler.

**Distant Activation (1 Intellect point).** You can activate or deactivate any machine you can see within short range, even if normally you would have to touch or manually operate the device. To use this ability, you must understand the function of the machine, it must be your size or smaller, and it can't be connected to another intelligence (or be intelligent itself). Action.

**Tier 2: Coaxing Power (2 Intellect points).** You boost the power or function of a machine so that it operates at one level higher than normal for one hour. Action to initiate.

**Charm Machine (2 Intellect points).** You convince an unintelligent machine to “like” you. A machine that likes you is 50 percent less likely to function if said function would cause you harm. Thus, if a foe attempts to detonate a bomb near you controlled by a detonator that likes you, there is a 50 percent chance that it won't explode. Action to initiate.

**Tier 3: Intelligent Interface (3 Intellect points).** You can speak telepathically with any intelligent machine within long range. Further, you are trained in all interactions with intelligent machines. Such machines and automatons that normally would never communicate with a human might talk to you. Enabler.

**Tier 4: Machine Companion.** You create a level 3 animate, intelligent machine that accompanies you and acts as you direct. As a level 3 machine companion, it has a target number of 9 and a health of 9, and it inflicts 3 points of



damage. If it's destroyed, it takes you one month to create a new one. Enabler.

**Robot Fighter.** When fighting an automaton or intelligent machine, you are trained in attacks and defense. Enabler.

**Tier 5: Information Gathering (5 Intellect points).** You speak telepathically with any or all machines within 1 mile (1.6 km). You can ask one basic question about themselves or anything happening near them and receive a simple answer. For example, while in an area with many machines, you could ask "Where is the ravage bear?" and if the creature is within a mile of you, one or more machines will probably provide the answer. Action.

**Tier 6: Control Machine (6 Intellect points).** You can control the functions of any machine, intelligent or otherwise, within short range. This effect lasts ten minutes. Action.

## WEARS A SHEEN OF ICE

Through your studies, you have learned to focus your natural talents to command the powers of ice and cold. People might refer to you as an ice mage. Sometimes ice mages are thought to come into conflict with those known as fire mages, but this is a fallacy believed by ordinary folks more than anything based in truth.

You likely wear white or blue garments that are heavier than they need to be—unless you live in a cold region or wintry clime, in which case you probably wear less clothing than other people do because the cold doesn't bother you.

Most ice mages are nanos, but a glaive armored in ice, perhaps wielding an ice sword, would be quite impressive.

**Connection:** Pick one other PC. Due to a quirk of the numenera, if that character is standing next to you when you use your Ice Armor ability, he is also protected by a sheen of ice. (He does not get the added protection of your Resilient Ice Armor ability.)

**Additional Equipment:** You have a bladed weapon made of stronglass that looks like ice.

**Ice Esoterics:** If you perform esoterics, those that would normally use force or other energy instead use cold and ice. For example, an Onslaught force blast is a ray of frost, and Flash produces a blast of cold and ice shards. This alteration changes nothing other than the type of damage. As another example, Barrier creates a wall of ice. This alteration changes nothing except the wall's appearance and the fact that it takes 2 additional points of damage from fire.

**Minor Effect Suggestions:** The surface around the target becomes slick and difficult to stand on.

**Major Effect Suggestions:** The target is covered in ice that hinders its movement for one minute, during which time the difficulty of all tasks it performs is modified by one step to its detriment.

**Tier 1: Ice Armor (1 Intellect point).** When you wish it, your body is covered in a sheen of ice for ten minutes that gives you +1 to Armor. While the sheen is active, you feel no discomfort from normal cold temperatures and have an additional +2 to Armor versus cold damage specifically. Enabler.

**Tier 2: Frost Touch (1 Intellect point).** Your hands become so cold that the next time you touch a creature, you inflict 3 points of damage. Alternatively, you can use this ability on a weapon, and for ten minutes, it inflicts 1 additional point of damage from the cold. Action for touch; enabler for weapon.

