

GLASS

Generic Live Action Simulation System System Test Document v1.2 (gold candidate)

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1	Credits	4
2	Introduction	5
2.1	Overview	5
2.2	Goals	5
3	Basic Concepts	6
3.1	Game Variations	6
3.2	General Terms.....	6
3.3	Game Participants	7
3.4	Holds.....	7
3.5	Safe Weapon Combat	7
3.6	Short Range Effects	8
3.7	Long Range Effects.....	8
3.8	Scope.....	8
3.9	Verbals.....	8
3.10	Gestures.....	8
3.11	Extra Character Descriptions	9
3.12	Legal Play.....	9

4	Attributes	10
4.1	Attribute Definitions.....	10
4.2	Counters	10
4.3	Thresholds.....	10
4.4	Attribute Costs & Limits.....	11
5	Damage	12
5.1	Physical Damage Effects.....	12
5.2	Psychological Damage Effects	12
6	Abilities	14
6.1	Ability Definitions.....	14
6.2	Ability Base Cost	15
6.3	Use of Abilities	15
6.4	Attribute-Related Abilities.....	16
6.5	Situational Abilities	17
6.6	Offensive Abilities	18
6.7	Response Abilities.....	19
6.8	Defensive Abilities.....	20
6.9	Item Abilities	20
6.10	Constraining Abilities	22
6.11	Movement Abilities.....	22
6.12	Special Abilities	22
6.13	[ed- Ability Tasks]	23
7	Advantages	24
7.1	Range Advantages	24
7.2	Special Advantages	25
8	Limitations	26
8.1	Damaging Limitations.....	26
8.2	Delaying Limitations.....	26
8.3	Usage Limitations	27
9	Item Props	29
9.1	Armor	29
9.2	Shield.....	29
9.3	Weapon	29
9.4	Focus	30
9.5	Tool	30
10	Object Props	31
10.1	Barrier	31
10.2	Blockage	31
10.3	Container.....	31
10.4	Lock.....	31
11	Rewards	33
11.1	Information.....	33

11.2	Money	33
11.3	Experience	33
12	Character Creation	35
12.1	Decide Concept.....	35
12.2	Assign Defects	35
12.3	Purchase Attributes and Abilities.....	37
12.4	GM Approval	37
12.5	Make Props and Tags.....	37
13	Genres	38
13.1	[ed- Genre-Specific Section].....	38
13.2	Game Mastering GLASS	39
13.3	[ed- Genres Tasks].....	40
13.4	[ed- Book Tasks]	40

1 Credits

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[ed- All the rest of the usual front matter stuff in a book of this type.]

20

2 Introduction

2.1 Overview

Generic Live Action Simulation Systems (GLASS) is a live action role-playing system that enables players to resolve conflict with actual player skill and to act out everything that their characters do, as long as no one is ever at risk of injury. Players use foam melee weapons instead of playing pieces, throw birdseed packets instead of dice, and pull triggers on child-safe guns instead of joysticks. Armor worn and shields wielded protect them from the malice of foes; and when it's time to run, the players must actually beat feet, not take out measuring tapes.

The rules that comprise the system only kick in when it is too dangerous—or physically impossible—to simulate character actions with actual player activity. Rules help to resolve questions of character ability or feat possibility without player risk; and the game mechanics allow players to use skills they will never learn in real life, to attempt daring feats they'd be fools to try in the real world, or to harness raw power right out of fantasy.

2.2 Goals

In GLASS, every gameplay assumption and rule system is intended to serve one or more of these design and play style goals:

Rules Light

Only necessary rules and effects are formalized. Anything an average person can do safely or act out is not modeled in rules or game effects. Rules are designed to provide speedy resolution of fundamental, generalized effects, while still allowing character diversity via customization.

Math Light

Most effects are for 1 point and reduce only one character resource counter; thus, they require no articulation of effects (no “verbals”) and allow for quick and easy damage tracking. Defensive layers are limited and there are no offensive layers. Modifiers are usually only applied to one side of a particular opposed dichotomy of traits or effects (e.g. there are no effects that increase weapon damage, but there are effects which increase defenses). Abilities are initially defined as unrestricted and of near-maximal utility; limitations may then be added to reduce costs, while advantages that increase effectiveness are rare.

Action Heavy

Effects and rewards seek to increase a character's longevity or versatility, not reduce a player's actual effort or the activity that is required to accomplish goals. Effects require minimal or no bookkeeping and have easy-to-adjudicate durations (when applicable). The use of verbals is minimized; and verbals are designed to be unique and unequivocal, to improve comprehension in chaotic conflicts.

Role-playing Heavy

Game Masters are encouraged (but not required!) to emphasize non-violent conflicts and problem-solving when they are designing game scenarios and game world situations. There are very few mind-affecting or social effects simulated by rules: the former undermines player self-determination while the latter is better handled with role-playing.

Quiet

Weapon hits do not require verbals; and a weapon's damage is obvious from its size, handling, and use. Thus, the only necessary verbals are those which will tend to contribute to game atmosphere (creative incantations) or aid apprehension (one-word effects or non-standard damage declarations).

Safe

Every player is guaranteed his or her personal space, defined as all space within arm's reach; no one may enter another's personal space without expressed permission. No grappling or striking with hands or feet; and no grabbing items that are secured to a player's body or held in a player's hands. No climbing anything other than stairs. No vehicles or personal transports other than wheelchairs; and players in wheelchairs must be noncombatants. All props, objects, makeup, attire, and devices must be approved by the game Hosts and Game Masters (or their delegates), taking into account player experience and maturity, aspects of the game environs, non-participants' likely reactions, and local laws.

3 Basic Concepts

This section provides terms and general methods of play that represent the fundamental concepts with which a player must be familiar to understand the rules of GLASS and to play with confidence and pace.

3.1 Game Variations

Some rules within the GLASS system are mutually exclusive variations that can not be in effect at the same time in the same game without causing confusion or ruining the play experience.

Priority

The principle dichotomy for a GLASS game's particular set of rules is Priority.

Player Priority – Rules which ensure that an individual player's control over his or her character's destiny is paramount.

Player Priority rules are indicated with this symbol: ✓

World Priority – Rules which ensure that the verisimilitude of the game setting is paramount. World Priority rules are indicated with this symbol: ⊙

Options

Some rule variations do not fit the above Priority dichotomy. In such cases, the available variations for a particular rule are designated as two or more *Options*, which are mutually exclusive and which are indicated with this symbol: ○

Toggles

Some rule variations have sub-rules which could be applied to the base rule or to any of the Options for the rule. In such cases, the available variations for a particular rule are designated as one or more *Toggles*, any of which could apply and which are indicated with this symbol: □

Use of Variations

GMs will specify which Priority is in effect and which Options and Toggles apply for each of the rules which have them. That Priority and those Options and Toggles will remain in effect for the duration of that game, across all sessions and Resets. Only the rules for that Priority and those Options and Toggles are permitted; rules for the other Priority and for other Options or Toggles are not in effect and are not permitted.

Warnings

Some rules and variations can be unbalancing to a game or lead to disruptive play. Such rules are designated with a Warning, which is indicated with this symbol: ●*

3.2 General Terms

These terms refer to time, general effects and actions, and fundamental game mechanics.

actor – (n.) The individual who is attempting to do something to a target.

Attack – (n.) An attempt to hit with a Weapon or with a damaging Ability (v.) To attempt to hit with a Weapon or with a damaging Ability.

Downtime – (n.) Time between play sessions (in a scheduled game) or as specified (in a 24/7 game). Note that Downtime is usually also a Reset, though it need not be in all games or at every session end: some GMs will prefer Downtime to be "frozen" time during which no play or Reset occurs.

in-game – (adj.) Anything that is considered a part of the simulated game world, be it present or not, represented or real.

hit – (v.) Contact a target with a Touch, Throw, or Projectile. Auras and Stares always hit.

Packet – (n.) A birdseed-filled cloth ball that is used to target a player with a Throw. Packets must be approximately 2" in diameter, and they must be bundled loosely enough not to bounce when dropped onto a hard surface from shoulder height.

present – (adj.) Actually, physically on site and in-game; indicative of a PC, SC, EC, Item, or Object.

Prop – (n.) Any game item which is made in a safe or expedient manner to serve as a model of something that, were it real, would be unsafe or impractical to have in the game.

Reset – (n.) Time at which Abilities are refreshed and GMs provide players with new Tags. (v.) Perform a Reset.

session – (n.) Time during which the game is played and all players are expected to be in character (IC). Some games (e.g. 24/7 or Assassin-style games) do not have scheduled sessions, and play can occur at any time.

site – (n.) The location at which the game occurs, which represents the extent of the permitted play areas. Some games (e.g. 24/7 or Assassin-style games) do not have specific sites, and play can occur anywhere that it will not cause a disturbance.

5 *Tag* – (n.) Paper chit which indicates a game effect or which represents an Item, an Object, or a single use of an Ability.

target – (n.) The intended recipient of an Ability or Attack. (v.) To attempt to hit a target with an Ability or Attack.

Threshold – (n.) The value that an Attribute or Ability must equal or exceed in a test.

victim – (n.) A target that has been hit by an Ability or Attack. Note that a hit need not ultimately harm or impair a target for the target to be considered a victim.

10 3.3 Game Participants

These terms refer to game players, those who run the game, and those who work for it.

Game Master (GM) – Anyone who is actively running a game session with players by describing situations and found objects or by adjudicating rules.

15 *Player Character (PC)* – A player who can and may participate in the full range of permitted activities and whose character is considered present and may be the target of any effect.

Extra Character (EC) – Anyone who is actively representing a GM-assigned, present character. GMs will often require players to serve a percentage of session time as ECs.

20 *Safe Character (SC)* – An injured or disabled player who wears a blaze orange headband and does not wield Weapons. The player may not be the target of a Touch, Aura, Throw, or Projectile Attack; likewise, the player may not use Touch, Aura, Throw, or Projectile Attacks, though he or she may use Palm, beneficial Throw Abilities, or Stare Attacks or Abilities. The player's character is considered present.

Non-Character (NC) – The player wears a bright yellow headband and does not wield anything. The player's character is not considered present. An NC player is considered out of character (OOC), must minimize such OOC time, and may have no interaction with others.

25 *Host* – Anyone who designs, organizes, works at, or provides space for a game event. Players are expected to obey all Hosts at all times.

3.4 Holds

A Hold requires everyone in sight of the caller to Gesture: kneel on one knee and cross arms over head. No one may take actions or move, other than to remain safe.

30 GMs will call a Hold if it is necessary for the story or to adjudicate an event. At such times, players may ask questions about the situation or other observable elements of the game setting.

Players may only call a Hold in the event of an emergency: injury, loss of glasses required for vision (but not loss of Focuses!), at risk of being forced into real danger. Players may not call a Hold to attempt to enforce their Ability effects or to ask for rule clarifications.

35 3.5 Safe Weapon Combat

All Weapon-based combat is acted out in real time with physical blows or actual shots; thus, every Weapon must be completely safe for all game participants. When the GMs and Hosts have ratified a Weapon (or Item) as safe for their game, it is considered *safety-approved*.

Melee Weapons

40 The US Standard: Foam-covered, ½" or ¾" PVC plastic or carbon fiber pipe. The entire length of a Weapon (excluding its handle, if any) must be padded with uncompressed, closed-cell foam at least ¾" thick. Weapon tips must be padded with uncompressed, closed-cell foam at least ¾" thick *and* with uncompressed open-cell foam at least 2" thick. For durability and styling, foam may be covered with hypoallergenic latex, cloth, or cloth tape (*not* vinyl or plastic tape); if so, Weapon tips must have several pinholes punched into the covering, to allow for easy airflow into and out of the open-cell foam (i.e. easy compression and rebound).

45

Projectile Weapons

The US Standard: Uncompressed foam with *no* PVC reinforcements. At least 12" long and 2" in diameter, if tubular; or at least 6" in diameter and 1" thick, if planar. Foam may be covered for protection with cloth, cloth tape (*not* vinyl tape), or hypoallergenic latex. In games where it is appropriate, GMs will inform players whether child-safe toy guns, Airsoft guns, or paintball markers (with proper face and ear protection) are permitted.

