KORE Guidelines

Forward

Dedication

This work is first and foremost dedicated to my wife and kids.
They truly have made me a better man than I even thought I was capable.

Secondly, this system is dedicated to Ernest Gary Gygax 1938 - 2008 and Dave Arneson 1947 - 2009
Mighty are the shoulders of the giants upon which we all stand. Without you, I would have never discovered
the wonder and marvel of this pastime. And that would surely have been a great loss to me. We will miss
you both. Go forth, a chair has been prepared for each of you at the big table upstairs and God is now ready
to throw dice with the masters.

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KORE Overview

General Overview

<u>What you'll find in this book?</u>

The KORE Guidelines are a complete set of Role-playing rules that can be used to imagine any world and play any genre of game. The flexibility of the rule-set was paramount in the creation of the guidelines. At each point, I continually asked myself if the game required this rule to be present or if it could be eliminated. Some of the rules that were not necessary for the set to feel complete, but were elegant and loved by play testers, were allowed to remain under the optional category.

<u>Why another universal system?</u>

Because at its core, every system is "Universal." Genre-specific rule sets don't offer any more or less specificity at their core than so-called Universal systems. So long as the players agree to the mechanics of the system, any given system will meet the needs of the players to tell a tale in any specific or broad genre. While one could argue that certain nuances of a game system promote the immersion necessary to tell a story, it isn't the mechanics that tell the tale, it's the players.

<u>Guideline vs. Rule</u>
Everything contained in this manuscript is a guideline. There are no hard and fast rules. If you find something you don't like or doesn't work, then by all means, change or remove it. If you think something works better, then use it.

<u>Optional Guidelines</u>
Scattered throughout the book are optional rules that are designed to help players increase the depth of the system. While these guidelines are provided, they are by no means required to be used in any fashion; the core set of guidelines are sufficient to play a fast and fun game. As a player, you may find that your GM has selected some, all, or perhaps none of the optional rules under which to play. It is your responsibility to know by which subset of guidelines the Universe that you'll be participating within is governed. As a GM, it is your responsibility to determine beforehand, and make known to the players, which subset of guidelines you'll be moderating from.

<u>How the guidelines are arranged</u>

The KORE Guidelines are set in two distinct sections; The Player Section and the Game Moderator Section. The Player Section contains all the information necessary to create characters to play in games moderated using the system, while the Moderator section contains information on the resolution mechanics used by the system.

While the names may indicate that the sections are exclusive to the player role, this is not the case. Players will find valuable information in the Moderator section, and the information in the Player section will prove invaluable to a moderator. Gone are the days of specific rules that are known only to the moderator; players presumably understand the natural rules of the Universe, and are therefore given privilege to see how these Universal rules are defined by the system.

You'll also note that the sections do not contain long discussions on the nature of "How to play the game." This is intentional. The guidelines are a framework with which the players (and GM) should use in concert to create the game World as they see fit.

<u>What's special about this system?</u>

Simplicity
I wanted first and foremost to make the system simple. Too many systems begin as simple games but quickly evolve into these ponderous, vast rules-heavy systems with a rule or system or chart for anything and everything. While some may find this enjoyable, I don't have the desire or the inclination to spend my precious time analyzing the rules of a given game if it takes away from any game-play time I might be able to scrounge up. As a result, I have eschewed dice pools for a simpler, one die mechanic; multiple charts for a simple over-under rule set; and a point-buy system for everything character related.

Speed
The system should be able to be picked up and within a minimum amount of time; players should be enjoying the game, not bogged-down in a quagmire of rules and restrictions. Anything that takes too long to gather up a cursory understanding is broken.

Flexibility
Any system worth creating should be able to be used to play any genre "out of the box." Failure to meet this design consideration indicates a flaw in the core mechanics. What to play a Space Opera? Okay, do so. Want instead to play Peter and the Wolf the RPG? Then do so as well.

What you won't find in this book?

Lists of spells, skills, equipment, etc. will not be included. As you will hopefully soon realize, they aren't necessary. In fact, they detract from the whole more than they contribute to it.

What you'll need to play games run under the KORE guidelines

A pencil, a single d10 die, and either a piece of blank paper or a copy of the character sheet provided in the Appendix of this book.

KORE Player Section

<u>Character Creation</u>

General

Much like the rest of the system, character creation is open-ended and flexible. Characters may be generated from any genre and possess almost any power, ability or skill. Your GM will establish point pools. These pools will be based upon the level of game desired; a lower pool lends to a grittier, more realistic and dangerous game while a higher pool will generally indicate a pulpier, super heroic setting. In fact, point pools may vary between character types based on the genre you have selected as the origin for your character.

> GMs should be careful in balancing character power to ensure no single individual dominates the party.

When creating characters, keep in mind that many elements of the characters are flexible; as with statistics and attributes, so too are such characteristics as race. Characters need not utilize a stereotypical role such as a dwarven fighter from the medieval era. That same dwarf could be a cybernetic, gun-toting mercenary from an alternate future of a medieval fantasy world comprised of elves, dwarves, etc.

> As we generated characters for the first time, everyone defaulted to being Humans of one form or another.
>
> It was certainly not a conscious decision nor enforced by the GMs.

What's my motivation?

All the flexibility at the time of creation can lead to some interesting characters. However, while developing a character, you must always keep in mind how that character will be role-played. A normal human is easy to develop and play because you have a close understanding to the natural motivations/goals/tendencies of a human. An alien that only communicates by telepathy and moves only through levitation and teleportation is much more complicated and thus more difficult to role-play.

The most important idea is to create someone you can enjoy, understand, and determine actions for. Picture the character in a variety of situations and determine how he/she would respond. If you have trouble doing so, or find yourself defaulting to actions you the player would choose, you may have developed a character that is not playable by you or at least not in this form. Try to determine what facets of the character are causing difficult and remove or flesh out those facets.

Lather, Rinse, Repeat

Character creation should not be a single pass. After you have produced the original character, go back through the character generation process step by step and analyze why you chose each element. Also think of additional skills the character might possess. It is much easier to find missing pieces after you have a good idea of who the character is. Repeat this process as many times as necessary to be comfortable with whom the character is, what he can do, what he represents and what limitations are incorporated.

Statistics

Attributes:

Mechanically speaking, character creation begins with determining the attribute scores. Every attribute score has a range of 0-10 and is purchased from the initial Point Pool.

Minimum Competency and Beginning Statistics

Because all reasonable characters can perform actions linked to every statistic, the baseline for minimum competency is 1 in all statistics.

> *Your GM will have final say on your choice of statistics.*
> *Generally speaking, no character should have an initial score of 0 in any attribute.*

What are the attributes?

Strength

Strength determines the ability of an entity to exert force on physical objects using muscles.

Dexterity

Dexterity is a term referring primarily to the ability to coordinate physical movements and actions.

Constitution

Constitution is the general condition of physical body.

Intelligence

Intelligence is a mental capability involving the ability to reason, plan, solve, think, comprehend, and learn.

Wisdom

Wisdom is the trait of utilizing knowledge and experience with common sense and insight.

Presence

Presence is a term referring to charisma and force of personality. Presence also determines how "with it" an individual is.

The attributes form a triad of the general make-up of a character in the nature of Capacity (Strength and Intelligence), Capability (Dexterity and Wisdom), and Resistance (Constitution and Presence) and are commonly categorized in Physical and Mental groups:

	Physical attributes	**Mental attributes**
Capacity	Strength (STR)	Intelligence (INT)
Capability	Dexterity (DEX)	Wisdom (WIS)
Resistance	Constitution (CON)	Presence (PRE)

Point buy:

At the beginning of Character Creation, your GM will indicate how many points are in the Pool for attribute and skill purchasing. This pool of points will be used to determine the attributes that define the "natural" makeup, as well as the skills available to your character.

General Statistic Point Buy Table:

Statistic Point Pool	Style of Play
15	Mundane, Everyday [realistic]
20	Competent [elite, semi-realistic]
25	Heroic [TV action show, semi-pulp]
30	Incredible [action movie, pulp]
35	Legendary
40+	Super heroic [comic books, myths]

As a general rule of thumb, the greater the Pool, the more fantastic the setting.

<u>Derived Statistics:</u>

Derived Statistics are all encompassing representations of physical, mental, and mystical values that define a character. They are calculated from the purchased attribute statistics. In the event of a remainder, all scores are rounded up. Derived Statistics are attribute scores that indicate how the base abilities interact to help identify the core characteristics of a character. They are categorized in Physical, Mental and Super groupings.

What are the Derived Statistics?

Dodge

Dodge is a measure of the character's ability to overcome or elude physical damage. It can indicate that damage is either "shaken off" or that an attack misses altogether.

Health Points

Health Points (HP) are a measure of the total physical damage susceptibility and capacity of a character.

Physical Damage Bonus

Physical Damage Bonus (Pdb) is a bonus added to the total inflicted damage of a physical attack due to deft skill or brute force.

Idea/Know/Education

Idea/Know/Education (IKE) is a measure of the character's capability to know things, have a prescient moment of "Aha!" Also indicative of how generally well educated the character is. Your GM might interpret an IKE success to indicate that the character *believes* he knows something about a subject, but that the information is in fact wrong.

Discover

Discover indicates how often a character will notice things. It measures not only general awareness of surroundings, but also determines how well an actively searching individual might find something hidden.

Discipline

Discipline is an indicator of a character's resilience to stress and pressures. It measures willpower and nerve as well as determining a character's sanity. Creatures with low discipline will likely flee from obstacles and dangers while those with high discipline can withstand the very gates of hell.

Power

Power (POW) is used to cast spells and use superpowers. It is a measure of the overall magical/mystical/super heroic nature of an individual.

