DISTEMPER

CORE RULEBOOK v0.7.68

Dis·tem·per / ˌdisˈtempər/

noun: distemper

   1.   a viral disease of some animals, especially dogs, causing fever, coughing, and catarrh.

   2.   political disorder.

trans. verb: distempered; distempering; distempers

   1.   to throw out of order

   2.   derange, unsettle

Game Design & Layout: Tony Bushell

Table of Contents

THE DISTEMPER

The world quickly went to hell when Man's Best Friend became our deadliest enemy.

It's been about a year since the Dog Flu, a highly contagious and deadly form of distemper, appeared out of nowhere. No one was sure if the dogs gave it to us, or if we gave it to them but it didn't matter much once 80% of humanity was wiped out.

Polite society quickly collapsed under the pressure of the unprecedented death-toll, and it took all the old rules with it.

Tens, possibly hundreds of millions more have died since from starvation, disease, or just for the food in their hand, and mankind has been pushed back to the population and technology levels of the 1800s. The weak are already dead and survivors must be willing to fight to protect what's theirs.

Good folk remain but are outnumbered by the weak and the bad. Despite all the death, there still seems to be a never-ending supply of crazy and dangerous groups anywhere you go.

From the gangs and militias in the largely abandoned cities to the tribes and clans out in the country, any efforts to rebuild are swallowed by the fighting for territory and whatever limited resources remain. If you have something someone wants, you can expect them to try and take it from you.

The collapse of any central authority created a power vacuum which has given rise to tinpot warlords, often ex-military, police, or criminals, all leading raggedy armies and claiming sovereignty over any area they want and everything within it.

Roaming bands of marauding raiders who don't care about notions such as territory will descend like human locusts to take what you have by force, all too often with military precision. They are getting more desperate as unspoiled gasoline becomes harder to find, and this desperation just serves to make them more dangerous.

People have always turned to Religion in hard times and the death and devastation caused by the virus gave rise to multiple new churches, sects, and cults, each with their own fanatical followers who are seemingly willing to commit previously unthinkable atrocities in the name of their new faith.

Perhaps scariest of all, there are even rumors that a semblance of the Government is up and running in Washington and that they have both a vaccine and a plan to try and reestablish control.

The shortage of food has turned some to cannibalism and although that idea still remains repulsive to most, the truth is that there is barely anyone still alive who hasn't been faced with the prospect of having to kill someone else to secure their next meal.

As hard as it is to trust anyone these days, it's hardest of all to trust a well-fed man.

In light of all these dangers, residents of many towns, villages and settlements have banded together for safety, but also to pool their efforts and resources. Small farming collectives are establishing themselves around the country as people return to a life without the internet or power tools.

There is always a need for hardworking people who are looking for a sense of community, just like there will always be a need for people prepared to fight to protect what's theirs.

And then there is still the virus itself. H724. The media called it *the Dog Flu*, but *the Distemper* is how most people refer to it. Not content with killing more than 6 billion people during the first go around, *the Distemper* can still infect and wipe out a community within days.

Masks are still more common than not, although that is starting to fade the further people get from the pandemic. Once someone gets infected it takes a few days before they exhibit symptoms, but even before they show, the virus has already started making them crazy.

By the time it's obvious someone is sick they are ready to snap. With no warning, they will turn on anyone around them and, like a dog, they will bite and scratch and attack anything within reach until, like a dog, someone puts them down.

A runny nose or sneeze can quickly get someone shot in the face because no one takes any chances these days.

And, of course, canines themselves still carry the disease. It makes them as crazy as it makes us and feral packs of wolves, coyotes and jackals are a constant threat, showing up with no warning and ripping into anything they see, savaging anyone within reach and transmitting the disease with each bite.

There are no more rules, there are no more laws, and each individual is going to have to decide who they are going to be in this ugly new reality. At some point, everyone is going to find themselves asking, "what am I prepared to do to survive?" and they had better have a good answer.

So, who do you plan on being?

Do you have skills valuable to others, like a doctor or mechanic or teacher, or have you survived this long by being better at doing unto others before it's done unto you?

Are you willing will you take part in rebuilding society, do you plan on carving out your own empire by force, or are you simply trying to secure your next meal?

Will you be hunters, will you be protectors, or will you find yourself someone's prey?

Spring is coming, food is running out, and there is nowhere left to hide.

It's time to choose.

Chapter 1: What is Distemper?

Intended to be played in a group of 3-6 people, **Distemper** is a survival/horror tabletop role-playing game (TTRPG) set in the aftermath of a pandemic which has killed almost everyone on earth and transformed what is left into a dangerous, brutal, and capricious new reality.

Each new day in this harsh world brings risks, threats and terrors that you – along with a couple of friends and a handful of dice – must decide how to respond and react if you are going to survive.

In its simplest terms, *Distemper* can be seen as a complex and rewarding game of make-believe where one player takes on the role of referee or facilitator, also known as the *Game Moderator* (or just *GM*) and everyone else creates a *Player Character*, also be referred to as a *PC* or, more simply, a *character*.

Collectively referred to as *The Group*, the participants weave an interactive narrative as they build their own story and forge their path in this fractured and deadly world.

If you have ever watched a movie or TV show or been reading a novel or comic-book and found yourself thinking: "I wouldn't have done that, I would have done something *better*, something *smarter*, than that," then *Distemper* is your opportunity to put that theory to the test.

Each player will create a character who is front and center in stories that the group collectively tells, and exactly how they will survive and thrive will come down to the choices they make and the actions the group take along the way. Players will soon find that nothing is easy or without consequence anymore and that their choices matter.

Unlike many traditional games, there are no winners or losers in *Distemper*, and the game unfolds cooperatively between the players and the GM who collectively define the challenges and outcomes in order to tell a story that is exciting, enjoyable, fulfilling, and memorable.

With the exception of a handful of 6-sided dice, this core ruleset provides the group everything they need to play a game, from character creation, to combat, to populating the world and the people they will meet along the way, to creating an adventure or campaign. Further supplements, source-books and modules will help flesh out the world and provide a tapestry for future storytelling.

As with any game, there are a variety of rules and setting information to digest and when reading this guide, you will see various rules, sidebars, clarifications and some exposition called out in boxes such as those on the right. This is done to both make digestion of the information easier, as well as returning to find specific rules when you need them.

Lastly, as an additional aid to finding important rules or data, there will occasionally be a bloody thumbprint calling out a box or block of text or a table. This should always be treated as critical information and the thumbprint may even appear next to the page number in the bottom corner if the contents of the entire page are significant enough.

The first thing you need are six-sided dice. Lots of them, as many as you can find. See if there are any more and grab some blank paper and pens while you're at it.

At a minimum, the Game Moderator (GM) should spend some time familiarizing themselves with the rules prior to starting play, but it may be helpful if players have at least a passing familiarity with the basic rules. To help with this, there is a *Distemper QuickStart* guide available at **www.DistemperVerse.com** that distills the rules down to the bare essentials for ease of digestion and it may be easier initially for a starting group to play solely using the *QuickStart* rules, coming back to this book once they have the basic concepts under their belt.

To further facilitate quick gameplay, there is also an introductory adventure called **Chased** that is available for download from **DistemperVerse.com** that guides a GM and group through starting a game and to get people playing as quickly as possible.

So, grab some friends, some scraps of paper, a handful of dice and prepare to tell some *Collaborative Stories* in a dark, dangerous, dystopian world where every move may be your last.

RULES & SIDEBARS

Some rules are important or complex enough that they are called out in boxes like this, usually as sidebars to regular text, to make them easy to find and return to when needed.

They will often be accompanied by working examples that provide greater detail that both help clarify a rule and aid players and GMs digest the information.

CLARIFICATIONS & EXPOSITION

THE CONTENTS OF BOXES SUCH AS THIS ARE INTENDED TO PROVIDE CONTEXT OR DETAILS FROM OUTSIDE THE GAME BUT CAN ALSO BE USED TO PROVIDE INFORMATION DESIGNED TO BE SHARED WITH THE GROUP THAT WILL HELP SET THE TONE, OR TO GIVE THE PLAYERS A SENSE OF WHAT'S HAPPENING IN THE WORLD AROUND THEM.

DEPENDING ON THE CONTEXT, IT IS UP TO THE GM IF THEY HINT, PARAPHRASE, OR READ THE CONTENTS OF THESE BOXES DIRECTLY TO THE PLAYERS.

WHAT IS THE DISTEMPERVERSE?

DESIGNED AS PART OF A UNIQUELY SHARED NARRATIVE, *DISTEMPER* IS A MUCH LARGER POST-APOCALYPTIC EXPERIENCE THAN JUST THE GAME THAT YOU ARE READING.

SET AGAINST A CONTINUALLY UNFOLDING BACKDROP EXPLORED THROUGH THE *DISTEMPER* COMIC BOOKS, THE ACTIONS AND STORIES FOR SOME INDIVIDUAL PLAYER CHARACTERS IN THE *DISTEMPER* GAME CAN BE DEEPLY PERSONAL AS THEY EXPLORE THEIR CHARACTERS LIVES, WHILE OTHERS MIGHT PLAY ON A GRANDER SCALE WHERE THEY FIND THEMSELVES SHAPING THE FATE OF HUMANITY AND INFLUENCING FUTURE COMIC BOOK STORYLINES AND GAME CONTENT.

THE *DISTEMPERVERSE* WEBSITE TIES THE GAMES AND COMIC BOOKS TOGETHER AND ACTS AS A CONDUIT FOR NEW CONTENT TO BOTH READERS AND GAMERS ALIKE. ADDITIONALLY, IT IS HOME TO *THE TAPESTRY*, A MECHANISM FOR PLAYERS AND GMS TO ALLOW THEIR STORIES, SETTINGS AND CAMPAIGNS TO TO BE CURATED AND POTENTIALLY BE SHARED WITH THE COMMUNITY OR EVEN WORKED INTO FUTURE COMIC BOOKS STORY ARCS OR GAME CONTENT.

IT IS ENTIRELY POSSIBLE THAT THE ACTIONS OF PLAYER CHARACTERS, GMS, WRITERS, CONTENT CREATORS, AND OTHER COMMUNITY MEMBERS WILL INFLUENCE THE COURSE OF HUMAN HISTORY AND DEFINE ONGOING EVENTS IN THIS NEW WORLD.

COLLECTIVELY, THE NARRATIVES WEAVED TOGETHER ACROSS VARIOUS MEDIUM AND VIA DISPARATE PLATFORMS MAKE UP THE *DISTEMPERVERSE*.

WHAT WILL YOUR PART IN SHAPING THE WORLD BE?

VISIT *WWW.DISTEMPERVERSE.COM* FOR MORE DETAILS.

THE WORLD YOU ARE LIVING IN

Designed to be quick and fast-flowing, *Distemper* provides a grounded experience that is less fanciful in tone, grittier, and more down-to-earth than many TTRPGs.

By design, characters are ordinary people. Combat is brutal and unforgiving. Players are going to need to track their ammo and food in a world where it's increasingly scarce.

Distemper doesn't take place generations later, it is barely a year since the apex of the disease. This is very much the here and now. Some parts of society are attempting to knit themselves back together in isolated pockets whilst the frayed fringes of other elements are simultaneously pulled, causing further hardship and conflict.

There are no zombies, no mutants, no vampires, and no alien invaders in *Distemper*. There are no lasers, magic potions, and no fantastic creatures. There is just the gnawing cold, constant hunger and, scariest of all, other humans to contend with.

The players should remember that everything their characters knew has changed. People will be forced to do ugly things to survive and their morality will be constantly tested with ethical choices that can impact long-term gameplay.

After all, when starvation is a very real prospect, people will find themselves driven to extremes.

People may no longer be dying in droves from the virus but those who hadn't already succumbed and weren't killed in the rioting that consumed and ravaged society or hadn't died of exposure, starved to death, and who weren't killed over scraps of food in the famines that followed, are now faced with figuring out the next steps in long-term survival.

The Rule of Law has been replaced with the Rule of the Gun and if you have something of value, you need to be prepared to fight to keep it and, if someone has something that you want? Well, you might have an interesting choice to make.

As always, mankind is resilient. In some places, people are actively working together to fulfill the basic needs of food and protection knowing full well that someone, somewhere else, could be plotting to take it away from them.

Some cities are burning hellholes whilst others are sanctuaries and beacons of hope. Trust is in short supply and is harder to earn than before but is more important than ever. With no central authorities remaining, everyone needs someone else to watch over them while they sleep.

Suggestions on customizing campaigns and timelines are covered in *Chapter 10: Moderating The Distemper* and will be detailed in future supplements. GMs are encouraged to take full artistic license to create the setting required to tell the story the group wants to tell.

Now that you have players, a Game Moderator, the rules, and those sweet, sweet dice, it's time to create characters, define the game world and start weaving an interactive narrative.

SESSION XERO: SETTING THE STAGE

Once the GM and players are gathered the group should discuss what kind of story they want to collaboratively tell and set any boundaries and guidelines for the level of horror and violence that they are comfortable with.

Whether this takes 10 minutes or 2 hours, this conversation is referred to as *Session Xero* and, at a minimum, subjects that the group should discuss include the duration of the game, the tone and level of violence, any triggers, and the group's make-up and starting point.

DURATION

Although this discussion relies largely on what the GM has planned, the group should discuss the length of the intended campaign – is this going to be a one-shot adventure with a defined beginning, middle and end that is played out during a session or two, or will this be an open-ended, sandbox campaign that will unfold over the course months, or possibly even years?

TONE & VIOLENCE

As *Distemper* is, at it's core, a Survival/Horror game, the group should discuss the tone of the game and the level of violence, gore, and dread with which they are comfortable.

Are they interested in a more visceral, combat heavy story of pillaging and conquest, or are they drawn to role-playing as a member of a community trying to rebuild what they can of society against stacked odds? Is this a bleak and hopeless world where characters will do anything to get by, or do they wish to act as flickers of hope for others?

The group should also discuss if are there limits to what they are comfortable with encountering or having described to them, or is everything fair game? If extreme topics like torture or cannibalism feature in a story, is that going to create issues for the players?

Given that the backdrop to the world is how Man's Best Friend wiped humanity out, players may also want to discuss the role both the virus and dogs play in the game to ensure the GM is clear on how best to include (or exclude) both subjects. Is the virus still a concern? Are dogs still carriers? How will players feel about fighting with a pack of chihuahuas? See *Animals* on page 172 for more details on handing dogs within the game.

TRIGGERS & THE X CARD

Tied to the tone and violence conversation, there are multiple subjects and storylines that might feed into personal dislikes or in other way act as a trigger for individuals and unintentionally create a negative play experience, and should be avoided.

Although the GM should ask the group if there are any subjects in the survival/horror genre that they particularly want to keep away from and tailor the stories being told to that outcome, some groups may additionally offer the group the option of an *X Card* - a token or a piece of paper with an X on it that is pointed to, or someone typing an *X* in an online chat window to signal that a player is uncomfortable with the subject matter and the group should pivot.

Given the inherently dark and disaffected nature of the *Distemper* game-world, these questions should at least be touched upon before play commences so that the game is an enjoyable experience for all involved.

MAKE-UP AND STARTING POINT

Once the tone has been set, the players and GM should discuss the types of characters that will make up their group and the skills they will collectively bring. In addition, they should also discuss any background flavor they may bring to the group dynamic, such as weird personal peccadilloes or habits. Some groups may decide to use pregenerated characters (see *Ready to Go, Out of the Can* on page 39), but for those wishing to create custom characters, now is the time to do it. Refer to the *Backstory Generation* section in *Chapter 5: Who Will You Be?*

As the group either picks or creates characters, the GM should encourage a discussion around where they are from, how they came to be together and where they are going to start the game.

As some games may begin in the middle of the action, players should have a good understanding of the group dynamic before play begins and the players should *Fill In The Gaps* (see page 10) around those details so that they start to put context around their characters and possibly even build a shared history. Some GM's may ask players to further define the various relationships in the group or tell quick stories of who they were before the pandemic began.

Session Xero is covered in greater detail on pages 9 and 175.

COLLABORATIVE STORYTELLING

STORYTELLING IS ONE OF HUMANITY'S OLDEST AND MOST EFFECTIVE TOOLS FOR BOTH COMMUNICATION AND ENTERTAINMENT WHEREIN ONE OR MORE PEOPLE COLLECTIVELY WORK TO SHARE A CONCEPT OR AN EXPERIENCE WITH AN AUDIENCE.

COLLABORATIVE STORIES ARE AT THE HEART OF ROLE-PLAYING GAMES AND TOGETHER, THE GROUP SHOULD GO BACK AND FORTH EXCHANGING IDEAS, SUGGESTIONS AND DIALOGUE THAT BUILD ON EACH OTHER AND CREATE LAYERS AS THEY INTERACTIVELY WEAVE A STORY THEY DRIVE THE NARRATIVE, THEY ACT AS THE PROTAGONISTS, AND DEFINE THE OUTCOMES OF THEIR ACTIONS.

THE PLAYER'S ROLE

PLAYERS SHOULD TAKE ON THE ROLE OF THEIR CHARACTER AND ACT AS THEY WOULD DURING THE COURSE OF THE GAME. THEY SHOULD MAKE SUGGESTIONS, WORK WITH OTHER PLAYERS TO HELP ANSWER QUESTIONS AROUND THE STORY AND TO PROVIDE DETAILS AND CONTEXT AROUND THEIR MOTIVATIONS AND ACTIONS.

THEY SHOULD HELP TO POPULATE AND SHAPE THE WORLD AROUND THEM, TO ROLEPLAY AS THEIR CHARACTER AND MAKE THE CHOICES THEIR CHARACTER WOULD AND MAKE THE GAME AS ENGAGING AND FUN FOR EVERYONE AROUND THEM AS POSSIBLE.

WHILST IT'S POSSIBLE THAT PLAYER'S CHARACTERS ARE AT ODDS WITH EACH OTHER WITHIN THE GAME, THE PLAYERS THEMSELVES SHOULD NEVER BE ANTAGONISTIC TOWARDS ONE ANOTHER OR THE GM. IF THAT HAPPENS, TAKE A BREAK, AND TAKE A BREATH BEFORE RESUMING PLAY.

THE GM'S ROLE

THE GM IS LIKE THE HOST OF A PARTY. IT IS UP TO THEM TO PROVIDE A PLATFORM FOR PEOPLE TO ENJOY THEMSELVES AND ENSURE THAT NO ONE IS BEING LEFT OUT.

THE GAME MODERATOR PROVIDES THE STORY FRAMEWORK, VOICES THE NPCS THAT THE PLAYERS WILL INTERACT WITH, DESCRIBES SETTINGS AND SITUATIONS, AND FACILITATES AND ARBITRATES RULES AND DECISIONS.

IF THERE IS ANY AMBIGUITY OR CONFUSION AROUND DICE ROLLS OR OTHER MECHANICS, THE GM HAS THE FINAL SAY.

THE GM HAS WIDE AUTHORITY WHEN IT COMES TO DRIVING GAMEPLAY AND ENSURING THE GROUP IS HAVING FUN. IF A GM DECIDES TO BEND, CHANGE, OR IGNORE RULES TO MAKE SURE PEOPLE ARE ENJOYING THEMSELVES, THAT IS THEIR PREROGATIVE AND THEY SHOULD FOCUS MORE ON TELLING A GOOD STORY THAN FEELING BEHOLDEN TO ARBITRARY DICE ROLES.

WHILE IT IS UP TO THE GM TO MOVE THE NARRATIVE ALONG AND TO PROVIDE CHALLENGES AND CONFLICT FOR THE GROUP TO OVERCOME, IT IS NOT IN THEIR ROLE TO BE CONFRONTATIONAL OR TO EVER PLAY AGAINST THE PLAYERS. THEY SHOULD ALWAYS BE LOOKING FOR A WAY TO PROVIDE THE CHARACTERS WITH A CHALLENGE, BUT NOT CHALLENGE THE PLAYERS THEMSELVES.

RULE XERO

Whilst more of a guideline than a hard and fast rule, *Rule Xero* is also, oxymoronically, the only rule that can't be ignored:

Each player at the table must be having fun when playing.

Whilst this might sound obvious in the context of a game, it is the joint responsibility of the whole group to keep the game moving forward in an interactive and engaging manner for everyone at the table. The group is strongly encouraged to place more emphasis on overall enjoyment than mechanics or minutia, and to ensure the whole group is involved and participating.

If Rule Xero is not being followed, the group should take a minute to discuss what's wrong or missing and the GM should pivot accordingly.

Too much combat? Find a way to engineer some kind of social challenges.

Is the game moving too slowly to the point that people are getting distracted, either by sidebar conversations or their phones? A life-threatening catastrophe should get things moving again.

Do some people feel disengaged? The GM should find a way to have their character become the center of the action and have them *Fill in The Gaps* to get them reengaged.

Above all remember that a game should always be fun and if it's not, it's up to the entire group to fix it.

FILLING IN THE GAPS

At various points during the game, players are all expected to help further the narrative by describing to the group what they are doing, what they see or feel, what is happening to or around them, or what has come as a result of an action they have taken.

This is referred to as a player *Filling in The Gaps*.

Filling In The Gaps helps to drive collaborative storytelling by having the players weave the narrative themselves rather than it being the GM's job to describe everything to them.

It is up to each player to bring the rest of the group along on the journey of how their actions have impacted those around them, or otherwise furthered the story.

Note: *Filling in The Gaps* is a particularly useful tool for GMs in getting even the more shy or reticent players to engage with the game and narrative and tell the story for themselves and should be applied liberally.

See *Rule Xero* above for more details.

WHAT IS THE XERO SUM ENGINE?

THE *XERO SUM ENGINE* (ALSO REFERRED TO AS XSE, OR THE "*ZEE ENGINE*") IS A TABLE-TOP ROLE-PLAYING SYSTEM DESIGNED TO GET A GROUP OF PLAYERS INTO THE THICK OF THE ACTION AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE BY COMBINING QUICK TO LEARN MECHANICS THAT ARE FLEXIBLE, FULFILLING AND FUN, WITH A LIBRARY OF SYSTEMS WHICH MAKE STARTING A RUNNING A GAME AS SIMPLE AS POSSIBLE.

THIS INCLUDES ELEMENTS SUCH AS PREDEFINED CHARACTERS, SETTINGS, AND LOCATIONS THAT REQUIRE MINIMAL SETUP AND ENABLE EASE OF PLAY.

THE SIMPLICITY OF THE MECHANICS OF THE XERO SUM ENGINE (MANY OF WHICH ARE BASED ON OPEN GAMING SYSTEMS (OGS) AND REQUIRE NOTHING MORE THAN A PAIR OF 6-SIDED DICE) MAKE THE RULES EASY TO LEARN BUT WITH ENOUGH ADAPTABILITY THAT THEY CAN BE APPLIED TO ANY GENRE AND SCALED TO ANY DIFFICULTY WITH A LITTLE BIT OF WORK FROM THE GAME MODERATOR.