**Tier 3: Freezing Touch (4 Intellect points).** Your hands become so cold that, in addition to inflicting damage as described under Frost Touch, your touch freezes solid a living target of your size or smaller, rendering it immobile for one round. Action.

**Tier 4: Resilient Ice Armor.** The sheen of ice you generate using your Ice Armor ability gives you an additional +1 to Armor. Enabler.

**Tier 5: Cold Burst (5+ Intellect points).** You emit a blast of cold in all directions, up to short range. All within the burst take 5 points of damage. If you apply Effort to increase the damage rather than to decrease the difficulty, you deal 2 additional points of damage per level of Effort (instead of 3 points); however, targets in the area take 1 point of damage even if you fail the attack roll. Action.

**Tier 6: Ice Creation (6 Intellect points).** You create a solid object of ice that is your size or smaller. The object is crude and can have no moving parts, so you can make a sword, a shield, a short ladder, and so on. Your ice objects are as strong as iron, but if you're not in constant contact with them, they function for only 1d6 + 6 rounds before breaking or melting. For example, you can make and wield an ice sword, but if you give it to another PC, the sword won't last as long for that character. Action.

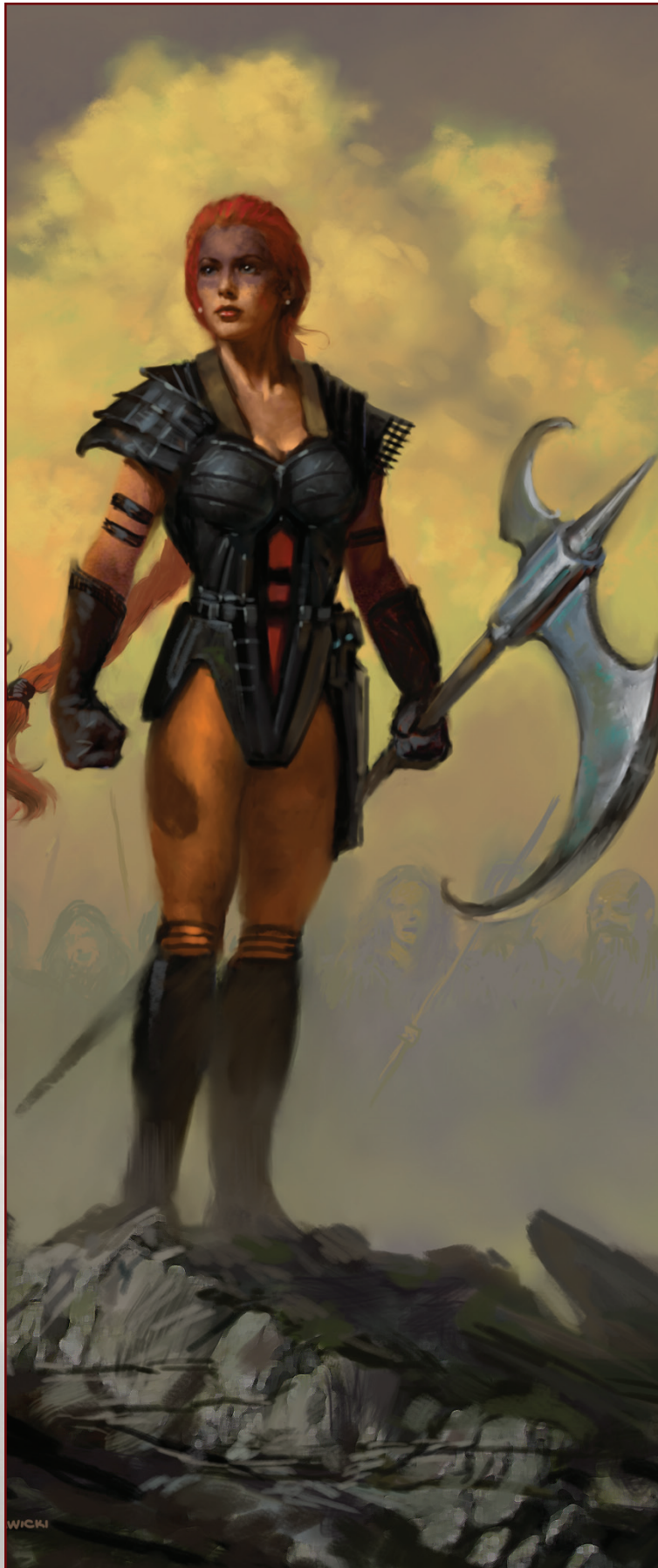
## WIELDS POWER WITH PRECISION

Not only are you blessed with a great command of the numenera, but you are also trained to exploit esoterics in ways that elevate you above other nanos and jacks. Some people believe that those who perform esoterics are born with the ability, but you know that skill and intelligence play important roles. The ancients created the numenera through knowledge, discovery, and intellect, and to use it properly, you must follow the same path.

You probably wear spectacles and dapper outfits, carrying extra books, notebooks, and pens so you can continually focus on your studies and experiments.

Nanos usually receive this instruction and focus, but some jacks do as well. Glaives never do.





**Connection:** Pick one other PC. You've placed an immutable, one-time ward that renders her immune to the esoterics you perform unless she wants to be affected.

**Additional Equipment:** You have an additional book on the subject of the numenera.

**Minor Effect Suggestions:** The esotery overwhelms and dazzles the target for one round, during which time the difficulty of all tasks it performs is modified by one step to its detriment.

**Major Effect Suggestions:** The esotery terrifies the target, who uses its next two turns to flee.