3.6 Short Range Effects

Many effects that are available to players can be performed on nearby targets without the use of Melee Weapons.

Palm Ability— An Ability that requires the actor to make light, open-handed contact—with the target player's consent—on the target's shoulder, arm, lower leg, or other previously-agreed-upon location.

Touch Ability— An Ability that requires the actor to lightly strike the target with a Tool to hit (in fact, a Melee Weapon Attack is just a particular case of an Unlimited Touch Ability).

Aura Ability— An Ability that requires the actor to indicate the reach, in a circle, of a wielded Tool or Weapon; all characters (or Objects or Items, depending upon the Ability) within the indicated circle are hit.

3.7 Long Range Effects

Many effects that are available to players can be performed on targets at range without the use of Projectile Weapons.

Throw Ability— An Ability that requires the actor to hit the target with a thrown Packet.

Spray Ability— An Ability that allows the actor to hit multiple targets with a handful of thrown Packets.

Stare Ability— An Ability that requires the actor to maintain sight of the target and point at the target.

3.8 Scope

One way that players can simulate Ability limitations or specializations is to map the Ability to some arbitrary element, class, or type of game world effect. Therefore, when designing a game, GMs will choose three—and only three—Scopes for the game world. GMs are encouraged to choose Scopes that are evocative and reflect the game setting, but they could also be completely arbitrary.

Players may then apply the Scoped Limitation to an Ability or apply a Vulnerability Defect to their characters, to operate under such restrictions. If an Ability has no Scope at all, it is assumed to affect (or be affective versus; i.e. resist) all Scopes by default.

3.9 Verbals

Players use declarations to make it clear what their characters are doing or how their actions affect their targets. A *Verbal* is the entire sequence of words that an actor must say to generate a game effect. A Verbal can include any or all of these elements, which (if required at all for a particular Ability) are said in the order that they appear below:

Incantation— Nearly any sort of phrase with the indicated number of *syllables* (utterances which take at least one second); a delay with flair. The exact words of an Ability Incantation are never prescribed, to allow for individual creativity. Further, a player may say more syllables than are necessary to activate the Ability, if he or she wants to do so (or happens to accidentally do so, or wants to imply that the effect will be greater than it actually is).

Count— To count down aloud from the indicated number to zero, using one second (i.e. one syllable) per number; a simple delay.

Call— A unique phrase that the actor says clearly and loudly, to inform the victim and other players of the effect that hit him or her (or that is being activated by the actor). A Call also includes the Scope of the Ability (if any), which is said after the normal effect Call. A Call with a number in front of it must be repeated that number of times to make the effect occur.

3.10 Gestures

Many game effects require the player to indicate constantly to other players that the effect is active. As it would be distracting and tiresome to repeatedly declare such continuous effects with a Verbal, there are several standard pre-defined Gestures that must be used.

An Ability that requires a Gesture will specify the Gesture in its definition and will only be in effect while the player makes the Gesture. A player may continue to hold—but not wield or otherwise use—Weapons, Shields, or Tools in the hand(s) making a Gesture.

3.11 Extra Character Descriptions

5 Often, the cost of Props and makeup limit what GMs will provide to ECs to simulate their roles. To work around this, many games allows players to Call “Appearance?” to an EC, to which the player of the EC responds with a standard, short Description. Usually, a Description mentions the EC’s size, color, and gender (for humanoids) or distinctive features. Many game genres will not require EC Descriptions or “Appearance?” Calls (e.g. a modern game in which all ECs are human and all Descriptions are simply “you see what you see”).

10 3.12 Legal Play

[ed- Pending. Discussion of social contract: player self-adjudication and cheater ostracism; GM enforcement with defined penalties; GLASS Cutters enforcement with defined behaviors that lead to banning.]

4 Attributes

Attributes are the fundamental statistics that are common to all characters, no matter the game genre or the power level of characters. They represent both the quantitative limits of a character's life essence (his or her "hit points" in other systems) and the qualitative capabilities of a character that can not be simulated through player activity (his or her "stats").

5 A normal human's Attribute levels average 3. Someone particularly tough, clever, or confident could have a 4 or even a 5 in an Attribute, but it is very rare for normal humans to have Attributes level 6 or higher.

4.1 Attribute Definitions

Health

10 Health represents the number of Wounds that a character can take before becoming Unconscious. Health is also used in tests of physical constitution or physical power.

Examples: A GM declares that a poisonous gas does 2 to Health (i.e. Harm Directly) to anyone in the area with less than 5 Health.

A crypt door has a Tag that indicates "Health Barrier (Strength) 15 (3)"; a group of 1 to 3 characters must apply at least 15 points of Health to open or close the door, and Strength Situational Abilities may be applied to the total.

Alacrity

15 Alacrity represents the number of Drains that a character can withstand before becoming Exhausted. Alacrity is also used in tests of coordination or ingenuity.

Examples: A character slogging through a swamp is given a 6 Alacrity Threshold to move faster than a walk.

20 A book has a Tag on it that reads "4 Alacrity to read"; the book is so obtuse, technical, and boring that a character must have at least 4 Alacrity to read it for clues.

Psyche

Psyche represents the number of Shocks that a character can endure before becoming Insane. Psyche is also used in tests of confidence or intuition.

25 Examples: A character that observes a horrifying monster is told by a GM "5 Psyche or 3 Shocks": if the character does not have a 5 or higher Psyche, he or she takes 3 Shocks.

A cursed cave has a rope across its entrance with a Tag that reads "3 Psyche to pass": it's such a chilling place that one must have at least a 3 Psyche to even consider entering the cave.

4.2 Counters

30 Most often, the three Attributes are used as counters that are reduced by damage or other game effects. It is always the players' responsibility to keep track of their characters' Attribute values as they fluctuate during the course of play, though many GMs provide Tags to help track current Attributes values and the use of Abilities. Not all game genres, however, need Tags for bookkeeping, particularly realistic or modern game genres which limit Armor or Abilities.

4.3 Thresholds

35 An Attribute may also be used to determine if a character can resist a game effect or perform a particular feat. At these times, a Threshold value is assigned by a GM or by a Tag in the playing area (often on an Object). The character's Attribute value must equal or exceed the Threshold value to resist the effect or accomplish the feat.

Occasionally, a Threshold can be met by the combined efforts of multiple characters (a *Cooperative Threshold*). In these cases, either a GM will inform the players or the Tag will have a number in parentheses after the Threshold value to tell how many characters can effectively combine their Attribute values to apply them to the task at hand.

40 A Tag or GM will fully define the Threshold with these details in the order that they appear below:

- 1) Description – (Optional) The in-game appearance of or reason for the Threshold test.
- 2) Situational Ability – (If requisite) The Ability that a character *must* have to attempt the test. The value of that Ability is added to the Attribute being tested.

- 3) Attribute or Lock Type – (Required) The Attribute which is being tested or the type of Lock.
- 4) Object Designation – (If requisite) The word Barrier, Blockage, or Lock, if the Threshold test is associated with an Object.
- 5) Helpful Ability – (Optional) The Situational Ability (in parentheses) which may be added to the base Attribute to attempt to equal or exceed the Threshold.
- 6) Threshold – (Required) The value which the Attribute value plus required or applicable Ability values must equal or exceed.
- 7) Cooperative Limit – (If allowed) A number (in parentheses) which indicates how many characters may combine Attribute and applicable Ability values to meet or beat the Threshold value.

Based on the details given on the Tag or by the GM, player(s) simply compare the applicable value(s) to the Threshold value and determine if it has been equaled or exceeded. If it has been met then the test is a success and the character(s) may proceed or may set the state of the Barrier (open or closed).

Examples: A tightrope (a rope on the ground, for safety) has a Tag that indicates “Alacrity (Agility) 6 to cross”: a character must have at least 6 levels of Alacrity, including levels of Agility, to walk along the rope to its otherwise-inaccessible destination.

A computer system (a Container for some Information) has a Tag that indicates “Computers Alacrity Lock 5”: a character must have Knowledge: Computers, and its level plus the character’s Alacrity must equal or exceed 5 to access the files in the system.

[ed- More to come, with book re-org.]

4.4 Attribute Costs & Limits

The Experience (Exp) cost of an Attribute level is equal to four times the level plus the sum of all previous level costs.

This table provides a list of Experience cost per Attribute level and of total Experience cost to buy an Attribute level outright:

Attribute Level	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Exp for each Level	4	8	12	16	20	24	28	32	36	40
Total Exp to Level	4	12	24	40	60	84	112	144	180	220

GMs will set limits on characters’ starting and maximum Attribute levels with the game’s Power Level. Such limits allow the GMs to properly scale the difficulty of challenges in the game world; they also help GMs maintain a degree of equivalence between new characters and experienced characters in long-running games that allow for character advancement. When properly managed and scaled, this relative equivalence helps to ensure that most players can have some impact on most situations.

5 Damage

Many game effects attempt to reduce a character's Attributes. Abilities and Weapons batter through Armor to reduce Health; Attacks and Ability Limitations wear away Reserve and Alacrity; horrors and despair can erode even the strongest Psyche.

5.1 Physical Damage Effects

5 Wound

Wounds reduce, first, Armor by 1 point per Wound, down to 0 Armor. After that, Wounds reduce Health by 1 point per Wound, down to 0 Health.

A character at 0 Health has a choice: become Unconscious, immediately or at any time while still at 0 Health; or remain active and suffer all subsequent Wounds to Psyche, reducing Armor first if the character still has any (e.g. Harm Directly reduced the character to 0 Health without affecting its Armor).

A character reduced to 0 Psyche while still at 0 Health becomes Dead (i.e. it does not become Unconscious).

A character recovers Health at the rate of 1 point per Reset.

Unconscious

An Unconscious character is insensible and unable to take any actions. The player must go prone at the soonest safe moment, in the nearest safe place, and must remain alert for other players. The player must ignore in-game events while Unconscious, except to remain safe.

If the character became Unconscious with more than 0 Health, another player may revive him or her with a 5 Call "Wake!" Palm.

If not revived, a character becomes conscious after 5 minutes (300 Count) and, if at 0 Health, gains 1 Health.

✓ Commit

A player whose character is Unconscious may choose to Commit at any time during the required 300 Count. The character's Health is immediately restored to full normal value, as is its Innate Armor.

Then, *Commitment Time* begins: for a number of minutes equal to fifteen minus the character's Psyche at the moment it Committed, if any effect renders the character Unconscious then the character is Dead and may no longer be played. Items and Objects in the character's possession must be placed at the character's current location; and the player may move about as an NC.

⊙ Killing Blow

If a character is Unconscious or in a Bind then a 5 Call "Killing Blow" Touch at any time during the required 300 Count causes the victim to become Dead.

Dead

The game's Resurrect Option and Toggles (or the absence of Resurrect in Player Priority games) indicate what happens to a character after death: in some games, death is final and irrevocable; in others, it is merely a character state that must be handled per the rules to continue to play the character.

5.2 Psychological Damage Effects

Drain

Drains reduce, first, Reserve by 1 point per Drain, down to 0 Reserve. After that, Drains reduce Alacrity by 1 point per Drain, down to 0 Alacrity. A character at 0 Alacrity becomes Exhausted.

Exhausted

An Exhausted character is out of energy and listless. The character may not use any Tiring Abilities—even if Reserve is somehow acquired—and the player may not run or jump.

A character may rest to restore Alacrity (but not Reserve, which must be Restored or Repaired). The player must remain seated or prone and must remain completely inactive for 3 minutes (180 Count) to recover 1 point of Alacrity. A resting character may not wield anything and may not move at all (other than to remain safe), or else the 180 Count must be restarted.

Shock

Shocks reduce Psyche by 1 point per Shock, down to 0 Psyche. A character at 0 Psyche becomes Insane.

Insane

An Insane character has become psychologically unstable and exhibits extreme behavior. The character may not use any Scarring Abilities.