Grounding

Grounding is a measure of an individual's resilience to spells and mystical attacks. It also determines a character's level of humanity or sense of self.

Mystical Damage Bonus

Mystical Damage Bonus (Mdb) is a bonus added to the total inflicted damage or potency of a spell or superpower.

CRUNCH: How are the Derived Statistics calculated?

The derived statistics categorized in Physical, Mental and Super grouping are:

Physical derived statistics:	
Dodge	$\dfrac{(DEX + CON + INT)}{3}$
Health Points (HP	$\dfrac{(STR + DEX + CON)}{3}$
Physical Damage Bonus (Pdb)	$\dfrac{(STR + DEX)}{10}$
Mental derived statistics:	
Idea/Know/Education (IKE)	$\dfrac{(INT + WIS)}{2}$
Discover	$\dfrac{(DEX + WIS + PRE)}{3}$
Discipline	$\dfrac{(WIS + CON)}{2}$
Super derived statistics:	
Power (POW)	$\dfrac{(STR + PRE + CON)}{3}$
Grounding	$\dfrac{(WIS + PRE + CON)}{3}$
Mystical Damage Bonus (Mdb)	$\dfrac{(INT + PRE)}{10}$

<u>A Statistic of X means what?</u>

While Average here falls within the range of 1 to 6 with a mean of 3.5, and not 5, this was done by design. KORE is most commonly used as a game system where the players take on heroic personas.

Average here will be defined to be that of a typical human with skills and abilities within the norm of society. This choice was made to give the majority of players a 'touchstone' of sorts to grasp a generic understanding of what the numbers mean.

Score	Description
0	Challenged – You cannot perform any actions liked to this statistic unless aided by some external influence.
1-2	Everyday – You're capable of performing general actions linked to this statistic. Any significant external influence would thwart your ability to succeed in a task linked to this statistic.
3-4	Competent – You're capable of performing more strenuous activities linked to this statistic and can overcome most mundane external influences. With even minor assistance, any task requiring a check against this statistic would become a coin flip.
5-6	Heroic – You're capable of performing amazing activities linked to this statistic. Even with minor hindrance, tasks requiring a check against this statistic will still be considered a coin flip.
7-8	Incredible – A statistic at this level falls above normal human capability. Rare individuals achieve or are born with abilities this level. Even significant external influences hindering a check against this statistic will commonly be overcome.
9-10	Legendary – A statistic at this level puts you in the realm of otherworldly ability. Unless thwarted with considerable hindrances, tasks testing this statistic are almost guaranteed to succeed.
11+	Super heroic – There are no natural descriptions for the capabilities available to an entity with a statistic of this level. Tasks requiring a check against this statistic are considered automatic unless opposed by a force lowering the check to a more "natural" score.

Interpreting a Statistic

Since Derived Statistics are all encompassing representations of physical, mental, and magical/mystical values that define a character, their resulting values are open to interpretation.

Your GM is the final arbiter as to the interpretation of a Statistic.

While a Dodge of 0 *might* mean slow and ponderous, it might also indicate some reason behind the score that is not initially intuitive. For example, any planetary body or artificial gravity device might have a Dodge of 0 with respect to any other object with mass. Likewise, an object with an immense magnetic field would have a necessary Dodge of 0 with regards to ferrous objects. But consider that an object with a dispersion field might have a Dodge of 8 or 9. And an omniscient being with innate telepathic powers and teleportation powers would easily muster a dodge of 10.

Dodge 0 – Ponderous, massive, and perhaps immobile. Think "broad side of a barn."
Dodge 10 – Incorporeal, teleporting, prescient

IKE 0 – Since IKE is a representation of intelligence, as well as instinct or core programming, note that a score of 0 really doesn't make sense for any interactive object. Non-interactive objects, or objects with nothing resembling sentience might qualify. Think "Door knob."
IKE 10 –This entity is near omniscient

Discipline 0 – "Gibber, meep, Flee!"
Discipline 10 – Unshakable, could handle multiple foundation shattering events.

Example of Character Creation Mechanics – Statistics

> So let's make a quick character.
> For the sake of demonstration, let's assume our GM wants to play a pulpy, heroic setting and so has allocated 25 points to the point buy attributes pool. Since we are playing a "normal human" setting, all attributes begin at a minimum score of 1.

Name:	Odie

Attribute	Current	Maximum	Modifier	Attribute	Current	Maximum	Modifier
STR	3	3		INT	5	5	
DEX	4	4		WIS	4	4	
CON	4	4		PRE	5	5	

Description / Details:

Odie is a part time auto mechanic and a part time paranormal investigator. He is in his late twenties, and single

Physical	Current	Maximum	Modifier	Mental	Current	Maximum	Modifier	Super	Current	Maximum	Modifier
Dodge (DEX+CON+INT)/3	4	4		IKE (INT+WIS)/2	5	5		POW (STR+PRE+CON)/3	4	4	
HP (STR+DEX+CON)/3	4	4		Discover (DEX+WIS+PRE)/3	4	4		Grounding (WIS+CON+PRE)/3	5	5	
Pdb (STR+DEX)/10	1	1		Discipline (WIS+CON)/2	4	4		Mdb (INT+PRE)/10	1	1	

> There are some very interesting numbers here that help us understand a bit more about our intrepid paranormal investigator.
>
> A Dodge of 4 is not bad; Odie dodges non-opposed checks 40% of the time. He must either be fairly quick on his feet or perhaps he's a good judge of other's motives.
>
> An IKE of 5 means that 50% of the time he'll at least believe he knows something about a subject, or have an idea about something. This means that Odie would be a valued member of any investigation.
>
> A Discover of 4 means that nearly 50% of the time Odie will "notice" things. Again this makes our character valuable as an investigator – perhaps Odie should have considered becoming a police investigator.
>
> A Discipline of 4 indicates that he works well under pressure, is fairly sane and can handle a few foundation-shattering revelations.
>
> A POW of 4 is impressive. Too bad Odie lives in (or at least believes he lives in) a non-magical world. If Odie ever encounters magic, or comes into contact with some mutagenic material that creates superheroes, then the denizens of evil should consider themselves warned.
>
> A Grounding of 5 indicates that he would not be fooled by illusions, and that he must not believe in hokum and fairytales… Most likely he's a debunker. It also indicates that Odie has a strong sense of empathy and humanity.

Skills:

While statistics describe the general make-up of a character, skills are what a character can do. They include abilities, spells, hobbies, jobs, etc. Skills include whatever you can think of. While specificity is preferred; generality is allowed (i.e. Pilot would most likely not include Space Shuttle operation unless specified. However rifle would mean that the character is familiar with the safe use and handling of most rifles.)

In addition to personal capabilities, skills may also include any unique equipment of note the character may have at his or her disposal as well as contacts the character may be able to bring into play.

Your GM is the final arbiter for ascertaining if a specific skill falls in a general category.

Skill Categories:

Each skill is placed in one of 3 categories; physical, mental, or super denoted with a P, an M, or an X

Physical

Physical skills are commonly tied to any of the three physical statistics; STR, DEX, or CON. They include powers of force, deft manipulation, and sundry.

Mental

Mental skills are commonly indicated as being tied to any of the three mental statistics; INT, WIS, or PRE. They include fields of study, knowledge and the like.

Note that as a general rule, Affiliations/Friends and Contacts are always categorized as Mental skills.

Super

Unlike Physical and Mental skills, Super skills are beyond physical and mental linkage. They include Superhero powers, Magical spells, and their ilk.

Note that some skills could arguably be categorized in more than one general group.
For example: Drive car is arguably both physical as well as mental.

In cases where such a situation arises, consult your GM for the proper skill category.

The only skill that falls into no category is the Common skill, which has no such notation. This is because the Common skill encompasses physical, mental (and possibly super) skills. When a necessary linked attribute or statistic is required, such a linkage is utilized for the specific check. However, the Common skill is never linked itself.

Examples of physical skills:	Examples of mental skills:	Examples of super skills: Including superhero abilities
Drive (P) Pick Locks (P) Stealth (P) Club (P) Dance (P) Surgery (P)	Occult Lore (M) Mythology (M) Computer Programming (M) Quantum Physics (M) Astronomy (M) Foreign Language – Latin (M) Survival – Desert (M)	Heal (X) Summon Something Horrible (X) Speak with Dead Things (X) Beyond Sight (X) Fly (X) Lasers for Eyes (X) Armored Skin (X)

Point buy:

Just like attributes, skills are purchased from another Point Pool. Your GM will indicate how many points you can spend for skills. While you will want to buy a number of skills to meet your desired character concept, you'll also want to be careful to reserve some points for spending on equipment and associations which are purchased from the same pool.

General Skill Point Buy Table:

Skill Point Pool	Style of Play
20	Mundane, Everyday [realistic]
25	Competent [elite, semi-realistic]
30	Heroic [TV action show, semi-pulp]
40	Incredible [action movie, pulp]
50	Legendary
75+	Super heroic [comic books, myths]

As a general rule of thumb, the more points in the pool, the more fantastic the setting.

OPTIONAL: "Initial Cap" Skill Limit Guideline:

In order to prevent "One Skill Wonders", initial skills are capped at a maximum initial purchase by the following calculations:

The maximum starting physical-linked skill points = $\dfrac{(STR + DEX + CON)}{3}$

The maximum starting mental-linked skill points = $\dfrac{(INT + WIS + PRE)}{3}$

The maximum starting super-linked skill points = $\dfrac{(INT + CON + PRE)}{3}$

<u>Freebies</u>

Some skills are free. They include Native Language, Common Skills, and Undocumented Skill 1 Skills.