XSE ALLOWS A GROUP TO TELL AN ENDLESS VARIETY OF COLLABORATIVE STORIES THAT RANGE FROM HIGH FANTASY TO GRITTY PULP TALES TO HARD SCIENCE-FICTION. IF THE GROUP CAN THINK OF IT, THE XERO SUM ENGINE CAN ACCOMMODATE IT.

MORE DETAILS ABOUT THE *XERO SUM ENGINE* AS WELL AS NEW CONTENT, ADVENTURES AND SOURCE-BOOKS, ARE AVAILABLE FOR DOWNLOAD FROM *WWW.DISTEMPERVERSE.COM.*

APPENDIX N:

"APPENDIX N" IS A ROLE-PLAYING TERM THAT IS TRADITIONALLY USED TO DESCRIBE THE VARIOUS FILMS, BOOKS, COMICS, TV SHOWS, GAMES, OR OTHER SOURCES THAT INSPIRED THE GAME, THE GAME-WORLD, OR THE LORE.

BELOW IS THE APPENDIX N FOR *DISTEMPER* AND WHILE NOT ALL OF THEM MAY MAP EXACTLY – OR EVEN OBVIOUSLY – TO THE STORIES TOLD IN THE *DISTEMPERVERSE*, THEY ALL HELPED FURTHER THE POST-APOCALYPTIC TABLEAU THAT INSPIRED THIS GAME.

THEY ARE ALL HIGHLY RECOMMENDED TO GET A DEEPER SENSE OF THE TONE INTENDED FOR THE GAME WORLD, NOT NECESSARILY FOR THE QUALITY OF THE WORK ITSELF.

MOVIES & TV

THE ROAD

SOUTHERN COMFORT

BLACK SUMMER
(WITHOUT THE ZOMBIES)

THE DAY

DELIVERANCE

THE BOOK OF ELI

THE WALKING DEAD
(WITHOUT THE ZOMBIES)

BOOKS AND COMICS

THE ROAD

I AM LEGEND
(WITHOUT THE VAMPIRES)

THE STAND

CROSSED

THE WALKING DEAD
(WITHOUT THE ZOMBIES)

GUNG-HO

WHAT'S THE FURTHEST
PLACE FROM HERE?

VIDEO GAMES, BOARD GAMES, AND TTRPGS

TWILIGHT 2000 (V1, V2, V4)

AFTERMATH!

JAGGED ALLIANCE

A GUIDE TO TERMS

There are several terms you will encounter in *Distemper* that are common in Role-Playing Games but deserve some clarification:

PLAYERS: The stars of the story who work with the GM to weave the interactive & collaborative stories. *Players* are the people making the decisions and rolling the dice.

PLAYER CHARACTER: *Player Character*, often just referred to as a *PC*, or *character*, is the manifestation or avatar of the player within the story and it is up to the player to provide each *PC* with a specific and unique voice.

GM: The *Game Moderator* (or, *GM*) can be seen as a facilitator or referee who defines and controls the environment that the players, via their characters, navigate as part of their storytelling journey.

NPC : A *Non-Player Character* (or *NPC*) is someone that the players will interact with and who is brought to life by the GM. They might be neutral, friendly or hostile, depending on the situation.

GROUP: A collective term used for both the *players* and the *GM*, as well as the *characters* within the gameworld.

CHECKS: Also referred to as *Dice Checks* or *Dice Rolls*, this is the basic mechanic for resolving attempts at using skills or attacks by rolling two 6-sided dice.

MODIFIERS: Each *Check* can be affected positively and negatively in a number of ways by *Modifiers* which are directly tied to Attributes, Skills, and Conditions and are added or subtracted from the total of a dice roll.

SESSION XERO: The discussion between GM and players working on the group's background or world-building that sets up the larger tapestry for storytelling. *Session Xero* can also be when characters are created.

PARADIGMS: As part of the Xero Sum Engine, multiple familiar archetypes, called *Paradigms*, are included to facilitate quick gameplay. Although they require little customization before play, *Paradigms* are just as well suited to take into a longer campaign as they are for a one-off adventure.

SESSION: The period of time during which the players are gathered and playing the game together is referred to as the *Session*.

SCENES: Roughly analogous to a chapter in a book or single scene in a movie or TV show, *scenes* each have their own point or purpose that tie into the larger story. Sometimes these will involve combat, other times they might be more social in nature and can be intense, lighthearted, frivolous, or even intentionally misleading. Each *session* of play may contain multiple *scenes* that range from a few minutes spent talking to an NPC, to several hours as players explore a seemingly abandoned military base.

SEQUENCES OF EVENTS : A series of *Scenes* that, when taken in context, create a larger, self-contained narrative with a clearly defined ending. In pop-culture terms, a book, movie, episode of a TV show, or a comic book are roughly analogous to a *Sequence of Events*, and this may span over multiple *Sessions*, depending on its length and complexity.

CAMPAIGN: Multiple *Sequences of Events* that have an overarching narrative and can potentially span months or years and will see the growth – or even death – of the player characters.

BASE OF OPERATIONS: Any structure (or structures) that the players call home for any length of time is considered a *Base of Operations.*

COMMUNITY: If the players want, they may try to join a *Community*, or even start their own, in order to help deal with the challenges in this new world.

HOMESTEAD: If players establish or join a *Community*, their *Base of Operations* will become a *Homestead*, which can potentially be multiple buildings, a town, or even an entire territory.

ACTIVITY BLOCKS: As players build *Communities* and a *Homestead*, action may move from the real-time of *Scene* to an *Activity Block* that can stretch over days, weeks, months, or even seasons.

NEGATIVE PLAY EXPERIENCE: If the subject-matter, atmosphere at the table, or interactions between players isn't fun for someone, it can create a *Negative Player Experience* (NPE), something that should be avoided or changed at all costs.

RULE XERO: This is the only non-negotiable rule in this book – the group must be having fun, or something has to change.

Chapter 2: A Brief History of the Virus

(BEFORE) The first death officially attributed to H724 was recorded in Chile on March 7th. Less than 4 hours later and half a world away, the second death was recorded in Indonesia.

Before long, people were dying at such an unprecedented rate that they began to pile up in mass graves that could be seen from space.

Mankind was largely oblivious to the virus up until people started dying and, by then, it was already far, far too late. By October, less than 5 months after the first recorded death, more than half of the world's population were gone and by Christmas of the same year, anyone that was going to die from the virus was probably already dead.

Ho, ho, ho, humanity.

Before mankind really even had time to come to terms with what was going on, 75% of the world's population was gone and two billion people remained to wonder what had just happened.

People started calling H724 *The Dog Flu* or *the Distemper* once it became commonly known that Man's Best Friend were asymptomatic carriers. Although conspiracy theorists claimed dogs had been infected in Russian bio-labs and then let loose in Europe, the spread of the sickness was so rapid and global that it was impossible to take an educated guess as to where it truly originated.

There was no way to pin the blame on any specific nation, let alone isolate a patient - or pack - zero, not that blame would have made any difference. With an unusually long incubation period of 3 weeks, by the time H724 started killing people, it was already everywhere. Blame was ultimately as pointless as the desperate search for a vaccine would turn out to be.

JANUARY The BBC World Service ran its first H724 story in January, reporting that a previously unidentified virus, initially believed to be a mutation of the common flu, had infected an estimated 100 million people worldwide, more than Tuberculosis or HIV. Of special note was that it appeared to share characteristics with distemper, a virus usually only found in dogs.

Whilst appearing to be highly contagious, it also seemed to be relatively benign, with the most obvious symptom being a relentless cough. People were reminded to practice good hygiene, to cover their mouths when coughing and sneezing, and to avoid contact with those who appeared to be sick.

Subsequent reports over the next few weeks quickly shifted in tone as scientists reported that this had mutated, and that H724-B wasn't as benign as it had first appeared.

FEBRUARY It quickly became obvious that this widespread sickness was going to impact the global economy and, within a few weeks of the initial reports, a British Reuters correspondent broke a story from within Chechnya that several provinces were dealing with a highly contagious virus and that the
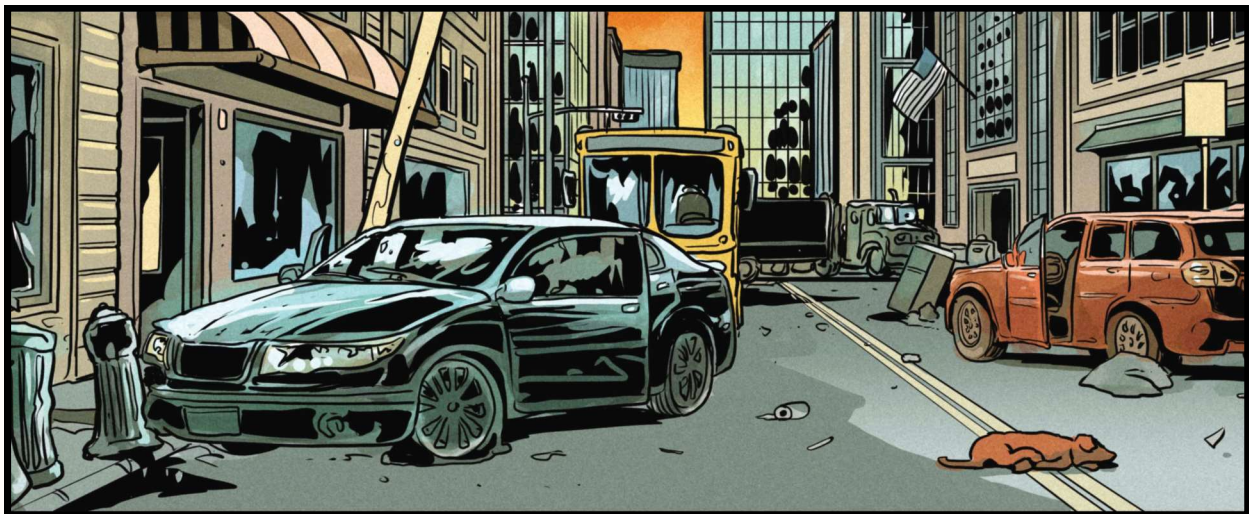
central government was scrambling to gain control of the situation. The reporter went missing almost immediately after filing their report.

Multiple doctors who had tried to report the virus and treat the sick were arrested but, the correspondent had reported, but no one would even speculate as to why. Chechen officials initially attempted to deny the story while simultaneously quarantining its three most heavily populated cities with the help of the Russian military until soon the entire country was completely locked down.

Conspiracy theories caught fire the world over like they were covered with gasoline. The virus had been created in a lab. This was a shadow cabal plot to depopulate the world. This was the rise of a new world order. Aliens were finally here. This was The Rapture.

MARCH

Less than a week after the Reuters story broke, an elderly man with a relentless cough in Chile died while in the middle of a uncontrollable fit of hacking that sounded almost like he was barking. An autopsy confirmed he had multiple underlying co-morbidities but also all the symptoms of H724-B. Doctors realized this had more than a passing similarity to distemper, and it was noted than in his last moments he seemed to lunge for the medical staff in what they had perceived as an aggressive and hostile manner but lacked the vitality to actually hurt anyone.

This was the first recorded death attributed to *the Distemper.*

The next day, the Chechen governments closed all their borders and restricted all international and domestic travel as rumors of mass canine culls circulated, but by then Elvis had already left the building and the virus was on the move.

On March 19th, the World Health Organization announced that they had classified the virus and believed it had a mortality rate in line with the seasonal flu. They reiterated the need for good hygiene to prevent transmission.

Within a week scientists had reclassified it as H724-C, stating that after more research they realized it had again mutated and was now believed to be airborne. They revised the mortality rate upward to 4% and, not long after, H724 was officially declared as a pandemic.

APRIL

Face masks became an increasingly common sight and although there was no evidence that they helped prevent transmission, there was also no evidence that they didn't and manufacturers stepped up production to meet worldwide demand.

Despite multiple pandemics in years past, the particularly rapid and virulent spread of the dog flu still took most governments by surprise and their responses were slow, disorganized, and ineffective. Many authorities tried to play the sickness down as little more than a seasonal flu or even a political hoax, which further delayed action.

As reports of the spread of the virus intensified and people continued to get sick and die at an exponential rate, nations were forced to act. However, it wasn't until the end of April

– almost a month after WHO had declared a pandemic – that all international commercial passenger travel was suspended.

By then the International Monetary Fund reported that a global recession was inevitable with multiple supply chains already impacted. This inevitably led to hyper-inflation in many countries, which in turn led to civil unrest. Widespread rioting and looting were rampant with authorities using increasing levels of force to maintain order. In later months, the mass starvation seen in poorer nations would hit every country on the planet.

Despite the resources now being thrown at medical research from around the world, testing was still unreliable. Asymptomatic carriers remained undetectable and only the acutely sick tested as being infected. This led health care professionals to mistakenly clear people who were carrying the virus, enabling its unchecked spread.

MAY In early May, with millions dead worldwide and untold millions more infected, a coalition of scientists from 14 nations led by Mats Berglund, a famed Swedish epidemiologist, began researching the development of effective testing in hope that it would in turn lead to a vaccine.

Data provided by a German research institute enabled a breakthrough in the development of rapid testing capabilities and Berglund shared his cautious optimism at a press conference.

Within a week of beginning testing, Berglund's team advised WHO of a new mutation, H724-C, which they now believe to be zoonotic. There were clear indicators that dogs could both get and pass H724-C back to the humans and the media dubbed it the Dog Flu after reports of several infected patients' pets exhibiting similar symptoms at the same time as their owners.

Berglund's team took note that the dogs became wildly aggressive at the end, often attacking and thereby transmitting the disease to their owners and vets.

After further testing, it was believed that pigeons could also carry the virus, and many countries began organized and aggressive culls of both animals. Many nations mandated their citizens voluntarily turn their pets into authorities for forced euthanasia.

At the end of the month, the mortality rate of H724-C was revised upwards again to a startling 19%.

JUNE Panic begins to set in worldwide as people question how much their governments and leaders are actually able to do to protect them in the face of this pandemic with no known vaccine or cure. It sinks in for most that their government can tax them, but it can't protect them.

As this realization leads to a summer of worldwide riots that cause untold destruction as there is nothing left to loot and people turn their impotent rage to destroying public buildings.

Berglund's team had sent researchers to hot spots of infection to further study the virus but even with more effective testing, they made scant progress towards any kind of vaccine. Answering a question at a press conference, Berglund says that it may be as long as a year before any kind of effective treatment is found which sends financial markets further into panic, causing further rioting.

Stories emerge of the mass extermination of dogs and pigeons and various other pets from around the world, and various EU member states secretly start culling herds of livestock for reasons unknown. More and more countries close their borders in a futile attempt to slow the spread of the infection.

The very fabric of society unravels across the world as summer progresses and the disease kills more people than the Spanish Flu.

News reports are a continual and horrific song of lament to this inexorably unfolding global catastrophe, until eventually the news reports stop.

JULY

With the number of infections and death toll constantly rising, healthcare services are overwhelmed and begin to break down. The virus is indiscriminate, and many healthcare workers succumb, leading to a worldwide shortage of anyone qualified to help.

Unable to cope with so many dead bodies, multiple countries create mass graves that are visible from space. Eventually there's no one left to bury or even move the dead and they begin to line the streets. China begins what it calls "central corpse disposal" and the fires can be reportedly seen from Taiwan.

With rapid testing kits now in production, Korea conducts mandatory, nationwide testing and moves their infected along with those suspected of having been exposed into "survival camps", an act that is quickly followed by many other countries.

AUGUST

Two unexplained nuclear explosions in Finland create a sudden and devastating nuclear winter in a very localized region. Although no one is ever sure precisely what caused it, the event appears to trigger total societal breakdown in neighboring Sweden and within days of losing its power-grid, the country is plunged into absolute darkness.

Soon there are multiple, independent reports of widespread brutality and horror, in addition to unconfirmed rumors of cannibalism. This in turn drives further riots throughout Europe as terrified people demand desperate action from paralyzed governments who are hanging on by their fingertips.

Berglund's research team are no closer to any kind of breakthrough when the UK begins human experimentation to test a possible vaccine. Although there is widespread condemnation, it is lukewarm and largely symbolic as the UN, WHO and the FDA remove all drug research safeguards soon thereafter.

SEPTEMBER

By the beginning of September, what is left of the CDC was able to convince what remained of the US government to quarantine Rhode Island, parts of California and New York City. The bridges connecting Manhattan to the outside world are destroyed and the blow-back from these actions creates civil unrest on a previously unseen scale, forcing the government to implement Martial Law across the United States.

The US is quickly followed by most of the EU, Canada, and Australia, as governments use what limited forces they have left in a vain attempt to retain order. So called *Survival Camps* are set up all over the world but are ineffective at preventing the outbreak and simply become a place to put anyone that has a cough or looks sick (or is even just sweaty) and have nothing to do with actual survival for the people in the camps.

Reports come out of camps in multiple countries of mass exterminations within these camps but there is no one left to care about these atrocities by this point.

Normal life ceases to exist for most people by the end of August and nationwide lock downs and food shortages lead to unstoppable riots around the globe.

With no one left to police, many cities and provinces throughout the world become "No Go" areas for anyone but the locals. Humanity begins a slow and painful descent back into aggressive tribalism. Healthcare is nonexistent in most parts of the world, replaced by ever-growing piles of burning corpses. Cities begin to catch fire but there are no emergency services left to respond.

OCTOBER

In early October, Berglund's research team have introduced synthetic genes into H724 and believe they have line of sight to a vaccine, but it isn't coming fast enough to stop Europe from falling into anarchy as successive governments topple.

The rest of society quickly follows Europe into abject chaos as national and local governments and other authorities fail across the planet.

NOVEMBER

Barely seven months after it began, *the Dog Flu* had wiped out more than 50% of humanity and what was left was frightened, hungry, and scattered. Centralized services were no longer being provided and, one after another, things just stopped working.

All anyone had left to rely on by this point was themselves.

DECEMBER

By Christmas, 74% of the population of earth was gone. Small consolation that everyone who was going to die was probably already dead, with less than two billion people remaining

Happy New Year.

The threat of the virus seems to be passing and although coughs and runny noses can get people shot, things are leveling out. However, all communication has long since broken down and with no functioning central government to protect and provide for them, it is left to whoever remains to rebuild.

People are on their own. No one knows for sure what happened, the state of the world, or who is left. All anyone knows is that they have to eat and stay warm and will do whatever they need to in order to make that happen.

Humanity may have survived but civilization certainly didn't.

Chapter 3: After the Screaming Stopped

THE IMMEDIATE AFTERMATH

As horrific as things got during the pandemic, it was the few months immediately following that were arguably the hardest for many survivors.

Once the initial horror of the deaths caused by the pandemic began to recede, people needed to do whatever they could in order to survive. For many, this would mean committing what they had previously considered unthinkable acts.

As survivors adjusted to their new reality, they were quickly forced to realize that everything they knew was gone.

Perhaps the only commonality shared by all survivors was that the initial outbreak and subsequent aftermath had been equally brutal to everyone, with little comfort to be found anywhere.

In this new world, everything was hard, everything was cold, and everything hurt.

During the outbreak, society had proven itself to be so delicate that the survivors found themselves questioning how it had even managed to last so long in the first place.

For reasons that never became clear, some parts of the world, most notably Africa and Asia, were much harder hit than others and in some places the mortality rate exceeded 90%. But with the exception of a few of the most remote areas known to man (even the Dog Flu couldn't completely conquer Siberia) nowhere had escaped unravaged.

Despite all having fallen largely into anarchy during the pandemic, Europe, Australia, and North America all found themselves with a disproportionate number of survivors as the dust started to settle.

However, in relatively densely populated areas like many of the European member states, a greater number of survivors wasn't necessarily a good thing, as it just meant fiercer competition for what scant resources remained.

Even with the almost overwhelming loss of life, there are still several billion survivors, and they all need to eat. Mankind has been pushed back to the population level of the 1800s and although the vestiges and framework of society remains, civilization is quickly circling the drain.

The world had changed irrevocably. As the rule of law began to break down when there was no one left to enforce it, the strongest were not only able to survive but to thrive, even if it was at the expense of others.

As time went on, the lines between what had previously been considered good or bad behavior became increasingly blurred until there was just a choice between survival or death. People acted and reacted accordingly.

Survivors formed packs for the strength in numbers that brought them, although many of them used that strength to take what they needed from the weak.

All too often, it seemed the bad were everywhere and help was no where to be found.
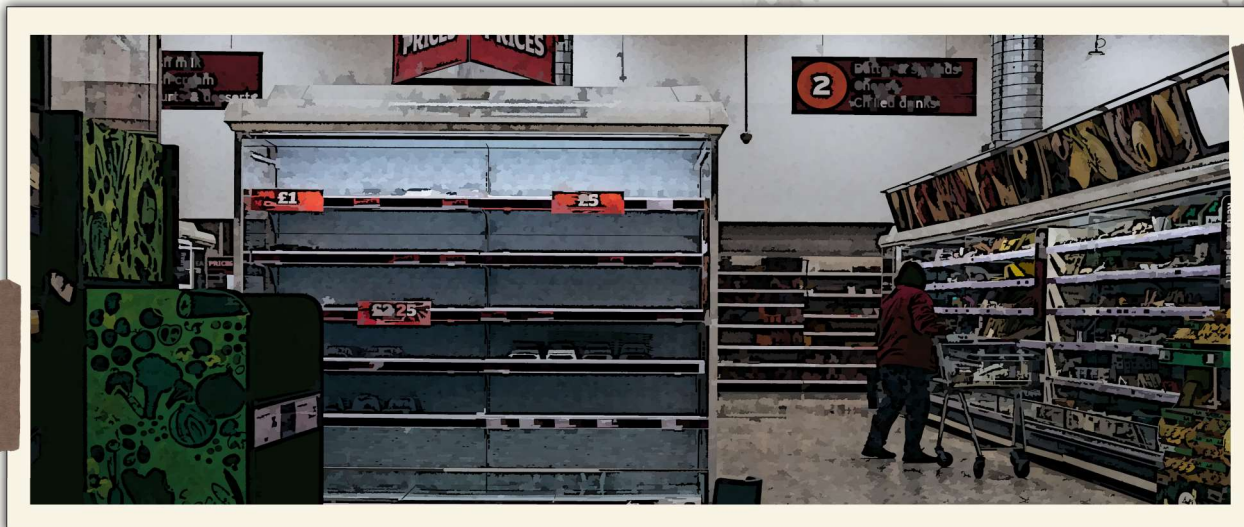
INFRASTRUCTURE

Those who had survived the pandemic had already seen the global supply chain collapse and knew there were no more stores and no more currency.

There was also no running water to drink, no health services, and no authority.