**Tier 1: Genius.** Your Intellect Pool increases by 5 points. Enabler.

**Tier 2: Training and Precision.** You are trained in all esoterics. As a result, you reduce the difficulty of any task involved in the use of an esotery by one step. Enabler.

**Tier 3: Enhanced Esoterics.** Your esoterics that have durations last twice as long. Your esoterics that have short ranges reach to long range instead. Your esoterics that inflict damage deal 1 additional point of damage. Enabler.

**Tier 4: Greater Repertoire.** You can learn one additional esotery of fourth tier or lower. Enabler.

**Tier 5: Greater Training.** You are specialized in all esoterics. As a result, you reduce the difficulty of any task involved in the use of an esotery by two steps. Enabler.

**Tier 6: Supra-Genius.** Your Intellect Pool increases by 5, and your Intellect Edge increases by 1. Enabler.

## WIELDS TWO WEAPONS AT ONCE

You bear steel with both hands, ready to take on any foe. You fight with two weapons in melee, sometimes called dual wielding. A fearsome warrior, quick and strong, you believe that the best defense is a strong offense.

You probably sheathe one weapon on each side or both crossed behind your



back. They are likely your most prized possessions, and you might have names for them.

Many glaives and jacks train to fight with two weapons at once. Very rarely would a nano spend the time required to learn such a purely physical art, but it's possible.

**Connection:** Pick one other PC. You have trained with this character so much that if the two of you stand back to back in a fight, you both gain a +1 bonus to Speed defense tasks.

**Additional Equipment:** You start with an additional light melee weapon.

**Minor Effect Suggestions:** The target is intimidated and flees as its next action.

**Major Effect Suggestions:** You can make an immediate additional attack with one of your weapons.

**Tier 1: Dual Light Wield.** You can use two light weapons at the same time, making two separate attacks on your turn as a single action. You remain limited by the amount of Effort you can apply on one action, but because you make separate attacks, your opponent's Armor applies to both. Anything that modifies your attack or damage applies to both attacks, unless it's specifically tied to one of the weapons. Enabler.

**Tier 2: Double Strike (3 Might points).** When you wield two weapons, you can choose to make one attack roll against a foe. If you hit, you inflict damage with both weapons plus 2 additional points of damage, and because you made a single attack, the target's Armor is subtracted only once. Action.