Common Skill

Every character is given a baseline skill set that is "common" to the people of the genre/era/heritage of the person. Indicated as the Common Skill, this score begins at IKE / 2.
Examples for any era might be Persuasion, General Athletics, Knowledge - Local Area, Punch, etc.
Examples for "modern era settings" might be driving, reading/writing, etc.

Your GM is the final arbiter for ascertaining if a skill is considered "Common" of the era.

Common "break-up" guideline:

A player can break the Common Skill into various sub-skill entities for the sole purpose of lowering one common sub-skill to raise another. However, no sub-skill can ever drop below 1 via this procedure. Nor can a skill be raised above a character's initial skill cap in this manner.

Break-up Example

A modern era character's Common Skill score is 3 resulting in (among other sub-skills):

Drive 3
Read/Write - English 3

But the player wishes this character to be a redneck that races cars but didn't bother much with school. This optional guideline allows increasing the Drive sub-skill a point by lowering Read/Write - English a point. This is allowed so long as the Read/Write skill is not lowered to less than 1.

Since Drive is a physical skill, the player checks the Initial Physical Skill Cap for the character (STR + DEX + CON)/3 = 4. The GM allows the "break-up", as sundering the skill and raising it to 4 does not exceed this cap.

For our example, the results would be:

Drive 4
Read/Write – English 2

Native Language

Every character is given his or her IKE score in their native language for purposes of reading, writing, speaking, and comprehension. Remember that while our understanding of language might mean the spoken, written word; in other cultures and for those entities on alien vistas, this might not always be the case.

Some examples of unique language ideas:

- Runic Writing – Such as used by paleo-humans.
- Smoke signals – once employed as long distance communication.
- Music – not unlike the Gaelic tradition of song.
- Art – Graffiti is a form of communication.
- Dance – Interpretive movements to tell a story.
- Body Posture – Horses and Dogs are prime examples.
- Color Change – The Humboldt Squid uses this means of communication.
- Telepathy – Reading another's mind and sending one's own thoughts can be quite communicative.
- Empathy – feelings read and sent over a distance can impart a great deal of information.

Can I have more than one "native" language?

Generally speaking, a native language is the initial language a character learns from birth. While it is possible to have more than one language used in a childhood environment, it is not likely that each distinct tongue would be consciously and conceptually considered "native." One language would always be re-translated to the other in the consciousness of the individual. This latter, translated to, language would be considered the "native."

OPTIONAL: Undocumented Skill1 Skills:

Any skill not listed and not part of the Common Skill is assumed to be at skill level 1 if it is reasonable the character can at least perform it. While this is not a carte blanche allowance to leave certain skills absent from your character's sheet, it does allow for an easy resolution to the "That's not on your sheet!" or "I can't list all those skills…" moments.

Undocumented Skills Example

> For instance; Odie's character sheet doesn't include gardening. But since gardening is a skill he would at least be familiar with, Odie's gardening skill is assumed to be 1
>
> However, Odie's character sheet also doesn't include Pilot Space Shuttle or Foreign Language – Iranian, or even Speak with the Dead. Since these skills are probably beyond his abilities, Odie's Pilot Space Shuttle, Foreign Language – Iranian, and Speak with the Dead skills are assumed to be 0.
>
> That's not to say that any of these skill 0 skills are impossible for Odie to perform, rather that he has no appreciable capability to succeed in performing them without some outside influence.

> *Your GM is the final arbiter for ascertaining if a skill is considered reasonably performable by your character and falls within the Undocumented Skill 1 Skill list.*

Capability vs. Competency

Just because someone is capable of performing an action doesn't necessarily mean that they can perform that very action with any level of competency. Capability is gauged by having a score in a given skill. Competency is gauged with how high the score is in relation to those around.

Score	Description
0	Challenged – You don't know how to do this task at all.
1-2	Everyday – You've learned the basics of this task and can do this thing most of the time, though not necessarily very well and poorly under pressure. You're an apprentice or a beginner.
3-4	Competent – You are well trained and practiced in this skill and can perform it well in everyday circumstances. You can handle unusual applications of the skill with some difficulty. You're considered a professional and could support a living wage with a job performing this skill.
5-6	Heroic – You are a master of this skill and are capable of unusual applications of the skill. You are considered a master craftsman.
7-8	Incredible – A skill at this level means you're one of the very best in the world. You are at ease with unusual applications of this skill, or even new applications. You are likely sought as a foremost expert in the field of this skill.
9-10	Legendary – A skill at this level puts you in the realm of the greatest practitioners of this skill in history. You are pushing forward the boundaries of the skill and what it can be used for. You are considered either a genius or a savant in this skill or that it is a natural extension of yourself.
11+	Super heroic – skills at this level are better than anyone could believe in the real world. Demonstrations of skills at this level are likely to seem so "unreal" as to be considered impossible by normal means.

I have a skill of X. Can I do Y?

See Modifiers.
Yes and no. Or perhaps a better answer is… maybe. Having a score in a skill grants the player the possibility of succeeding in a given task, but does not guarantee success. But even a score of 11 can be adjusted by modifiers causing the result to be in serious doubt. And that's not to mention what happens if the check is opposed. However, conflict resolution in KORE is also tied to a random roll, allowing for some interesting variation on the results of a skill check.

Example of Character Creation Mechanics - Skills

Let's return to creating Odie.

Name:	Odie							Description / Details:		
Attribute	**Current**	**Maximum**	**Modifier**	**Attribute**	**Current**	**Maximum**	**Modifier**	Odie is a part time auto mechanic and a part time paranormal investigator. He is in his late twenties, and single		
STR	3	3		INT	5	5				
DEX	4	4		WIS	4	4				
CON	4	4		PRE	5	5		**Hero Points**		1

Physical	Current	Maximum	Modifier	Mental	Current	Maximum	Modifier	Super	Current	Maximum	Modifier
Dodge (DEX+CON+INT)/3	4	4		IKE (INT+WIS)/2	5	5		POW (STR+PRE+CON)/3	4	4	
HP (STR+DEX+CON)/3	4	4		Discover (DEX+WIS+PRE)/3	4	4		Grounding (WIS+CON+PRE)/3	5	5	
Pdb (STR+DEX)/10	1	1		Discipline (WIS+CON)/2	4	4		Mdb (INT+PRE)/10	1	1	

Again, since we want a pulpy genre, we'll allocate 40 points to our point pool to buy skills. We will spend 30 of these points on skills and save 10 of these points for Equipment and Affiliations.

Odie's initial physical skills can be a maximum of 4
Odie's initial mental skills can be a maximum of 5
Odie's initial super skills can be a maximum of 5

Odie is a modern era character in a realistic game based on present day Earth and chooses skills appropriately.

Check	Skill	P/M/X	Current	Maximum	Modifier	Check	Skill	P/M/X	Current	Maximum	Modifier
	Native Language: English (IKE	M	5	5			Occult Lore	M	4	4	
	Common Skill (IKE2)		3	3			Investigate	M	4	4	
	Repair Car	M	5	5			Locksmith	P	4	4	
	Drive	P	4	4			Architecture	M	2	2	
	Rifle	P	2	2			Pistol	P	2	2	
	Electronics	M	3	3							

Hero Points

Essentially, Hero Points are allowances of player fiat. Though limited in scope, they give the player the opportunity to shape the very universe about their characters. In this respect, they are powerful tools that should be respected and used wisely.

Characters start with an initial pool of 1 Hero Point and can accumulate up to 3 points that are awarded by GM or majority of player approval for good RP, driving the story onward, etc. at any time. They are also awarded at the end of a major story arc. Generally speaking, all players who participate should be awarded at least 1 Hero Point at the end of a major story arc.

Players can use points to achieve the following results:
- Perform a reasonable action successfully without dice so long as it is within their character's capabilities.
- Staying Death's hand, placing them at the edge of death. Without help in the near future they will still die.
- Roll a single die again as a "Do over". This can apply to a failed skill check or a poor initiative roll.
- Spend a single Hero Point for the benefit of another player who has declared a *Blaze of Glory* Action.

Except as noted in "*Blaze of Glory*" and "*Group Effort*" actions, Hero Points cannot be spent for the benefit of another player. At your GM's discretion, they can however, be used to aid a non-player entity.

Except as indicated in "*Pushing your Luck*", repeated use of Hero Points for the same purpose (using 2 points to roll over twice) is not allowed. However, multiple Hero Points can be expended on different circumstances in a single turn. For example, 1 to stipulate success in an action, another to roll a failed attempt to survive the result of said action, and finally a third to stipulate that the character does not die from the resulted subsequent failure.

Except as described by a re-roll or in "*Flashback to 'But What If…'* " event, Hero Points can only be used to alter a current or future event. A player cannot retroactively change an event once that event has entered the fabric of the game.

Example of Hero Point usage:

Woz, the gun-totin' hell-stormin' veteran of the demonic wars sighs deeply and eschews his alter ego of the mild mannered professional poker player long enough to deal with the hell spawn that has interrupted his game. Annoyed that this minor entity would consider facing him here in a public location where the fight is likely to involve innocent bystanders, as well as aggravated by the fact that he just drew to an inside straight, Woz makes a break for the stairwell door hoping to lure the demon to a more private locale to send it back to the brimstone belly of Hell.

The GM determines that the entity isn't interested in Woz and ignores his attempt to lure it away; there are plenty of delicious souls here that are much easier targets than the abyss-touched warrior for heaven. Woz realizes he's misinterpreted the demon's presence as the hell spawn ignores his actions and remains in the room to eat the souls of the other gamblers.

Woz's player declares that he wishes to use a Hero Point to flash an Arcane Sigil of Drawing at the spawn of evil. Woz's knows the spell and could roll for success, but he wishes to insure the infallibility of the spell and that the outcome of the action is to his liking. Woz, a veteran character, currently has 3 Hero Points. The GM decides that this is an appropriate use of the Hero Point and agrees. Woz deducts 1 Hero Point from his Hero Point pool leaving him with 2 points available.