Specific Disorder— If the character became Insane due to failing a GM-assigned Threshold test then the player must adhere to a GM's instructions on how he or she must behave while at 0 Psyche. Often, the GM will also require that the player continue to portray lesser, related effects of insanity while between 1 Psyche and full normal Psyche.

Phobic— If the character became Insane due to another character's Offensive Ability (e.g. Scar) then the victim must behave as if in mortal terror of the actor, fleeing and avoiding the actor at all costs while at 0 Psyche. Once the victim's Psyche is back above 0, the player may behave normally again, though it is considered good role-playing to remember the scarring fear and act accordingly for the character (e.g. with continuing trepidation, blusterous rage, embarrassment, etc) until restored to normal full Psyche.

Catatonic— If the character became Insane due to the character's own Ability use (surely out of desperation) then the player must behave as if the rest of the world does not exist, as if the character's own mind has become a prison with its own rules and inmates. Note that this does not restrict the player to becoming an NC, huddling in a stupor with catalepsy (rigid immobility) or waxy flexibility; good role-players can find all sorts of creative ways to exhibit catatonia without turning it into an advantage or a nuisance, most plausibly by exhibiting echolalia (repeated vocalizations), echopraxia (involuntary repetition or imitation of motions), or irrational excitement. Fortunately, a catatonic character may defend against Attacks—the attacker is integrated somehow into the catatonic fantasy world—but a catatonic character *may not* Attack or use Abilities and *may not* show initiative or behave purposefully regarding in-game situations. In spite of this defensive capability, a catatonic character that starts roaming the game world without help is probably not far from incarceration by in-game authorities or an untimely death.

6 Abilities

Abilities define nearly every game effect, skill, or power that a character can use (Weapons, Armor, and Shields handle the rest). By default, an Ability is a full-power effect on one fundamental game element and is *innate* to the character: an aspect of its very being and its natural capabilities. *Modifiers* are often applied to customize an effect to suit a specific concept or to reduce its cost.

GMs will decide if players may define Abilities or must select them from lists of pre-defined Abilities provided by the GMs or GLASS rules. Many game genres benefit from the expedience of a strict list of available Abilities; many GMs will even customize Ability lists to the point where they resemble traditional “equipment,” “skill,” “power,” or “spell” lists found in other role-playing game rules. Conversely, some game genres feel too rigid or flavorless without player-created items, powers, and magic; even then, GMs will often restrict Abilities (limit Up Cost or completely forbid) to better reflect the power level and play style of the game.

6.1 Ability Definitions

GLASS rules use this format to define an Ability and its effects:

Ability Name

Gesture

“Call!” (“Deactivation Call!”)

“Call #!” (“# Deactivation Call!”)

(Base Range, Usage) Definition of game effects. Replace all instances of “#” with the Ability level.

Base Cost

Ability Name

If an Ability Name has square brackets ([]) then each purchase of the Ability must specify which of the elements in the brackets it affects.

Example: The name “Boost [Health, Alacrity, Psyche]” means that each purchase of Boost must specify whether it affects Health, Alacrity, or Psyche.

If an Ability name has curly brackets ({}) then the player may specify which of the elements in the brackets is affected at the time that the Ability is used (i.e. all choices are available with each purchase of the flexible Ability).

Example: The name “Disarm {Right, Left}” means that the player can choose which arm to affect each time that he or she uses the Ability.

Base Range

The Base Range of an Ability is the default range of the effect, before any Advantages are applied to extend its useful range. These terms specify distances, and they appear below in order from nearest to farthest:

Self– Internal to oneself; zero distance.

Palm – Light, open-handed contact—with the target player’s consent—on a target’s shoulder, arm, lower leg, or other previously-agreed-upon location.

Touch– Lightly strike a target with a Melee Weapon or Tool.

Throw– Throw a Packet at a target; attempt to hit with a Throw Ability.

Stare– Establish visual contact with a target and make the target aware of it by pointing.

Usage

The Usage of an Ability defines the time that an Ability remains in effect.

Instant– The Ability takes effect immediately. The results of the Ability effect are permanent.

Continuous– The Ability takes effect immediately and lasts until the player deactivates it by no longer making its Gesture. All Continuous Abilities deactivate at the next Reset.

Unlimited– The Ability can be activated as often as the player wishes or it is always active; it is considered to be innate to the character.

6.2 Ability Base Cost

To purchase Abilities, players spend Starting Experience at character creation or spend Earned Experience during Downtime (if the game Options allow). The Base Cost indicates the initial price in Experience of the Ability, before any Modifiers are added. Except for Unlimited Abilities, each Ability purchase allows *only one use* per Reset, regardless of the Ability level. To use an Instant or Continuous Ability more than once per Reset, the player must purchase it repeatedly.

The tables in this section provide the cost per level and the total cost to purchase a level outright for each type of Ability cost.

Fixed Cost

The Base Cost is always the indicated amount of Experience. Fixed Cost Abilities do not have levels of effect.

Linear Cost

The Base Cost for a particular level of the Ability costs its value in Experience plus the sum of all previous level costs:

Linear Cost Level	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Exp for each Level	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Total Exp to Level	1	3	6	10	15	21	28	36	45	55

Double Cost

The Base Cost for a particular level of the Ability costs double its value in Experience plus the sum of all previous level costs:

Double Cost Level	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Exp for each Level	2	4	6	8	10	12	14	16	18	20
Total Exp to Level	2	6	12	20	30	42	56	72	90	110

Quad Cost

The Base Cost for a particular level of the Ability costs quadruple its value in Experience plus the sum of all previous level costs:

Quad Cost Level	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Exp for each Level	4	8	12	16	20	24	28	32	36	40
Total Exp to Level	4	12	24	40	60	84	112	144	180	220

6.3 Use of Abilities

Most Ability use in GLASS occurs in real time. To keep it obvious what is happening and when, there is a strict sequence of play for Ability use:

- 1) **Activate** – (Mandatory) The moment that an actor *intends* to use an Ability, it is unavailable until next Reset (unless Unlimited). A player may begin to use an Ability and then stop before finishing with a hit and Call; nevertheless, the Ability is unavailable until next Reset (unless Unlimited).
- 2) **Incantation** – If the Ability has the Incantation Limitation, the actor must say the required number of syllables.
- 3) **Count** – If the Ability has the Slow Limitation, the actor must count, one second per number, the required number to himself or herself (*not* out loud). Note that, for expedience, it is common for Counts over 1 minute (60 Count) to be managed with a timing device (which is not considered as present or in-game unless, for example, it also happens to be a Focus).
- 4) **Stall** – (Optional) After all Delaying Limitation requirements have been met, the actor may choose to *stall* (wait to attempt to hit with) the Attack or Ability as long as desired, so long as the actor does not defend itself with a Shield or start any other Weapon Attack or Ability use. However, if the actor attempts a block, begins another Attack, or begins to use another Ability then the stalled Attack or Ability *fizzles* (its effects do not occur) and it is unavailable until next Reset (unless Unlimited). Also, if the actor makes any form of defense with a Shield then a stalled Attack or Ability *fizzles* and it is unavailable until next Reset (unless Unlimited).
- 5) **Attempt** – The player swings his or her Touch Tool or Weapon, throws one or more Packets, or points and Stares at the victim. Note that non-Attack Abilities do not require an attempt and, as such, skip Step 6.

- 6) Result – One of these outcomes occurs with every attempt:
- Hit – The Tool or Weapon contacts the victim anywhere *except* the victim’s Shield or Weapon(s); or the Packet contacts the victim anywhere *except* the victim’s Weapon(s). The Ability effects occur. Note that Aura and Stare Abilities always hit.
 - Block – The Tool or Weapon contacts the victim’s Shield or Weapon(s); or the Packet contacts the victim’s Weapon(s). The Ability fizzles and is unavailable until next Reset (unless Unlimited).
 - Miss – The Tool, Weapon, or Packet fails to contact the victim or the victim’s Shield or Weapon(s). Return to Step 4: the actor may attempt an Attack as often as he or she wishes, so long as he or she obeys the rules for stall.
- 7) Call – (If a hit occurs or if a non-Attack Ability) The actor immediately announces the effects of the Ability: its Call, Call addition (“by Aura,” “by Staring,” “to Immaterial”), and Scope, in that order.
- 8) Response – (Optional) The victim immediately uses a Response Ability that nullifies, redirects, or otherwise changes the result of the actor’s Ability (or the target’s block, for Sunder Shield).

6.4 Attribute-Related Abilities

Boost [Health, Alacrity, Psyche]

“Boost [Health, Alacrity, Psyche] to #!”

(Self, Instant) Increases [Health (or Innate Armor), Alacrity (or Reserve as an innate Ability), Psyche] to #.

Quad

Diagnose [Health, Psyche]

“Diagnosing! What’s your [Health, Psyche]?”

(Palm/Touch, Unlimited) The character is adept at medical science or psychology. The player may ask for the [Health, Psyche] Attribute value of another character, even if that character would normally be unresponsive (i.e. an adversary, Unconscious, Dead, or Insane). If the target replies that they have 0 Health or 0 Psyche then the target must state whether he or she is Dead or what Insanity he or she is suffering.

5 Experience

Push [Health, Alacrity, Psyche]

(Self, Instant) Increases [Health, Alacrity, Psyche] by 1 point per level for the duration of one Threshold test.

Linear

Restore [Health, Alacrity, Psyche]

“Restore [Health, Alacrity, Psyche] to #!”

(Self, Instant) Increases [Health (or Innate Armor), Alacrity (or Reserve as an innate Ability), Psyche] to # or to normal full value, whichever is *lower*.

Double

☉ Resurrect

“Resurrect!”

(Palm, Instant) Restores a Dead character to Unconscious with 1 Health. GMs will select which of these Options and Toggles (if any) are in effect:

○ *No Resurrect* – Resurrect is not available in the game and, thus a Dead character may no longer be played. Items and Objects in the character’s possession must be placed at the character’s current location; and the player may move about as an NC. This Option simulates a game setting in which life is fragile, violence is severe, and just surviving is a major challenge.

○ *Resurrect Location* – Resurrect is only available in a specific game location, and it is automatically applied to any Dead character that is brought to that location. Otherwise, Items and Objects in the character’s possession must be placed at the character’s current location, the character may no longer be played, and the player may move about as an NC. GMs will designate the Resurrect Location for each game site. This Option simulates a game setting where it is possible to save a character with the assistance of localized in-game but non-present entities or powers.

○ *Resurrect Ability* – Resurrect is available to any player who wishes to purchase it, to use it on a target Dead character (*not* on oneself when Dead; Resurrect is a Palm Ability). If a Dead character is not Resurrected then Items and Objects in the character’s possession must be placed at the character’s current location, the character may no longer be played, and the

player may move about as an NC. This Option reflects the safest of game settings: places where merely having the right friends can cheat death.

5 *Resurrect Timer* – Resurrect works as it does with the chosen Resurrect Option, but the GMs will specify a *time limit* for it to be accomplished (typically five or ten minutes) or else the character may no longer be played. The player should remain at the location of death until the time limit has passed unless other characters move him or her using any safety-approved and genre-appropriate means. No matter what, after the time limit has passed, Items and Objects in the character's possession must be placed at the character's current location, the character may no longer be played, and the player may move about as an NC.

10 If the Resurrect Timer Toggle is *not* in effect then the player may remain at the location of death for as long as desired and may be moved by other characters using any safety-approved and genre-appropriate means. When the player finally becomes bored enough to accept fate *or when the session ends*, the character may no longer be played. Items and Objects in the character's possession must be placed at the character's current location or, if at session end, returned according to the requirements of the Prop owner(s), the GMs, or the Host; and the player may move about as an NC.

15 *Resurrect Risk* – Resurrect works as it does with the chosen Resurrect Option, but there is a chance that the character will also acquire a Defect without its commensurate Experience Bonus or suffer a reduction in one or more Attributes. GMs will specify the chance (10% to 100%) and the severity (10, 30, or 60 Experience) of the Defect or Attribute reduction. This Toggle reflects a game setting in which returning from the dead can have a severely debilitating effect, for whatever reason.