**Tier 3: Dual Medium Wield.** You can use two light weapons or medium weapons at the same time (or one light weapon and one medium weapon), making two separate attacks on your turn as a single action. This ability otherwise works like the Dual Light Wield ability. Enabler.

**Tier 4: Dual Defense.** When you wield two weapons, you are trained in Speed defense tasks. Enabler.

**Tier 5: Dual Distraction (4 Speed points).** When you wield two weapons, your opponent's next attack is hindered. As a result, the difficulty of your defense roll against that attack is reduced by one step, and the difficulty of your next attack is reduced by one step. Enabler.

**Tier 6: Whirling Dervish.** When you wield two weapons, you can attack up to six times in one round as a single action, but you must make each attack against a different foe. Make a separate attack roll for each attack. You remain limited by the amount of Effort you can apply on one action, but because you make separate attacks, Armor applies to each of them. Anything that modifies your attack or damage applies to all attacks (positively

or negatively), unless it's specifically tied to one of the weapons, in which case it applies to only half of the attacks. Enabler.

## WORKS MIRACLES

You manipulate matter and time to help others and are beloved by everyone you encounter. Some people consider you a representative of the gods or a power from beyond this world. Perhaps they're right—transdimensional experiments in the prior worlds might be what created the energies that you now wield.

You probably wear simple clothes—nothing too flashy or stylish. There's no need to call more attention to yourself.

Nanos are the likeliest miracle workers, using their mental fortitude to focus the power of healing. A glaive who can heal himself, though, is an interesting and dangerous proposition.

**Connection:** Pick one other PC. This character quietly suspects that you're a messiah or supernatural being. You can choose whether or not you're aware of his suspicion.

**Minor Effect Suggestions:** The target is healed for 1 additional point.

**Major Effect Suggestions:** The target is healed for 2 additional points.

**Tier 1: Healing Touch (1 Intellect point).** With a touch, you restore 1d6 points to one stat Pool of any creature. This ability is a difficulty 2 Intellect task. Each time you attempt to heal the same creature, the task difficulty increases by one step. The difficulty returns to 2 after that creature rests for ten hours. Action.

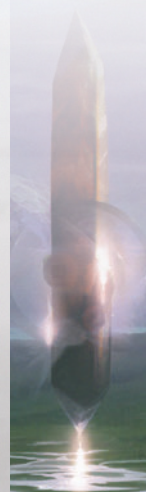
**Tier 2: Alleviate (3 Intellect points).** You attempt to cancel or cure one malady (such as disease or poison) in one creature. Action.

**Tier 3: Font of Healing.** With your approval, other creatures can touch you and regain 1d6 points to either their Might Pool or their Speed Pool. This healing costs them 2 Intellect points. A single creature can benefit from this ability only once each day. Enabler.

**Tier 4: Inspiration (4 Intellect points).** Through mental inspiration and the manipulation of time, one creature you choose within short range is granted an additional, immediate action, which it can take out of turn. Action.

**Tier 5: Undo (5 Intellect points).** You turn back time a few seconds, effectively undoing a single creature's most recent action. That creature can then immediately repeat the same action or try something different. Action.

**Tier 6: Greater Healing Touch (4 Intellect points).** You touch a creature and restore its Might Pool, Speed Pool, and





Intellect Pool to their maximum values, as if it were fully rested. A single creature can benefit from this ability only once each day. Action.

## WORKS THE BACK ALLEYS

The thief, the burglar, the pickpocket: these are the dangerous individuals who haunt the back alleys of every community. You are a thief in a city or town, making your livelihood at the expense of the wealthy. Your talents, however, prepare you for all kinds of pursuits, even when you're not crouching in an alley or climbing into a window.

Usually, you dress to blend in with the crowd. When you're on a mission, black, form-fitting clothing allows you to swim in the shadows.