The demon feels its essence tugged at by the Arcane Sigil and recognizes the nature of the threat. Covering itself in a billowy darkness, it rushes into the stairwell and speeds after Woz.

Woz reaches into the pocket dimension that holds his personal armory and draws out a vicious looking curved blade. The old warrior awaits the presence of the demon with a grin, "Hell's going to know the wrath of the Woz once again," he thinks.

But the demon is no novice. It realizes that any mortal capable of an Arcane Sigil of Drawing is likely a competent foe. Instead of facing the warrior of heaven directly, the spawn of evil allows its essence to coalesce into the darkness of the stairwell shadows, re-materializing directly behind its quarry.

The GM determines that the spawn of evil gets a free attack against Woz. Rolling for an attack, the demon succeeds. Cloth, flesh, skin and sinew are ripped from Woz's back as the claws of the demon cut deeply into the surprised hero. Damage is rolled and it exceeds Woz's current hit points.

Woz's player declares the he wishes to use an additional Hero Point to cheat death. The GM agrees and modifies the damage to allow Woz to have 1 hit point left. Woz's player again subtracts a Hero Point from his pool, leaving him with 1 point.

However, in order to allow the use of luck to save the character, the GM decides that the agony of the attack is so great that Woz has dropped his weapon and fallen down the stairs hitting his head on the concrete.

Woz now lies in a crumpled heap at the landing of the stairs, unconscious and bleeding. Flowing down the stairs, grinning at the thought of feasting on the soul of a warrior of heaven is his foe…

OPTIONAL: Pushing Your Luck:

Upon rolling a FoB, any player with Hero Points in his Hero Pool can declare that for the next declared number of actions, they will "Push their Luck."
Pushing your luck automatically declares that the same action be performed for up to as many turns as the player has Hero Points, but also decreases the player's Hero Point Pool by the declared turns. The player foregoes the immediate FoB check and instead declares that he is pushing his luck for a specified number of turns.

> Pushing one's luck is always a gamble, and a decision not chanced lightly. However, it is also the best way to immediately improve a skill and net a cool result in the process.
>
> Cautious players may decide to push only non-opposed checks in hopes of never fearing that the action will somehow become impossible. But as demonstrated in the example, even what appears to be a non-opposed event can turn out to be opposed.

> *Note that the GM must agree that the action can be pushed.*
> *Your GM is the final arbiter for ascertaining if "Pushing one's Luck" is possible for an action.*

The character must perform the action for the specified number of rounds or forfeit all benefits of the "Push" and loose the declared number of Hero Points. While the player need not roll any dice to determine success of the action, if at any time the action becomes impossible to perform, the push fails.
At the end of a successfully pushed action, the results are always spectacular and beneficial. While the nature of how spectacular is determined by how difficult and how long the player pushed his luck, the pushed action always results in an immediate improvement of the skill pushed and places a check beside the skill for end of game Trial and Error improvement possibilities.

Example of "Pushing your Luck"

Odie has been spending days pouring over the dusty forgotten books and tomes in the Library Archives of the local University. Hot on the trail of some otherworldly creature, his previous research indicated that some secret is buried in the chaotic mass of parchment and papers – a secret that might lead to the current resting place of a monster. Odie's declares that he will attempt an investigation roll to hopefully glean some forgotten bit of lore from the ancient manuscripts.

Odie's current investigate score is 4, giving him a good chance of finding something so long as it isn't too obscure. But the GM decides that the task is somewhat difficult with a modifier of 2 determining that Odie must roll a 1 or a 2 to succeed. Odie rolls a d10 and gets a 1! A success and a Flash of Brilliance too!
Seeing an opportunity to improve his skills as well as gain some valuable information, Odie immediately declares that since he has 2 Hero Points, he will spend 1 and "Push his Luck" for his next turn. The GM agrees that Odie may indeed "Push his Luck". Odie immediately subtracts 1 Hero Point from his pool, reducing his pool to 1.

Unbeknownst to Odie, this round Mark-H is also temporally searching for clues to the location of the same monster, but his search is occurring temporally. Since both players are searching the Library Archives at the same time, but only one can find the information hidden within, the GM declares that each player determine their action initiative score

Odie rolls a d10, getting an 8 and adds this to his DEX for a result of 12. Mark-H rolls a 2 and adds this to his DEX for a result of 8.

Odie will get to the information before it is whisked away to some future timeline. However, had Odie failed to act before Mark-H, Odie would have lost all the benefits of "Pushing his Luck" since the action he had chosen (namely investigate) would have no longer been possible. Cf. **Declared Actions that become Impossible Actions.**

Another turn goes by in which Odie performs the same investigative action and is automatically successful. At the beginning of the next round, the GM declares that Odie uncovers a host of information including the diary of the last Lighthouse Keeper. Within the diary is a dried sprig of holly and a dried four leaf clover. Odie increases his Investigate score by 1 to 5 and places a check by it for a possible Trial and Error improvement at the end of the story arc.

Special Case: FoB resulting from "Pushing your Luck"

At the end of a pushed action, the results are always spectacular and beneficial. While the nature of how spectacular is determined by how difficult and how long the player pushed his luck, the pushed action always results in an immediate FoB improvement of the skill pushed.

Special Case: Trial and Error resulting from "Pushing your Luck"

At the end of a pushed action, the results are always spectacular and beneficial. While the nature of how spectacular is determined by how difficult and how long the player pushed his luck, the pushed action always results in placing a check beside the skill for end of game Trial and Error improvement possibilities.

OPTIONAL: Blaze of Glory Actions:

While "Pushing your Luck" is performed in response to and to augment spectacular success, Blazing Glory actions are performed in response to and to augment spectacular but catastrophic failure. They are the role-play equivalent of martyring oneself for the cause.

Any character with Hero Points may declare a Blaze of Glory Action as the result of a catastrophic failure or in the event of imminent death, in doing so they must transfer all the Hero Points currently in their Hero Pool into the Glory Pool. These Hero Points now become Glory Pool Points that must be either spent immediately, or lost forever.

The Player must declare that he is performing a Blaze of Glory action immediately before his turn is over and all results of the Blaze must be determined before play can continue.

> *Note that the Player, not the GM determines if a "Blaze of Glory" event occurs.*

Once a player declares a Blaze of Glory Action, any other player may spend one additional Hero Point to add to the Glory Pool. However, only the Glory Blazing player may stipulate the result of the Glory Point expenditure. If points are left unspent in the Glory Pool, they are lost forever.

Essentially Glory Blazing is an extension and continuation of a simple Luck Point expenditure to keep a character alive. However, instead of stipulating that the character lives, the character still dies (unless additional Glory Points are expended to keep the character alive) but the player chooses instead to stipulate any one thing that must be beneficial to another individual.

> *Note that even if the player stipulates that death is somehow averted, their character is removed from play until the completion of the story arc.*

If a Glory Pool contains:	The player may:
1 Glory Point	Perform a Blaze of Glory Action by sacrificing his character gaining the right to stipulate a declaration that determines the immediate outcome of the sacrifice of the character. This sacrifice must be for the benefit of another.
Each additional Glory Point (Not necessarily spent by the Glory Blazing player)	Stipulate an additional declaration including but not limited to stipulating a reason for the character to survive the event.

Example of a Blaze of Glory:

Already in the clutches of the mad leader of the cultist group, Odie's girlfriend, the lovely Ms. Sera, knows that she has no hope for escape from the cellar. To make matters worse, Sera has just overheard the cultists discussing how they intend to leave soon and intercept her true love as he makes his way to some abandoned lighthouse. It seems the villains are on some timetable and are attempting to tie up all the loose ends before some appointed time.

The cultists begin to perform a ritual summoning something horrid from beyond the realms of reality… Sera immediately realizes that she is to be the sacrifice…

Sera's player scans her character sheet one last time for some means of escape. Finding none, but realizing that she has a Hero Point at her disposal, she resolves herself of her action.

Sera's player declares that Sera's not going out quietly, rather she's going out in a Blaze of Glory.

Play stops as Sera's Hero point is immediately moved to the Glory Pool. Immediately 1 point is subtracted from the pool as a cost of beginning the Blaze and declaring the outcome of the event.

Sera's player must now declare a stipulation that must benefit another player. She declares that the summoning will, as a result of altering the fabric of reality, turn the bottles of wine stored in the cellar to highly flammable liquid, which will subsequently explode.

Seeing an opportunity to perhaps save his character's girlfriend, Odie's player subtracts 1 Hero Point from his character sheet and adds it to the Glory Pool.

With points remaining in the pool, Sera's player writes a note to the GM declaring that somehow Sera's proximity to the portal protected her from the explosion.

Sera is removed from play and the game resumes… only Sera's player and the GM know that at some point in the future Sera will return…

OPTIONAL: Flashback to "But what if…"

In the event a player has reached an impasse and cannot move the story forward due to some failure of planning, he has the option to expend a Hero Point to buy a flashback to a "but what if..." planning discussion that is nearly identical to the current obstacle thereby obtaining the necessary gear or requirement to overcome the mundane obstacle.

Flashback**Error! Bookmark not defined.**s can help streamline game play by eliminating the need some players have to plan for everything before doing anything.

While contingency planning is good practice, it can sometimes break the flow of play. Flashback**Error! Bookmark not defined.**s allow

The reasons provided for the flashback must be reasonably plausible and not break the storyline. Flashbacks can be used to overcome minor obstacles but not opposed check conflicts.