15 Experience if Resurrect Ability

6.5 Situational Abilities

20 Situational Abilities are special in that they depend upon GMs to provide utility for them in the world. GMs will not permit the purchase of any of these Abilities for which they do not intend to provide challenges.

Acuity

(Self, Unlimited) The character is more intuitive and insightful than his or her Psyche would indicate. The player may add Acuity levels to Psyche for any Threshold test in which intuition or inspiration would be helpful.

25 *Double*

Agility

(Self, Unlimited) The character is more nimble than his or her Alacrity Attribute would indicate. The player may add Agility levels to Alacrity for any Threshold test in which nimbleness and balance would be helpful.

Double

Courage

30 (Self, Unlimited) The character is braver than his or her Psyche Attribute would indicate. The player may add Courage levels to Psyche for any Threshold test in which the character is under threat or intimidation.

Double

Knowledge

35 (Self, Unlimited) The character has studied a particular subject or profession, which must be specified each time that Knowledge is purchased. The player may add Knowledge levels to any Attribute for any Threshold test related to the specified subject. GMs will provide a list of Knowledge subjects which are appropriate to the game genre or which are useful in the game setting, to ensure that players do not waste Experience on inapplicable Knowledge. Furthermore, GMs will indicate the Attribute(s) to which a specific Knowledge may be applied.

40 *Linear*

Perception

(Self, Unlimited) The character has an enhanced sense of some kind, which must be specified each time that Perception is purchased. Common senses are Sight and Hearing; more exotic senses could include Smell, Sonar, Radio, or Heat. The player may add Perception levels to Alacrity for any Threshold test in which the improved sense would be helpful. Note that most Alacrity Threshold tests that could benefit from Perception are initiated by GM request and are not explicitly declared, so that the GM can keep the cause of the test a secret if all characters fail it. Therefore, a player whose character has Perception should answer a GM request for "Perception?" with more than one value: his or her base Alacrity value and all values for all Perception Abilities.

Example: A GM is guiding players through a scenario and wants to test if anyone notices "spots of blood" leading away from the trail (it would just be left to the players to notice them or not, if there were actual Props for the spots). The GM stops everyone and asks, "Perception?" One player, whose character has 2 levels of Sight Perception, replies, "base 3, Sight 5." Another player, whose character has 2 levels of Smell Perception and 1 level of Sight Perception, replies, "base 2, Smell 4, Sight 3."

Any Tag-based Alacrity Threshold test in which a Perception Ability would be helpful will indicate the sense in parentheses after the Threshold. Conversely, such tests in which the sense is *required* will indicate the requisite sense (without any parentheses) before the word "Alacrity." The Perception value for that sense is added to the base Alacrity of the characters that attempt the test. The Threshold for a Perception test is never Cooperative.

Linear

Strength

(Self, Unlimited) The character is stronger than his or her Health Attribute would indicate. The player may add Strength levels to Health for any Threshold test in which a burst of muscle power would be helpful.

Double

Survival

(Self, Unlimited) The character is adapted to survive in an extreme environment, which must be specified each time Survival is purchased. The player may add Survival levels to Health or Alacrity for any Health or Alacrity Threshold test in which his or her adaptation would be helpful. GMs will provide a list of appropriate Survival environments for the game. Common environments include Bad Air, Cold, Heat, Radiation, and Vacuum.

Any Tag-based Health or Alacrity Threshold test in which a Survival Ability would be helpful will indicate the environment in parentheses after the Threshold. Conversely, such tests in which the environment Survival Ability is *required* will indicate the requisite Survival Ability (without any parentheses) before the word "Health" or "Alacrity." The Survival value for that environment is added to the base Health or Alacrity of the characters that attempt the test. The Threshold for a Survival test can be Cooperative and, if so, will have the number of people who can cooperate in parentheses after the Threshold.

Double

6.6 Offensive Abilities**Bind**

"Bind #!" ("# Unbinding!")

(Touch, Instant) Bind *may not* be blocked with a Shield nor parried with a Weapon. The victim may not use his or her arms for anything other than Gestures. The Bind may be deactivated with a # Call "Unbinding!" while wielding nothing and taking no other action, unless a Lock is applied after the Bind, in which case the Lock must first be bypassed or destroyed. A character other than the victim may perform the Unbinding with Palm contact, after any Lock on it has been bypassed or destroyed.

Double

Disarm

"Disarm {Right, Left} #!" ("# Rearming!")

(Touch, Instant) Disarm *may not* be blocked with a Shield nor parried with a Weapon. The victim must drop anything held in his or her right or left hand (actor's choice at the time the Ability is used) and may not attempt to pick it up for the duration of a # Call "Rearming!"

Linear

Harm

“#!”

(Touch, Instant) Inflicts 1 Wound on the victim per level.

Double

5

Harm Directly

“# to Health!”

(Touch, Instant) Reduces victim’s Health by 1 point per level.

*Quad***Knockout**

10

“Knockout!”

(Touch, Instant) The victim becomes Unconscious. Knockout does not affect the victim’s Armor or Health.

*30 Experience***Root**

“Root #!” (“# Unrooting!”)

15

(Touch, Instant) Root *may not* be blocked with a Shield nor parried with a Weapon. The victim may not move his or her feet, other than to remain safe. The Root may be deactivated with a # Call “Unrooting!” while wielding nothing and taking no other action, unless a Lock is applied after the Root, in which case the Lock must first be bypassed. or destroyed Another character may perform the Unrooting with Palm contact, after any Lock on it has been bypassed or destroyed.

Double

20

Scar

“# Shocks!”

(Touch, Instant) Inflicts 1 Shock on the target per level.

*Quad***Silence**

25

“Silence #!”

(Touch, Instant) The victim may not say an Incantation (and, thus, may not activate any Abilities which require Incantation) nor speak for a 1 Count per level of effect, though he or she must still say Ability Calls or emergency Holds.

*Linear***⊙ Slay**

30

“Slay!”

(Touch, Instant) Reduces the victim’s Health to 0 and he or she is Dead. The victim’s Armor is unaffected.

*60 Experience***Tire**

“# Drains!”

35

(Touch, Instant) Inflicts 1 Drain on the target per level.

*Double***Tire Directly**

“# to Alacrity!”

40

(Touch, Instant) Reduces the victim’s Alacrity by 1 point per level.

*Quad***6.7 Response Abilities**

Response Abilities must be activated immediately after a successful hit is Called (or when blocked, for Sunder Shield). As such, they *may not* be assigned any Delaying Limitations.

Counter

45

“Counter!”

(Self, Instant) Nullifies the effects of an Ability.

15 Experience

Reflect

“Reflect!”

(Self, Instant) Causes the effects of an Ability to be inflicted upon the actor instead of the victim.

30 Experience

5

Sunder Shield

“Sunder!”

(Touch, Instant) Causes a Shield to become useless and no longer able to block Weapons or Touch Abilities that hit it; henceforth, any block with the Shield is the same as being hit on the arm that is wielding it.

Note that a Weapon or Touch Tool *must* have been blocked by the Shield being sundered immediately prior to the “Sunder!” Call; as such, it is a Response to a block by a victim *not* to a hit from an actor.

10

At range, Sunder Shield is used as any Attack Ability is used: as a Throw or Spray Ability, it takes effect if a Packet hits any part of the victim or its Shield; as an Aura or Stare Ability, it always hits.

30 Experience

Unbind

“Unbind!”

(Self, Instant) Frees the target from a Bind or Root. Unbind will not disable a Root or Bind that has had a Lock applied to it until the Lock is first bypassed or destroyed.

5 Experience

15

6.8 Defensive Abilities

20

Innate Armor

(Self, Unlimited) Provides 1 point of Armor per level, in addition to whatever Armor points that the character receives for armor pieces that are worn by the player. Because it is an intrinsic quality, a character must use Restore Health or Boost Health to recover Innate Armor, *not* Repair Armor.

Linear

25

Reserve

(Self, Unlimited) Provides 1 point of Reserve per level. If the Reserve is an Item Ability then Repair Reserve recovers it; if the Reserve is an innate Ability of the character then Restore Alacrity or Boost Alacrity recovers it.

Double

☠️ Restraint

30

(Self, Unlimited) Allows the character to ignore effects that inflict only 1 Shock. Restraint *does not* apply to Psyche lost due to the Scarring Limitation.

60 Experience

☠️ Toughness

35

(Self, Unlimited) Allows the character to ignore effects that inflict only 1 Wound. Toughness *does not* apply to Health lost due to the Harming Limitation.

30 Experience

☠️ Vigor

40

(Self, Unlimited) Allows the character to ignore effects that inflict only 1 Drain. Vigor *does not* apply to Drains suffered due to the Tiring Limitation.

15 Experience

6.9 Item Abilities

45

Many GMs will choose to set the cost of Use and Wear Abilities to 0 Experience. This choice reflects games in which society is very violent and no character is “viable” without common combat skills; for example, WWII games, barbaric fantasy, and Neolithic settings. To maintain character portability to other games, however, it is better to require every character to spend the Experience necessary to buy the use of common Weapons in the game setting: this provides each character with the needed viability without granting 30 to 60 free Experience to that character, when it tries to play in another GLASS game. Thus, in a 200 Starting Experience WWII game, all players might be required to buy Use Short Weapon and Use Projectile Weapon for a total of 10 Experience, thus leaving them with 190 Experience each to spend as they wish.

Identify*Read the Item Tag(s)*

(Self, Instant) The character is able to recognize all of the Unobvious Independent Abilities of one unique Tool or Focus. The player may henceforth use the Unobvious Independent Abilities of the Item, following all rules as normal as if the Item Abilities were the character's own.

*10 Experience***Reforge Shield***"Reforge Shield!"*

(Touch, Instant) Restores a sundered Shield to normal functionality.

*10 Experience***Repair [Armor, Reserve]***"Repair [Armor, Reserve]!"*

(Touch, Instant) Increases [Armor, Reserve] of an Item by 1 point, up to normal full value.

*1 Experience***Repair Special Armor***"Repair Special!"*

(Touch, Instant) Increases Special Armor of an Item by 1 point, up to normal full value.

*3 Experience***Use [Short, Medium, Long, Thrown, Projectile] Weapon**

(Self, Unlimited) The character is capable of effectively fighting with a [Short, Medium, Long, Thrown, Projectile] Weapon. The player may wield a single Weapon of the selected type. GMs will list permitted Weapons of each type, based on the game genre and setting.

*5 Experience***Use Dual [Short, Medium, Long, Thrown, Projectile] Weapons**

(Self, Unlimited) The character is capable of effectively fighting with two [Short, Medium, Long, Thrown, Projectile] Weapons at the same time. The player may wield a Weapon of the selected type in each hand. GMs will list permitted Weapons of each type, based on the game genre and setting.

*10 Experience***Use Shield**

(Self, Unlimited) The character is capable of effective defense with a Shield. The player may wield a Shield of any size. May be purchased twice to wield a Shield in each hand.

*5 Experience***Wear Armor**

(Self, Unlimited) The character is capable of effectively fighting while wearing Armor made of authentic bulky or heavy materials: quilted cloth, leather, wood, heavy metals, and stone. The player may receive Armor points for wearing Armor on any and all Locations, per the Weight of the Armor.

*10 Experience***Wear Special Armor**

(Self, Unlimited) The character is capable of effectively fighting while wearing Armor made of unauthentic or highly advanced light or modern materials: aluminum, plastics, Kevlar, latex, and so forth. The player may receive Armor points for wearing Armor on any and all Locations, and that Armor will always qualify as Light Armor, being Special Armor.

20 Experience

6.10 Constraining Abilities**Lock [Physical, Conceptual, Health, Alacrity, Psyche]**

"[Physical, Conceptual, Health, Alacrity, Psyche] Lock #!"

(Touch, Instant) Creates 1 point of [Physical, Conceptual, Health, Alacrity, Psyche] Lock per level. The actor must attach a GM-signed Lock Tag to the Object or give it to the victim of a Locked Ability, to indicate the Lock type and level. The actor may also elect to create a Key for the Lock; if so, write the number of the Key on the Lock Tag and on the tear-away Key portion of the Tag. Note that only GMs may create named Locks.