There was nothing except what survivors could find for themselves and take.

Once people realized they didn't even have the bare essentials, luxuries like television and social media became a rapidly fading memory. Survival was the sole remaining driving instinct and people grabbed whatever they could find until everything was gone.

All across the globe, services and infrastructure stopped working. Some things vanished immediately, and others disappeared more quietly and over time but there was no hope that any of it was ever coming back.

Many things that people had just come to expect as part of everyday life, such as television, telephones, and the internet, had become unreliable and problematic relatively early into the crisis as providers struggled to keep infrastructure running in the face of quarantines and sick employees and a quickly spiraling economic recession.

And then, one day, it was just gone.

Conversely, some elements of the power grid were highly automated and still running in many parts of the world and could easily continue to run unimpeded for several years.

Eventually, enough relay stations would fail, and it would all inexorably grind to a halt, but until then some areas still basked in the glow of artificial light and refrigeration.

CITIES & TOWNS

Several metropolitan power-grids, which had been designed with resilience and redundancy in mind, continued to supply electricity to many areas and was one of the few reasons that anyone had initially stayed in cities.

For many, between the food shortages, structural dangers, and the constant, brutal, indiscriminate gang warfare for control of territory and resources, electricity was the only thing that made remaining in a city bearable.

Rife with transmission mechanisms and so many people in confined spaces, cities had become inherently dangerous places during the epidemic. Fresh outbreaks would spread haphazardly, like wildfire, and the epicenter of the disease seemed to leap from city to city, back and forth across the globe. Nowhere found an effective containment strategy.

With its spread completely unchecked, the virus destroyed whole communities with impunity and without discernment. Although it seemed it could survive anywhere and in any environment, the virus had thrived in cities where efficient public transport systems could ensure that a cough or sneeze was a death sentence for anyone in proximity. Seasonal allergies had caused more than one panicked stampede in more than one city at more than one time. Paranoia and distrust rose to such levels that a shocking number of people were beaten to death by angry crowds, often for little more than having a runny nose or coughing in public.

Riots and running battles between the remnants of authority and the citizens they had sworn to protect raged endlessly through the streets until there were no more police or soldiers to fight the protesters. The riots,

combined with various malevolent acts of anger, lunacy, and desperation, had left many cities pockmarked with ugly, open wounds that increasingly identified them as the warzones they had become.

Fires raged relentlessly, rampaging, and consuming everything in their path. Utilities overloads and gas line explosions were as frequently to blame as the acts of angry citizens, but a horrifyingly large number of fires had started accidentally when the piles of burning corpses that were littered everywhere set fire to the areas around them.

With no emergency services left to respond, some fires burned uncontested for months and destroyed whole city districts and towns. Even months on from the peak of the virus, a large number of cities still burn.

Many cities, burning or not, had no access to food supplies or had been built in inhospitable environments and had quickly become barren, increasingly dangerous places. Only the lost, insane or desperate would willingly remain behind and would even then it purely because they truly had nowhere else to go.

For many survivors, entering cities would come to be considered as an elaborate form of suicide.

But despite the inherent dangers, a surprising number of communities have begun to rebuild in cities and towns across the world.

BEACONS OF HOPE

Even though the continued degradation of lines between good, bad, survival and death, and, as dark as things can sometimes seem, good people remain. Many who had been leaders before, such as politicians, businessmen, social figureheads, doctors, nurses, cops, fire fighters, schoolteachers, and soldiers, remained leaders in the wake of this disaster, rededicating themselves to protecting and rebuilding.

In the year since the apex of the pandemic, multiple communities based on shared principles of safety and mutual interest and the integrity of a person's word had taken hold and several were even starting to thrive.

Some towns survived largely due to their ready access to a food source, such as coastal communities where fishing had supported the locals for generations, while others have managed to pull communities of farmers, hunters, and foragers together by way of town markets

In several parts of the US, trade networks were beginning to form and a few peaceful settlements in Kansas and Colorado had started a nascent farmers market. There were vague rumors of a network of towns in Oregon that were close to having a semi-functioning peace-keeping force to protect from raiders.

These largely peaceful communities would occasionally have to fight to keep what they were building, but that was the cost of survival in the new world. No one who has survived this long has done it by confusing kindness with weakness. The strong fought and the stupid died. Survivors held their ground while cowards ran.

Several cities across the US have become beacons of hope to others, with strong leadership still able to rally people behind an ideal and work towards a common goal.

MANHATTAN ISLAND

Early on into the outbreak, Manhattan had become what was considered to be an unrecoverable hot-spot, and the decision was made to quarantine the whole island. All bridges and tunnels leading to the island were collapsed and, despite the government's protestations that they weren't doing exactly what they were doing, all residents were left to die.

Even though all ways in and out had been disconnected, tethers to the power and utilities grids had remained intact and, as the infection began to die out, a significant number of residents were able to shelter in place and wait the virus out.

As the situation started to somewhat normalize, the trapped citizens had banded together and had even recreated a semblance of their previous existence. The Deputy Police Commissioner, Art Buchanan, had survived and rallied enough of what remained of the Police, the National Guard, the Coast Guard and anyone else who could wear a uniform or carry a gun to restore a modicum of order to the city.

These Manhattanites even have several volunteer fire squads to deal with the persistent threat of fire as they continue to burn the bodies of the dead.

No attempts have been made to repair any of the bridges or tunnels as the Manhattanites have no desire to open up to what they now consider to be outsiders. The Coast Guard maintains constant patrols around the island and sink any unidentified or uncommunicative vessels.

Buchanan installed himself as the Superintendent of Manhattan and knows that eventually they are going to need to open up for trade with whatever is left on the outside world, as the Island is far from self-sufficient. However, he continues to push an isolationist agenda that draws an unsurprising amount of support, given what an icon he has become to his followers.

The rest of America left them for dead and as far as Buchanan and his men and the citizens of Manhattan are concerned, they have now left the rest of America for dead.

It was perhaps unsurprising that, as most of the world failed, NYC somehow continued to thrive.

NEW PHILLY

Another city that had benefited from strong leadership after the collapse was Philadelphia, where the Mayor, Grey Wilkerson had remained in office along with several key members of his leadership team.

Despite being hit very hard early on in the crisis, under Wilkerson's guidance, the City of Brotherly Love coalesced and focused on ensuring the health and safety of its citizens. It had one been one of the first cities in the US to establish mass graves to burn the dead in order to prevent the spread of disease and pestilence. As a result, they had a slightly higher survival rate.

The relative order and safety of New Philly has made them a beacon for those needing help, as well as those seeking to try and take advantage of their success. This has been exacerbated recently after they sent scouting parties throughout the surrounding regions to try and unite whoever is left. Several of the parties didn't return, and it has incorrectly marked them as a soft target to several warlords who are looking to expand their territories.

ROADS TO NOWHERE

Outliers like New Philly notwithstanding, survivors quickly became relentless scavengers for the scarce amount of consumables within cities that remained. These resources quickly ran out or were heavily contested by armed gangs staking their claim.

Highly valued items like ammo, medicine, canned goods, and unspoiled fuel can still be found but it is just a matter of time before everything is looted,used, or expired. Hidden caches of food and resources still exist and are waiting to be unearthed, but they are becoming increasingly rare as time goes on. If someone wants something fresh, they are going to have to catch it or grow it themselves.

The lack of food during the outbreak initially led to mass rioting and looting with the subsequent societal breakdown forcing people out of larger conurbations in droves as they migrated in search of fresh fruit, vegetables, fish, and wildlife to sustain them.

The desperation of the situation meant that any nascent
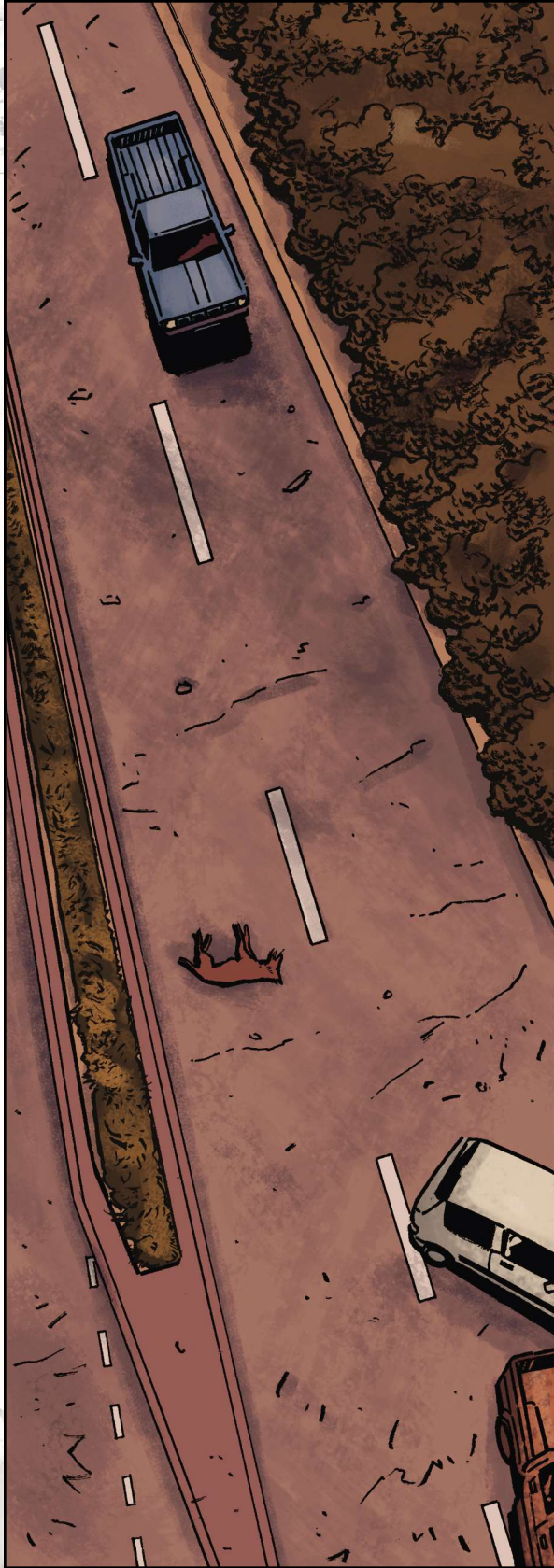
camaraderie in these caravans of strangers was quickly eroded by hunger, and they often turned on each other over food, lies, or perceived slights. Fights frequently broke out over misunderstandings or if someone appeared to be sick.

Few of these migrating groups found their way to any destination and fewer still found better lives waiting.

Having undergone such a major societal regression, for many people, small-town life or isolationism and living off the land had, once again, become the optimal solution.

For most, it had all come full circle and all that was left of the American Dream was finding a small piece of land where they could try and eke out enough food to feed themselves and their family. There was no government or bureaucracy left and nothing to stop people from just finding somewhere that they wanted and claiming it as their own.

However, this mentality extended to the people who would threaten that same way of life and there were a seemingly endless supply of human jackals looking to prey on weaker targets and take what others have.

Lines were blurring further as people struggled to survive. For each good person working to rebuild something that was lost, there were two brutes looking to take it away from them.

For each small farming community that diligently worked fields, there were two warlords – most often cops, crooks, gang-members, or ex-military – who have stepped into the power vacuums created after the various national and local authorities failed.

For each village that has combined efforts to hunt and forage, there are two other groups who aren't willing or able to put the work in but are more than prepared to use brutal methods to secure the same output from those who are. These often nomadic bandits act like locusts, descending on an area and taking all they can before moving on again.

For every column of migrators moving to try and find better prospects, there are two tribes of cannibals scouting the land for strays or those who can't defend themselves, just waiting to prey on them.

Although the various packs of survivors usually have an alpha leading them, there are also a great many leaderless groups that are united by nothing more than mutual need and continued survival and who will turn on one another in a heartbeat.

Some of these groups have staked out territory but just as many – often the laziest and most vicious – are mobile. All

have a low regard for life that isn't their own and for those who can't be of use to them.

In some areas, particularly those where power failed early on, many have reverted to pure tribalism, with any outsiders being seen as a threat. Anyone not known or marked as part of the tribe can expect to be greeted with immediate hostility.

That tribalism can breed cannibalism as an ugly and desperate method to keep the tribe strong and health, which overrides all other considerations. For many, cannibalism was a slow descent and not something done lightly, but it was ultimately preferable to starvation.

A disturbing number, however, realized they just enjoyed how human flesh tasted - to say nothing of the hunt - and they would continue to do it, even when presented with other options.

As resources have become scarcer, these tribes have increasingly been given to raiding opposing camps or settlements to snatch their meals. If they are lucky, they might find a few strays on the road, migrating to a better area. Many of these tribes have taken to branding, tattooing, or otherwise marking themselves to visibly identify themselves to identify one another and prevent them eating their own or their allies.

In the power vacuum that followed immediately in the wake of the pandemic, multiple militias, gangs, tribes, churches and warlords have risen up and laid claim to a specific area and everything within it.

With the amount of weapons and military equipment available, some of these warlords have created literal armies but they have started to realize that, once supply lines have been established, armies are a useless and expensive luxury with nothing to fight and so are constantly on the lookout for enemies with something worth taking.

Skirmishes regularly occur between various groups with either conflicting ideologies or territorial ambitions and although most of these warlords lack the appetite or ammo for wanton killing and destruction, there are at least a few that are planning precisely that.

Although driven by different motivations, there are many religious sects who have united behind a homegrown prophet who are often just as heavily armed as their militia counterparts. These *Pandemic Prophets* motivate their followers with a fiercer ideological drive based in a desire for more than simple territorial control.

With no one to stop them and the weapons to enable them, there are several churches around the country that have taken an extremely hard line with their beliefs and are enforcing judgment on anyone they find in the furtherance of their message.
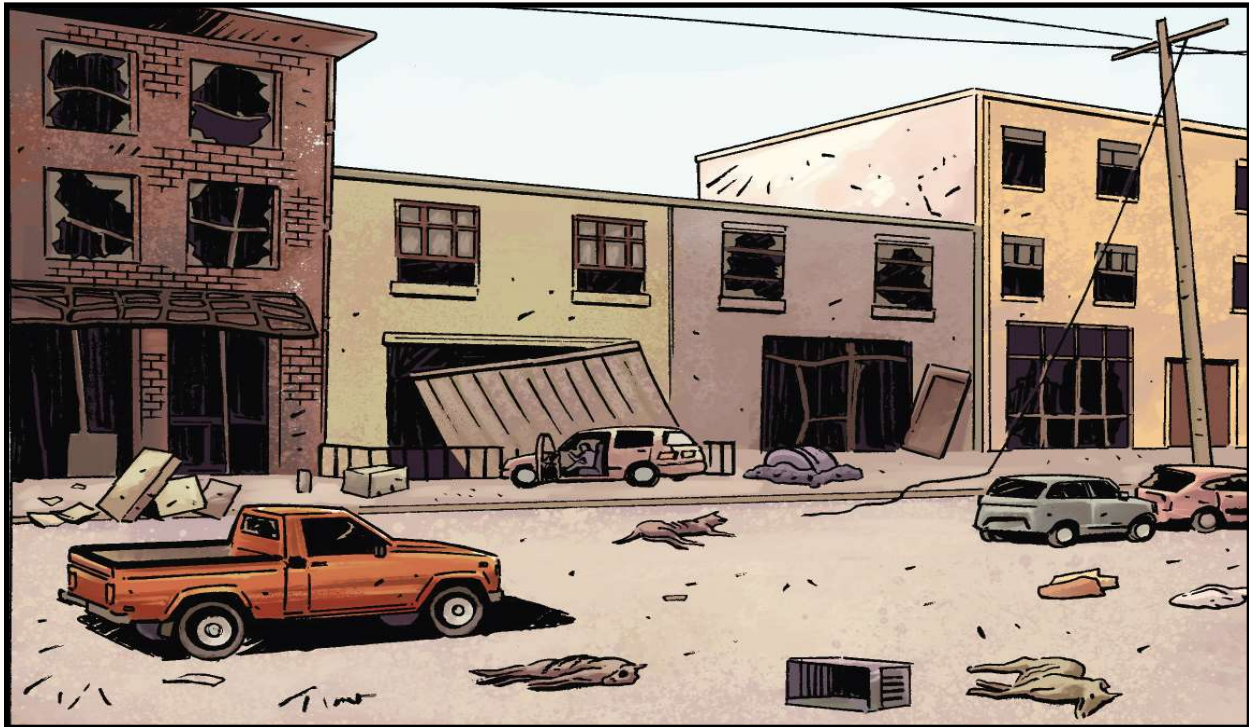
GOVERNMENTS

In some places, local and regional governments have tried to heal themselves and restore order to their communities but, in many cases, those same communities weren't interested in listening to someone else's idea of telling them how to live when they were providing no value.

Some people still believed that what they had done before meant they retained some kind of authority after and they found no shortage of others who would test them to prove it.

Legitimate or not, there were a surprising number of people early on who believed themselves when they said they represented the authority of the US government. Over time, those who believed their badges and uniforms still carried weight began to realize that it was only their weapons that carried any authority.

As the chain of command had started to collapse under the weight of the outbreak, many military leaders had issued orders to their men to "carry on" and many of the surviving troops were acting under the assumption that there was still a centralized civilian or military command somewhere, even though they had seen no signs of that for more than a year.

And indeed, although the initial death toll meant it had been almost impossible to keep any kind of administration functioning, the US Civilian and Military commands had been so pervasive that it was almost inevitable that it would try to reconstitute itself.

In the last few months, remnants from the old world made contact with one another and have started an attempt to repair and rebuild itself from its seat of power in Washington, DC. Those involved refer to this as *The Great Reclamation* (See *Chapter 10: Moderating The Distemper* for more details on *The Great Reclamation*).

But, for most survivors, even if there is a government, so what? The world has changed beyond all recognition and few survivors have any illusion or desire to be "rescued" by the government that failed them.

TRADE AND BARTER

For those that are left, the value of everything has shifted. Money quickly became worthless during the outbreak when the banking systems collapsed under the strain of a spiraling global recession. Once again, barter became king.

Most trade revolves around essentials like ammo, batteries, working gasoline, meat, fruit and produce. However, there is still a market and desire for luxury items. People will do a surprising amount for even the smallest taste of the world before and no one cares about expiration dates when it comes to chocolate. Certain metals and stones remain precious, even if no one can quite articulate why.

The scavenger economy, such as it is, is booming. Many non-perishable and non-essential items are still available to those who are willing to risk going looking for them. Some everyday items from before are often disproportionately valuable after. Batteries remain a constant as they fuel necessities just as often as they do creature comforts, and toilet paper is always in high demand.

Weapons are plentiful but ammo is a much rarer and unarguably the most valuable commodity.

With bullets and batteries being the basis of the new economy, there are many who are trying to get bullet mills working again, which will be the new equivalent of printing money.

Cars sit on sides of roads and in showrooms everywhere, but their use has become increasingly infrequent as gasoline has started to go stale and lose its potency. Although diesel will remain good for a while, it is just a matter of time until that runs out too. Until it does, however, it is among the most valuable of barter currencies.

There are many communities trying to get oil refineries working again, just as others are trying to figure out how to convert vehicles to alcohol and then how to produce enough to run them. Until that happens, horses, carts and buggies have become more commonplace than they have been for a century.

However, horses make good meat so you have to be careful where you leave them.

Cigarettes are another staple of the new economy. Assuming someone can even find them, they are stale and brittle and taste worse than ever, but there are no new ones ever coming and a sealed pack of smokes can be traded for an equal number of bullets in some parts.

Although largely unspoken, it is widely acknowledged that life is never going back to what it was like before and people are adapting as well as they can.

Some realized early on that bringing back as much of a sense of normalcy as possible heals souls just as easily as it empties purses, and several outposts and taverns have sprung up where goods and services are bartered, booze is sold and some entertainment is even offered.

The owners invariably have well-armed protection to keep the peace, but that doesn't stop regular fights from breaking out any more than it stops raiders from trying to take what's not theirs.

Communication, like so many things, has been thrown back by generations. Ham radio has come back into vogue as communities begin to reach out to one another and share information. However, the short range inherently limits its use and the only way to ensure a message gets through over longer distances is to actually send it by way of a messenger. Homing pigeons may have been a thing once but after H724, no one was trying to get near pigeons any time soon.

Some of the more organized collectives have begun sending out heavily escorted caravans to scout and see who else they can find and what they might have to trade. In some places they are a welcome sight, an indicator that humanity still exists, but in other places they are seen as either a necessary evil or a valid target.

People remain suspicious of strangers, as much for the malevolence they can harbor in their heart as for the virus that can lay dormant in their system.

Sickness remains a problem and, with so few medical professionals left, people are unwilling to take risks. People are so terrified of the dog flu that more than one innocent person has been butchered in this new world for nothing more than having a persistent tickle in their throat.

Whoever is left has the same basic considerations and concerns (primarily staying alive) and while there can a little more complexity behind that need, it's usually not much.

Finding food and water, staying dry and hopefully warm. Not being killed, and if that seems inevitable, not being tortured before it happens.

Sometimes that's as much as anyone can ask for in the new world.

WHAT NOW?

Mankind is at a juncture. H724 didn't wipe the species out but it did erase some of the technologies and advances that had defined decades of progress. There is no doubt that mankind will continue to survive, but how quickly they can rebuild is another question.

Despite there still being billions of survivors, there are nowhere near enough with the required expertise and understanding to make the world work like it had before. Many technologies have simply been lost forever. Towards the end, libraries got looted like they were supermarkets or gun stores as people tried to hoard knowledge in the form of books. Many who had never even seen a field were going to have to figure out how to farm and for many, books were the only remaining method of learning.

Free from mankind's destructive nature on a large scale, the world itself is starting to heal. There is no more drilling, fracking, mining, or other sources of pollution and nature is starting to flourish again, free from mankind's dark influence.

It has only been a year but between the diminishing effects from pollution and mother nature, who can once again be felt exerting her dominance on the planet, the air already smells better. This can be seen everywhere, perhaps most readily by the unkempt and untended fringes of grass starting to creep around the edges of roads and the vegetation climbing up the sides of buildings.

As the world moved into its first post-virus Spring and as mankind attempted to heal and rebuild, so did the planet.

Some things you will want to remember:

THE WORLD IS ADRIFT

There are no central authorities left, no governments, no military, no supply-chain, and next to no loyalty remains for anyone outside of the immediate family or clan. Enough people with enough weapons can lay claim to anywhere – or anything – they feel entitled to, unless someone else stops them.

In a fractured country where territorial maps are being rewritten at a whim, you are going to have to navigate tribal lines and continually shifting threats as you look for your own place of safety.

Or, rather than creating a base and putting a target on your back, maybe you will decide to just keep moving, dealing with threats as they arise.