> *Note that only mundane obstacles may be overcome with a Flashback event.*
> *Note also that your GM is the final arbiter on the use of a Flashback event.*

Example of a Flashback to "But what if…" event:

Odie has been searching for the old abandoned lighthouse identified in his research. Though he doesn't know exactly what's hidden below the old tower, he knows the general region and is convinced that it's linked to his current investigation.

Finding himself turned around and subsequently lost on a deserted two-track dirt road running along the coast, Odie feels compelled to pull over and walk along the beach to gain his bearings.

Late in the day, off in the distance, he spots the lone tower of the lighthouse. Unfortunately for our hero, the tide has begun come in and the road to the rocky outcropping upon which the old structure was built is completely washed out.

Odie's player immediately searches for a resolution to his current quandary. Eyeing the position of the slowly sinking sun toward the horizon, Odie immediately recognizes that should he stay here and wait for the tide to pull out, he would be forced to enter the lighthouse in the dark.

Not wishing to perform such folly, Odie's player declares he wishes to perform a Flashback to a planning event wherein he anticipated this event and as a result, placed a portable raft in the truck of his car.

The GM considers the ramifications of allowing the player to utilize a Flashback to overcome the obstacle and agrees that Odie probably would have considered the possibility that he needed some means of getting to the structure should it be flooded.

Odie's player deducts a Hero Point from his character sheet and a raft is discovered in the trunk of Odie's car.

KORE Game Moderator Section

<u>Conflict Resolution:</u>

It's all about conflicts

Conflicts come in two types; Opposed and Non-Opposed. These conflicts are overcome with a simple rule. If opposed, the actor must roll above a certain threshold to succeed. If no opposition exists, then the actor must roll below a threshold to realize success.

Success, Failure, or something in-between

The KORE guidelines allow for GM interpretation on what a specific result or score means. This allows for the flexibility of according for results that aren't necessarily success or failure. However, some results either are or are not; for these there can be no middle ground. It is your job as GM to determine if a result indicates success, failure, or perhaps something in-between.

Should this be a roll?

At some point you're going to wonder if rolling for a result is even warranted. Gauge the situation fairly; more rolls do create a greater randomness to the outcomes of situations, which in turn increases the chances of failure to perform actions. But a greater number of rolls also increases the chances that a player will roll a Flash of Brilliance. Additionally, more rolling increases the likelihood of character advancement from the simple use of skills.

In some cases, simply assuming success can eliminate both rolling and the vagaries of randomizations. C.f. Success is Inevitable.

As a GM it is your job to balance the needs of the players to advance at a reasonable rate, the enjoyment of rolling the dice, and the necessity to refrain from needless power creep.

Non-opposed checks:

When trying to determine if a check is successful, simply roll a d10. If the value is **BELOW** the skill or statistic score, then success is realized.

Unlike opposed checks, lower rolls are better for non-opposed checks.

CRUNCH: General Non-Opposed Check Calculation

$$Score_{Actor} > roll_{Actor} \pm \mod ifier_{Actor} \rightarrow Success$$

Example of a non-opposed check:

Odie's been investigating something nasty presumably lurking in the cellar of an old abandoned lighthouse. He comes upon a door that's locked. The lock is rusted with age.
Odie tries to pick the lock with his lockpick set that he bought on eBay. The lockpick set is a mundane item, providing a modifier of 1 to the skill check.
Because of the rust, the lock is a difficult task to pick and so Odie takes a +1 [Difficult] modifier to his skill check
Odie rolls d10 and gets a 6
Modifying for the mundane item yields 6 - 1 = 5
Further modifying for the rust yields 5 + 1 = 6
Since this is greater than his lockpick skill, Odie fails to pick the lock.

In frustration, Odie picks up a rock and beats the lock with it.
The rock is an inconsequential item so it grants no skill bonus.
Odie rolls d10 and gets a 2
Because of the rust, the lock is easy to break so Odie gets a -1 [Easy] modifier to his skill check
2 - 1 = 1 this is equal to his club skill so Odie checks for damage (Character Pdb + Item Pdb)
(1 + 1 = 2) and succeeds in breaking the lock.

OPTIONAL: Special Case: "Take 5" guideline

If faced with a non-opposed check in which a player has a 5 or greater skill or statistic score, that player may "Take 5" and assume success. While this may seem an expedient benefit that would always be used, doing so negates any FoB or Trial and Error Improvement possibilities.

> *Note that the Take 5 guideline requires a modified score of 5 or greater*
> *Modifiers can prevent a player from taking 5*

Example of "Take 5"

Odie has been pouring over the lighthouse keeper's diary looking for clues as to the nature of the beast in the cellar. Not wishing to miss any bit of information, Odie's player declares that, as his investigate skill is currently 5, he will Take 5.

The GM agrees that no modifiers prevent the action. Success is realized without requiring a roll of the die.

The GM declares that Odie learns the following details: The keeper was obsessed with the phases of the moon, horticultural details on holly and clover, and the reported use of cold wrought iron to vanquish creatures from outside reality.

Special Case: Skill Zero Actions:

Skill Zero Actions are actions that the player wishes his character to attempt to perform even though he has a skill score of 0. This can only be allowed if the check also has a modifier that allows for the possibility of a successful check. When trying to determine if a check is successful, simply roll a d10. If the value is **BELOW** the modified skill or statistic score, then success is realized

Skill Zero skills cannot be improved via the Trial and Error method of improvement, but can be increased via a Flash of Brilliance. Furthermore, Skill Zero skill checks cannot be assured via the expenditure of a Hero Point.

Skill Zero Actions should not be confused with undocumented Common Skills.

CRUNCH: General Skill 0 Check Calculation

$$\mathrm{mod}\,ifier_{Actor} > roll_{Actor} \rightarrow Success$$

Example of a Skill Zero Action:

Waking to find himself in a spacecraft manufactured by some alien race, Woz wishes to try to ascertain some information from the strange blocky lettering that he believes must indicate a language of some sort. Unknown to Woz, the spaceship atmosphere is littered with an abundance of nanobots that have infiltrated his system. Following some pre-programming that is directed at teaching sentient beings, these nanobots have reconfigured a small portion of Woz's brain, increasing his chances of understanding the alien dialect.

Woz rolls an alien dialect check as a Skill Zero Check with a modifier of 3 [Very Easy]. He needs a roll of 3 or less to succeed. The roll is a 1… Success! And a Flash of Brilliance check is allowed. Woz rolls a subsequent d10 netting another 1… Success!

Woz player adds the Alien Dialect to his character sheet with a score of 1. So long as the nanobots remain in Woz's system any further attempts to understand the dialect will result in a needed roll of 4 or less.

Special Case: Group Effort

If multiple characters attempt to perform an action, and the task allows for collusion to improve success, then their scores are combined as follows:

The character with the highest skill score's value is used as the baseline score and each additional individual performing the action adds 1 to the score. If the resultant roll is **BELOW** the target, success is realized. Any of the involved characters may expend a Hero Point or enact a Blaze of Glory to assure the successful resolution of the action.

Neither Flash of Brilliance, nor Trial and Error improvements are realized from a successful Group Effort.

CRUNCH: General Group Effort Check Calculation

Assuming N actors

$$Score_{Best} + (N-1) > roll \pm \text{mod}\, ifier \rightarrow Success$$

Example of a Group Effort:

Odie, the Mark-H, Tai, and Woz all want to lift a boulder blocking their way. The boulder is large enough to allow the four to each get a good grip, so the GM allows a Group Effort check to move the stone megalith. The GM further declares that moving the boulder is a STR non-opposed check.

Odie's STR is 3
Mark-H's STR is 5
Tai's STR is 4
And Woz's STR is 4

Since Mark-H has the highest STR, his score (5) is used as the baseline. There are 3 additional individuals performing the action, so the score is now considered to be 5 + 3 = 8. However, the boulder is a massive granite block, so the GM assesses a penalty of 3 [Very Difficult] to the task making the final check 5 + 3 = 8 - 3 = 5.

Our heroes have a 50% chance of lifting the megalith.
The players decide that Odie will roll for the check but he fails with a 7…

Knowing that the boulder blocks their only way of escape, Tai's player declares that he will expend a Hero Point from his pool to assure that the block is removed.

The GM declares that the four lift with all their might, and just when it appears that gravity and the stone have won the battle, some hidden adrenaline reserve kicks in and the great block grinds out of the way.

Opposed Checks:

Opposed checks occur when trying to determine if an action or reaction is successful against another's action or reaction.

When determining if a check is successful, each individual (actor and defender) roll a d10. If the actor's rolled value plus the action linked skill or statistic is **ABOVE** the defender's rolled value plus the defense linked skill or statistic, then success is realized.

Unlike non-opposed checks, higher rolls are better for opposed checks.

Opposed attribute or skill checks are made against the most logical attribute or skill.

As with non-opposed checks, modifiers may further complicate or ease the success of an opposed check.

> What happens in the event of a tie?
>
> Ties always indicate the PC realizes success.
>
> If both actor and defender are PCs, then a re-roll is indicated.

CRUNCH: General Opposed Check Calculation

$$Score_{Actor} + roll_{Actor} \pm \text{mod}\,ifier_{Actor} > Score_{Opposition} + roll_{Opposition} \pm \text{mod}\,ifier_{Opposition} \rightarrow Success$$

Example of opposed check:

Locked behind the door was a creature of nightmares. Unfortunately, Odie has set it loose.
Something Nasty tries to strike Odie with its tentacles (assumed to be a Club attack.) Nasty's Club skill is 6.
Odie, not wanting to get clubbed with a tentacle, attempts to dodge. Odie's Dodge stat is 4.
Nasty rolls d10 and gets a 3
Nasty's score is 3 + 6 = 9

Odie rolls d10 and gets a 4
Odie's opposed score is 4 + 4 = 8

Since Odie's score is less than Nasty's, the evil thing strikes our hero, doing damage to him.
Nasty's Pdb is 2. Ouch!
Odie takes 1 + Pdb = 1 + 2 = 3 damage.
Since Odie only has 1 HP right now (4 - 3 = 1) he changes gears and instead decides to run!