Linear

Unlock [Physical, Conceptual]

"[Physical, Conceptual] Unlock #!"

(Touch, Instant) Allows the character to *bypass* 1 point of [Physical, Conceptual] Lock per level.

Double

Wreck [Physical, Conceptual]

"[Physical, Conceptual] Wreck #!"

(Touch, Instant) Allows the character to *destroy* 1 point of [Physical, Conceptual] Lock per level, essentially treating the Lock as a Blockage. Unlike Unlock, more than one character may apply levels of Wreck at the same time; in such a circumstance, add together all Wreck levels. If all Lock points are destroyed then the actor must dispose of the Lock Tag in the manner that the Hosts require. If all Lock points are not destroyed at the same time then the Lock is automatically restored to its normal full value.

Quad

6.11 Movement Abilities**Ranging**

Hold one arm straight up

(Self, Continuous) The character is somehow able to stay out of reach of Melee Weapons and short range effects. The player can not be the target of a Touch, Palm, or Aura Ability unless the actor is also Ranging. Likewise, he or she may not use a Touch, Palm, or Aura Ability on a character that is not also Ranging without first deactivating Ranging.

10 Experience

Immaterial

Cross arms over chest

(Self, Continuous) The character somehow becomes untouchable (but remains visible) and is impervious to most physical effects. Immaterial does not allow a character to pass through solid objects, but it will allow him or her to bypass a Barrier or Blockage. The player is considered an SC.

20 Experience

Invisible

Place both hands on top of head, with elbows akimbo

(Self, Continuous) The character becomes invisible to sight, but remains susceptible to effects. The player is considered an SC and is also immune to Stare Abilities. Other players must behave as if the actor is not present unless the actor makes noise, which cancels Invisible (just as if the actor stopped making the Gesture).

30 Experience

6.12 Special Abilities**●* Compel**

"Compel #!"

(Touch, Instant) The victim must obey the actor's instructions for a number of minutes (60 Counts) equal to the level of Compel minus the victim's current Psyche. Note that the victim need not tell the actor how long that time period will be, or even whether Compel had any effect at all!

Quad

☞ Divination*Find a GM and ask*

(Self, Instant) The character has some way to find out uncommon or secret Information from a non-present, yet in-game entity (i.e. not an EC). The player may ask a GM one Yes or No question, which the GM must interpret literally and answer honestly. GMs will carefully consider whether to allow Divination in a game, as it can require an unmanageable level of individual attention.

*30 Experience***☞ Forget***"Forget #!"*

(Tough, Instant) The victim forgets the events that have occurred a number of minutes (60 Counts) in the immediate past equal to the level of Forget minus the victim's current Psyche. Note that the victim need not tell the actor how long that time period is, or even whether Forget had any effect at all!

*Double***Illumination***Snap light stick or turn on flashlight or headlamp*

(Self, Continuous) The character can generate light. The player may hold the light or attach it to his or her body in some way. Note that this Ability is only appropriate to low technology supernatural or fantasy genres; GMs will typically allow characters to use light sources at will in modern or high technology genres.

*5 Experience***Sense Invisible***Hands held beside eyes*

(Self, Continuous) The character can perceive Invisible characters and Objects, be it through sight or some other uncommon discriminatory sense.

*10 Experience***25 6.13 [ed- Ability Tasks]**

[ed- Consider the costs v. efficacy of control powers (Bind, Root, Disarm, Silence).]

7 Advantages

Advantages are beneficial Modifiers which may be assigned to an Ability to improve its functionality or to better reflect the desired power, technology, or spell. Each Advantage has a Plus value that is used to calculate the *Up Cost* – the cost of the Ability and all Advantages, before any Limitations are applied, with no rounding (i.e. Up Cost is *not* rounded to the nearest whole number).

Formula: $\text{Up Cost} = \text{Base Cost} \times (\text{sum of all Pluses} + 1)$

Example: The Fireball spell from the “Verbals” section (Incanted, Slow, Throw Harm 5) has a Double Base Cost; therefore, level 5 costs a total of 30 Experience. The Throw Advantage is a Plus 1, which makes the Up Cost equal to $30 \times (1 + 1) = 30 \times 2 = 60$ Experience. If it were also assigned Leeching (Plus ½), it would instead have an Up Cost equal to $30 \times (1\frac{1}{2} + 1) = 30 \times 2\frac{1}{2} = 75$ Experience.

Note that, for an Ability with no Advantages, the Up Cost is equal to the Base Cost.

GMs will usually place a maximum limit on the Up Cost of each Ability to reflect the Power Level they would like for the game.

7.1 Range Advantages

Range Advantages must be applied in a *serial* manner; for example, a Self Ability may be made into a Palm then Throw then Stare Ability, in that order, for a total of Plus 3½.

Palm

Allows the actor to use a Self Ability on other characters via Palm contact, becoming a Palm Ability.

Plus ½

Throw

May only be assigned to a Palm or Touch Ability. Allows the actor to use the Ability on a target via a Throw, becoming a Throw Ability.

Plus 1

Aura

“...by Aura!”

May only be assigned to a Palm or Touch Ability. Allows the actor to affect everyone within Touch Tool or Weapon reach, in a complete circle, with a single use of the Aura Ability. The actor must add the phrase “by Aura!” to the end of the Ability Call.

Plus 2

Spray

May only be assigned to a Throw Ability. Allows the actor to throw as many packets as he or she can hold, when attempting to hit with a single use of the Spray Ability. The actor must point at and Call to each individual hit by a packet in the Spray before taking any other actions to attack or defend (but may move); otherwise, the effect fizzles against those victims hit by packets with no Call. The actor *may not* make a Call more than once per victim, no matter how many of the packets hit that victim.

Plus 2

Stare

“...by Staring!”

May only be assigned to a Throw Ability. Allows the actor to use the Ability on a target via a Stare, becoming a Stare Ability. The player must add the phrase “by Staring!” to the end of the Ability Call and must be able to see and point at the intended target.

Plus 2

7.2 Special Advantages

Affects Immaterial

“...to Immaterial!”

Allows the Ability to be used on an Immaterial target. The player must add the phrase “to Immaterial!” to the end of the Call.

Plus 1

🌀 Independent

May only be assigned to an Ability that requires a Tool or Focus. If Independent is applied once, the Ability is considered an *Obvious Independent Ability* and any other player that wields the Tool or Focus may use the Ability. If Independent is applied twice, the Ability is considered an *Unobvious Independent Ability* and another player may only use it if told about the Ability by the owning player or if someone uses the Identify Ability on the Tool or Focus.

Plus ½

Leeching

May not be assigned to an Ability with the Tiring Limitation and must be assigned to an Offensive Ability. If the Attack hits a target, the actor gains 1 point of Reserve for every Wound, Drain, or Shock that the Attack inflicts.

Plus ½

Shareable

May only be assigned to a Movement Ability. Allows the character to “bring along” one target while using the Ability. The target player must also make the required Gesture and must remain within arm’s reach of the actor, or else the Ability deactivates for the target (but not for the still-Gesturing actor). May be assigned repeatedly to the same Ability to bring along multiple targets.

Plus 1

Trigger

May only be assigned to a Touch or Aura Ability. Allows the character to set a mechanical trigger which will cause the Ability to activate. The player must create a safe way to signal that the effect has activated (e.g. burst balloon, buzzer, falling foam) and must attach a Tag to the signaling device, to indicate the Ability effects. Note that disabling the signaling device is *not* automatic upon detection; a player (even the one who set the device) must deactivate it without its signal going off. The area of effect for a Triggered Aura Ability is always ten feet in diameter, which is a reasonable approximation of the reach a player has with a Touch Tool. To set a Trigger on the opening of a Container, the player may simply place the Trigger Ability Tag on top of the contents of the Container. No signaling device is required in such a circumstance, and therefore it is assumed that the player who set the Trigger can unset it to open the Container safely.

Plus ½

8 Limitations

Limitations are detrimental Modifiers which may be assigned to an Ability to reduce its usefulness or applicability. Each Limitation has a Minus value that is used to calculate the *Final Cost*—the cost of the Ability after Advantages and Limitations are applied. Round Final Costs up or down to the nearest tenth of an Experience point, with a minimum Final Cost of 0.1 Experience.

Formula: Final Cost = Up Cost ÷ (sum of all Minuses + 1)

Example: The Fireball spell from the “Verbals” section (Incanted, Slow, Throw Harm 5) has a 60 Experience Up Cost. The Incantation Limitation is a Minus ½ and Slow is a Minus ¼, which makes the Ability’s Final Cost equal to $60 \div (\frac{3}{4} + 1) = 60 \div 1\frac{3}{4} = 34.29$, which rounds to 34.3 Experience. If it were also assigned Tiring (Minus ½), it would have a Final Cost equal to $60 \div (1\frac{1}{4} + 1) = 60 \div 2\frac{1}{4} = 26.67$, which rounds to 26.7 Experience.

Note that, for an Ability with no Limitations, the Final Cost is equal to the Up Cost.

8.1 Damaging Limitations

Harming

Requires the character to lose 1 point of Health to activate the Ability. May be assigned repeatedly.

Minus 1

Scarring

Requires the character to lose 1 point of Psyche to activate the Ability. May be assigned repeatedly.

Minus 2

Tiring

May not be assigned to an Ability with the Leeching Advantage. Requires the character to suffer 1 point of Drain to activate the Ability. May be assigned repeatedly.

Minus ½

8.2 Delaying Limitations

Focus

The Ability requires a specific, unique Focus to be activated. The player must wear a safe Prop, which enables the use of the Ability. If the player is not in physical contact with the Focus, the player may not use the Ability. May be assigned once if the Focus is secured to the player’s body (e.g. necklace, ring, clothing); may be assigned twice if the Focus is merely resting upon the player (e.g. hat, shawl).

The player of an Unconscious character may be asked by another player to surrender any and all of the Unconscious character’s Focuses to that other player. In such a circumstance, the recipient *may not* use the associated Ability or Abilities, unless they are Independent and—if they are Unobvious—someone can Identify them.

Minus 1

Incantation

Prior to the attempt to hit, the actor must speak a syllable for each level of the Ability or, for Fixed Cost Abilities, for every 5 points of Up Cost. May be assigned repeatedly to increase the number of syllables required per level or per 5 points of Up Cost.

Minus ½

Slow

The actor must Count, one second per number, the required number to himself or herself (not out loud) after the Ability’s Incantation (if any) and before the attempt to hit or the final Call. Note that, for expedience, it is common for Counts over 1 minute (60 Count) to be managed with a timing device (which is not considered as present or in-game unless, for example, it also happens to be a Focus). May be assigned repeatedly, per this table:

Number of Slows	Count Length	Total Minus
1	5	¼
2	10	½
3	30	¾

Number of Slows	Count Length	Total Minus
4	60	1
5	5 minutes	1¼
6	10 minutes	1½
7	30 minutes	1¾
8	1 hour	2
9	2 hours	2¼
10	4 hours	2½
11	8 hours	2¾
12	12 hours	3

Tool

The Ability requires a specific, unique Tool to be activated (the Weapon or Touch Tool requirement for all Touch Abilities *does not* qualify for the Tool limitation unless only a specific, unique Tool enables the Ability). The actor must wield a safe Prop of the Ability's source to use the Ability. May be assigned once if the Tool can be wielded one-handed; may be assigned twice if the Tool must be wielded two-handed.

The player of an Unconscious character may be asked by another player to surrender any and all of the Unconscious character's Tools to that other player. In such a circumstance, the recipient *may not* use the associated Ability or Abilities, unless they are Independent and—if they are Unobvious—someone can Identify them.

Minus 1

8.3 Usage Limitations

🔗 Linked

When the Ability is used, it automatically activates other Abilities (called the *Target Abilities*) at the same time, but only if the Target Abilities are unused; used Target Abilities will not activate.

The player must specify a different Target Ability for each purchase of Linked. Each Target Abilities Up Cost must be less than or equal to the Up Cost of the Linked Ability, and they must have the same Range as the Linked Ability. Any other Limitations still apply for every Ability, and each of the steps in the sequence of Ability use are done simultaneously at each step: perform the requirements of the Linked Ability first, then of all of the Target Abilities in any order.