Most thieves are jacks, but nanos make interesting burglars as well. A glaive thief likely adds a little more physicality to his crimes.

**Connection:** Pick one other PC. The character knew you beforehand and convinced you to leave your life of crime for other pursuits—at least temporarily.

**Additional Equipment:** You start with a bag of light tools.

**Minor Effect Suggestions:** You can immediately attempt to hide after this action.

**Major Effect Suggestions:** You can immediately take a second action during this turn.

**Tier 1: Thief.** You are trained in sneaking, pickpocketing, and lockpicking tasks. Enabler.

**Tier 2: Underworld Contacts.** You know many people in a variety of communities who engage in illegal activities. These people are not necessarily your friends and might not be trustworthy, but they recognize you as a peer. You and the GM should work out the details of your underworld contacts. Enabler.

**Tier 3: Pull a Fast One (3 Intellect points).** When you're running a con, picking a pocket, fooling or tricking a dupe, sneaking something by a guard, and so on, you treat the task as if it were one level lower. Enabler.

**Tier 4: Master Thief.** You are trained in climbing, escaping from bonds, slipping through narrow places, and other contortionist moves. Enabler.

**Tier 5: Dirty Fighter (2 Speed points).** You distract, blind, annoy, hamper, or otherwise interfere with a foe, hindering his attack and defense rolls for one minute. As a result, the difficulty of your defense rolls and attack rolls against the foe is reduced by one step. Action.

**Tier 6: Alley Rat (4 Intellect points).** While in a city, you find or create a significant shortcut, secret entrance, or emergency escape route where it looked like none existed. You and the GM should work out the details. Action.



# EQUIPMENT

*The Ninth World is a dichotomy of past and future, of the primitive and the extremely advanced. Nowhere does this dichotomy become more evident than in the tools the inhabitants use, the clothing they wear, the weapons they wield, and the gear they carry. This section looks at some of the currency, materials, and gear in the Ninth World.*

## CURRENCY

Thanks to the mining and metallurgy of the prior worlds, and their ability to create anything they wished (or so it seems, anyway), no metal is rarer than any other. People in the Ninth World have no concept of gold, silver, gemstones, or even diamonds as being valuable due to their scarcity. Such materials are valuable based on their beauty or usefulness alone. Most civilized societies use generic coins commonly referred to as *shins*.

Shins are usually metal but can be made of glass, plastic, or substances that have no name. Some are jagged bits of interesting material or small, coinlike objects (such as highly decorative buttons from a machine), and others are properly minted and stamped, with writing and images. Some regions of the Ninth World accept only coins that were minted in that realm; others accept all coins, regardless of origin. This custom varies from place to place and society to society.

## MATERIALS

Most objects built in the Ninth World are made of wood, leather, cloth, stone, glass, or metal. Smithies and forges can produce high-quality steel objects, but they generally work in iron or bronze. However, plastic (called “synth”), organic stone or steel, exotic crystal, and even stranger materials are not unknown. Such materials include (but are not limited to) adamant silk, azure steel, molded foam, shapestone, and stronglass.

Most common Ninth World items are made of conventional materials, but it's not strange to find a few objects made of these more exotic substances. For instance, amid a rack of steel and iron axes, a character might find one with a synthsteel head (likely a piece of synthsteel originally designed for another purpose and adapted for use as an axe head). Usually, the cost of an item made of exotic materials is the same as that of a normal item, but if the material makes a big difference—such as in the case of a shield made of stronglass so you can hold it in front of you and still see through it—the seller might charge up to twice the normal price.

## ENCUMBRANCE

Weights of objects are not listed. In fact, it would be futile to do so because the weight of an object depends on what materials were used to make it. An iron axe and a ceramic axe weigh different amounts. Most of the time, there's no need to keep track of how much a character carries.