<u>Modifiers:</u>

Some tasks are either more difficult or easier than others and have modifiers to perform them.

Also, some situations are not without external influences dictating a portion of their outcomes.

What can be affected with a modifier?

The short answer is that anything can be modified. Initiative, both declaration and action phase, any skill or attribute check; even a learning check could be modified by some external influence (e.g. Even though the action succeeded with a FoB, the character was under some mind-altering effect that prohibits remembering the brilliance.)

General Modifier Table

Modifier	Description and Example
1 to 2	[Difficult task] • Picking a rusted lock • Reading an arcane dialect [Easy task] • Breaking a rusted lock with a hammer, rock or a pistol
3 to 4	[Very difficult task] • Picking a rusted and broken lock • Reading an arcane dialect on an ill preserved parchment [Very easy task] • Breaking a rusted lock with a sledgehammer or a shotgun
5 to 6	[Exceedingly difficult task] • Picking a rusted and broken lock with a makeshift lockpick set • Reading an arcane dialect on an ill preserved parchment in poor light [Exceeding easy task] • Taking candy from a baby
7 to 8	[Extremely difficult task] • Picking a rusted and broken lock quickly with a makeshift lockpick set • Reading an arcane dialect on an ill preserved parchment in poor light while running away from something nasty [Extremely easy task] • Shooting fish in a barrel
9 to 10	[Impossible task] • Picking a rusted and broken lock immediately without a lockpick set while shooting a gun at something nasty • Reading an arcane dialect on an ill preserved parchment in complete darkness with eyes closed while running away from something nasty [Sure thing] • Hitting the Earth when jumping from a plane

Special Case: Success in Inevitable

If an action declared is impossible to fail; i.e. an un-opposed modified check of 1 or less, or an opposed check of 10/11* or more, then that action is assumed to succeed without the need to roll any dice.

Note that as a GM, it is your job to determine when a die roll is called for, and when an action should be allowed without a die roll.

If a result needs to happen to keep the story arc in motion, then applying a modifier that insures success is the best way to handle the situation.

*Why 10/11?

A 10 would indicate only a tie could result vs. a Non-PC opposition, while an 11 would indicate a value insuring that no tie could occur vs. a PC.

*Note that while the result is identical, this is not the same as the Take 5 guideline.
The Take 5 guideline is chosen as an action by the player.
Inevitable successes are determined by the GM.*

Example of assumed successful actions:

Sera wishes to overhear the plans of the cultists upstairs from her

Sera has a Discover derived statistic of 4.
The GM determines that the cultists are in a heated argument and as a result are yelling .Furthermore, the floorboards are old and rotted, providing very little barrier to the sounds.

He modifies the check by 7 resulting in 4 + 7 = 11 and declares that success is inevitable. No die are rolled as Sera hears the cultist's plans to intercept Odie before he reaches the lighthouse.

Special Case: Impossible Actions

If an action declared is no longer valid to perform during the character's action phase, or is beyond the capabilities of the character, then that action is forfeited.

Note that this failure would be identical to applying a -10 check modifier to the non-opposed skill attempt, but eliminates the need to roll for an outcome.

Examples of impossible actions:

Tai, the Fisher King of Lore, The Caliph of Orina, and heraldic bearer of the Crest of Ridges, is engaged in battle with friends against a murderous band of dark matter elves. He declares that he will attack the dark matter elf that is closest to him with his Omni-Mind Cerebral Concussive Force Power on his action phase. Effective though it is, this mind power can only be used to wrack the psyche of a living, sentient being. During the battle this round and prior to his action, the target of his attack is slain by the Mark-H mech-warrior's Radio-Fission energy beam. Since Tai has no valid target to attack, he forfeits his action this round.

Next round Tai declares that he wishes to pick up the mangled body of what was once a nearby car and hurl it at the elves. Tai's strength is an impressive 5, but the GM believes that this score is not sufficient to perform this action. The GM, being an evil GM, decides that this declaration of an impossible action can be used to enhance the tension of the battle. He declares that Tai thinks he can perform the action, and that this belief was likely due to Tai's poor estimating of the current mass that the body of the car still retains. As a result, Tai's action this round is changed to: move to the car, attempt to lift it, and fail.

<u>Who goes when?</u>

Generally, players will act in concert or in round robin fashion when the nature of "when" doesn't necessarily impact the outcome of a situation. However, in some cases (most notably combat) the determination of "who goes when" and "who does what" is important to the "proper" resolution of a scene.

Initiative

Initiative is determined by the statistics INT and DEX and is broken into two phases, a Declaration Phase, and an Action Phase.
Before action takes place, each individual rolls d10. This roll is added to both INT and DEX statistics for determination of placement in both phases

<u>Declaration Phase:</u>
From lowest to highest INT + d10 score, each entity determines and speaks his or her action.
This simulates the ability of those with higher INT scores to ascertain what their opponents will do.

<u>Action Phase:</u>
From highest to lowest DEX + d10 score, each entity gets to perform the action they stated during the Declaration Phase. This simulates the ability of those with faster reflexes to move first.

Example of initiative determination:

Odie faces the Something Nasty in the cellar of the lighthouse. Odie has already determined that he can't defeat the nasty, so he knows he will run… if he's alive to do so.

Odie rolls d10 and gets an 8 while Nasty rolls d10 and gets a 2. Luck is on Odie's side so far…

Odie's INT is 5 and DEX is 4 yielding a declaration phase initiative of 13 and an action phase initiative of 12. Nasty's INT is 2 and DEX is 7 yielding a declaration phase initiative of 4 and an action phase initiative of 9.

Since Nasty's declare and action scores are lower than Odie's, Nasty will declare first and perform last, giving Odie the tactical advantage of knowing what his opponent is doing and possibly being able to counter it.

Nasty declares that it will attempt to engulf Odie and smother him.
Odie declares that he will RUN!

Odie turns and bolts to the door…

Is that your final Action? - Changing a declared action

Once an action is declared, it cannot be changed without forfeiting the action altogether.

Note that the result of this guideline is identical to applying a -10 modifier to a character changing his or her action.

Declared Actions that become Impossible Actions

If an action declared is no longer valid to perform during the character's action phase, or is beyond the capabilities of the character, then that action is forfeited.

Note that the result of this guideline is identical to applying a -10 modifier to a character attempting to perform an action that is no longer valid.

<u>Advancement and Improving:</u>
During the course of a story arc, a character has the opportunity to improve his skill rank. Any skill listed on a character sheet can be improved. This includes Contacts and Equipment which can be strengthened (in the case of contacts and allies) or augmented (in the case of items.)

Practice makes Perfect – Improvement by Skill Use

<u>Flash of Brilliance</u>

If a character succeeds remarkably in a skill by rolling an unmodified 1 in a non-opposed check or an unmodified 10 in an opposed check, that skill has the possibility of improving immediately due to a flash of brilliance. To see if such an event has occurred, the player rolls an additional d10. If the resultant roll is a 1, then 1 point is added immediately to the skill.

CRUNCH: What's the base chance of improving due to a FoB?

The base chance of improving a skill due to a FoB check is calculated as the Chance of Generating a FoB check times the Chance of Succeeding in the Check itself.

$$FoB_{chance} = 1:10 = 10\%$$

$$FoB_{check} = 1:10 = 10\%$$

$$\therefore FoB_{Success} = 10\% \times 10\% = 1\%$$

Example of Flash of Brilliance:

Odie is fleeing from Something Nasty that is pursuing him out of the cellar of the lighthouse. Odie's player asks if a successful Occult Lore skill check would provide any help in determining how to defeat or subdue the Nasty thing behind him. The GM agrees and Odie rolls a d10 and gets a 1. Brilliance!

Odie rolls another d10 and gets a 1. Odie adds 1 to his Occult Lore skill, increasing it to 5.

Odie recalls something he read in a dusty tome years ago and reaches into his pocket for the sprig of mistletoe he always carries. Praying that his gambit works, Odie turns and holds it directly in front of him…

Special Case: FoB for the Common Skill

If a character succeeds remarkably in a Common Skill un-opposed check by rolling an unmodified 1, then that specific sub-skill is considered sundered, or "split out" from the Common Skill and henceforth is now capable of being improved by subsequent improvement means.

Example of Sundering and Improving a Common Skill via FOB:

Woz attempts a serious drive maneuver by rolling against his Common Skill (currently at 2) and gets a 1 noting a FoB. Woz's player writes Drive (2) on his character sheet, splitting it out from the Common Skill set.

If, later in the game, Woz rolls another FoB, or "checks" the drive skill he is given the chance of improving it by the same methodologies as any skill.

Trial and Error

Characters get better at skills by using them; if a character succeeds in a skill check, regardless of opposition, he or she should put a check beside that skill. Once the scenario is over, the player will roll d10 for each skill that is "checked." If this d10 roll is above the current score, then 1 point is added to the skill.