RESOURCES ARE SCARCE

Things are rotting and spoiling and whatever is left of any value is going to be gone soon but you still need to eat and drink. Whether you decide to scavenge, hunt, farm, or steal from someone else, securing resources will be sure to bring you into conflict at some point.

Some towns and cities who are further along in their recovery than others have started establishing trade-routes with like-minded settlements. Several roadside trading posts and taverns have appeared in various parts of the country and are as heavily armed

and defended as anything in this new world.

You are going to have to decide if you are going to take your chances on your own, or if you are going to work with – and possibly recruit – NPCs to help produce a continual supply of food and provide safety for you and yours.

Although parts of the electrical grid remain intact, relays continue to fail, and swaths of the country have no power and no clean water. Staying warm and dry is as important as staying fed and you are going to face continual challenges ranging from other humans, to wildlife, to the environment – and you will need to solve them all to stay alive.

In addition – and possibly scariest of all – with almost 60 million survivors in America alone, there are still many human threats that you need to navigate, ranging from warlords seizing territory to religious zealots reveling in the rapture of the end times to bandits looking to take whatever they can from anyone that has something worth taking to cannibals looking to make you their next meal.

MANKIND IS CIRCLING THE DRAIN

The world everyone knew is gone, along with all the comforts and upside that it had previously brought.

News broadcasts & the internet went out months into the pandemic and no one really knows anything for sure if they haven't seen it for themselves.

Rumors are rife. Nothing and no one can be trusted.

Anyone who is still alive has likely had to do terrible things to survive, and anyone with half a brain knows it's not going to get any easier, any time soon.

You will have to decide who you are willing to trust, and just how far that trust will extend as you interact with desperate people.

Whatever you choose, you are going to have to decide how you deal with the strangers you encounter and the consequences of the choices you make.

And remember to keep your mask on.

ALL HOPE IS NOT LOST

Even in the dark there are sparks of hope. Places remain where people are trying to work together for a brighter future.

If you find these communities then you may want to enter to trade, socialize, or simply see what is on offer.

Maybe you'll want to try and join them (if you are permitted) and throw in your lot with a rebuilding effort.

You may attempt to raid the place and see what you can steal.

You might even decide to try and take over.

WHAT COMES NEXT IS UP TO YOU

Any period of great upheaval brings with it a change to the course of history. There are endless stories to be told in this new world. Stories of heroism, horror, bravery, treachery, conquest, defeat, and victory.

It's up to the group to decide what those stories are, and what their part in the story will be.
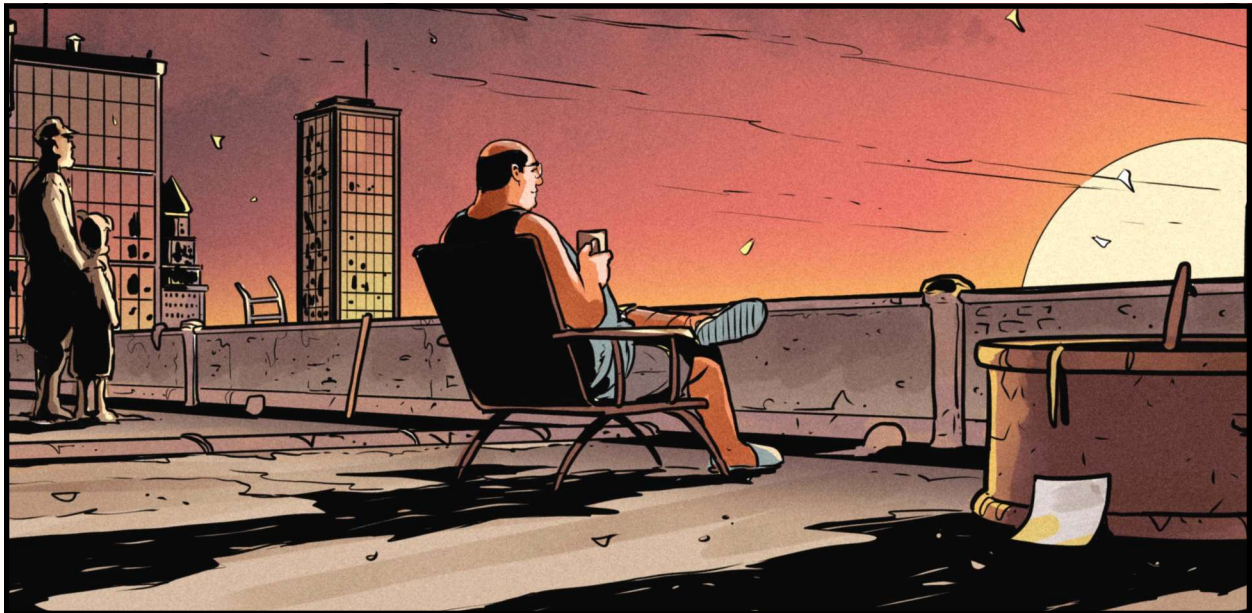
Chapter 4: How Do You Play?

Much of *Distemper* is a collaborative story that is told between the players and the GM – in essence, a back and forth of ideas, descriptions, suggestions, actions, and resolutions that play out via the group's interactions with one another.

However, there will be times, such as when engaging in combat or trying to use a Skill, where a degree of specificity around an outcome is required to ensure fairness, remove ambiguity, and provide clarity to all involved.

This is handled via throwing two, six-sided dice, also referred to as a **dice check** or a **dice roll.**

DICE CHECKS

In their simplest form, all of the game mechanics in *Distemper* revolve around throwing a pair of six-sided dice (written as **2d6**) and getting a score of **9** or above. There is more complexity within the rules, but if a person can roll **2d6**, they can play *Distemper*.

Whilst 9 is the hard line between a success and a failure, higher or lower scores bring further gradations of success and failure. They are **Dire Failure, Fail, Success,** and **Wild Success** and are laid out with their scores in **Table 1: Outcomes**, and detailed in the **Degrees of Success** sidebar on page 29.

TABLE 1: OUTCOMES	
1-2	DIRE FAILURE
3-8	FAILURE
9-13	SUCCESS
14+	WILD SUCCESS

There will be times with a player is asked to roll more less than two dice, this is referred to in the format **1d6** or **3d6**. Occassa6tion a score of 1-3 is required, this is referred to as **1d3** and is a **1d6** roll with the score halved.

ROLL MODIFIERS

Each *dice check* can be modified in a variety of ways to reflect inherent traits, abilities, the skills the PC's have learned along the way, as well as environmental or other idiosyncratic factors that can influence the final outcome.

There are 3 potential modifiers – **Ability, Skill** and **Conditional** – each with a range anywhere from -3 to +5 that get added to the 2d6 roll before a check.

This is expressed as **2d6 + AMod + SMod + CMod**.

An example roll would be written as **2d6+1+2-3**, or **2d6+3**.

It is very common for a roll to have multiple modifiers to reflect the situation at hand and these are all cumulative, and so a check might be impacted by someone's innate ability as well as their training, in addition to something as abstract as weather conditions.

DEGREES OF SUCCESS

Although a roll of 9 or above is considered a success (see **Table 1: Outcomes**), there are additional degrees of success and failure that are designed to create either challenges or positive consequences for the characters.

Whilst the dice provide a number and the outcome, it is up to the GM and the group to define how the outcomes weave into the narrative and provide color and context to them. It is up to the GM and players to *Fill in The Gaps* (see page 10), particularly around the outcomes of *Dire Failures* and *Wild Successes,*

These degrees of success apply to all rolls of the dice and apply as equally to NPCs as they do to the players.

DIRE FAILURE

On a final total of 2 or less, in addition to failing in their action or attack there is an additional setback or outcome that impacts the character.

This could be anything from losing their footing after an unsuccessful punch, to a gun jamming and needing to be cleared before it can be used again.

The negative outcome from a *Dire Failure* must be meaningful and directly impact their next action. It is up to the players and the GM to *Fill in The Gaps* as to exactly what has happened.

If a player or the GM rolls double ones on both dice (also called a natural two) then, in addition to being a *Dire Failure*, is also a *Moment of Low Insight* (see *Moments of Insight* on page 31).

FAILURE

Although an action or attack fails, there is no additional consequence – a blow simply doesn't connect or the lock on a closed door can't be picked.

SUCCESS

The action or attack succeeds as intended – a fist connects with a jaw or a lock is successfully picked and the door swings wide open.

WILD SUCCESS

On a final score of 14 or higher, not only was the player successful but there is also an additional positive outcome tied to the action.

This could be an opponent who gets shot also drops the grenade he was priming and accidentally takes out the two hapless goons next to him, or perhaps a scavenging attempt that turns up both a hidden safe as well as a note with the combination written on it. As always, the group should help the GM *Fill in The Gaps* as to the outcome.

If a player or the GM rolls double sixes (also known as a natural twelve) then it is a *Moment of High Insight* (see *Moments of Insight* on page 31).

MODIFIER RANGES

All characters have five *Attributes* - **R**eason, **A**cumen, **P**hysicality, **I**nfluence and **D**exterity - which collectively define their mental and physical capabilities. These are referred to as the **RAPID Range,** due to the acronym created from the first letters.

The Modifiers for any of the *RAPID Range attributes* start at *-2 (Lame)* and go up to *+4 (Human Peak)* for humans, *+5 (Animalistic)* for Animals. These modifiers are laid out on **Table 2: Rapid Range Modifiers** and explained on page 33.

TABLE 2: RAPID RANGE MODIFIERS	
-2	LAME (-2)
-1	WEAK (-1)
O	AVERAGE (O)
+1	GOOD (+1)
+2	STRONG (+2)
+3	EXCEPTIONAL (+3)
+4	HUMAN PEAK (+4)
+5	ANIMALISTIC (+5)

Characters also have skills that they have learned such as First Aid or Unarmed Combat and these modifiers range from *-3 (Inept) to +4 (Life's Work)*, as laid out in **Table 3: Skill Range** and on page 34.

TABLE 3: SKILL RANGE	
-3	INEPT (-3)
O	UNTRAINED (O)
+1	BASIC KNOWLEDGE (+1)
+2	JOURNEYMAN (+2)
+3	PROFESSIONAL (+3)
+4	LIFE'S WORK (+4)

An Attribute or Skill of 0 (*Average* or *Untrained*) is considered the Average and confers no positive or negative modifier, while each level above or below 0 brings a corresponding positive or negative modifier that is applied to dice checks.

For Example: A character with a Dexterity attribute of 1 and Charm skill level of 2 would get a +1 Modifier when performing any task using their Dexterity attribute and +2 to any attempts at Charming others.

MAKE DICE ROLLS CONSEQUENTIAL

ROLLING DICE IS ALWAYS FUN BUT IF THERE IS LITTLE OR NO CONSEQUENCE TO THE OUTCOME IT CAN DIMINISH THE DRAMATIC IMPACT A CHECK SHOULD HAVE ON THE GAME. FOR THIS REASON, DICE ROLLS SHOULD BE RESERVED FOR MOMENTS THAT HAVE MEANINGFUL CONSEQUENCES OR OTHERWISE MOVE THE PLOT ALONG, NOT FOR AVERAGE OR MUNDANE TASKS.

AS AN EXAMPLE, IF AN ENCOUNTER REVOLVES AROUND OPENING A LOCKED DOOR TO RESCUE A PRISONER, THEN IT IS DESERVING OF A DICE ROLL. HOWEVER, IF THE GROUP HAS DECIDED TO SEARCH A DECREPIT AND SEEMINGLY ABANDONED HOUSE, IT SHOULD BE ASSUMED THAT THEY ARE ABLE TO KICK THE DOOR IN WITHOUT MUCH TROUBLE.

AS A RULE OF THUMB, IF A DICE ROLL DOESN'T IMPACT THE GREATER PLOT OR MOVE THE STORYLINE ALONG, IT'S A ROLL THAT DOESN'T NEED TO BE MADE.

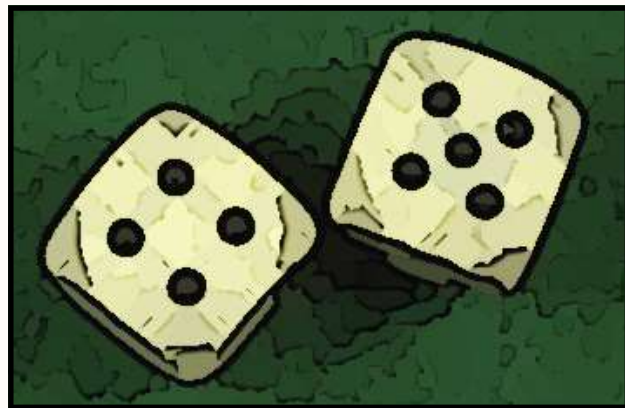| TABLE 4: CMOD VALUE	
-5	DOOMED TO FAILURE (-5)
-3	CATASTROPHIC (-3)
-2	TERRIBLE (-2)
-1	BAD (-1)
O	NO MODIFIER (O)
+1	GOOD (+1)
+2	BETTER (+2)
+3	BEST (+3)
+4	AMAZING (+4)
+5	DIVINE INTERVENTION (+5)

MOMENTS OF INSIGHT

In addition to the gradations of success already covered, a roll of double one or double six (a natural 2 or 12) is considered to be a *Moment of Insight* wherein the task went so flawlessly well or so disastrously awry that the character learned an important lesson about what not to do or gained a deep understand of how and why they were successful.

As a result of this role, they receive a *Distemper Dice* that can be used to affect future dice checks (see *Distemper Dice* on page 37).

By their very nature, *Moment of Insights* always have a narrative impact and regardless of any Ability, Skill or Conditional modifiers being applied to the roll, a double one will always count as a *Dire Failure* and a double six will always count as a *Wild Success*.

As these *Moments of Insight* are tied to specific dice rolls, a roll of double one is referred to a *Moment of Low Insight* and a roll of double six is referred to as a *Moment of High Insight*.

Although *Distemper Dice* cannot be used when making a *Group Check* (see *Group Checks* on page 36), if the player rolling the dice gets a *Moment of Insight*, then everyone who is a part of the check also receives a *Distemper Dice*.
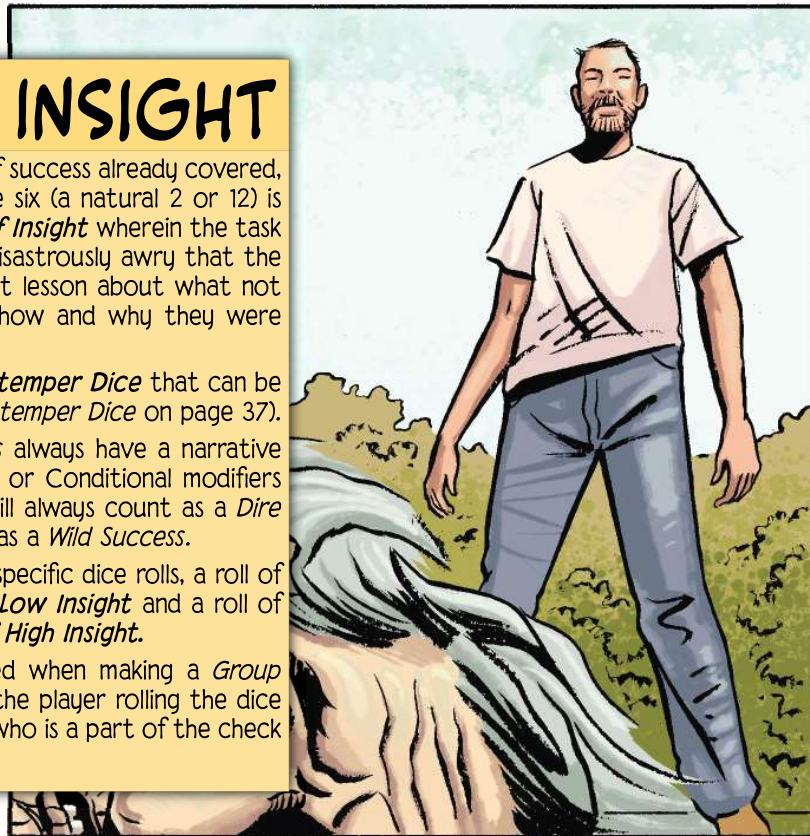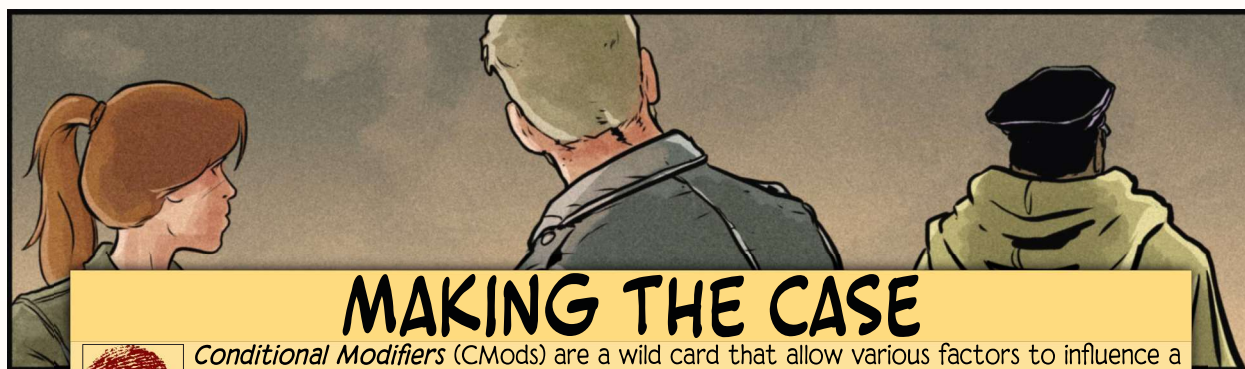
MAKING THE CASE

Conditional Modifiers (CMods) are a wild card that allow various factors to influence a dice roll and are limited only by the group's imagination. Similar to *Filling in The Gaps* (see page 10), players are encouraged to *Make Their Case* about suggestions they believe enhance the narrative and GMs are encouraged to listen and attempt to work these ideas into gameplay.

For example, a player might *Make the Case* that because it had been previously established that their character grew up in a certain region, and that their accent would be more likely to encourage locals to listen and more easily trust them. The GM may decide this is perfectly valid and award a +1 CMod to any Charm attempt.

This back and forth between the group is integral to telling collaborative stories and *Making the Case* is an important tool for the group to allow the players to directly impact the narrative.

MODIFIER TYPES

A Dice Check can be influenced by one of three modifiers that relate to a character's Abilities, their Skills, and circumstances or Conditions, as described below.

ABILITY (AMOD)

A character has five physical & mental attributes – Reason, Acumen, Physicality, Influence & Dexterity, collectively referred to as The RAPID Range – which influence related activities involving those attributes. This influence is reflected by an Ability Modifier (or AMod) that is applied to the dice roll.

FOR EXAMPLE: A character with a Dexterity of 2 shooting at someone with a pistol would get a +2 AMod.

SKILL (SMOD)

Familiarity or training in a specific area or subject will positively impact a dice roll involving that Skill, such as training in Unarmed Combat when brawling or *Lock-Picking** when trying to open a vault door.

Players get a +1 *Skill Modifier* (or *SMod*) for each level they have in a Skill and so a character with Driving 2 will get a +2 SMod to any dice check involving the use of a vehicle.

Although a lack of familiarity doesn't stop a PC from attempting most skill checks, the GM may decide that what they are doing is sufficiently complex or challenging that it requires a negative SMod.

FOR EXAMPLE: A character with no Skill levels in Driving is still able to steal a truck and attempts some intense driving to get away while being chased. The GM may award a -1 or greater SMod for their lack of expertise driving such a large vehicle and attempting something that impacts the narrative.

There are also a number of skills that are complex enough to require vocational training (such as *Surgery**) or the character automatically incurs a -3 SMod when trying to perform tasks relying on them. These skills are denoted by an asterisk and italicized, in the format *Demolitions**.

As each Skill is derived from one of the RAPID Range attributes, the PC receives the benefit of having high levels in both and may get multiple modifiers.

This means that if the character from the example above who has a Dexterity of 2 also has Ranged Combat 1 then they will get a +2 AMod for Dexterity as well as the +1 SMod for Ranged Combat, for a total roll of 2d6+2+1.

CONDITIONAL (CMOD)

Environmental, circumstantial, or karmic influences can all positively or negatively affect dice checks and are applied either at the discretion of the GM or at the request of a player or the group (see the *Making the Case* sidebar to the right).

These *Conditional Modifiers* (or *CMods*) could range from rain making a wall harder to scale, to the darkness of night making it easier to sneak into a building, to a dazed character being unable to aim straight. *CMods* are designed to reflect a combination of the challenge at hand, the circumstances, equipment, external influences, or other circumstantial factors and should be applied liberally.

Conditional Modifiers are cumulative in their effect and any check might have a number of CMods applied for any variety of reasons, all of which are added to the final total.

FOR EXAMPLE: The character above with a Dexterity of 2 (and a corresponding +2 AMod) and Ranged Combat 1 (a +1 SMod) who is *taking a shot with a sniper rifle and scope might get a +1 CMod for the scope being properly sighted, +2 CMod for being in an elevated perch, +1 CMod for the target being still and a -3 Cmod for taking the shot during the middle of a sandstorm.

Although the total cumulative modifiers for this check could be expressed as: **2d6+2+1+1+2+1-3**, for the sake of ease of play, the GM should help the player come to a simpler total (in this instance) of **2d6+2+1+1**, or even **2d6+4**.

ATTRIBUTE RANGES

Each character in *Distemper* has five attributes: *Range, Acumen, Physicality, Influence* and *Dexterity*. These are collectively referred to as the **RAPID Range** (taken from the acronym of the attributes).

This is written in the format 00000 and can range from *-2 (Lame)* to *+5 (Animalistic)*, as described below.

For more details on the RAPID Range Attributes, see page 42.

LAME -2

Lame carries a -2 Modifier and means that a character is in some way underdeveloped or disadvantaged in a particular area.

A Dexterity of -2 might mean the character is in a wheelchair whilst an Influence of -2 could reflect an horrible disfigurement or extremely antisocial behavior.

Human newborns and toddlers would be considered -2-2-2-2-2.

WEAK -1

Weak gives a -1 Modifier and, although not as severe as *Lame*, similarly denotes some kind of impediment or level of disability.

A Physicality of -1 means someone is extremely weak, whereas a Reason of -1 would suggest they are intellectually slow and potentially easy to fool.

An older person or younger adult would likely be -1-1-1-1-1.

AVERAGE 0

Average is the baseline for adult humans and gives no modifier either way. This is sometimes referred to as *Level 0*.

Unless otherwise noted, all characters are assumed to have a RAPID Range of 00000 (see *The Base Model* on page 145).

GOOD +1

The character has above average ability that is reflective of either a degree of training, or a high level of natural talent. This grants a +1 Modifier to attribute rolls.