Note that this is not a reciprocal relationship by default: a Target Ability does not activate its Linked Ability. However, two or more Abilities may be *Cross-Linked*, which means that they all have Linked and they each define the other Abilities as Target Abilities (which, further, requires that they have identical Up Cost and Range). Thus, the use of any of the Cross-Linked Abilities always activates the other Abilities.

Additionally, a Target Ability may also be defined as *Required*, for an additional Minus ½, which means that if the Target Ability is no longer available, then the Linked Ability can not be activated. Note that a Required Target Ability may not be Cross-Linked to the Linked Ability: Cross-Linked Abilities always, in a sense, “require” each other, as they always activate each other; thus, they may not be assigned Required, as it is not actually limiting the Ability any more than it already is limited by Cross-Linking.

Examples:

Ability A is Linked to Target Ability B: If A is activated then B automatically activates also; if B is activated first then A does not activate, but B will not activate again if A is activated. Only A is assigned Linked, for Minus ½.

Ability C is Linked to Required Target Ability D: If C is activated then D automatically activates also; if D is activated first then C does not activate, and C may not be activated until D is recovered during Reset. Only C is assigned Linked and Required Target Ability, for Minus 1.

Ability E is Cross-Linked with Ability F: If either E or F is activated then the other one automatically activates also. Both E and F are assigned Linked, for Minus ½ each.

☐ *Party Linked*– An Ability may be Linked to the Ability or Abilities of another character or other characters. Such Target Abilities may not be Required but may be Cross-Linked, in which case they take on the Required rule for no additional Minus (otherwise, Cross-Linked Abilities might be activated independently of each other by accident or without the other characters being made aware that their Abilities also activated). The Target Abilities activate only if the other character or characters are within arm’s reach of the actor; and to keep things clear, they only activate after the other characters hear the Linked Ability’s Call. The use of this Toggle simulates “ritual magic” that allows for massive combined effects or the classic “Wonder Twin Powers Activate!”

Minus ½ for Linked

Minus 1 for Linked to a Required Target Ability

Scoped

The Offensive, Response, or Defensive Ability is characterized by a particular game setting Scope. It is only applicable to effects or resistances with the same Scope or with no Scope. The player must add the Scope term after the normal Call for the Ability. Scoped may not be assigned repeatedly.

Example: A player purchases Harm 3 Scoped to Magic. After a successful hit, the player Calls “3 Magic!”

Minus 2

Single Use

This instance of the Ability may only be used one time. It does not refresh at Reset, and the Experience spent to purchase the Single Use Ability is not refunded. Single Use is most often applied to Independent Abilities to simulate in-game Items like med kits, potions, or special ammunition.

Minus 4

Not While Moving

The Offensive, Response, or Defensive Ability may not be used while the actor is walking, running, or using a Movement Ability.

Minus 1

Only Affects [Males, Females]

“...to [Males, Females]!”

The Ability only affects [males, females] that it hits. The actor may not make an effect Call if the victim of the Ability is not of the correct gender. The Ability can not affect things which have no gender (Objects, asexual ECs, etc); thus, it is the duty of the player of an EC to announce its gender in Descriptions (i.e. replies to “Appearance?” Calls). This Limitation’s Minus is variable to allow for different gender mixes in the game setting (PCs, SCs, and ECs). GMs will set the Minus based on the percentage of the game setting that is the indicated gender.

Minus ¼ (>90%), Minus ½ (>60%), Minus 1 (50%), Minus 2 (<30%), Minus 3 (<10%)

Only During [Day, Night]

This Limitation may only be applied to an Instant or Continuous Ability, restricting the use of the Ability to [day, night]. Day is defined as any time that the sun is completely above a level horizon; night is the rest of the time, including dawn and twilight. This Limitation’s Minus is variable to allow for different game schedules. GMs will set the Minus based on the percentage of game session time during which the Ability will be useful. For 24/7 games, GMs will assume Minus 1 regardless of seasonal variations.

Note that this Limitation is the “model” for any other conditional Limitations that GMs will create to better define their game settings. For purposes of character portability between GLASS games, any such additional conditional Limitations on a character’s Abilities would default back to Only During [Day, Night] while not in their game of origin.

Minus ¼ (>90%), Minus ½ (>60%), Minus 1 (50%), Minus 2 (<30%), Minus 3 (<10%)

Requires Surprise

The Ability is only effective if the actor hits the victim in the back. If an activated Requires Surprise Ability hits the victim anywhere other than in the back, the Requires Surprise Ability fizzles, the actor makes no Call, and the Tool or Weapon inflicts 1 Wound (if Short) or 2 Wounds (if Medium wielded two-handed or Long) on the victim (note that 1 Wound is the default damage that a victim should assume, if no Call is made after a Weapon hits).

Minus 2

9 Item Props

Items are Props of things that are wielded or worn by players to allow the players to use game effects.

9.1 Armor

Armor is any safety-approved attire that grants Armor points when worn by a player with the appropriate Wear Armor Ability.

Locations

Only Armor that covers these Locations is considered:

Torso Locations– (5) Head; Neck; Chest; Back; Groin & Buttocks (both must be covered)

Arm Locations– (5) Upper Right Arm; Lower Right Arm; Upper Left Arm; Lower Left Arm; Hands (both must be covered)

Leg Locations– (5) Upper Right Leg; Lower Right Leg; Upper Left Leg; Lower Left Leg; Feet (both must be covered)

Weight

An armor piece's Weight is either Light or Heavy, as follows:

Light Armor– Heavy quilted cloth (*not* merely clothing), leather, wood, or plastic and other modern materials (i.e. anything that qualifies as Special Armor) grant 1 point of Armor per Location.

Heavy Armor– Steel, bronze, ceramic, and stone grant 2 points of Armor per Location.

Armor that is reduced to 0 points is not destroyed or in any way removed from play, but its components are too damaged to be effective until Repaired.

9.2 Shield

A Shield is a safety-approved blocking device that prevents all Wounds inflicted by a Weapon that hits it before hitting the player (if the follow-through hits the victim at all, of course). A Shield can also block Touch (but *not* Throw) Abilities, which causes them to fizzle. (Aura and Stare Abilities always hit.)

The US Standard: Every edge and outward-facing surface of a Shield must be covered with at least ¾" of foam, to protect other players from scrapes and bruises. Some GMs will require all foam Shields; and some GMs will forbid Shields altogether, be it for safety or game genre reasons.

9.3 Weapon

A Weapon is a safety-approved Prop of a Melee, Thrown, or Projectile Weapon.

A Melee Weapon that an actor uses to make a hit with a Touch Ability *does not* deliver its normal Wound(s) on top of the Touch Ability's effect. The actor must choose either to Call the Touch Ability effect or to make no Call, let the victim suffer the 1 or 2 Wounds, and let that Ability use fizzle.

Light Weapons

Short Melee Weapons, when swung through at least a 90° arc, all Thrown Weapons, and semi-automatic or faster Projectile Weapons inflict 1 Wound per hit.

Medium Weapons

Medium-length Melee Weapons inflict 1 Wound per hit (when used one-handed) or 2 Wounds per hit (when used two-handed), when swung through at least a 90° arc.

Heavy Weapons

Long Melee Weapons, when swung through at least a 90° arc, and one-shot-per-reload Projectile Weapons inflict 2 Wounds per hit.

Use of Weapons

The use of and defense against Weapons is the simplest aspect of GLASS, which is good because it can be the most common type of activity in a GLASS game.

An actor attempts to hit with a Weapon. The victim, if hit, suffers 1 or 2 Wounds, depending upon the size of the Weapon or the number of hands on the Weapon. Note that a hit victim should assume a hit for 1 Wound, if the actor does not make an immediate Call.

5 Any contact with the victim's Weapon or Shield means that the Attack attempt is blocked and no Wounds are inflicted (even if the follow-through happens to hit the victim).

There are no Calls for normal Weapon use, though a character may make a Response to a Weapon hit (e.g. Counter, Reflect) or to a block (e.g. Sunder Shield). or to ensure that an unaware victim knows it was hit with a 2 Wound swing or Weapon.

9.4 Focus

A Focus is any safety-approved Prop of an Item that must be worn by the player to grant its Ability.

10 9.5 Tool

A Tool is any safety-approved Prop of an Item that must be wielded in a player's hand(s) to gain its Ability.

Key

A one-handed Tool, represented by a Tag or other Prop, that is marked with a number to indicate the Lock that it opens.

Touch Tool

15 A Tool, safety-approved and built according to Melee Weapon requirements, which allows an actor to target someone with a Touch Ability.

10 Object Props

10.1 Barrier

A Barrier is any physical or conceptual Object which prevents characters from passing it. A Barrier Tag is attached to the Barrier to indicate the specific Attribute or Ability Threshold that must be equaled or exceeded to open it. The Threshold value might also have a number in parentheses after it, which indicates the total number of characters who may combine Attribute or Ability values to meet the Threshold (i.e. a Cooperative Threshold).

Once a Barrier is opened, it may be left open (others may pass without meeting the Threshold) or closed (someone meets the Threshold again and restores the Barrier).

A Barrier may be represented in the game as a door, a hanging sheet, or a line of tape or string.

10.2 Blockage

A Blockage is a special kind of Barrier which uses the same rules as a Barrier with one exception: once a Blockage is bypassed by meeting its Attribute or Ability Threshold, it is presumed to be destroyed and, thus, permanently open. The actor must dispose of the Blockage Tag in the manner that the Hosts require.

10.3 Container

A Container is any Object which, in itself, is useless but which has within it Information, an Item, a Reward, or anything else the GMs can imagine (perhaps even an EC!).

Containers do not have Thresholds and therefore do not use Tags. It is very common, however, for a Lock Tag to be applied to a Container to represent it being secured, hard to access, or confusing to study. There are many ways to employ this fundamental system of Locks on Containers.

A Container may be represented in the game as a chest, a box, an envelope, a book, furniture, a computer, or anything that can be considered as able to contain something.

10.4 Lock

A Lock is a GM- or player-created way to keep a Container or Barrier closed.

Attribute Lock

The Lock has an Attribute Threshold which must be met or exceeded by the character's applicable Attribute. As with any Threshold, a number in parentheses after it indicates how many characters may combine Attribute values to attempt to meet or exceed the Threshold. Further, if a Situational Ability could be helpful to meet the Threshold then it will be specified in the parentheses *after* the Threshold, and the level of that Ability is added to the value of the required Attribute.

Example: A desk drawer has tape on its handle which reads "Sticky Drawers: Health Lock 4(2)." The Health Attribute(s) of one (or two) characters must meet or exceed 4 to pull it open each time someone wants to open it.

Ability Lock

An Ability Lock is a special kind of Attribute Lock which uses the same rules as an Attribute Lock with one exception: a specific Situational Ability appears *before* the Threshold (not in parentheses). A character must have this Ability to attempt the Threshold test. The levels in the indicated Situational Ability *are* added to the indicated Attribute for the Threshold test.

Example: A folded sheaf of papers has a Tag attached to it which reads "Occult Knowledge Alacrity Lock 5." Not only must a character have the Occult Knowledge Ability, but its level plus his or her Alacrity must meet or exceed 5 to be able to grasp the arcane Information.

Physical Lock

The Lock is based on mechanical principles which employ engineering common to the game setting. It can only be bypassed by a character with an Unlock Physical Lock Ability level equal to or greater than the indicated Threshold. It can be destroyed by characters with combined Wreck Physical Lock Ability levels equal to or greater than the indicated Threshold.

Conceptual Lock

5 The Lock is based on programming code, a complex cipher, or mystical rules: something contingent upon the prevailing metaphysics of the genre which can not be solved with intelligence alone (or it would be an Alacrity Lock). It can only be bypassed by a character with an Unlock Conceptual Lock Ability level equal to or greater than the indicated Threshold. It can be destroyed by characters with combined Wreck Conceptual Lock Ability levels equal to or greater than the indicated Threshold.