GRAPH-FU: Possibility of Improving a Skill from Trial and Error

Possibility of Improving a Skill from Trial and Error
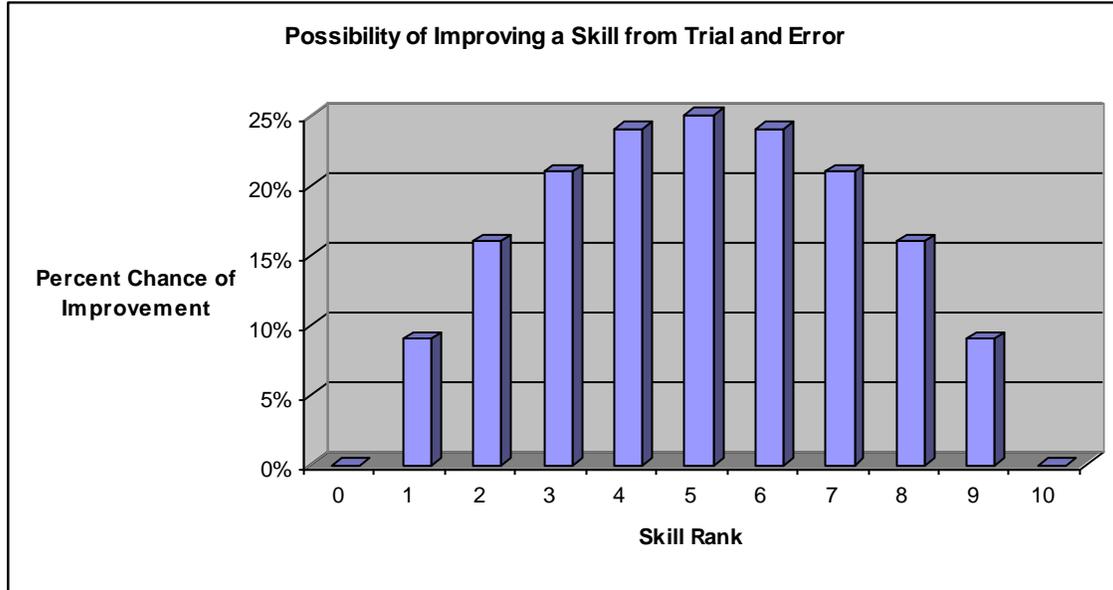
Example of Trial and Error:

Since Odie has survived the horror beneath the lighthouse and has returned home to rest and recuperate, he has a chance to learn from his mistakes and successes.
During the investigation the following skills were "checked."

Club (a new skill that was previously unlisted and assumed to have a skill of 1)
Occult Lore (currently at 5)
Architecture (currently at 2)
Investigate (currently at 5 due to an immediate increase from successfully "Pushing his Luck")

Odie rolls a d10 for each "checked" score and gets the following results:
Club = 3
Occult Lore = 4
Architecture = 1
Investigate = 3

Odie succeeds in a Trial and Error improvement check for his Club skill, which increased to 2.

Special Case: Trial and Error for the Common Skill

Since the Common Skill is an amalgam of multiple, distinct and non-related skills that are considered common to a character, Trial and Error means for improvement is not possible.

You Can Teach an Old Dog New Tricks – Improvement by Learning

Improving a current skill on your own

Improving on your own is more difficult than being taught by a buddy and more time consuming than any other method. Improving a skill takes 1 month per current skill level to perform and a check of the skill is required. If the check fails, the skill learning fails. If the result succeeds by being **ABOVE** the skill in question, then the current skill is improved by 1 point
.

> *Note that the character is removed from play for the required game time while improving skills.*
> *Note also that while modifiers may influence the capabilities of a character to improve an existing skill*
> *a skill at level 0 cannot be improved by this fashion.*

GRAPH-FU: Possibility of Improving a Skill by Learning on Your Own

Possibility of Improving a Skill by Learning on Your Own

Percent Chance of Improvement (vertical axis, 0% to 100%)

Skill Rank (horizontal axis, 0 to 10)

Skill Rank	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Percent Chance	100%	90%	80%	70%	60%	50%	40%	30%	20%	10%	0%
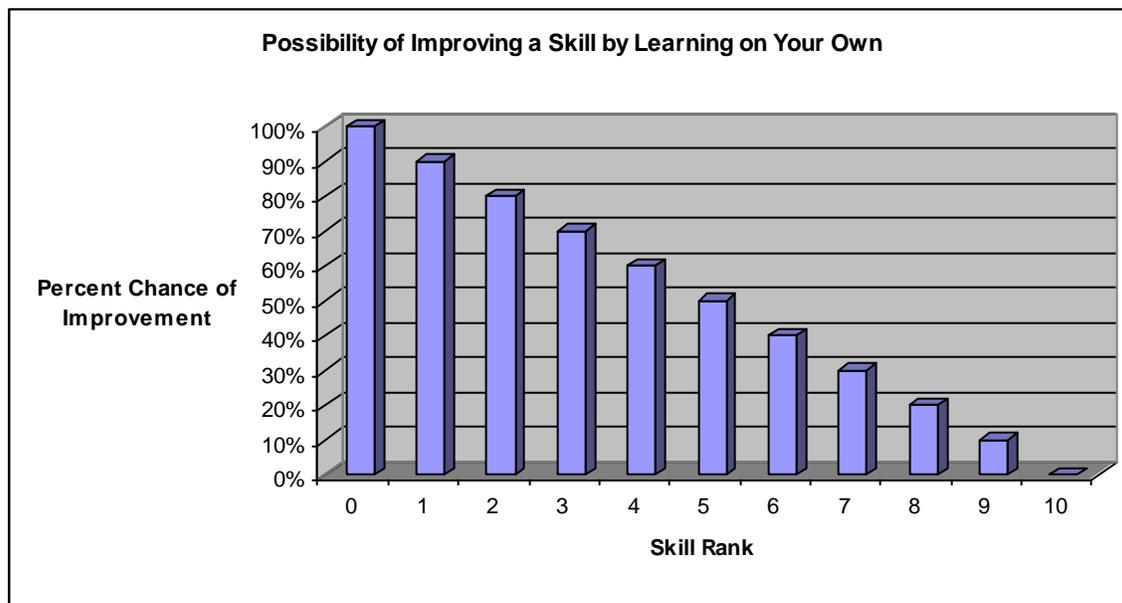
Example of improving a current skill on your own:

Wishing to improve her photography skill which is currently at level 2, Sera takes 2 months of quiet time studying the trade. At the completion of the 2 months, Sera's player rolls a d10 resulting in a 2.

The studying fails to impart any meaningful information and the skill remains at 2.

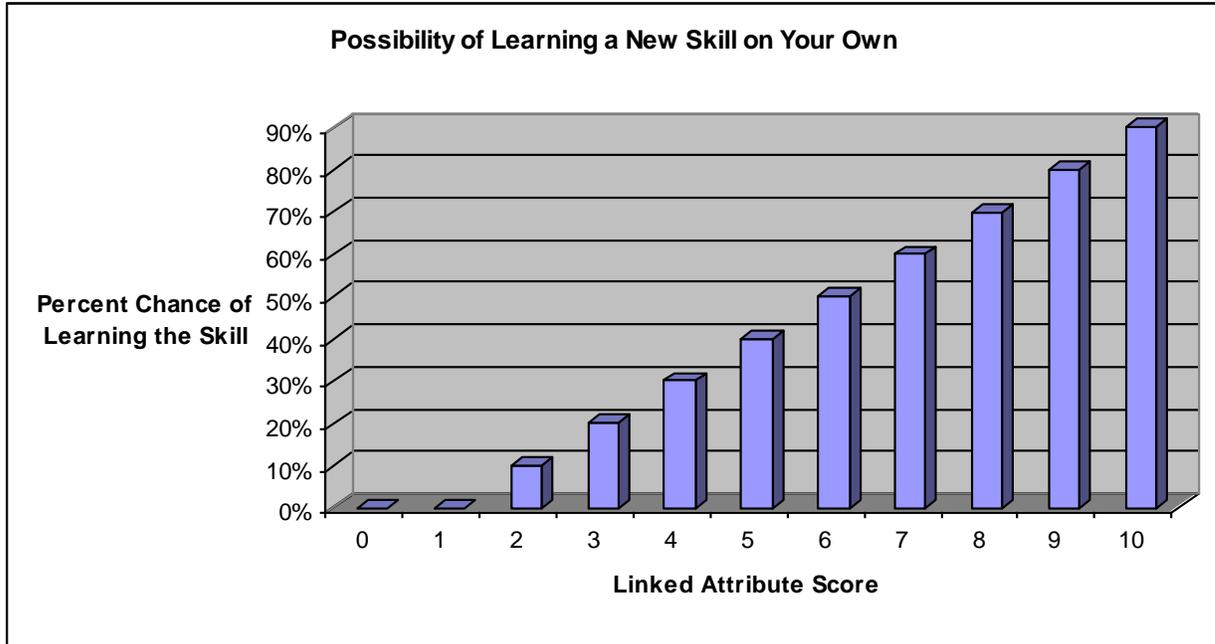<u>Learning a new skill on your own</u>

Learning a new skill on your own is far more difficult than any other method. Learning a new skill takes 1 month to perform and a check of the linked statistic is required. If the check fails, the learning fails. If the result succeeds by being **BELOW** the current score, then a new skill at level 1 is added to the character sheet. Note that any skill that is linked to an attribute of 1 or below cannot be learned by this method. Note too that the character should be removed from play for the required 1 month of game time that they are engaged in learning the new skill. Note also that modifiers may influence the capabilities of a character learning a new skill.

GRAPH-FU: Possibility of Learning a New Skill on Your Own

Possibility of Learning a New Skill on Your Own

Percent Chance of Learning the Skill (y-axis: 0% to 90%)

Linked Attribute Score (x-axis: 0 to 10)

Example of learning a new skill on your own:

Odie finds a magical tome that contains a secret formulation that allows him to learn a new spell "Cut you from Beyond the Ethereal Darkness." Since he has no one to teach him the spell (which would then fall into the "Learning from a Buddy" guideline) he attempts to learn the spell by himself.

Odie's spends the next month studying the arcane information in the tome. At the end of the study period, he rolls a POW check and succeeds. Odie's player adds a new skill representing the spell: Cut you from Beyond the Ethereal Darkness to his character sheet and sets the initial skill score at 1.