Strong +2

Someone who has spent a lot of time training or working on developing a particular RAPID attribute gets a +2 Modifier to reflect their above average performance or ability.

EXCELLENT +3

Years of dedication, training and natural ability culminate with a +3 Modifier.

Note: Although Attributes can be raised over time through Character Development to as high as Level +4 (Human Peak), a character cannot start with any of their RAPID Range higher than Level +3 (Exceptional).

HUMAN PEAK +4

Although not available during creation, an Attribute of +4 reflects an insane level of devotion to an activity or natural ability. Characters can only raise Attributes to Human Peak over time by investment of *Character Development Points*, also known as *CDP* (see *Character Evolution* on page 177 for more details).

Animals may have Attributes of +4, such as a Wolf having a particularly high DEX.

ANIMALISTIC +5

A +5 Modifier reflects abilities outside of the usual human range and would appear almost superhuman to observers.

Raising an Attribute to Animalistic Level is not possible for a character, although some NPCs and Animals may have Stats of +5 or higher. A bear has a Physicality of X, whereas the highly charismatic NPC leader of a large, religious sect might have an INF of +5, at the GMs discretion.

ATTRIBUTE CHECKS

There will be times when a character is required to make a check for a skill they don't have, such as Athletics or Perception. When this happens, they make a check using the RAPID Range attribute that the skill is based on, such as Physicality for Athletics or Acumen for Perception.

Additionally, whilst Distemper includes a wide swath of skills that should cover most outcomes, there will always be times when a specific action might not be covered explicitly by a skill. In such a case where no appropriate skill can be identified, the outcome is decided by a check against the appropriate RAPID Range attribute.

An example of this might be an arm-wrestling contest between two characters where both would be required to make a check using their Physicality AMod to see who is the strongest.

SKILL MODIFIERS

Skill Modifiers range from *-3 (Inept)* to *+4 (Life's Work)*, as described below.

INEPT -3

Inept is a special circumstance that carries a *-3* Skill Modifier and applies when a character has no training in a particular Skill that requires a degree of specialization or familiarity with necessary equipment in order to be successful.

Although any character can still attempt this roll, there will be a negative *-3* Skill Modifier (SMod).

As soon as a character has one level in one of these skills, they go from *-3* to *+1*.

These skills are usually tied a vocation or profession and are denoted italicized with an asterisk, such as *Surgery** and *Demolitions**.

UNTRAINED 0

Characters who have no familiarity with a skill are considered to be *Untrained* and receive no positive or negative Skill Modifier when attempting to use that Skill.

BASIC KNOWLEDGE +1

Basic Knowledge means that the character has some familiarity or training in the subject and receives a +1 SMod when using this skill.

JOURNEYMAN +2

Journeyman means that the character has not only had training but has spent a significant amount of time using this skill in a real-world setting and has developed a high degree of comfort and muscle-memory. They receive a +2 SMod any time they use this skill.

PROFESSIONAL +3

The character has above average ability that is reflective of a great deal of training, combined with a high level of natural talent and many years of experience, *Professional* brings a +3 Modifier to checks.

NOTE: Although Skills can be raised over time through *Character Evolution* and potentially go as high as Level *+4 (Life's Work)*, a starting character cannot begin the game with any of their Skills higher than *Level +3 (Professional)*.

LIFE'S WORK +4

After many years of dedication to a particular skill, this character would be considered an expert by their peers and receive a +4 SMod to reflect the insane level of devotion to a skill or activity over the course of decades. Most characters will not survive long enough to reach this level.

CONDITIONAL MODIFIERS

Modifier values play a significant part in determining a character's likelihood of success or failure at any given task. Although the Modifiers from Attributes and Skills are fixed, Conditional Modifiers reflect the variables that can affect any situation and the range can be broad. It is up to the GM and group to decide the right level of complication being added to any situation and while the GM has the final say and can always go outside of these guidelines, the suggested ranges of Modifiers are from -5 (Doomed to Failure) to +5 (Divine Intervention), as described below.

DOOMED TO FAILURE (-5):

If a character is undertaking something that is so unlikely to succeed that it will take a minor miracle to be successful but the player and GM agree that there is still a possibility of being successful, then a -5 (or greater) Modifier may make sense.

A character who has been pushed off the top of a tall building and tries to angle themselves to land in a body of water or break their fall by hitting tree branches on the way down may receive a -5 Modifier on an Athletics or Physicality attempt as they attempt to land in one piece.

CATASTROPHIC (-3):

When everything that can possibly go wrong does go wrong, and it feels like the world or universe is conspiring against the characters, a -3 or -4 Modifier makes sense.

In game terms, this might equate to trying to follow an animal's tracks during a thunderstorm.

TERRIBLE (-2):

If the odds of being successful are significantly stacked against a character whilst the goal remains within reach, a -2 Modifier will make a task challenging or more difficult.

In game terms, this might be trying to shoot a moving target from a vehicle which is also moving.

Bad (-1):

When there is a challenge or impediment that could affect the characters' chance of being successful, a -1 Modifier makes sense.

In game terms, this might be trying to calm a horse that has been riled up by a storm outside.

NO MODIFIER (0):

A 0 Modifier is the very definition of "all other things being equal" and the success or failure of this task lies on nothing but the characters' talent, training, or ability.

GOOD (+1):

When the character has an advantage that swings the situation in their favor, a +1 Modifier might apply.

A +1 Modifier might be appropriate when using binoculars to scan the horizon on a bright, clear day.

BETTER (+2):

If the characters have a better than average chance of being successful, either through smart planning, luck, or the bad moves of others, a +2 Modifier would be appropriate.

An example might be when a character is gambling on a high-stakes game of poker and using a marked set of playing cards to determine what is in their opponent's hand.

BEST (+3):

When fortune smiles good and hard on the character and gives them an unfair advantage or foot up in that challenge.

A sniper with a perfect perch taking a shot at an unsuspecting target below them in good weather conditions might get a +3 Modifier.

DIVINE INTERVENTION (+5)

If the task is an almost certainty and it feels like the characters actions are being guided by the very universe itself, a +5 Modifier might be appropriate. However, a Modifier of this size should be rare as this makes the action a virtual certainty.

If a character had snuck into a warlord's room at night and was attempting to shoot the sleeping lunatic from point blank range, a +5 Modifier might be appropriate.

OPPOSED CHECKS

Most actions are self-resolving and somewhat binary - a lock can either be picked or it can't - and despite the gradations of outcome, checks will essentially either succeed or fail based on the actions of the character and the supporting dice roll.

However, there are times when a check might require an equal and counteracting response from another PC or an NPC to fully quantify the result. This comes in the form of an *Opposed* (or *Opposing*) *Check*, where more than one party is involved in a dice roll to determine the outcome.

In the event of an *Opposed Check*, no matter if it's a PC vs another PC, PC vs an NPC or NPC vs NPC, both characters make a check against the same skill or attribute, and whichever character has the highest total score wins the *Opposed Check*.

If the rolls are the same and there is no clear winner, it is assumed that the *Opposed Check* neither succeeded nor failed and both the GM and player should Fill in The Gaps as to what is happening, before moving to another roll to determine a clear winner.

Note: If one character gets a *Wild Success* or a double six and a *Moment of High Insight* and the other side doesn't, they are automatically the winner.

Similarly, if one character gets a *Fail* or a *Dire Failure* but the other side is Successful, they automatically lose the check

FOR EXAMPLE: two characters are involved in an all or nothing game of poker. Depending on who wins, the NPC will either agree to the release of some hostages, or the PC will join them in the lock-up. The PC has an Acumen of +1 and Gambling +2 and so rolls 2d6+1+2 and gets a total score of 14 – a Wild Success.

The NPC has an Acumen of +2 and Gambling +3 and rolls 2d6+2+3 for a total of 10. Although Successful, the NPCs hand of cards is trumped by the PC's *Wild Success*, and the PC successful wins the hand of poker.

However, had the NPC also rolled 14 and gotten a *Wild Success*, then the stakes of the game have just been raised. Both participants will need to roll again to determine the outcome.

Had either character gotten a *Moment of Insight*, they would have either been dealt a flawless hand and won the game outright on a double six, or accidentally shown their hand to their opponent and lost everything on a double one.

GROUP CHECKS

If multiple characters undertake a task where they can all contribute, such as opening a stuck door, then they can elect to pool their abilities and make one single *Group Check* instead of each character making an individual check.

To make a *Group Check*, the player with the highest relevant individual Attribute or Skill makes their roll, adding any relevant AMod or SMods for each member of the group participating in the check. If multiple characters have the same modifier, they can decide between them who makes the roll.

Distemper Dice cannot be used as part of *Group Checks*, although if the player making the roll gets a *Moment of Insight* (see *Moments of Insight* on page 31) then each participating player also receives a *Distemper Dice*.

Group checks can lead to some potentially large rolls with a significantly higher likelihood of success, reflecting the combined effort of many people to achieve a singular goal.

As an example, if four players are trying to open a trap door that is stuck, the player with the highest Physicality would make the dice roll and would add the Physicality AMod for each of the participating group members.

As another example, players trying to determine the source of a scream in the dark would use the highest Perception value from any member of the group and then add any and all Acumen or Perception Modifiers from any other players involved in the check to reflect the collective ability to triangulate on the origins of the sound.

Note: Not all tasks are going to be eligible for a Group Check and it is up to the GM to decide if it makes sense for any given task. For example, it is unrealistic that 5 members of a group could find a way for all of them to help fire the same weapon but having those same 5 members search a room makes it more likely that a hidden item would surface.

DISTEMPER DICE

Call it karma, call it divine intervention, call it force of will, *Distemper Dice* are a mechanism for players to affect dice rolls or other elements of gameplay in their favor in a variety of different ways.

Each player gets 2 Distemper Dice during character creation and receives an additional *Distemper Dice* each time they roll a double one or a double six and have a *Moment of Insight* (see page 31).

If playing in person, actual dice should be placed in front of the player, ready for use. Get special dice for that. Make them a cool color.

Although the exact manner in which they are played is a discussion between the GM and the group, common scenarios are:

  • Adding an additional dice to the pool prior to making a check, for a 3d6 dice pool

  • Trading a *Distemper Dice* in prior to a dice roll for a +3 Conditional Modifier (CMod) that is added to the total

  • Substituting *Distemper Dice* for one or both of the original dice rolled for fresh dice that are then rolled into the pool and added to the total

  • Surrendering a *Distemper Dice* to 'bend reality' by allowing a player to find an unexpected clue or suddenly have a missing piece of required equipment (such as a rope to scale a wall), or have been previously informed of a guard's routine by a drinking buddy, or whatever they *Make The Case* for

  • If a character would otherwise *Die* (see page 123), they may surrender all of their *Distemper Dice* in exchange for recovering 1 Wound Point and 1 Resilience Point for each dice surrendered. Players cannot choose how many dice to use in this method, this costs all of their available *Distemper Dice*

There is no limit to the number of *Distemper Dice* a player can have and unspent *Distemper Dice* should be marked on the character sheet and updated at the end of each session

Once used, *Distemper Dice* are immediately surrendered back to the GM.

Although *Distemper Dice* can be used by a player to perform an act that helps another player, they are non-transferable and cannot be given directly to another character.

FOR EXAMPLE: One character is trying to disarm a crude bomb but has no Distemper Dice available to them and although another character cannot directly give them their Distemper Dice, they could spend one to influence a General Knowledge check and guess at which wire needs to be cut based on watching spy movies as a kid.

Note: With the exception of *Antagonists* (see page 146), non-player characters do not have Distemper Dice and do not receive any as a result of a *Moment of Insight*.

DISTEMPER DICE - Chain Reactions

If a player uses a *Distemper Dice* to affect a dice roll and gets another *Moment of Insight* during the check, this causes a *Chain Reaction*, and the player receives two *Distemper Dice* to add to their pool. They can choose to play either of those dice immediately, or bank for later use by adding them to their pool.

There is no limit to the number of *Distemper Dice* that can be earned as part of a *Chain Reaction* if a character has multiple *Moments of Insight*.

Chapter 5: Who Will You Be?

PLAYER CHARACTERS

Characters are the game-world representation of the real-world player behind the dice.

As a player's eyes, mouth, and hands within the game-world, they are the avatar by which a player can interact with other *player characters* (PCs), as well as the *Non-Player Characters* (NPCs) voiced by the GM, and the larger world around them.

Although they are essentially little more than a collection of statistics and mechanics – how strong they are, or how well they can ride a horse – a character is most importantly defined by the voice that a player gives to them.

Whilst one character may have the same stats to another, the way that the players breathe life into them and define their personality as they interact with those around them will make each character wildly different.

For this reason, each player should have a clear understanding of who their character is if they are to determine how they will act and react to various situations within the game-world. Players are guided through defining these elements during the *Backstory Generation* process and given opportunities to define who their character is, so hat they know how their character will react in any given situation.

There are two methods for creating characters, **Backstory Generation** and **Picking a Paradigm,** and it is up to each player which option they choose. This may depend on how much time they have to prepare their character, their familiarity with the game mechanics and the *Backstory Generation* process, the type of session or campaign that is running, or it could be as the result of a discussion with the GM about how best to achieve the character concept they are looking for. Whichever method produces the character that the player wishes to play is the right method.

As an alternative, there is also the option of using **Pregenerated Characters** (more frequently just called **Pregens**) which require zero preparation beyond choosing the one you want to play. See *Ready To Go, Out Of The Can* on page 39 for more details.

Once everyone has their character ready, the group is ready to roll some dice.
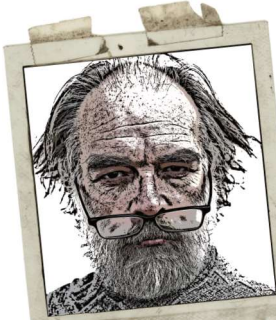
BACKSTORY GENERATION

Backstory Generation gives the player control of all aspects of their characters' development by allowing them to define how the various periods of their lives affected their growth, what they learned, and how they grew during those times.

This sculpting is done by applying *Character Development Points* (or *CDP*) to various attributes and skills at different times of the characters' evolution, such as where they grew up, or what they did for work. See *Character Development Points* on page 58 for more details.

This option should be chosen by players who enjoy creating characters and have both the time and desire to watch their character evolve step-by-step as they are shaped towards the exact concept or design that the player has in mind.

The *Backstory Generation* method is covered in greater detail on page 56, and a blank character sheet can be found on the following two pages, with more available for download from **www.DistemperVerse.com**.

PICKING A PARADIGM

There are times when players may wish to just jump-in and get started playing – perhaps when they need to replace a dead character on the fly, when joining a game at short notice, or when they have no defined concept in mind.

For those players, *Distemper* comes with **Paradigms** that already have attributes, skills and equipment specifically designed to fit a trope or a role within a group that will be familiar to many players, such as a bewildered Family Doctor trying to adjust to this cruel and capricious world, a cop with a built-in sense of justice, or hard-bitten Mercenary who can't seem to escape killing.

Although this method takes care of the mechanics, it's still up to the player to customize certain elements of these paradigms such as their personality, backstory, their *Motivations* and *Complications* (see page 65) and the various details that will help quickly bring them to life.

See *Paradigms* on page 73 for more details. Paradigm sheets are available for download on pages 74-105.
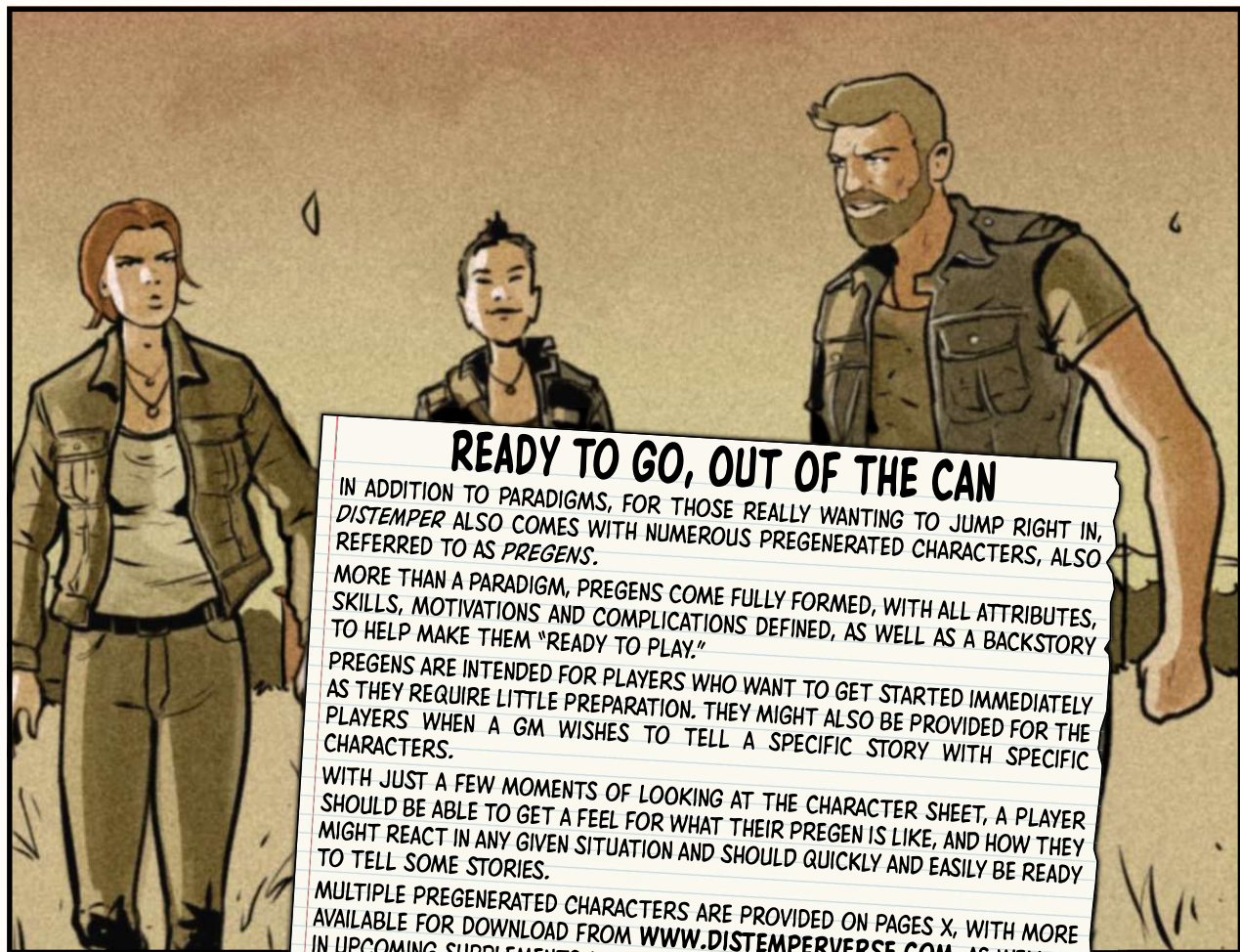
READY TO GO, OUT OF THE CAN

IN ADDITION TO PARADIGMS, FOR THOSE REALLY WANTING TO JUMP RIGHT IN, *DISTEMPER* ALSO COMES WITH NUMEROUS PREGENERATED CHARACTERS, ALSO REFERRED TO AS *PREGENS*.

MORE THAN A PARADIGM, PREGENS COME FULLY FORMED, WITH ALL ATTRIBUTES, SKILLS, MOTIVATIONS AND COMPLICATIONS DEFINED, AS WELL AS A BACKSTORY TO HELP MAKE THEM "READY TO PLAY."

PREGENS ARE INTENDED FOR PLAYERS WHO WANT TO GET STARTED IMMEDIATELY AS THEY REQUIRE LITTLE PREPARATION. THEY MIGHT ALSO BE PROVIDED FOR THE PLAYERS WHEN A GM WISHES TO TELL A SPECIFIC STORY WITH SPECIFIC CHARACTERS.

WITH JUST A FEW MOMENTS OF LOOKING AT THE CHARACTER SHEET, A PLAYER SHOULD BE ABLE TO GET A FEEL FOR WHAT THEIR PREGEN IS LIKE, AND HOW THEY MIGHT REACT IN ANY GIVEN SITUATION AND SHOULD QUICKLY AND EASILY BE READY TO TELL SOME STORIES.

MULTIPLE PREGENERATED CHARACTERS ARE PROVIDED ON PAGES X, WITH MORE AVAILABLE FOR DOWNLOAD FROM WWW.DISTEMPERVERSE.COM, AS WELL AS IN UPCOMING SUPPLEMENTS AND ENCOUNTERS.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION & NOTES

RELATIONSHIPS

Name: Relationship Modifier: Name: Relationship Modifier:

Who Will You Be?

CHARACTER SHEET OVERVIEW

Before creating a character it is helpful to understand how the various elements such as attributes and skills will influence gameplay. All of this is covered in greater detail below and an example character sheet is presented on the below to provide a working example.

A blank character sheet is provided on page 40-41 for printing, and a form-fillable version can be found at **www.DistemperVerse.com**.

① PERSONAL DATA

This is where a player records both the various, minor details that help bring their character to life but have no real impact on gameplay, such as name, gender, height, weight, etc.

Additionally, this is where the *Complications* and *Motivations* that affect how a character behaves are recorded.

② THE RAPID RANGE

The *RAPID Range* refers to a series of attributes – Reason, Acumen, Physicality, Influence and Dexterity – that correspond to the various elements of characters' personality, intellect, and physical capabilities.

These five attributes, laid out below in **Table 2: RAPID Range Modifiers**, are a quick and easy way to quantify in game-terms how well equipped a character is to deal with any given task or obstacle. See *RAPID Range Attributes* on page 61 for more details on each attribute.

TABLE 2: RAPID RANGE MODIFIERS	
−2	LAME (−2)
−1	WEAK (−1)
0	AVERAGE (0)
+1	GOOD (+1)
+2	STRONG (+2)
+3	EXCEPTIONAL (+3)
+4	HUMAN PEAK (+4)
+5	ANIMALISTIC (+5)

Each Attribute starts at 0 and the range is expressed in the format 00000, with each number corresponding to the letter in the RAPID acronym - Reason, Acumen, Physicality, Influence & Dexterity.

Attributes range from *-2 (Lame)* to *+4 (Human Peak)*, and an attribute of *0* is considered *Human Average*.

This means that a completely unremarkable character would have a RAPID Range of 00000 (see *The Base Model* on page 145 for more details), whilst a character with slightly above average attributes across the board would be expressed as 11111. Another character, who has spent their life focusing on weight training and

gymnastics but little else, might have a Physicality of 3 and Dexterity of 2, for a RAPID Range of 00302.

An attribute of *0 (Average)* brings no modifier either way but for each point above or below 0, a character gets a positive or negative Ability Modifier (or, AMod) that is added to dice checks. This means that a character with an attribute of *-1 (Weak)* would get a -1 AMod whereas a character who has *2 (Strong)* would get a +2 AMod.