Use of Locks

10 When Locks are bypassed but not destroyed, the Locked Object may only open and close one time. If the Object is a Barrier or Blockage, those rules immediately apply. Once the Object closes again, all undestroyed Locks on it reactivate and must be bypassed all over again.

A Lock Tag is attached to the Object to indicate the Lock type and Threshold. If one or more Lock Tags are applied to an Object, characters must first bypass or destroy all of the Locks, in any order, to be able to attempt to open or bypass the Object.

15 It is common for Locks to have Keys. Usually, the appropriate Key is indicated on the Lock Tag by a unique number or by a uniquely torn Tag (for Locks applied by players). Other times, a GM might want players to discover which Key opens the Lock by trial and error (e.g. for dramatic tension). In these cases, the Lock Tag will indicate a name for the Lock instead of a number, and the GM will tell the player if a numbered Key works when tried in the named Lock (GMs will maintain an index of which Key number opens which named Lock).

11 Rewards

11.1 Information

Information is any note, clue, riddle, drawing, photo, etc that helps characters complete situational goals in the game. GMs are encouraged to come up with compelling and creative forms of Information for players to find, but a simple note can suffice to advance plotlines.

Information will often have some kind of Lock on it, or it might have several. In a modern game, for example, a “computer file” might have an Alacrity Lock to represent the common computer skills necessary to even find it in the directory system and a Conceptual Lock to represent digital encryption on the data itself.

11.2 Money

Most—but by no means all—game settings have some form of Money, if not several denominations of Money. When it is used, GMs will supply Money Props; though player-run economies can be entertaining and often emerge during long-running games, complete with player-backed banks and player-guaranteed notes.

Money is most often employed in games to provide a means for PCs and SCs to acquire Items from ECs. When this is the case, players are quick to offer each other goods and services in exchange for Money, so long as it is useful for character advancement. GMs will not provide Money if they are not going to provide EC vendors; leave it to the players to create their own economies if they can trade only amongst themselves.

At no time is a GM required to guarantee Money or to adjudicate any financial disputes between players, whether they are using GM-supplied or player-created Money (though an EC or several ECs might serve in these roles in a particular game).

Props may be as simple as Tags or printed notes and certificates—signed by a GM to help to avoid counterfeiting—or as fancy as custom metal tokens and ingots that can be ordered from novelty supply companies.

11.3 Experience

Players use Experience to purchase Attributes and Abilities, both at game start and throughout the course of play.

Starting Experience

GMs will set the Starting Experience of the game, which is one of the main ways to control the overall power level of a long-running game. A player may save Starting Experience, unless he or she also has Bequeathed Experience.

Bequeathing Experience

Regardless of the Spending Experience Option in use, a player always may elect to *bequeath* any or all unspent Experience to a future character that he or she will play in the same game. Bequeathed Experience is inaccessible to the character which originally had it; and a character which receives Bequeathed Experience must spend it and all Starting Experience during character creation or the remainder is lost forever.

Earning Experience

Characters can earn Experience just for participating in the game, or they might have to surmount in-game challenges or defeat fearsome foes to earn Experience. GMs will designate the way in which a character can earn Experience, using one or both of these Toggles:

❑ *Static Gain* – At each Reset, characters receive Experience equal to a percentage of Starting Experience. The GMs will specify a percentage from 1% to 5%, based on how rapidly they feel characters should gain efficacy in the game setting.

❑ *Variable Gain* – Experience is generally earned during play for successful completion of game tasks. When guiding a group through a scenario, GMs often have Experience to hand out to clever or feat-performing players. In planned or random encounters, ECs usually have Experience that is given to the first character that searches them after they are Dead, though it is common for players to distribute EC Experience among all characters who helped to win a conflict. GMs will reward EC Experience to character(s) equal to 2% of the Experience points it took to create the EC.

Experience that is found in Containers always goes to the character(s) who bypassed or destroyed the Lock(s) on the Container, even if another character went through the act of opening the Container’s Prop. Also, Experience that is found attached to Information always goes to the character that first reads the Information.

Experience often is awarded in fractional amounts in games with frequent Resets and in 24/7 games. GMs will do this when they wish to present many challenges to their players without allowing players to become unmanageably powerful or to become radically unequal based on time in the game. This scaling of Experience rewards is handled by using a tenth (0.1) of an Experience point as the base unit, which makes it possible to have an Experience reward for an EC created with less than 50 Experience (i.e. it rewards less than 1 full Experience point when defeated).

Props for Experience tenths can be simple GM-signed Tags or tactilely satisfying custom poker chips, metal tokens, or beads. Because GMs can be fairly certain that players will spend all Experience—or can require players to turn in all Experience at each Reset for it to count—frugal GMs will favor using costly Props for Experience rather than for often-hoarded Money.

Spending Experience

Players spend Earned Experience during a Reset. The GMs will designate the way in which a player can spend Experience on a character, using one of these Options:

○ *Zero Growth*— Experience that is spent on a character after it has been through a Reset may only be spent on Abilities that have the Single Use, Focus, or Tool Limitation (or a combination of them). The Ability Up Cost is adjusted by the Minuses for those Limitations to get the Final Cost as normal, and further Limitations or Advantages may be applied as normal.

○ *Balanced Growth*— When players spend Experience on their characters, they must balance the expenditure with a Defect worth equivalent Experience, for which they do not receive Bonus Experience as they would at character creation. This option represents a game in which gaining additional capabilities above and beyond Starting Experience “corrupts” or “degenerates” a character. This Option is most useful for games with frequent new players, as no one’s net total Experience is higher than anyone else’s.

○ *Constrained Growth*— Experience that is spent on a character after it has been through a Reset is worth less as more of it is spent by the same player. However, it may be spent in any way. *Experience Ranks* are defined as multiples of the game’s Starting Experience; thus, a character’s Rank is determined by dividing the total Experience spent on the character by the game’s Starting Experience (rounding down). Each successive character Rank after Rank 1 *doubles the previous Rank’s Experience cost* for any and all new expenditures on that character. This cost adjustment is refigured after each discrete expenditure: a single point increase to an Ability or Attribute, the total purchase of a new Ability, or paying off a Defect. Thus, it is possible for a character to go up in Rank while in the middle of spending Earned Experience during a Reset.

Example: A game’s GMs start their characters at 200 Experience; the game’s Experience Ranks are 200, 400, 600, 800, and so forth. Thus, these are the game’s Experience Rank ranges and cost multipliers:

Rank 0	0–199 Experience	normal Final Costs
Rank 1	200–399 Experience	normal Final Costs
Rank 2	400–599 Experience	2× Final Costs
Rank 3	600–799 Experience	4× Final Costs
Rank 4	800–999 Experience	8× Final Costs

Needless to say, it is a heavily invested player that continues to put Experience into a Rank 3 or higher character. Further, it is a low lethality game that has many Rank 3+ PCs and SCs in play, whereas a game with many Rank 3+ ECs is quite lethal for a starting character.

○ *Unlimited Growth*— Players pay normal Final Costs for any and all Experience expenditures. GMs will use the Experience Ranks in Constrained Growth above, to provide clear indicators during the course of play as to what challenges are appropriate to which characters.

12 Character Creation

Once versed in the terms and techniques of GLASS, a player should be able to make a character using minimal GM direction.

12.1 Decide Concept

There is no point in beginning to spend Starting and Bequeathed Experience until the player has a strong concept for the type of character he or she wants to play in the game world. A player should consider these elements well before writing down a single Attribute value or Ability:

- 1) The ways in which he or she will want to engage in combat (if at all): melee or at range, with Weapons or Packets or by Staring. Most often, these fundamental decisions will radically shape the player's enjoyment of his or her role in the conflicts of the game world.
- 2) Any supporting Abilities he or she wants to be able to provide to other characters. Such Abilities influence the character's relationship development, influence with other players, and capacity to be useful in various situations.
- 3) What Attributes best reflect the character's body, mind, and spirit. The Attributes form the core of the character, when all Items have been lost or taken and when Abilities are in short supply. Ultimately, they are what keeps a character in the game.
- 4) The flavor or color of some or all Ability use: raw or with Incantations, Focuses, Tools, and other Props. Not only does this provide the strongest cues to the other players as to what sort of character he or she is, it also contributes to the real world costs the player may incur to maintain their Props.
- 5) Their capabilities to portray more rigorous role-playing rights and requirements. Such opportunities are not to be entered into lightly, and they can often be far more draining than the gains they have provided are useful. Conversely, these elements of a character can provide the GMs with a significant lever on the character's reactions and with easy means to involve it in storylines.
- 6) Their character's history, place in the world, attitudes, and short- and long-term motivations and goals. Such a background gives GMs even more hooks into the character, the better to involve it deeply in the game world's situations, politics, or organizations.

12.2 Assign Defects

Defects represent character flaws or restrictions on player behavior which, when assigned to a character during creation, provide additional Starting Experience. Thus, the values below each Defect are *Bonuses* (increases) to Starting Experience, not Costs.

Because a Defect provides additional Starting Experience, it must actually increase the risk to the character or limit the character; otherwise, it is not worth points. For example, a character with Ponderous playing at a game site where the Hosts forbid running is not, in fact, limited by that Defect, because all characters must conform to its requirements.

A player may spend Experience to pay off a Defect (all during one Reset) and thus rid his or her character of the Defect's restriction.

Blind

The character can not see, which the player must always exhibit and honor, or the character loses the Defect and loses Abilities or levels equal to the Experience Bonus. The character is an SC with all the requirements of such a participant, plus the player may not assign the Stare Range Advantage to any Abilities. When in character, the player must wear a blindfold which covers his or her eyes but allows him or her to see enough to remain safe; a good choice of material is loose-woven silk or gauze bandages. Note that sunglasses are not considered sufficient eye covering, though they may be worn over an approved blindfold, if appropriate to the game genre and if safety-approved (i.e. shatterproof plastic lenses and frames; safety glasses).

60 Experience

Clumsy

The character is less nimble than his or her Alacrity Attribute would indicate. The player must subtract Clumsy levels from Alacrity for any Agility Threshold test. The player may not purchase more levels of Clumsy than the character's normal full Alacrity level.

Double

Cowardly

The character is more timid than his or her Psyche Attribute would indicate. The player must subtract Cowardly levels from Psyche for any Courage Threshold test. The player may not purchase more levels of Cowardly than the character's normal full Psyche level.

Double

Deaf

The character can not hear, which the player must always exhibit and honor, or lose the Defect and lose Abilities or levels equal to the Experience Bonus.

30 Experience

Dense

The character is less intuitive and insightful than his or her Psyche would indicate. The player must subtract Dense levels from Psyche for any Acuity Threshold test. The player may not purchase more levels of Dense than the character's normal full Psyche level.

Double

Feeble

The character is weaker than his or her Health Attribute would indicate. The player must subtract Feeble levels from Health for any Strength Threshold test. The player may not purchase more levels of Feeble than the character's normal full Health level.

Double

Makeup

The character is of a particular race that is simulated with extensive skin painting (i.e. covering all exposed skin) or with prosthetics (e.g. ears, horn[s], wings, tail[s], additional limb[s]). GMs will provide a list of races appropriate to the game genre that may take the Makeup Defect; or players might be allowed to define their own Makeup requirements, to simulate some kind of distinctive features. Ultimately, this Defect is a reward for taking extra effort to enrich the game's atmosphere. The player must be in Makeup to be in character; otherwise, the player is an NC. All Makeup must be safety-approved. May be assigned repeatedly for appearances which have multiple Makeup requirements as follows: full skin covering may be assigned once; prosthetics may be assigned once for each major feature or pair of features.

10 Experience

Mental Disorder

The character must always behave in a manner which reflects the Mental Disorder, much like a permanent Insane state. GMs should be very careful about what Disorders are allowed, as disruptive or annoying Disorders are likely to make the game less fun or might become rewards for behaving like a jerk; they are intended as rewards for committing to challenging role-playing requirements. To that end, a Mental Disorder must be in some way limiting, debilitating, or difficult; otherwise it is not worth any Experience gain. A Mental Disorder should not be too limiting, though: no Mental Disorder should be so extreme that the relatively low Bonus, relative to the game's Power Level, is not worth the trouble of its required behavior.