## EQUIPMENT LISTS AND PRICES

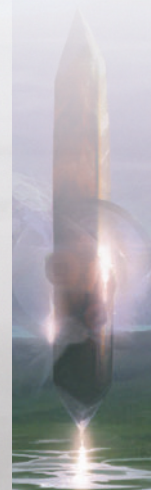
Equipment in the Ninth World is often much like that found in an ancient or medieval societies but can be far more advanced. For example, a simple tent or bedroll might be constructed of synthetic fiber that makes it entirely water-resistant as well as far lighter and warmer than cloth. A chainmail hauberk could be made in whole or in part from glassy links that are harder and lighter than steel.

There are many types of special equipment not listed here, including brilliance cloth, memory ants, shaper keys, and sprayflesh. Special equipment items are not regularly manufactured by Ninth World crafters. Instead, they are recovered from old sites, but they're found often enough and in large enough quantities that they can sometimes be found for sale.

While prices vary from place to place, when in doubt, light weapons cost 1 shin, medium weapons cost 3, and heavy weapons cost 5. Light armor costs 3 shins, medium armor costs 5, and heavy armor costs 15. Most other common objects cost 1, 2, or 3 shins. Sellers usually discount for bulk purchases.

## ARMOR

You can wear only one type of armor at a time—you cannot wear chainmail hauberk and scale armor, for example. However, Armor bonuses from multiple sources combine to provide a total armor rating. For example, if you have subdermal implants that give you +1 Armor, a force field that offers another +1 Armor, and beastskin armor that grants +2 Armor, you have a total of 4 Armor.





## ARMOR

Light (1 point of Armor)	Price
Leather jerkin	3 shins
Hides and furs	2 shins
Special Light (2 points of Armor)	Price
Armoring cloth	40 shins
Micromesh	50 shins
Medium (2 points of Armor)	Price
Beastskin	5 shins
Brigandine	5 shins
Chainmail hauberk	6 shins
Special Medium (3 points of Armor)	Price
Metalweave vest	40 shins
Synth breastplate	50 shins
Heavy (3 points of Armor)	Price
Plate armor	15 shins
Scale armor	12 shins

Anyone can wear any armor, but doing so can be taxing. Wearing armor costs you Might points and reduces your Speed Pool. You can rest to recover these lost Might points in the standard manner, even if you're still wearing armor. (Ask your GM for more details.) The Speed Pool reduction remains as long as you wear the armor, but the

Pool returns to normal as soon as you remove it. Glaives and jacks have abilities that reduce the costs and penalties of wearing armor.

## WEAPONS

Not all characters are familiar with all weapons. Glaives know their way around most types, but jacks prefer light or medium weapons, and nanos usually stick to light weapons. If you wield a weapon that you have no experience with, the difficulty of making an attack with that weapon is increased by one step.

**Light weapons** inflict only 2 points of damage, but they reduce the difficulty of the attack roll by one step because they are fast and easy to use. Light weapons are punches, kicks, knives, handaxes, darts, and so on. Weapons that are particularly small are light weapons.

**Medium weapons** inflict 4 points of damage. Medium weapons include broadswords, battleaxes, maces, crossbows, spears, and so on. Most weapons are medium. Anything that could be used in one hand (even if it's often used in two hands, such as a quarterstaff or spear) is a medium weapon.

**Heavy weapons** inflict 6 points of damage, and you must use two hands to attack with them. Heavy weapons are huge swords, great hammers, massive axes, halberds, heavy crossbows, and so on. Anything that must be used in two hands is a heavy weapon.