③ SKILLS

All characters will have had some degree of training in various skills prior to the game starting. All the available Skills, along with the Attribute they are tied to, are all listed in these notes.

Each skill ranges from *Level 0* to *Level 4* (detailed below in **Table 3: Skill Range)** and has a number of blank boxes listed next to them on the card and players should fill in the number of boxes that reflect how many levels they have in that skill. If there are

---

PERSONAL DATA

Name: Profession:

Age: Weight: ①   Height: Gender:

Complication: Motivation:

REASON: ⬡   ACUMEN ②   PHYSICALITY: ⬡   INFLUENCE: ⬡   DEXTERITY: ⬡

COMBAT SKILLS -3 1 2 3 4 5
- Demolitions* (PHY) ☐☐☐☐☐
- Melee (PHY) ☐☐☐☐☐
- Ranged (PHY) ☐☐☐☐☐
- Unarmed (PHY) ☐☐☐☐☐

SWAY SKILLS 1 2 3 4 5
- Animal Handling (INF) ☐☐☐☐☐
- Barter (ACU) ☐☐☐☐☐
- Charm (INF) ☐☐☐☐☐
- Deception (INF) ☐☐☐☐☐
- Entertainment (INF) ☐☐☐☐☐
- Inspiration (INF) ☐☐☐☐☐
- Intimidation (PHY) ☐☐☐☐☐

MECHANIC SKILLS -3 1 2 3 4 5
- Armor* (DEX) ☐☐☐☐☐
- Tinkerer (DEX) ☐☐☐☐☐
- Vehicles* (DEX) ☐☐☐☐☐
- Weapons* (DEX) ☐☐☐☐☐

INNATE SKILLS 1 2 3 4 5
- Athletics (DEX) ☐☐☐☐☐
- Dodge (DEX) ☐☐☐☐☐
- Driving (DEX) ☐☐☐☐☐
- Gambling (ACU) ☐☐☐☐☐
- Hunting (PHY) ☐☐☐☐☐
- Navigation (ACU) ☐☐☐☐☐
- Perception (ACU) ☐☐☐☐☐
- Scavenging (ACU) ☐☐☐☐☐
- Survival (ACU) ☐☐☐☐☐

KNOWLEDGE SKILLS -3 1 2 3 4 5
- Farming (REA) ☐☐☐☐☐
- General (REA) ☐☐☐☐☐
- Local (REA) ☐☐☐☐☐
- Psychology* (REA) ☐☐☐☐☐
- Research (REA) ☐☐☐☐☐
- Tactical* (REA) ☐☐☐☐☐

MEDICINE SKILLS -3 1 2 3 4 5
- First Aid (REA) ☐☐☐☐☐
- Pharmacology* (REA) ☐☐☐☐☐
- Surgery* (REA) ☐☐☐☐☐

CRIMINAL SKILLS -3 1 2 3 4 5
- Lock-Picking* (REA) ☐☐☐☐☐
- Sleight of Hand (DEX) ☐☐☐☐☐
- Stealth (DEX) ☐☐☐☐☐
- Streetwise (ACU) ☐☐☐☐☐

SECONDARY STATS

Wound Points: 10 + PHY + DEX   DM Melee: ④   Initiative: DEX + ACU + PER

Resilience Points: 6 + PHY   DM Ranged: Encumbrance: 6 + PHY

Morality: 3   Breaking Point: 3 + REA + PHY ☐☐☐   CDP: Distemper Dice: ☐☐☐

WEAPONS AND EQUIPMENT

Name: Type: M R E S   Range: Cond: Enc: Ammo:
WP: RP: %   Notes: ⑤

Name: Type: M R E S   Range: Cond: Enc: Ammo:
WP: RP: %   Notes:

Name: Type: M R E S   Range: Cond: Enc: Ammo:
WP: RP: %   Notes:

Name: Unarmed Combat   Type: (M) R E S   Range: Cond: Enc: Ammo:
WP: 1d3 +   RP: 100%   Notes: 1d3 + PHY + Unarmed Combat Damage

Equipment: Enc: Notes:
Equipment: Enc: Notes:
Equipment: Enc: Notes:

Rations Type: # Days: Enc: Notes:

ARMOR

Type: Enc: DM: Notes:

The skills a character has can be defined either through *Backstory Generation* or are already allocated via the Paradigms the player has chosen. Having skills that align with a character's RAPID Range brings compound bonuses as it is reflective of a combination of natural ability and training.

Each level learned in a skill adds a cumulative +1 Skill Modifier (or, SMod) to any dice checks that use that skill. This means that spending 2 Skill Points on Athletics gives a corresponding +2 Skill Modifier (SMods) to all Athletics checks. These SMods are added, along with any AMods, to the dice roll.

Certain skills require specialized training and instead of starting at 0, they start at -3 and confer a corresponding -3 Skill Modifier when used. These skills are denoted with an asterisk and are italicized when written, such as *Surgery** or *Vehicle Mechanics** and on the character sheet they are called out by a half-filled box.

As soon as a character spends one skill point on these skills, they should fill in both the half-filled box as well as the first box to reflect having Level 1 in that skill, with a corresponding +1 Modifier.

For ease of reference on the character sheet, skills are clustered by their type or nature into one of seven groupings - **Combat, Innate, Sway, Knowledge, Mechanic, Medicine,** or **Criminal**. Although skills might be grouped together, that doesn't mean they are tied to the same attribute. As an example, within the Sway grouping, there is Barter (which is tied to the Acumen attribute), Charm (which is tied to Influence) and Intimidation (which is tied to Physicality).

A list of Skills along with the RAPID Range attribute they map to can be found on page 49.

More details along with full explanations of the various Skills can be found in *What Do You Know?* on page 48.

④ SECONDARY STATS

Secondary Statistics are derived from the RAPID Range attributes and certain skills. Some have a direct bearing on combat, such as Wound Points (WP), Resilience Points (RP), Defensive Modifiers (DMM & DMR), Initiative Modifier, and Encumbrance. Although described in greater detail below, these are summarized on **Table 5: Secondary Stats**.

TABLE 5: SECONDARY STATISTICS	
WOUND POINTS	10 + PHY + DEX
RESILIENCE POINTS	6 + PHY
DAMAGE MODIFIER (MELEE)	– DEX + DODGE
DAMAGE MODIFIER (RANGED)	– PHY + DODGE
INITIATIVE	0 + DEX +ACU + PER
ENCUMBRANCE	6 + PHY
BREAKING POINT	3 + REA + ACU

TABLE 3: SKILL RANGE	
–3	INEPT (–3)
0	UNTRAINED (0)
+1	BASIC KNOWLEDGE (+1)
+2	JOURNEYMAN (+2)
+3	PROFESSIONAL (+3)
+4	LIFE'S WORK (+4)

no boxes filled in, it means that the character is untrained and gets 0 Skill Modifier (or SMod).

Each Skill is tied directly to a RAPID Range attribute and directly affects their likelihood of success when undertaking any given task. Each additional point added to a skill raises it by a Level, up to a maximum of *Level 3 (Professional)* for starter characters. With the only skills they can get to Level 3 being Vocational Skills that are tied to their *Profession* (see *Professions* on page 64).

Whilst not used for combat in the same way as those mentioned above, a character also has values included for *Morality* (see page 179), *Distemper Dice* (see page 37) and *Character Development Points* (see page 58) which all have an impact on some other element of gameplay and will change over time.

WOUND POINTS: Wound Points, abbreviated to WP, define how much physical punishment a character can sustain until they are Mortally Wounded and Die. Wound Points are based on a character's Physicality and Dexterity attributes and Characters start with 10 WP + Physicality AMod + Dexterity AMod, for a possible range of 6 to 18.

FOR EXAMPLE: A character with a Physicality of 2 and Dexterity of 1 means that they start in full health with a maximum of 10 + 2 +1 = 13 Wound Points.

When a character is reduced to 0 WP they are *Mortally Wounded* and will *Die* within **4 Rounds + Physicality AMod** (for a range of 4 to 7 Rounds) unless they receive medical attention (see *Stabilizing* on Page 126).

FOR EXAMPLE: If the character in the previous example with a Physicality of 2 is ever reduced to 0 WP, they will be Killed in 4 + 2 rounds unless they receive medical assistance from someone.

After character creation, the only way of increasing the number of Wound Points a character has is to increase their Physicality or Dexterity by spending CDP. Conversely, certain injuries like those suffered from *Lasting Wounds* (see page 127), or contracting and surviving the Dog Flu, can permanently reduce a character's Physicality or Dexterity attribute, thereby reducing their Wound Point total.

RESILIENCE POINTS: *Resilience Points*, or *RP*, represent a character's endurance and mental fortitude, and is the threshold at which they will pass-out and become Incapacitated. As this number is generally lower than a characters' Wound Points, there is a possibility they will be Incapacitated before they are *Mortally Wounded*. This is particularly likely if attacked with a weapon such as a club, or if they are beaten unconscious or *Subdued* (see *Grappling* & *Subduing* on page 122) during Unarmed Combat.

Resilience Points are based on a character's Physicality attribute and PCs start with **6 RP + PHY** modifier, for a range of 4 to 10.

Generally, a PC takes Resilience Point damage at half the rate of Wound Point damage, rounded down.

Therefore, a gunshot inflicting 5 WP damage would also inflict 2 RP damage. However, certain weapons (such as a club, or baton) will inflict the same amount of RP as WP damage. These weapons are marked as doing 100% RP damage. Some special attacks even deal only RP (such as gas or a tranquilizer dart). These effects will be noted in the weapon description.

When a character is reduced to 0 RP, they become *Incapacitated* for **1d6 Rounds - Physicality AMod**, for a range of 1-6 rounds, with a minimum of 1 round.

After this period, they regain consciousness with 1 RP and will recover 1 additional RP for each round they are not in combat for up to half their total. They can only recuperate the rest of their RP when they are outside of combat, usually with a good night's rest.

For Example: A character with a Physicality AMod of +1 starts with 6 +1 = 7 Resilience Points. If this character is ever reduced to 0 RP, they will be *Incapacitated* for 1d6-1 rounds (with a minimum of 1 round) at which point they will recover, coming to with 1 Resilience Point.

NOTE: Becoming Incapacitated through combat is different than becoming Incapacitated through the fatigue of carrying too much and becoming over encumbered, and the rate at which RP are recovered are different in both cases (see Encumbrance on page 45).

DEFENSIVE MODIFIERS: Defensive Modifiers (DM) represent a character's ability to dodge, parry or otherwise react to an incoming attack and minimize their chances of being hit. Defensive Modifiers not only influence how likely that attack is to succeed but also mitigates the damage inflicted to the character.

There are two different types of *Defensive Modifiers*, a *Defensive Modifier Melee* (*DMM*) that is tied to *Physicality,* and a *Defensive Modifier Ranged (DMR)* that is tied to *Dexterity*.

Characters start with *Defensive Modifiers* equivalent to their corresponding RAPID Range Attribute, and so a character with a Dex of 2 and PHY of 1 gets a +2 DMR and a DMM of +1. Additionally, every Level a character has in the skill Dodge grants them a +1 *Defensive Modifier* that is applied to both *Melee* and *Ranged* attacks.

Defensive Modifiers get applied at two different points

in combat. The first is when a character is being attacked, and their Defensive Modifiers are applied as though they were negative CMods. For Example, a character with a *Defensive Modifier Melee* (DMM) of +2 who is being attacked by a club-wielding NPC with a DEX of 1 and Melee Combat of 1 would apply their DMM to the incoming attack, so that the NPC rolls **2d6+1+1-2.**

The second time *Defensive Modifiers* come into effect is when an incoming attack has been successful, and the actual damage done is modified downwards by the value of the *Defensive Modifier*.

For Example: A character with a Dexterity of 1 gets a +1 Ranged Defensive Modifier (DMR), which is applied to all incoming ranged attacks. If this character is shot at and hit, their +1 DMR is then applied to any damage received and so the bullet that should hit for 4 WP damage and 2 RP damage will incur a -1 DMR modifier and will instead inflict 3 WP and 1 RP damage.

INITIATIVE (INIT): The order in which participants take part in combat is decided by rolling for Initiative. This is covered in greater depth on page 118, but Initiative is calculated by rolling 2d6 and then adding any Dexterity and Acumen AMods, as well as any Perception SMod.

Characters start with **0 INIT + Dexterity AMod + Acumen AMod + Perception SMod**, for a range of 0 to +12.

ENCUMBRANCE: Encumbrance (ENC) reflects how much weight and bulk a PC is able to manage before becoming fatigued and slowing down until they are ultimately forced to stop. The most common items a PC would carry are weapons, miscellaneous pieces of equipment, as well as food and supplies.

Each PC has a base *Encumbrance* of **6 + PHY** modifier, for a range of 4 to 10.

Characters can meet their *Encumbrance* limit without any adverse consequence. However, as soon as they exceed it, they suffer 1 RP damage per hour for each point they are over their Encumbrance limit. If the character becomes reaches 0 RP, they become *Incapacitated* (see page 123). Although they regain consciousness within moments and recover 1 RP, they must rest for four hours to recover half of their RP before carrying on. Alternatively, they can drop enough weight to meet their Encumbrance limit at which point they can then keep moving without incurring further RP damage.

FOR EXAMPLE: A PC with an Encumbrance of 7 and 6 Resilience Points is carrying a total of 8 points of equipment.

This is 1 point higher than the PC's Encumbrance of 7 and therefore they lose 1 RP per hour. After 6 hours the PC has suffered 6 points of RP damage and has becoming incapacitated. They fall to the ground and can't move any further. As soon as they start resting, they regain 1 RP, but the character must then rest for 7 hours before having enough strength to once again move while overloaded, or they can choose to leave some equipment behind and get within their Encumbrance limit.

See *Encumbrance* on page 45 for more details.

MORALITY: Each character has their own internal moral compass about the actions they take, and they may find that going against the grain of their nature has lasting consequences to their psyche and interactions with others.

Morality is an ingame measurement of how true they are being to their own value system, and it ties into the *Motivations & Complications* chosen during *Backstory Generation*. *Morality* reflects how a character reacts to the world around them and how events may change them.

All characters start with a *Morality* of 3 and, similar to *Wound* and *Resilience Points*, a character's *Morality* score can change over time, depending on the actions and choices they make. Doing good things in the world may see their *Morality* rise, while causing undue suffering to those around them might cause it to drop. If a PC's *Morality* reaches 0 then they permanently lose 1 point from their Influence attribute and their Morality score is reset to 3.

See *Morality* on page 179 for more details.

BREAKING POINT: Each character has a threshold for how

much mental stress they can take before they snap, usually leading to them doing something they later regret. This stress might come in the form of frustration, humiliation, anger, pain, fear, or extreme hunger, but every negative act that eats away at a character contributes towards their overarching mental state until they reach their Breaking Point and react negatively.

Each time a character finds themselves in an unduly stressful situation, such as not eating for a few days, spending a night asleep in the pouring rain, being antagonized repeatedly, or watching a friend get killed, there is a chance it will contribute to their mental state as well as causing a *Panic Attack* (see page 124), and they should mark one of the Stress Boxes on the character sheet next to their *Breaking Point* score. This score carries over from session to session.

When they reach their *Breaking Point*, characters have snapped, and they do something out of character or unexpected. The player should roll 2d6 and check *Table 22: Breaking Point* on page 178 to see what they do and then *Fill in the Gaps* as to what happens.

Once a character has reached their *Breaking Point* and had a reaction, they will calm down. Their *Breaking Point* is reset to zero and all boxes are cleared.

Characters start with a *Breaking Point* equal to **3 + Reason AMod + Acumen AMod**, for a range of 3 to 11. These are reflected by the number of Stress Boxes filled in on the character sheet.

See *Breaking Point* on page 178 for more details.

CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT POINTS (CDP): Over time, characters will earn Character Development Points that they can use to increase attributes or skills. These should be noted on the character sheet so that the player & GM know how much they have to spend. See Character Evolution on page 177 for more details.

DISTEMPER DICE: Characters start the game with 2 *Distemper Dice*. These dice will be spent to influence the narrative (see Distemper Dice on page 37), and more will be earned as a result of Moments of Insight (see page 31). Distemper Dice

carry over from session to session and should be recorded here on the character sheet.

⑤ WEAPONS & EQUIPMENT

Everything that a character is carrying needs to be explicitly listed on their sheet, or they do not have it with them. This includes all the weapons, along with the total amount of ammo they have for each weapon, miscellaneous equipment (such as binoculars or a compass), armor (along with the condition of the armor), any incidental items they have, along with any rations that they are carrying.

As characters find, use, and potentially lose their equipment and weapons, it should all be noted on their character sheet.

A full list of all weapons and equipment can be found on pages 130-131.

REMEMBER: If it's not written on their sheet, the character doesn't have it!

WEAPON STATISTICS: In this section are all the details for each of the weapons the character has with them, including the Type, Range, Condition, Encumbrance, Damage dealt, and any notes about the specific weapon.

AMMO TRACKING: Weapons run dry very quickly in this new world. These pips are for players to mark when their characters are using ammo, to make tracking easier.

EQUIPMENT: The name, *Encumbrance* value and any notes related to the equipment characters have with them is recorded here.

RATIONS: Each character starts with two days' worth of rations, and as they eat and acquire more, it should be recorded on the character sheet here.

ARMOR: The armor *Type, Encumbrance value, Defensive Modifier* granted, and *Condition* of the armor should all be listed here.

⑥ BACKGROUND & NOTES

As players are guided through the *Backstory Generation* process, they are prompted to write a short description of what happened at key points during their characters lives'. Here is where a player should note their backstory, outlining who they were before, how they came to be in this moment, and any relevant details about their past and their personality. This is something they can (but don't have to) share with other players in their group.

This space is where a player might record other information relevant to their character, such as rumors they have heard or actions and activities they wish to undertake.

⑦ RELATIONSHIPS

As characters start to interact with non-player characters (NPCs) within the gameworld, they will find themselves having different relationships that may vary over time. Players should make a note of any *Relationship Modifiers* (also referred to as an *RMod*) they have towards another character.

See *First Impressions & Gut Checks* on page 148 for more details.

WHAT DO YOU KNOW?

Skills are the mechanism that allow characters to perform the tasks or actions that define, alter or otherwise further the narrative. A character attempting to do something that requires a degree of knowledge, training, or ability – such as picking a lock, swimming across a raging river, or converting an engine to run on ethanol – will be required to make a successful Skill check.

For each Level a character has in a specific Skill they add a +1 Skill Modifier (or SMod) to any dice check that uses that ability. The modifiers are cumulative and the more levels a character has within that skill, the higher the SMod they apply.

With the exception of a few specific skills which are covered below, Skills range from *Level 1 (Basic Knowledge)*, which grants a +1 SMod, through to *Level 4 (Life's Work)* which gives a +4 SMod in return for the investment of years of effort to get to that level. To reflect their advanced knowledge, expertise and abilities, characters getting to Level 4 are rewarded with a specialized ability that builds on and makes better use of what they have already learned.

Although a lack of familiarity with a Skill doesn't stop a character from attempting most checks, the GM may decide that what they are doing is sufficiently complex or challenging that it will incur a negative SMod. So, whilst it's just assumed that most characters know how to drive, if someone with no levels in Driving is stealing a truck and attempts some crazy driving while escaping, the GM may decide they incur a -1 or -2 SMod.

There are certain skills that are denoted with an asterisk and italicized when written (such as *Lock-Picking**, *Surgery** or *Demolitions**), which are either sufficiently complex or require such a high degree of familiarity with the tools required to use – both of which will generally only come with professional experience. Anyone attempting those skills without at least *Basic Knowledge* will be considered to be *Level -3 (Inept)* and will incur a corresponding -3 SMod when attempting these checks.

FOR EXAMPLE: Someone with no training in *Surgery** can try to remove a bullet lodged in a companion's leg but there is a good chance they will fail and potentially cause more damage, reflected in game terms by the -3 SMod.

Each Skill is tied to a RAPID Range attribute and so a character with both natural ability as well as a degree of training will receive the benefit of both AMods and SMods when they are making dice checks.

Therefore, a character with a Dexterity of 2 gets a +2 AMod to any check that involves using that attribute. If that same character also has 1 Level in a skill that is tied to Dexterity – such as Athletics 1 – then they will get the benefit of both the modifiers. Any time they attempt to use that skill and would be expressed as **2d6+2+1**.

There are certain skills – *Psychology**, Inspiration, Tinkerer, for example – that have benefit to the individual but can also be used in the service and benefit of any community that the characters are a part of. More details can be found in the various skill descriptions, where relevant. See *Communities* on page 187 for more details.

New Skills can be learned, and existing Skills can be improved over time through the investment of *Character Development Points* (CDP). See *Character Evolution* on page 177 for more details.

There are a wide range of skills covering a spectrum of abilities, and whilst it's possible for a character to be very good at many things, it isn't possible for anyone to be good at everything. Some players may find that, ultimately, having a degree of expertise and specialization in certain skills will arguably serve their character well in the long run, while others may prefer to be more of a generalist with a wider number of skills.

Although the skills listed below on ***Table 8: Skills*** should provide a good swath of options, they aren't meant to be restrictive and there is much natural bleed between some of them. Characters with levels in *Charm* may get the same outcome from an interaction with an NPC as a character with the same number of levels in *Intimidation*, just as a character with *Animal Handling* may be as skilled handling a herd of livestock as a character with levels in *Farming*. So long as the player is willing to *Fill in the Gaps* as to how they are using their skills and the outcomes they are going for, this should be seen as a positive thing. Players and the GM are encouraged to think of ways to use the existing list of skills to achieve interesting narrative results.

Both in the descriptions below and on the character sheets, Skills are grouped with other, similar skills, into one of seven categories - Criminal, Combat, Innate, Knowledge, Mechanic, Medicine, and Sway. This is done for ease of reference when a player is trying to decide which of their characters' skills might best suit a certain situation. Although skills inside these groupings can be tied to different attributes, they are all thematically similar.