10 Experience

One-Armed

The character has lost an arm and the player may not wield anything in that arm's hand. The player must try to keep that arm by his or her side at all times, though he or she must be ready to use it when needed to remain safe (i.e. it is not bound and it is not trapped under attire). May be assigned twice to represent a character with no arms.

30 Experience

One-Legged

The character has lost a leg and the player may not put weight on that leg. The player may only walk by *half-stepping* (step forward with the good leg and then bring the bad leg forward to that point), but he or she may do so as quickly as is safely possible. May be assigned twice to represent a character with no legs who is an SC; the player may not stand, walk, run, or jump.

60 Experience

Ponderous

The character is a dreadfully slow mover, for whatever reason. The player may not speed-walk, run, or jump; he or she must walk at what could be described as a stately, shuffling, lethargic, or fitful pace: approximately one stride per second.

30 Experience

Vulnerability

Choose one Scope; the character suffers double effects from that Scope.

20% of Starting Experience

12.3 Purchase Attributes and Abilities

The purchase of Attributes and Abilities is typically constrained by the GMs, to fit their notions of the game setting's Power Level and genre, and the relative difficulty of challenges.

Sometimes, GMs will further constrain Ability purchases by creating pre-defined Ability Lists. Each pre-defined Ability is referred to as a *Template*, and a Template can not be modified by the player without GM approval (which, in effect, creates a new Template for the game).

To help beginning players or to maximally constrain the nature of characters in the game setting, GMs will provide static, complete sets of Templates, possibly including Defects, which are referred to as *Packages*. A player must buy a whole Package or not buy it at all, unless some or all of the Templates in the Package are also available individually. A player may purchase a Package more than once, if desired and worthwhile. Packages are best used to represent capabilities common to a profession or required by a game world organization (e.g. basic military training).

Finally, GMs will sometimes create several *Exclusives*. An Exclusive is a Package that, once purchased by the player, prevents the player from purchasing any other Exclusives or even the same Exclusive more than once. Exclusives are best used to represent things like game world species or apportioned and guarded access to training (e.g. organizations who completely control some aspect of the game setting or access to education).

Power Level

In addition to Priority, Options, and Toggles, a GLASS game is classified by the Power Level of starting characters. Though GMs will sometimes set custom Power Levels, this table provides general guidelines for low-, mid-, and high-power games:

Power Level	Starting Experience	Average Attribute	Maximum Attribute	Maximum Up Cost
Low	[ed- TBD]	3	6	[ed- TBD]
Mid	[ed- TBD]	5	8	[ed- TBD]
High	[ed- TBD]	7	∞	[ed- TBD]

Important: One of the core presumptions in GLASS is that normal, common ECs for any game genre or setting are always treated as low-power, regardless of the PC/SC Power Level in a particular game. In fact, this guiding principle is what makes it possible for characters from one GLASS game to play in a different GLASS game, regardless of genre and setting; only comparative Power Levels need to be taken into consideration. Even then, "unbalanced" characters are only a "problem" or obstacle to cross-game play if your play group feels the need for equality to enjoy the game. In "reality" (an unlikely reality, at that) a presumably low-power Neanderthal versus a mid- or high-power Jedi would be a pretty one-sided conflict; thus is it also the case in GLASS.

12.4 GM Approval

Show to a GM and make any required adjustments.

GMs will make sure that each character Defect actually increases the risk to the character or limits the character; otherwise, it is not worth points.

12.5 Make Props and Tags

Make or purchase Props which conform to the safety requirements in these rules and which conform to all additional requirements that are imposed by the Hosts or GMs.

Make Tags for Continuous and Unlimited Abilities and get GMs to sign them, or get them from GMs. It is common to make several copies of a character's particular Instant Ability Tags and give them to the GMs, to save them from having to make them for the player every Reset.

13 Genres

[ed- This is a “Notebook Section” with only the most nascent of situation and setting structure and details. Expand.]

This section provides character creation guidelines and common Ability definitions for a variety of popular game genres. Each genre definition includes the Power Level of the genre, the game Options/Toggles and Difficulty, commonality of major GLASS elements, hallmark Abilities, and frequently used Knowledge.

Difficulty

A game can be classified by the typical Difficulty of the genre, which is a measure of the severity of challenges the characters will face or of how often characters can expect to fail or die. The Difficulty of a game is best generalized by how often Thresholds will be higher than the average and maximum Attribute levels for the game’s Power Level. Though GMs may modify Difficulty to react to game evolution, this table provides general guidelines for low-, mid-, and high-Difficulty games:

Difficulty	Thresholds > Average Attribute	Thresholds > Maximum Attribute
Low	Rarely	Almost Never
Mid	Sometimes	Rarely
High	Often	Sometimes

When setting the Difficulty of a game, GMs should also recognize that the more difficult the game, the more incentive characters have to team up; the easier the game, the better characters will be when they choose to work independently.

Tuning Elements To Suit Genre

Clever GMs can further fine-tune game elements, to accomplish a variety of play style results for their players.

If players are solo too often: Increase the average Thresholds and make more of them Cooperative. Reduce access to EC vendors or Ability Items or both. Develop applicability for a long list of Situational Abilities.

If players are too inactive: Generate subplots and conflicts that require little GM maintenance but impact many of the characters’ influences or foundations. Increase the availability of Defensive Abilities. Inject more sources of Information into the game—true or false, based on developed GM-driven content or not—and take inspiration for action stimuli from what the players “deduce.”

Genre Summaries

The table in this section provides a quick reference for the subsequent detailed sections about particular genres. GMs can use this table for initial game inspiration, preparation, and planning; or they might find it useful for cross-genre game relations and character balancing, when they are planning to allow players to move between different games or even different genres.

Genre	Power Level	Difficulty	Scope or Conceptual	Melee Weapons	Projectile Weapons	Shocks	Armor & Shields	Makeup
High Fantasy	High	Low	Magic	Common	Single-Shot	Uncommon	Common	Common
Dark Fantasy	High	High	Magic, Spirit	Common	Single-Shot	Common	Common	Common
Prehistorical	Low	Mid	Spirit	Common	Single-Shot	Rare	Rare	Rare
Pre-Gunpowder	Low	Mid	Low Tech	Common	Single-Shot	Rare	Common	Rare
Post-Gunpowder	Low	Mid	Tech	Rare	Common	Rare	Rare	Rare
Thriller	Mid	Mid	Tech	Uncommon	Common	Rare	Rare	Rare
Horror	Low	High	Tech, Spirit	Uncommon	Common	Common	Rare	Uncommon
Golden Age Supers	Mid	Low	Any and all	Rare	Common	Rare	Common	Uncommon
Modern Supers	High	Mid	Any and all	Uncommon	Uncommon	Uncommon	Common	Common
Cyberpunk	Mid	High	Tech, Spirit	Uncommon	Common	Common	Common	Uncommon
Space Opera	High	Low	Tech, Spirit	Uncommon	Common	Rare	Uncommon	Common
Hard Sci Fi	Mid, High	Mid	Tech	Rare	Common	Uncommon	Common	Rare

25 13.1 [ed- Genre-Specific Section]

[ed- defined; examples in other game systems and popular media (e.g. books, film)]

Characters

[ed- Starting Experience; Attribute limits; archetypal Abilities]

Items

[ed- common Weapon, Armor, and Shield styles; other Tools]

5 **[ed- Genre-Specific Abilities, flavored (e.g. “Skills,” “Spells,” “Tech,” or “Psi”)]**

[ed- varies by genre]

13.2 Game Mastering GLASS

[ed- Advise GMs to have “Beginner Modules” at the start of each event:

* Loosens up the new players; gets them into the game.

10 * Give opportunity to ping every effect at least once or twice, so that players can start to learn Calls and effects.

* Provide immediate Exp, so that they can immediately re-tune or augment their character concept, using what they learn in playing the module. In fact, GMs should just plan to offer, say, 20% to 30% of the “actual” Starting Exp in the Beginner Module (so if it’s a 200 point SE game, then they write-up characters with 140 or 160 of the points and then get a flat 60 to 40 Exp reward at the end, to finish up the character).]

15 [ed- Discuss Touch versus Ranged Lock on Abilities like Bind, Root, and Silence.]

[ed- Discuss methods of tracking who possesses stolen Independent Abilities, and the unique Props to which they are associated (which must be returned to their owners each session, offering opportunity to cheat or forget it was stolen).]

Sample Situations

20 *Wandering Monsters*– Yep, just some crunchies waiting for a smacking. This is good for general excitement and fun; and it can also be a way to begin to introduce a larger challenge or plot line (ex: a pack of wolves is harassing the town: what is driving them out of the wilds, away from their normal prey, to risk the dangers in town?).

25 *Crawl*– Dungeon or woods, scary or rollicking, plot-motivated or just “because it’s there”: crawls are linear modules that may be one-offs or may be something several groups can cycle through before being shutdown. Basically, this could be called “Wandering Characters,” as the enemies encountered presumably live in these crawl areas, and our players are heading in to slay them all, for whatever reason (usually greed). But these could also represent travel time—looping around the campsite to get to the “Misty Mountains”—or they could be necessary quests that feed into larger plots.

30 *The Case of The _____* – Murder mystery, locked room thefts, anything you can lift from the pages of Sherlock Holmes or CSI: there’s a LOT of great acting and adventuring (yep, and combat) potential in a good mystery. You’ve got elements of scavenger hunts, logic puzzles, lies and the lying liars who tell them, real hunts (when the criminal is revealed and breaks for the trees)... What else could you want, in a challenge type? Yes, there’s the overhead of seeding clues in the game world (secretly, no less) and, of course, a good mystery takes a good plot and some good acting from an NPC or two. But better time spent on that than on, say, building a plywood wall so that we can simulate a “castle assault.”

35 *Battles*– Yep, sometimes we just want to have fun storming the castle. Some of the best TALAN content I played in involved, basically, a controlled march on a stronghold, complete with archers and such. This would also include the inverse: monsters marshaling to storm one of the town’s or players’ locations. I’d only like to see that there be a good reason for the battles, though; scheduling some kind of field battle for every Saturday evening, like clockwork, isn’t as good as having one come about due to logical reactions of in-game plots. Even BETTER if it can be PVP play, rather than PVM (player versus monsters): a field battle would be MUCH more interesting if it were two player factions meeting to “settle differences on a field of honor” rather than just “Ho! A horde of orcs cometh! To the field!”

40 *Natural Menaces*– Diseases and famine; wild, lethal weather; hostile, carnivorous flora and fauna: anything you can think of to make just being out in the environment a risk. Of course, you don’t want folks huddled in their cabins and the Inn... unless you ALSO have something that will take full advantage of that trapped, divided vulnerability. (That’s what made Alien such a freaky movie, I feel: trapped in a ship by the void of space, with a much more powerful creature hunting you!)

45 *The Long Con* – One way or another, an NPC manages to get the whole town by the ear, playing them for fools to their ultimate loss (and shame). The great fun comes from folks who won’t trust the “good thing,” and from other players trying to convince them (or trying to get them out of the way, to take their share of the “good thing”). In the end, the whole town has a new enemy... and that enemy is well-funded or well-prepared, thanks to the town itself. That’s what you call “automatic hatred,” right there.

13.3 [ed- Genres Tasks]

[ed- Portability, portability, portability: who can go where; which Diff's, Options, etc ruin or hinder portability?]

[ed- Search "GMs will" and trap or advise for character portability (see Scope for general notions on portability).]

[ed- Detail how (form) and where (GLASS Cutters, ad for game) to indicate Starting Exp, Priority, Options, Toggles, Up Cost limits, and other "GMs will" game-defining elements.]

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13.4 [ed- Book Tasks]

[ed- Reorganize rules: chapters focused on situation; organized by Attribute, then by Item, then by Object. Abilities nested under applicable situation, with an Index or reference table to collate them. Sub-sections will cover player use v. situational use as "what you can do" v. "what the world can do".]