## WEAPONS

Light Weapons (2 points of damage)	Price	Notes
Blowgun	1 shin	Short range
12 darts	3 shins	
Buzzer	25 shins	Handheld weapon. Fires thumbnail-sized bladed disks up to short range.
5-disk buzzer magazine	1 shin	
Club	1 shin	
Dagger	1 shin	Can be thrown up to short range
Dart thrower	8 shins	Long range
12 darts	3 shins	
Forearm blade	4 shins	Metal bracer with a mounted blade on it
Knife	1 shin	Can be thrown up to short range
Punching dagger	1 shin	
Rapier	2 shins	
Razor ring	1 shin	Ring with a razor-sharp outer edge. Short range.
Sisk	1 shin	Bladed throwing disk. Short range.
Unarmed (punch, kick, etc.)	—	
Whip	2 shins	

Medium Weapons (4 points of damage)	Price	Notes
Battleaxe	3 shins	
Bow	3 shins	Long range
12 arrows	5 shins	
Broadsword	3 shins	
Crank crossbow	10 shins	Magazine holds five bolts. Requires crank to advance. Long range.
12 medium bolts	5 shins	
Crossbow	5 shins	Long range
12 medium bolts	5 shins	
Flail	3 shins	
Hammer	2 shins	
Javelin	2 shins	Long range
Mace	2 shins	
Polearm	3 shins	Often used two-handed
Quarterstaff	2 shins	Often used two-handed
Spear	2 shins	Can be thrown up to long range
Verred	2 shins	A type of short sword with two forked blades
Yulk	2 shins	Splayed metal claw mounted upon a 2-foot (0.6-m) haft

Heavy Weapons (6 points of damage)	Price	Notes
Greataxe	5 shins	
Greatsword	5 shins	
Heavy crossbow	7 shins	Long range, action to reload
12 heavy bolts	5 shins	
Maul	4 shins	
Sword-staff	5 shins	





## OTHER EQUIPMENT

Adventuring Items	Price	Notes
Backpack	2 shins	
Bag of light tools	10 shins	See Further Notes
Bag of heavy tools	12 shins	See Further Notes
Bedroll	2 shins	
Book	5–20 shins	See Further Notes
Burlap sack	1 shin	
Compass	10 shins	
Crowbar	2 shins	
Disguise kit	12 shins	See Further Notes
Explorer's pack	20 shins	See Further Notes
First aid kit	10 shins	See Further Notes
Grappling hook	3 shins	
Lockpicks	5 shins	
Matchsticks (10)	1 shin	
Musical instrument	5–10 shins	
Pouch or other small container	1 shin	
Rope (50 feet / 15 m)	2 shins	
Shield	3 shins	Asset for Speed defense tasks (decreases the difficulty by one step)
Tent	3 shins	Large enough for two people
Torches (2)	1 shin	
Food and Mundane Items	Price	Notes
Ale/wine/other alcohol (glass)	1 shin	
Ale/wine/other alcohol (bottle)	3 shins	
Boots or shoes	1 shin	
Cigarettes (12)	2 shins	
Clothing	1 shin	Very nice clothing: up to 5 shins
Meal	1 shin	High-quality meal: up to 5 shins
Rations for one day	2 shins	

## FURTHER NOTES

**Bag of Light Tools:** Contains small tongs, pliers, screwdriver, small hammer, small pry bar, lockpicks, 10 feet (3 m) of string, 3 feet (1 m) of wire, and miscellaneous screws and nails.

**Bag of Heavy Tools:** Contains hammer, six spikes, crowbar, large tongs, chisel, and 10 feet (3 m) of light (but strong) metal cable.

**Book:** Provides an asset to any roll made concerning the subject of the book as long as the character has the book in his possession, can read it, and can devote half an hour to the task (or twice as long as normal, whichever is greater).

**Disguise Kit:** Contains cosmetics, facial prostheses, and a few other tricks. Provides an asset to disguise tasks, lowering the difficulty by one step when you attempt to disguise yourself as another person.

**Explorer's Pack:** Contains 50 feet (15 m) of rope, rations for three days, three spikes, hammer, warm clothes, sturdy boots, three torches, and two minor glowglobes.

**First Aid Kit:** Contains bandages, a few tools, salves, and so on. Provides an asset to healing tasks, lowering the difficulty by one step when you attempt to heal yourself or another person.