TABLE 8: SKILLS

#	NAME	GROUP	ATTRIBUTE	DESCRIPTION
1	ANIMAL HANDLING [SWAY] (INF)	SWAY	INFLUENCE	AN UNDERSTANDING OF BOTH THE SCIENCE AND THE ART BEHIND TRAINING ANIMALS, FROM BASIC TRICKS TO BREAKING IN STUBBORN COLTS TO CARING FOR HERDS OF LIVESTOCK
2	ARMORSMITH* [MECHANIC] (DEX)	MECHANIC	DEXTERITY	WORKING KNOWLEDGE OF HOW TO DESIGN, BUILD AND REPAIR ARMOR. THIS APPLIES TO VEHICLES AND BUILDINGS AS WELL AS PERSONAL ARMOR
3	ATHLETICS [INNATE] (PHY)	INNATE	PHYSICALITY	BEING GRACEFUL AND COORDINATED BUT ALSO REFLECTING HOW WELL A CHARACTER IS ABLE TO CLIMB, JUMP AND REACT TO PHYSICAL CHALLENGES AND OBSTACLES
4	BARTER [SWAY] (ACU)	SWAY	ACUMEN	BEING ABLE TO ARRANGE DEALS, TRADES, APPRAISE GOODS, AND HAGGLE FOR THE BEST OUTCOME
5	CHARM [SWAY] (INF)	SWAY	INFLUENCE	BEING ABLE TO GET OTHERS TO DO WHAT YOU WANT, OFTEN BY MAKING THEM THINK THAT IT'S WHAT THEY WANT TO DO OR IS IN THEIR BEST INTEREST
6	DECEPTION [SWAY] (INF)	SWAY	INFLUENCE	KNOWING HOW TO WEAVE ENOUGH TRUTH INTO A LIE TO CONVINCE SOMEONE OF SOMETHING UNTRUE AND HOW TO CONTROL TELLS AND TICS THAT MIGHT GIVE THEM AWAY
7	DEMOLITIONS* [COMBAT] (PHY)	COMBAT	PHYSICALITY	THE ART OF BLOWING THINGS UP, RANGING FROM CREATOMG IMPROVISED MOLOTOV COCKTAILS TO THE PRECISION USE OF MILITARY GRADE COMPOUNDS
8	DODGE [INNATE] (DEX)	INNATE	DEXTERITY	LIGHTENING REFLEXES & THE ABILITY TO BE WHERE AN ATTACK IS NOT, DODGE ADDS TO BOTH DMR & DMM
9	DRIVING [INNATE] (DEX)	INNATE	DEXTERITY	THE ABILITY TO DRIVE IT LIKE YOU STOLE IT AND DRIVE VERY DANGEROUSLY WHILE REDUCING THE CHANCES OF GETTING INTO A WRECK
10	ENTERTAINMENT [SWAY] (INF)	SWAY	INFLUENCE	NO MATTER IF IT'S BY DANCING, MAGIC, VENTRILOQUISM, MUSIC, STORY TELLING OR BEING A FUNNY GUY, THIS CHARACTER CAN KEEP PEOPLE ENTERTAINED
11	FARMING [KNOWLEDGE] (RSN)	KNOWLEDGE	REASON	A GOOD UNDERSTANDING OF HOW TO WORK THE LAND, LIVESTOCK (OR BOTH) TO PROVIDE FOR A LARGE NUMBER OF PEOPLE
12	FIRST AID [MEDICINE] (RSN)	MEDICINE	REASON	ENOUGH MEDICAL KNOWLEDGE TO STABILIZE AND HEAL MOST WOUNDED PATIENTS, IN ADDITIONAL TO BEING ABLE TO CARE FOR MOST AILMENTS, SICKNESSES, AND DISEASES
13	GAMBLING [INNATE] (ACU)	INNATE	ACUMEN	MORE THAN JUST A GOOD WORKING UNDERSTANDING OF MOST GAMES OF CHANCE, THIS ALSO ALLOWS FOR READING AN OPPONENTS TELLS, AND THE ABILITY TO PLAY TO ALWAYS WIN, LEGITIMATELY OR NOT
14	GENERAL [KNOWLEDGE] (RSN)	KNOWLEDGE	REASON	KNOWING A LOT ABOUT RANDOM THINGS AND THE ABILITY TO RECALL MINUTE AND USEFUL FACTS AT OPPORTUNE MOMENTS
15	HUNTING [INNATE] (PHY)	INNATE	PHYSICALITY	BEING ABLE TO TRACK PREY IN THE WILD, AND KNOWING HOW TO PREPARE, USE, AND AVOID, TRAPS
16	INSPIRATION [SWAY] (INF)	SWAY	INFLUENCE	BEING ABLE TO MOTIVATE GROUPS AND INDIVIDUALS TOWARDS A COLLECTIVE GOAL BY SHARING A VISION OR EVOKING SPECIFIC EMOTIONS
17	INTIMIDATION [SWAY] (PHY)	SWAY	PHYSICALITY	THE ABILITY TO GET INFORMATION OUT OF SOMEONE THROUGH PSYCHOLOGICAL OR PHYSICAL COERCION, SOMETIMES BOTH
18	LOCAL [KNOWLEDGE] (RSN)	KNOWLEDGE	REASON	KNOWING A SPECIFIC AREA LIKE THE BACK OF THEIR HAND, EITHER WHERE THE CHARACTER CURRENTLY IS AND WHERE THE ACTION IS TAKING PLACE, OR SOMEWHERE ELSE RELEVANT TO THEM
19	LOCK-PICKING* [CRIMINAL] (ACU)	CRIMINAL	ACUMEN	KNOWLEDGE OF MOST COMMON, AS WELL AS MANY UNCOMMON AND RARE, LOCKS, SAFES AND SECURITY SYSTEMS, AND HOW TO BYPASS THEM
20	MELEE COMBAT [COMBAT] (PHY)	COMBAT	PHYSICALITY	A MELEE WEAPON IS LIKE AN EXTENSION OF THE BODY, THIS SKILL INCREASES BOTH THE ACCURACY AND DAMAGE DONE WHEN WIELDING ONE
21	NAVIGATION [INNATE] (ACU)	INNATE	ACUMEN	AN UNCANNY SENSE OF DIRECTION THAT ALLOWS SOMEONE TO SUCCESSFULLY PLOT AND CHART COURSES WITH UNERRING ACCURACY
22	PERCEPTION [INNATE] (ACU)	INNATE	ACUMEN	A STRONG SENSE OF INSTINCT COMBINED WITH CONSISTENTLY OBSERVANT BEHAVIOR MEANS THIS CHARACTER PICKS UP ON NON-VERBAL QUEUES AND DETAILS OTHERS MAY MISS
23	PHARMACOLOGY* [MEDICINE] (RSN)	MEDICINE	REASON	AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE USE, EFFECTS AND CREATION OF VARIOUS DRUGS AND ALLOWS FOR SOMEONE TO USE PLANTS AND OTHER MAKESHIFT METHODS TO PROVIDE MEDICAL CARE
24	PSYCHOLOGY* [KNOWLEDGE] (INF)	KNOWLEDGE	INFLUENCE	UNDERSTANDING WHAT MAKES SOMEONE TICK AND BEING ABLE TO USE THAT KNOWLEDGE AGAINST THEM, OR TO HELP THEM, THIS CAN ALSO HELP WITH UNDERSTANDING LARGER GROUP DYNAMICS
25	RANGED COMBAT [COMBAT] (DEX)	COMBAT	DEXTERITY	PROFICIENCY WITH VARIOUS FORMS OF RANGED COMBAT, FROM SLINGS TO BOWS TO PISTOLS TO SHOTGUNS TO SNIPER RIFLES, IF IT CAN BE THROWN, THIS SKILL CAN MAKE IT MORE ACCURATE
26	RESEARCH [KNOWLEDGE] (RSN)	KNOWLEDGE	REASON	THE ABILITY TO CHASE TIDBITS OF INFORMATION AND PROVE A HYPOTHESIS TO A CONCLUSION, THIS ALSO ALLOWS FOR SOMEONE TO INGEST LARGE AMOUNTS OF DATA AND BECOME A RELATIVE EXPERT IN A SHORT TIME
27	SCAVENGING [INNATE] (ACU)	INNATE	ACUMEN	KNOWING WHERE TO LOOK FOR SPECIFIC ITEMS AND HOW TO EVALUATE THE CONDITION AND VALUE OF FOUND ITEMS
28	SLEIGHT OF HAND [CRIMINAL] (DEX)	CRIMINAL	DEXTERITY	MISDIRECTION AND DEFTNESS RANGING FROM SIMPLE CARD TRICKS TO BEING ABLE TO HIDE SOMETHING IN PLAIN SITE TO PICKING A POCKET
29	STEALTH [CRIMINAL] (PHY)	CRIMINAL	PHYSICALITY	KNOWING HOW TO MOVE TO AND STICK TO THE SHADOWS TO AVOID BEING DETECTED
30	STREETWISE [CRIMINAL] (ACU)	CRIMINAL	ACUMEN	INSTINCTIVELY UNDERSTANDING BAD PEOPLE WITH BAD INTENT AND KNOWING HOW TO NAVIGATE DANGEROUS SITUATIONS AS WELL AS BEING ABLE TO FIND BLACK MARKETS AND CRIMINAL ELEMENTS WHERE THEY EXIST
31	SURGERY* [MEDICINE] (RSN)	MEDICINE	REASON	AN UNDERSTANDING OF HUMAN ANATOMY, HOW AND WHERE TO CUT TO SAVE A PATIENT, AND A HIGHER LEVEL OF HEALTH CARE
32	SURVIVAL [INNATE] (ACU)	INNATE	ACUMEN	BEING ABLE TO USE AN OTHERWISE HOSTILE ENVIRONMENT TO THEIR ADVANTAGE AND HOW TO SURVIVE IN INHOSPITABLE TERRAIN AND LIVE OFF THE LAND
33	TACTICAL* [KNOWLEDGE] (RSN)	KNOWLEDGE	REASON	AN UNDERSTANDING OF HOW TO APPLY MILITARY AND INTERPERSONAL THEORIES TO A SITUATION TO GET THE UPPER HAND OR AN ADVANTAGE. CAN BE USED IN OR OUT OF COMBAT SITUATIONS.
34	TINKERER [MECHANIC] (DEX)	MECHANIC	DEXTERITY	THE NATURAL INCLINATION AND ABILITY TO MAKE SOMETHING OUT OF NOTHING, FIX SEEMINGLY UNFIXABLE THINGS, AS WELL AS TO MAKE SOMETHING THAT WORKS, WORK BETTER
35	UNARMED COMBAT [COMBAT] (PHY)	COMBAT	PHYSICALITY	FROM PUGILISM TO MARTIAL ARTS, A TRAINED FIST CAN PROVE AS DEADLY AS ANY WEAPON
36	VEHICLES* [MECHANIC] (DEX)	MECHANIC	DEXTERITY	BEING ABLE TO REPAIR, MAINTAIN AND CUSTOMIZE VEHICLES. THIS CAN RANGE FROM GETTING A BROKEN TRUCK MOVING AGAIN TO MOUNT A CANON TO THE ROOF OF A SEDAN
37	WEAPONSMITH* [MECHANIC] (DEX)	MECHANIC	DEXTERITY	KNOWING HOW TO BUILD HIGH QUALITY WEAPONS FROM SCRATCH, IN ADDITION TO MAINTAINING, REPAIRING AND CUSTOMIZING EXISTING WEAPONS

Who Will You Be?

CRIMINAL SKILLS

LOCK-PICKING*: Working knowledge of most common and many uncommon security systems and the tools required to bypass them. This can range from a regular front door to a house safe or to the vault in a bank.

Level 1 allows a character to attempt to bypass any mundane security system or lock and each subsequent level gives a +1 SMod to any attempt

Level 4 allows for attempts to be made to access things such as higher end banking (or even military-grade) security systems that might still be active in the appropriate facility.

A character must have a set of lock-picks (or other suitable tools) to undertake these tasks.

SLEIGHT OF HAND: No matter if it's swiping something from directly under someone's nose, picking the pocket of someone right next to you, a clever card trick, or concealing something in plain sight, *Sleight of Hand* gives a character the ability to cleverly execute deceptive acts, with each level bringing a +1 SMod to any check.

At Level 4, characters are so dexterous and adept at misdirection that they can appear to make small, handheld items literally vanish, or appear out of into thin air. This would require an *Opposed Check* against the other party's Perception (see *Opposed Checks* on page 36).

STEALTH: The ability to blend into the background, move softly and remain undetected. Each Level in this skill gives a +1 SMod when attempting to avoid detection and remain hidden.

At Level 4, characters can make a *Stealth* check to essentially remain hidden in plain sight. This would be an *Opposed Check* against someone's Perception (see *Opposed Checks* on page 36), and the environment would need to support this activity.

STREETWISE: Being able to connect the dots in any setting and being able to recognize the warning signs that precede or accompany threats, *Streetwise* allows a PC to survive in difficult and dangerous situations, in addition to allowing them to navigate new and hostile environments and ascertain where to
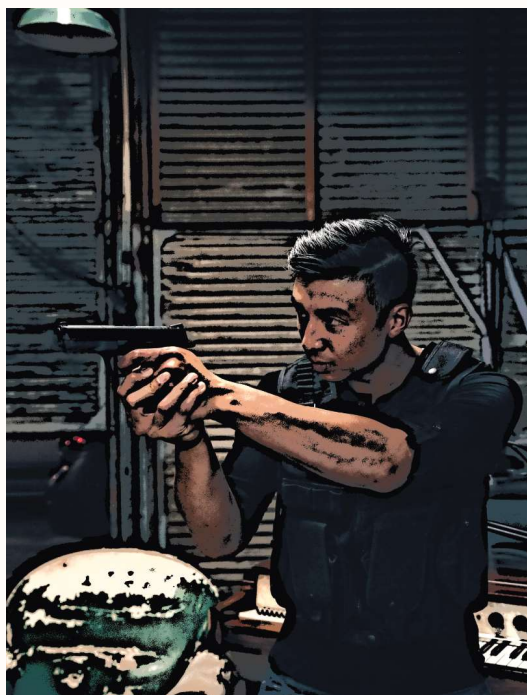
go and who to ask for help in times of need.

At Level 4, characters in more populated areas are able to find any black market or criminally inclined people with little trouble.

COMBAT SKILLS

DEMOLITIONS*: Training in the art of blowing things up, this skill gives the character an understanding of many and varied forms of explosives, ranging from Molotov cocktails to military grade compounds, as well as the fine motor coordination needed to both arm and disarm them.

Players with this skill at Level 1 can safely handle and arm most common explosives and get a +1 SMod per level on any *Demolition** checks.

At Level 4, a character can cobble together devastating makeshift explosives from the unlikeliest of items.

MELEE COMBAT: For characters with levels in this skill, a melee weapon becomes like an extension of the body, with increased accuracy and damage.

Each level in this adds a +1 SMod to any attacks with a melee weapon.

At Level 3, a character is so proficient that they may *Ready A Weapon* without using a *Combat Action* (see *Combat Actions* on page 119).

At Level 4, a character may make a *Called Shot* (see *Called Shots* on page 122) with no negative CMod.

RANGED COMBAT: Proficiency with many *Ranged Weapons*, from slings to bows to pistols to shotguns to sniper rifles. In the hands of this character a weapon is like an extension of their arm.

Each level adds +1 SMod to any check involving any ground-based vehicle, including animals.

At Level 3, a character is so proficient that they may *Ready Weapon* without using a *Combat Action* (see *Combat Actions* on page 119*).

At Level 4, a character may make a *Called Shot* (see *Called Shots* on page 122) with no negative CMod.

UNARMED COMBAT: Those with Levels in *Unarmed Combat* have often spent years honing their skills and abilities until their body is as effective as any weapon.

Each Level in this skill gives a +1 SMod to any attempt to *Attack*, *Defend*, *Subdue* or *Grapple* (see *Combat Actions* on page 119*).

At Level 4, each *Wound Point* of damage inflicts two *Resilience Points* of damage, making any attempts to Subdue a target instead of killing them more likely to succeed. Additionally, a character may make a *Called Shot* (see *Called Shots* on page 122) with no negative CMod.

INNATE SKILLS

ATHLETICS: A measure of how in shape the character is as well as their ability to put it to good use. This skill covers a variety of tasks requiring good physical condition, such as scaling a wall, swimming across a ravine with a fast-moving current, or throwing a hand-grenade through a rapidly closing door.

Each Level gives a +1 SMod to any *Athletics* attempt.

At Level 4, PC's may make *Athletics* checks that would rival even the most talented circus performer and may even appear almost superhuman to observers, such as scaling a seemingly completely smooth wall.

DRIVING: If it has wheels or legs, this skill gives mastery over any form of transportation and the innate ability to drive like you stole it without instantly getting into a wreck.

Each level adds +1 SMod to any check involving any ground-based vehicle.

At Level 4, a character may use their Level in *Driving* as any vehicle's speed for the duration of a *Chase* (see *Chases* page 142).

DODGE: The innate ability to sense where an attack is going to be and do everything possible to not be there,

Each Level in Dodge adds +1 to a characters' DMM and DMR, as well as to any attempts to Defend when in combat (see *Combat Actions* on page 119).

At Level 4, the character gets a free *Reposition Combat Action* at the end of each Round when in combat (see *Combat Actions* on page 119).

HUNTING: *Hunters* are able to track prey as well as laying and avoiding traps. Characters with levels in *Hunting* have a deep understanding of environmental factors and how to use them to their advantage.

For each level in this skill, a character gets a +1 SMod to any attempt to track an animal, as well as attempts to detect, disarm or set a trap.

At Level 4, a character may attempt to track animals – or human enemies - in the wild by following the tiniest and most unlikely of signs. Additionally, a character gets a +2 CMod on any *Attacks* against a target they are actively *Hunting*.

GAMBLING: An understanding of both how games of chance are played as well as how to best manipulate the odds of winning.

Gambling attempts are *Opposed Checks* (see *Opposed Checks* on page 36) and at Level 1 and above, PC's get a +1 SMod to any game they play or wager they make.

At Level 4, PCs understand the game well enough that they can cheat effectively, and in addition to the +1 SMod per Level, their opponent receives a -1 SMod to their *Opposed Check*. If the player fails the check, however, their cheating is exposed (see *Opposed Checks* on page 36).

NAVIGATION: Being able to successfully plot and chart courses, characters with levels in *Navigation* also have the expertise to follow a path to a safe destination, no matter the obstacles thrown in their way. The scope of this skill could range from being a backseat passenger with looking for landmarks, to being able to navigate by means of the sun, but a successful *Navigation* check allows a character to use anything available to get their bearings and point them in the right direction.

Each Level in this skill gives a +1 SMod on *Navigation* attempts.

At Level 4 and above, a character can make a *Navigation* check based on nothing but instinct and still divine the correct course.

PERCEPTION: Picking up on small details or clues that would otherwise be indiscernible, *Perception* allows a character to gain insight where they should have none and pick up on things that everyone else might miss.

Players may proactively make *Perception* checks to see if they are able to observe something unusual or out of place in a given situation, with each level bringing a +1 SMod.

At Level 4, a GM can ask a player to roll on their characters' *Perception* without telling them exactly why, with successes allowing them to pick up on otherwise imperceptible details.

SCAVENGING: With food and other essential resources in such short supply, the ability to sort through junk to find something of value has become an increasingly necessary skill to survive.

PCs with levels in *Scavenging* get a corresponding +1 SMod in any attempts at looking through buildings and belongings in the hopes of finding something worthwhile (see *Scavenging* on page 181) for more details.

At Level 4, players are able to make *Scavenging* Checks with the intent of finding a specific type of item (such as ammunition) or an even more specific item (such as copper wire) without requiring a *Wild Success*. Additionally, any *Successful Scavenging* check counts as a *Wild Success*, both in terms of the quantity of things found. Characters getting a *Wild Success*, can find *Rare* items that they require, instead of *Uncommon* items.

SURVIVAL: The ability to survive in the wild and live off the land, characters with Levels in survival know how to track prey, how to identify various flora and fauna, as well as find all manners of food and fresh water, and how to ensure they have working shelter from the elements. Although not necessarily proficient in *Hunting*, they are more adept than most at *Foraging* and *Fishing*, and get a +1 SMod on those checks (see *Living Off the Land* on page 180)

At Level 4, the character has the ability to source the plants and natural items helping in healing (see *Healing Supplies* on page 125) and, additionally, a character with the right tools could live off the land indefinitely using only what they can find and fabricate.

KNOWLEDGE SKILLS

FARMING: Farming is the knowledge and expertise to work the ground, plant seeds, grow edible plants, as well as being able to raise livestock, either for milk or meat.

Each Level in Farming gives a +1 SMod on *Farming* Seasonal Activity checks (see *Activities* on page 192).

At Level 4, a character can train an *Apprentice* to become so adept at *Farming* that they don't need any guidance or input from the character once trained (see *Apprentices* on page 190).

GENERAL KNOWLEDGE: This skill means that someone knows a lot about a lot and successful rolls allow them to recall minute facts and arcane knowledge that can often be very useful. When a character needs help or direction or requires a clue or to know something that will be useful to the situation at hand, a successful General Knowledge Skill Check could give them that advantage, with each Level granting a +1 SMod.

At Level 4, characters may have read so much on a given subject that they make a check as if they had any of the other Knowledge skills (Farming, Local, *Psychology**, Research, or *Tactical Knowledge**) or the Medicine Skill, *Pharmacology**.

LOCAL: More than a good working knowledge,

this allows a character to be so familiar and intimate with any given area that they can use the terrain and idiosyncrasies to their advantage. This skill is tied to a specific region or area that is predefined but doesn't have to be the area where the character currently is. See *Where Will You Go* on page X for more details.

Characters get a +1 SMod for each Level when attempting to locate something or someone, hide, or otherwise use their knowledge of the local region to their advantage.

At Level 4, a character knows a specific area like the back of their hand, and know the optimal routes to various places, as well as any potential pitfalls and dangers.

PSYCHOLOGY*: *Psychology** is the study of human behavior, the human mind, or the mental attitude of a group and helps a character both understand and manipulate another character's behavior to get a specific outcome.

Each Level in this Skill gives a +1 SMod if attempting to understand why someone is acting like they are, or how to best approach someone to achieve their goal.

At Level 3, a character can spend a *Daily Activity* block with another character to prevent them reaching their *Breaking Point* by talking to them and helping them remove a *Stress Box* (see *Breaking Point* on page 178).

At Level 4, a character who has spent time as part of a community is able to both understand them, as well as help the community leaders see what they need, and may add a +2 CMod to the community's weekly *Morale* checks (see *Morale* on page 191).

RESEARCH: *Research* is the ability to learn as much about a given subject or item as possible and help put that knowledge to good, practical use. This might be by figuring out how something works by taking it apart, or by digesting information from books and documents, but each level in this skill gives +1 to any attempt to learn more about any specific subject.

At Level 4, a character is so good and getting to the underlying truth of a situation that they can leverage the knowledge of others to that outcome. This translates to them being able to make a Group Check with anyone who a Knowledge, Mechanic or Medicine Skill, as if they both have that skill at the same level.

TACTICAL KNOWLEDGE*: An understanding of the mechanics and principles of organized combat. Characters with Levels in *Tactical Knowledge** get a +1 SMod on any attempt to formulate a plan or assess an enemy's weaknesses, or otherwise gain a *Tactical Advantage* (see *Tactical Advantages* on page 122).