<u>Learning from a buddy</u>

Any character with a base skill score greater than 5 can teach that skill to another character.
Learning takes 1 month for each point learned and can be raised in this fashion to a maximum of one-half the skill of the teacher (rounded down.) Learning and teaching are mutually exclusive events. One cannot teach and learn in the same month. Note that so long as the required time is spent in study, this method of learning is always successful.

Example of Learning from a buddy:

Thinking that perhaps there are easier ways to make a living, Odie calls his buddy Woz to teach him how to gamble effectively. Woz is a professional poker player with a gamble skill of 7. Since Woz's skill is greater than 5, he can teach Odie how to gamble more effectively than a normal slot-jockey. While Woz is arguably an excellent player, the most Woz can teach Odie the gamble skill is: 7 / 2 = 3.5 = 3.

Odie and Woz are taken out of commission for 3 months as Woz takes Odie under his wing. After the 3 months, Odie now has a gamble skill of 3.

Had the teaching session only lasted 1 month, Odie would be given a gamble skill of 1.

<u>Damage and Death:</u>

How Damage is determined:

If a character reaches 0 HP, IKE or POW, they are incapacitated due to physical, mental, or mystical trauma respectively. Scores below 0 usually indicate death. It should be noted that this might not always be true. A zombie may indeed have IKE and POW scores of 0 but still be driven onward by a lust for braaiiiins and whatever force has zombefied it…

Total damage dealt to an opponent is equal to 1 plus the character's Physical/Magical damage bonus plus the attack's Physical/Magical damage bonus minus the sum of all P/M damage modifiers for any protection. Depending on the nature of the attack, such damage is subtracted from an opponent's HP, IKE or POW respectively.

In general, damage is increased by the attacker's Pdb and/or Mdb as well as the weapon's or spell's Pdb and/or Mdb and decreased by the Pdb and/or Mdb modifier of any protective devices/effects.

> Note that if an opponent has damage mitigating protection that is greater than the total damage dealt plus one, then the damage is zero (i.e. one cannot be healed by an attack – unless that is a specific power.)

<u>CRUNCH: General Damage Calculation</u>

$$d = \left(1 + \sum Pdb_{Action} - \sum Pdm_{Opposition}\right) \leftrightarrow \sum Pdm_{Opposition} \leq \left(\sum Pdb_{Action} + 1\right)$$

General Item Damage Table:

Item	Pdb/Pdm	Weapon Example	Protection Example
Basic Item, Spell or Power	1	Club, knife, small caliber gun	Wooden Shield
Moderate Item, Spell or Power	2	Sword, large caliber gun	Medieval Body Armor
Advanced Item, Spell or Power	3	Automatic rifle	Modern-era Kevlar body armor
Godlike Item, Spell or Power	10		

Example of Damage and Death:

Odie's friend, The Protective Force Series Mark-H, a time-traveling cybernetic sorcerer-hacker from an alternate dimension (Mark-H for short), is attempting to thwart a group of three cultists who purport to summon an Ancient Evil, the ageless and utterly vile parent of Something Nasty.

The cultists are all standing in a group, and make an easy target since they are currently enraptured in the summoning spell.

Since Odie offered to let Mark-H use his wheels, and there isn't a lot of time (even for a time jumper like Mark-H) to call for backup, Mark-H decides to use the beat-up pickup truck as a weapon…
He steers at the cultist congregation and floors it!

The GM determines that a pickup truck has a Pdb of 3.

Mark-H's Drive Automobile skill is a paltry 2 (apparently in the future automobiles are non-existent.) Mark-H rolls d10 and gets a 2 succeeding.

The GM determines that the pickup truck is large enough to strike all three cultists since they are standing together. Damage of 1 + Mark-H's Pdb + Pdb for a car = 1 + 1 + 3 = 5 points is done to each nefarious villain. Since the cultist had only 3 HP, the massive truck barrels through each of them like butter, killing them.

However, in good dramatic fashion, their deaths act as sacrifices and complete the summoning of an Ancient Evil. The truck t-bones the coalescing body of the nightmarish creature doing 5 points of damage to the beast from beyond.

Noting that Mark-H failed to "buckle-up", the GM calls for a DEX check to prevent being thrown from the vehicle during the ensuing carnage.

Mark-H's DEX score is currently 7, augmented by his previous use of a cybernetic implant that boosts reaction time by 1. He rolls d10 getting a 9 and fails…

Thrown from the vehicle, the GM decides the injuries of such an act adds up to 3 damage; 1 for the sudden stop, 1 for going through the windshield, and an additional 1 for striking the spine covered body of a now fully manifested Ancient Evil.

Being an evil GM, he also determines that the truck and the flung body of Mark-H have insured that an Ancient Evil is paying amused attention to the funny creature that just propelled himself as a weapon. Dazed from the situation, Mark-H looses any action this round while an Ancient Evil gathers up the mangled truck carcass and tossed it at the dazed time-jumper.

The GM calls for a Dodge roll. If Mark-H fails, he's in for a world of hurt…

Recovery:

Damage and Death are dangerous foes in the KORE gaming system. But the ravages of battle can be overcome in various means. Some require time and rest, others allow for skills and powers to heal a character "on-the-spot".

<u>"Help me! I've been shot!" – Instant recovery</u>

Battlefield use of any ability that can aid the health of a character (including, but not limited to: First Aid, Medicine, Psychoanalysis, Pharmacy, Healing Spells, etc.) will sustain a character at 1 point on a successful check if that character is at 0 points, or will add 1 point to a character's characteristic statistic (up to their maximum number of points.) If the character was at 0 points, they would be considered unconscious, immobilized, or unresponsive due to the trauma, but will have averted death.

Note that Instant, Battlefield recovery methods heal only 1 point of damage.

Example of Battlefield Recovery:

Mark-H has defeated an Ancient Evil, but has fallen to a "late to the party" cultist. Bearing the brunt of a nefarious spell that saps both the physical as well as mental wellbeing of its target, Mark-H is unconscious and severely wounded at 0 Health Points to his 6 maximum and 0 IKE of his 5 maximum. Fortunately for the time jumper, Woz has been trailing this cultist and has come to the aid of his friend. Woz has a First Aid skill of 3, and wishes to attempt to perform some sort of healing that will stabilize the time jockey.
Woz rolls a d10 and gets a 3. Success! Though still unconscious and at 0 IKE, Mark-H is now at 1 HP.

Woz better deal with the cultist before Mark-H takes any further damage.

<u>"Let's take another look at your wounds" – Non-Battlefield recovery</u>

Non-Battlefield use of any skill that can aid the health of a character will increase a characters HP, IKE, or POW by a minimum of 1 point and a maximum of skill level on a successful check up to that character's maximum statistic score. Repeated use of some healing skills to provide a curative effect has a cumulative effect. Examples of skills that can be benefited by repeated use include Healing spells. Others such as First Aid, Psychoanalysis, etc, will have no further effect after the initial skill use.

Note that After-the-battle recovery methods heal up to the skill level points of damage.

Example of Non-Battlefield Recovery:

Mark-H and Woz have defeated their enemies and are preparing to leave the field of battle. Since the battle is over, and more time can be spent helping, Woz is allowed another First Aid check. Woz rolls and gets a 2, well below the necessary 3 he needs to be successful. Mark-H is healed another 3 HP. Any further attempt to use First Aid to improve Mark-H's situation will fail to net any positive results.
Woz also is capable of the magical spell Mend Bones and Bind Wounds at skill level 2. He attempts the spell, rolls d10, and gets a 2. Success! Mark-H is healed another 2 HP
At this point Mark-H is at his maximum HP, though he is still unconscious since Woz has no way to restore Mark-H's lost IKE points.

<u>Rest and Recuperative Recovering from damage</u>

Damage to a character's HP, IKE and POW scores can be recovered at the rate of 1 point per 1 week of recovery time. Recovery can be improved by professional assistance during the recuperative period. A successful skill check will decrease recovery time by half. Time required to heal is based on the highest of the damage scores to recover fully.

Note that no skill increasing or strenuous activities can be performed while resting and recuperating.

Example of Rest and Recuperation Recovery:

At the conclusion of another time spanning battle, Mark-H is severely wounded at 3 points of his maximum 6 HP and 1 point of his maximum 6 IKE.

It would normally take him 3 weeks to recover from this physical damage, but he is currently convalescing and being ministered to by the Mystic Temporal Sisters of Mercy Nurses. The GM determines that this constitutes a successful professional assistance skill check so the actual recovery time is 1.5 weeks.

Mark-H's mental wounds are more severe however, needing at least 2.5 weeks to recover fully. (5 / 2 = 2.5) Mark-H could settle in for a 17-day rest to recover fully, or he could forego the extra week and be at 4 IKE.

Appendix

Character Sheet

Name:

Attribute	Current	Maximum	Modifier	Attribute	Current	Maximum	Modifier
STR				INT			
DEX				WIS			
CON				PRE			

Description / Details:

Hero Points

Physical	Current	Maximum	Modifier	Mental	Current	Maximum	Modifier	Super	Current	Maximum	Modifier
Dodge (DEX+CON+INT)/3				IKE (INT+WIS)/2				POW (STR+PRE+CON)/3			
HP (STR+DEX+CON)/3				Discover (DEX+WIS+PRE)/3				Grounding (WIS+CON+PRE)/3			
Pdb (STR+DEX)/10				Discipline (WIS+CON)/2				Mdb (INT+PRE)/10			

Check	Skill	P/M/X	Current	Maximum	Modifier		Check	Skill	P/M/X	Current	Maximum	Modifier
	Native Language: _____ (IKE	M										
	Common Skill (IKE2)											