At Level 4, a character making a Successful *Tactical Knowledge** check can spot an enemy's weakness and get a +1 CMod on any *Called Shots*. Additionally, a character making a plan of attack or defense can work with the GM to *Fill in the Gaps* as to what they are trying to achieve.

MECHANIC SKILLS

ARMORSMITH*: The understanding and skills of how to use the appropriate materials to give something, or someone, a protective outer-shell without becoming overloading on weight or leaving avoidable vulnerabilities. Each Level in *Armorsmith** gives a character a +1 SMod on attempts to repair or create armor (see Armor on page 137).

At Level 4, a character PC can use *Common* supplies to perform repairs and upgrades to armor requiring uncommon supplies. In addition, the character can craft armor out of *Common* supplies (see *Crafting & Customization* in v0.8).

TINKERER: Tinkerers have the ability to take disparate items and create something more meaningful as well as the knack of repairing almost anything using seemingly nothing. Characters gets +1 SMod for each Level in this Skill when attempting to repair or craft new items (see Crafting & Customization in v0.8).

At Level 4, a character can craft almost any *Uncommon* item out of *Common* Supplies.

VEHICLE MECHANIC*: Knowing how to keep vehicles working, how convert them away from traditional gasoline engines to ethanol, and how to customize them for better performance are skills that seem to be fading fast. Gasoline might be losing its potency, but characters get a +1 SMod per Level on any checks relating to the maintenance or upkeep of vehicles.

At Level 4, a character PC can use *Common* supplies to perform repairs and upgrades to vehicles requiring uncommon supplies. Characters can also attempt to convert a car to using Ethanol and build a still (see *Ethanol & Methanol Stills* on page 143). Additionally, a character can attempt Extreme customization of vehicles (see *Crafting & Customization* in v0.8).

WEAPONSMITH*: The knowledge and expertise to maintain, repair, customize, and even build weapons. Characters get a +1 SMod to any checks relating to the upkeep and care of weapons.

At Level 3, a character PC can use Common supplies to perform repairs and upgrades to weapons requiring uncommon supplies. Additionally, a character can build weapons, as well as attempt the Extreme customization of weapons (see *Crafting & Customization* in v0.8).

MEDICINE SKILLS

FIRST AID: Enough medical knowledge to be able to stabilize a wounded patient, apply dressings and provide field-level care, as well the expertise to treat common sickness and ailments.

Level 1 allows the character to attempt a roll to Stabilize a seriously wounded patient and each additional level adds a corresponding +1 SMod (see *Stabilizing* on page 126).

At Level 4, when using First Aid Kits, Medical Kits, a Doctors Bag, or other *Healing Supplies* (see page 125), they heal an additional +1 WP per day.

SURGERY*: More than just understanding anatomy and how and where to cut to save a patient, a surgeon's holistic view of medicine and their abilities go way beyond simple First Aid and allow for setting of broken bones, dealing with *Infections* (see page 126), as well as dealing with cuts, bullet wounds, and other serious trauma.

Levels in *Surgery** allow a character to attempt a roll to stabilize a seriously wounded patient, with each additional level adding a corresponding +1 SMod to any *Stabilization* attempts (see *Stabilizing* on page 126). Characters with the right equipment and facilities could attempt to remove bullets or stitch wounds.

At Level 4, even without the right facilities and equipment, a skilled surgeon would be able to perform complex surgical procedures.

PHARMACOLOGY*: *Pharmacology** provides an understanding of how to find, make, and administer drugs. It allows for an understanding of the positive and adverse effects of chemical substances on living organisms, and also provides the ability to diagnosing and treat exposures to toxins and toxicants. It also allows for the manufacture poisons and cures.

Not limited to manufactured pharmaceuticals, skill in *Pharmacology** also includes an understanding of natural and herbal remedies.

At Level 4, a character is able to produce medicines, healing ointments, toxins and antidotes, and other useful items from *Uncommon* or *Rare* supplies that are *Scavenged* from appropriate sources (see *Scavenging* on page 180 for more details).

SWAY SKILLS

ANIMAL HANDLING: Understanding how to work with and get the best out of animals, ranging from house pets up to farm and working animals. Animal Handling allows a character to calm and train animals and, over time, build bonds with them until, at Level 3, characters are able to control herds of livestock.

Characters may add +1 SMod for each level of Animal Handling to any attempt to train, work with, or find weak spots in animals.

At Level 4, a character may attempt to create a lasting bond with any animal that they have been working with or training, and that animal will always see the character as their master, owner, or partner and, if appropriate, will act in the character's defense. This may include dogs (see page 150) for more details.

BARTER: The ability to negotiate the value of an item as well as being able to convince someone to substitute their desired currency for other items, Barter is the ability to find a solution that satisfies both parties and is handled as an *Opposed Check* (see *Opposed Checks* on page 36). The character who wins convinces the other side to agree to their offer.

Characters may add +1 SMod for each level of *Barter* to any such attempt.

At Level 4, characters may attempt to cheat or bamboozle a competitor by making a Successful *Barter* attempt, resulting in a greater outcome during the deal. If they fail, the other character will realize they were trying to cheat them and will respond accordingly.

CHARM: Being able to win others over to the characters' cause, *Charm* means that someone knows just what to say, when to say it, how to pay compliments and make others feel special or important.

Characters with Levels in *Charm* get a corresponding +1 SMod to any attempt to win an NPC over to their way of thinking and on *First Impressions* checks (see page 148).

At Level 4, a character might well be able to convince

an NPC to actively work against their own self-interest in order to better help the PC or their group.

DECEPTION: Being able to tell a good enough lie to convince someone of something obviously untrue, a successful *Deception* check allows a character to tell a story that is both convincing and well thought-out enough that someone else is taken in.

Each level in Deception gives a +1 SMod when attempting to deceive an NPC.

At Level 4, characters can not only deceive whole groups of people and convince them of things that many of them know are untrue, but they can build a narrative that can withstand intense scrutiny, even when not in their presence.

ENTERTAINMENT: Whether it's juggling or exotic dancing, someone with Levels in *Entertainment* generally has a good grasp of how to while away time with others and keep them engaged.

Each Level in *Entertainment* gives PCs a +1 SMod when trying to distract or win over an audience or otherwise use their skills.

As much for character development and role-play purposes as anything, characters should choose from one of the following specializations, or define their own. Whilst it's possible to be a jack of all trades, knowing exactly what a character does to Entertain others can help round them out.

Some examples are:

> **DANCING:** Knowing how to shimmy and shake in order to be alluring to the observer.
>
> **MAGIC:** Card tricks, illusions, or stage mentalism, all types of magic and tricks can entertain, confuse and amaze
>
> **VENTRILOQUISM:** Who doesn't love someone that can make a puppet or other

inanimate objects talk? They can also convincingly throw their voice.

STORYTELLING: Spinning a yarn in such a way that others are inexorably pulled in and are compelled to hear the outcome.

FUNNY GUY: Quips, jokes or impressions, *Funny Guys* are able to keep an audience laughing.

At Level 4, a character who spends a *Weekly Activity* block preparing (see *Activities* on page 192), can put on a show for other characters. On a Successful *Entertainment* check, each member of the audience is sufficiently distracted that they are able to decompress, and may remove one Stress Block, double that on a *Wild Success*.

However, if the character gets a *Dire Failure* or *Moment of Low Insight,* each audience members gains a *Stress Block* (see *Breaking Point* on page 178) as a result of their abysmal performance.

INSPIRATION: Inspiration allows a character to articulate an idea so well that other people buy into it and will champion it like it's their own.

For each Level in Inspiration, a PC gets a +1 SMod to any attempt to get NPCs behind an idea or to any NPC recruitment attempts.

At Level 4, the character adds +4 to any *Community Morale* checks (see page 191). Additionally, they can make rousing speeches that can convince any *Community* they are a part of, to risk everything – including their own lives – for the good of the larger group.

INTIMIDATION: An instinctive understanding of the human psyche and how to use both presence and physicality to scare someone through threat of force and coerce behavior or otherwise bend someone to their will.

Players may add a +1 SMod per corresponding level of skill to any attempt to get information or force an NPC into a certain behavior or action.

At Level 4, a Successful check allows them to exert sufficient influence to coerce a target who is no longer in the character's presence, to continue to work towards their wishes or demands.

BACKSTORY GENERATION

The *Backstory Generation* process is designed to guide a player through the creation of their character and allows them to define what their character learned and how they developed at the various pivotal stages of their life.

This process helps a player build their characters' history along the way and provides them with a backstory that they can use to help define who they are and help inform their role-playing choices. It can also be used by GMs to build character-specific storylines around. They can share as much or as little with other players as they wish.

This method exists both for those going into a game wishing to create a bespoke character that fits a specific concept or design, as well as for those who take inspiration from seeing how their character develops at each stage and the various options available.

Characters go through two phases during *Backstory Generation* – *Personal Growth* and *Professional Development* - during which players get to add a total of 5 *Character Development Points* to their RAPID Range Attributes, as well as adding 15 *Character Development Points* to Skills. Each CDP invested raising that attribute or skill by a corresponding point which also raises the character's AMod or related SMods.

During the *Personal Growth* phase, players will ask themselves who their character is, where they grew up, what they have learned along the way, and what were they like before the apocalypse hit. They can spend 3 Attribute CDP and 10 Skill CDP at this stage.

Raising RAPID Range Attributes to Level 1 or 2 costs 1 CDP per Level, and raising a RAPID Range Attribute from Level 2 to Level 3 costs 2 CDP.

Raising Skills to Level 1 or 2 costs 1 CDP per Level, and Skills cannot be raised higher than Level 2 during the Personal Growth phase.

The second phase is *Professional Development*. Everyone had some form of employment or way of making money before the pandemic and that will be defined during this step.

Players will pick a *Profession* for their character and get 2 Attribute CDP to spend, as well as 5 Skill CDP that must be spent on the *Vocational Skills* that are tied to their chosen *Profession*. At this point, they may raise any of their *Vocational Skills* to Level 3.

At the conclusion of each step, the player should write a sentence or two in the Background Information section of their character sheet that summarizes that period, the skills, or the life lessons they have learned, as well as any details of who they knew during that time (see *Background & Notes* on page 47).

By the end of the *Backstory Generation* process, players should have the framework for a character backstory that they can build on over time.

An example character – Alina Garcia – will be created to illustrate the process.

There is a *Backstory Generation worksheet* as well as an online character generator available at DistemperVerse.com that can be used to make notes at the different stages of a character's development to tie into the creation of a backstory.

BACKSTORY GENERATION CHECKLIST

Step 1. PERSONAL GROWTH
1. Where did they grow up?
   A. Spend 1 Attribute CDP on raising any RAPID Range attribute
      i. Level 1 and 2 attributes cost 1 Attribute CDP per Level
      ii. Level 3 attributes cost 2 Attribute CDP
   B. Spend 4 Skill CDP on raising any Skills
      i. Level 1 and 2 Skills cost 1 Skill CDP per Level
      ii. Skills cannot be raised above level 2 during the Personal Growth phase

2. What did they learn?
   A. Spend 1 Attribute CDP on raising any RAPID Range attribute
      i. Spend 2 Skill CDP on raising any Skills
      ii. Skills cannot be raised above level 2 during the Personal Growth phase

3. What did they like to do?
   A. Spend 1 Attribute CDP on raising any RAPID Range attribute
      i. Spend 4 Skill CDP on raising any Skills
      ii. Skills cannot be raised above level 2 during the Personal Growth phase

Step 2. PROFESSIONAL GROWTH
   A. Choose a Profession from the list on page 64
   B. Spend 2 Attribute CDP on raising any RAPID Range attributes
      iii. Level 1 and 2 attributes cost 1 Attribute CDP
      iv. Level 3 attributes cost 2 Attribute CDP
   C. Spend 5 Attribute CDP on any of the Profession Skills
      i. Level 1 and 2 Skills cost 1 Skill CDP per Level
      ii. Level 3 Skills cost 2 Skill CDP
      iii. Only Vocational Skills tied to the chosen Profession can be raised to Level 3

Step 3. CALCULATE SECONDARY STATS
   A. Wound Points
      i. 10 WP + Physicality Modifier + Dexterity Modifier
   B. Resilience Points
      i. 6 RP + Physicality modifier
   C. Defensive Modifier (Melee)
      i. Physicality Modifier + Dodge Skill Modifier
   D. Defensive Modifier (Ranged)
      i. Dexterity Modifier + Dodge Skill Modifier
   E. Initiative
      i. Dexterity Modifier + Acumen Modifier + Perception Skill Modifier
   F. Encumbrance
      i. 6 Encumbrance + Physicality Modifier
   G. Morality
      i. Each character starts with a Morality of 3
   H. Breaking Point
      i. 3 + Reason Modifier + Acument Modifier

Step 4. MOTIVATIONS & COMPLICATIONS
   A. Pick a Motivation from Table 6, or roll 2d6 and take one at random
   B. Pick a Complication from Table 7, or roll 2d6 and take one at random

Step 5. WEAPONS
   A. Choose 1 Primary & 1 Secondary Weapon from Table x
      i. Any weapon requiring ammo starts with 1d6
   B. Choose 1 piece of Miscellaneous Equipment from Table x
   C. Choose 1 Incidental Item

Step 6. FINAL FLAVOR
   a. Make a note of any additional information that is worth remembering or will help with roleplay.

Who Will You Be?

STEP XERO: CHARACTER CONCEPT

For many players, the first step in character creation is to decide who they want to play in this fractured and deadly world.

Are they going to rebuild or ravage?

Will your character's primary weapon be a gun, a hatchet, their fists, wits, or their mouth?

What will they bring to a group? Are they a leader trying to rally and inspire people to get behind an idea or a former cop just trying to maintain a semblance of order in chaos?

Are they a quick-talking conman, always looking for a way to turn a situation to their advantage or are they a combat medic, trained in keeping wounded people alive on a battlefield?

Are they just trying to stay alive long enough to get to their next meal?

Do they have the medical training that will keep the sick and wounded alive or are they just good at doing to others before it is done to them?

Are they intending to be a force for good, or are you an agent of chaos looking to take advantage of this new reality in any way they can?

Are they a shepherd or are they a hunter?

Are they a dark and malevolent soul in search of a kingdom or a beacon of hope who still wants to see the good in everyone?

If you know what it is that you're trying to create, write it down on your sheet but remember that it is entirely possible to go into this process without a clear character concept as one may evolve during the *Backstory Generation* process, or even from group interactions and discussions during *Session Xero* (see *Session Xero* on pages 9 and 175 for more details).

No matter how the concept comes about, players should create a character that ties into the overarching themes of the encounter, session, or campaign. Characters should be aligned with the goals of the group, whether it's planning on trying to help with rebuilding efforts or leading a gang of marauding raiding parties against your neighbors.

This doesn't mean that all groups need to be of a single-note design as it is very plausible that a group of nomads might include schoolteachers and retail workers along with ex-military, cops and petty criminals. After all, you can't afford to be as choosy about the company you keep anymore if you're hoping to survive.

No matter if it comes at the beginning or end of the process, players should be able to summarize their character in one or two sentences. This may be something they share with the group or something they keep to themselves, but a good understanding of their characters' concept will help inform their decisions when trying to decide how they would react to a given situation or role-playing as that character.

This can all be tracked on the *Backstory Generation Worksheet* available for download from **DistemperVerse.com**.

Note: Just because characters are often created in the relatively public nature of a group setting doesn't mean players shouldn't be able to add secretive elements to their characters that they share only with the GM. After all, sometimes it's more interesting to find out things about your traveling companions along the way, as well as giving the GM threads with which to build stories.

QUICK, QUICK, QUICK!

If the GM agrees, then a player familiar with the rules who already has a defined concept for a character in mind and who wishes to skip the *Backstory Generation* process can simply spend 5 points on Attributes and 15 points on Skills.

There is a *Backstory Generation* checklist on page 57 that provides guidance on how to calculate Primary and Secondary Stats, although players must still choose *Motivations* and *Complications* (see page 65) and are strongly encouraged to *Fill in The Gaps* and write a backstory that helps define their character's personality.

CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT POINTS

Character Development Points (or *CDP*) are the mechanism by which a player can exactly control and tailor not only the initial generation, but also the ongoing growth and evolution of their character.

During *Backstory Generation*, CDP are referred to as either Skill *Character Development Points* or Attribute *Character Development Points* and players are given a total of 20 CDP in the form of 5 Attribute CDP and 15 Skill CDP, which they can use to shape their character.

Although the starting pool of CDP are all used during Character Creation, they are also awarded to players in the later game by the GM as they undertake encounters, or complete other tasks or milestones. Players may then spend these CDP on Attributes or Skills to further Evolve their character

See *Character Evolution* on page 177 for more details.

WE CAN BE HEROES

DISTEMPER IS INTENDED TO BE ON THE MORE REALISTIC SIDE OF THE RPG SPECTRUM AND, UNLIKE MANY OTHER TTRPGS, WHILE THE CHARACTERS ARE THE PROTAGONISTS OF THE STORY, THEY AREN'T TRULY HEROIC IN THE TRADITIONAL SENSE OF THE WORD.

NO ONE IS A SUPERHERO IN DISTEMPER. THERE ARE NO ACTION MOVIE STARS LEFT, THEY ALL DIED. THERE ARE NO SUPER SOLDIERS, NO JOHN RAMBO'S, AND NO JAMES BOND'S.

THERE ARE JUST ORDINARY PEOPLE TRYING TO GET THROUGH SOME EXTRAORDINARILY HARD TIMES.

THERE IS NO INVINCIBILITY OR IMMORTALITY IN DISTEMPER AND EACH CHARACTER IS JUST ONE BAD CHOICE OR UNLUCKY DICE ROLL AWAY FROM DYING. TRUSTING TOO EASILY, NOT TAKING THE RIGHT PRECAUTIONS, RUNNING INTO COMBAT OR OTHER DANGEROUS SITUATIONS WITHOUT A PLAN, WILL ALL LIKELY END BADLY FOR THE CHARACTERS.

THIS SHOULDN'T IMPLY THAT THE CHARACTERS AREN'T SPECIAL -- THEY ABSOLUTELY ARE, THEY ARE THE PROTAGONISTS AND THE FOCAL POINT OF THE STORIES BEING TOLD -- HOWEVER, BY DESIGN, A CHARACTER WILL LIKELY BE AS FRAGILE AND LIMITED IN THE GAME AS HUMAN BEINGS ARE IN REAL LIFE.

JUST LIKE IN THE REAL WORLD, NO ONE IS GOOD AT ALL THINGS, AND VERY FEW PEOPLE HAVE ACTUALLY TRAINED TO SURVIVE THE APOCALYPSE AND THEY ARE USUALLY BETTER OFF TOGETHER THAN THEY ARE ALONE.

PLAYERS ARE ENCOURAGED TO REMEMBER THAT IT'S TOO SIMPLISTIC TO THINK OF THOSE WHO ARE LEFT AS GOOD GUYS AND BAD GUYS. THERE ARE JUST SURVIVORS, TRYING TO GET BY.

PLAYERS WILL HAVE TO DECIDE WHAT CONSTITUTES HEROISM -- OR EVIL -- FOR THEMSELVES.

MAD MIN MAX

WHILST IT'S TEMPTING FOR PLAYERS TO TRY AND GET THE MOST OUT OF THEIR CHARACTERS' PERFORMANCE BY MAXIMIZING RELEVANT ATTRIBUTES AND SKILLS WHILE IGNORING OTHERS THAT DON'T CONTRIBUTE TO THAT GOAL, THEY MAY FIND THEMSELVES UNINTENTIONALLY HOBBLING THEIR CHARACTER BY MINIMIZING THE NUMBER OF THINGS THEY CAN DO. A CHARACTER PUTTING 3 ATTRIBUTE POINTS INTO DEXTERITY AND 3 INTO RANGED COMBAT WILL ALMOST CERTAINLY HIT THEIR TARGET, BUT AT THE EXPENSE OF HAVING NO POINTS TO SPEND ON OTHER SKILLS THAT MIGHT BE USEFUL OUTSIDE OF COMBAT.

MAKING A ONE-NOTE CHARACTER SHOULD ONLY BE DONE AFTER DISCUSSION WITH THE GM TO ENSURE THAT SUCH A CHARACTER IS SUITABLE TO THE STORY BEING TOLD.
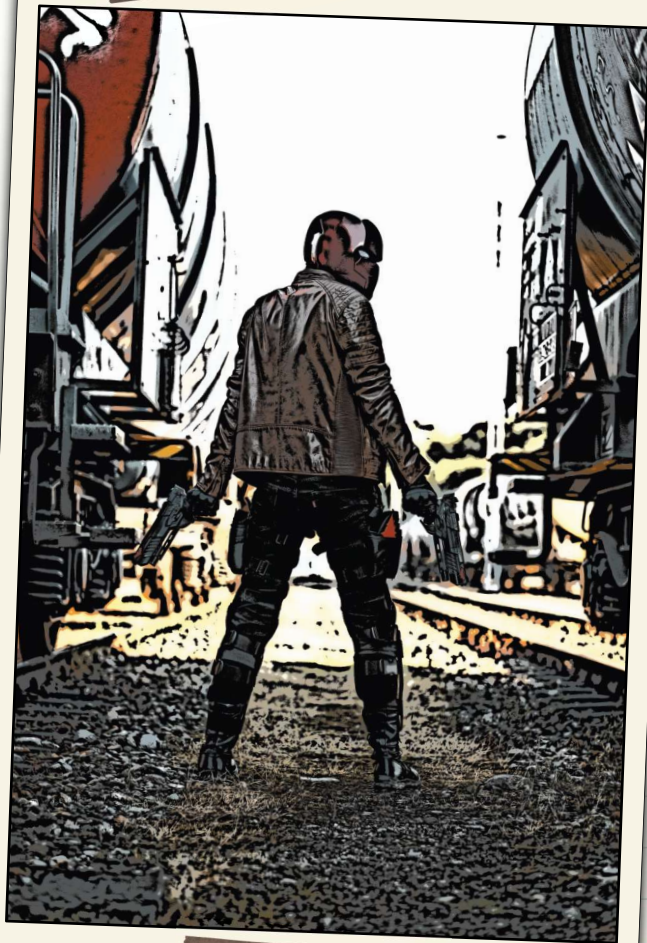
Who Will You Be?

STEP 1. PERSONAL GROWTH

The *Personal Development* covers where the character grew up, their education, what they learned along the way, and what shaped them during their childhood.

Characters enter the *Backstory Generation* process with a completely average RAPID Range of 00000 and no levels in any skills.

During the *Personal Growth* stage, players get 3 Attribute CDP and 10 Skill CDP to spend on shaping their character.

It costs 1 CDP to raise RAPID Range Attributes or Skills from 0 to 1, or from 1 to 2.

It costs 2 CDP to raise a RAPID Range Attribute from 2 to 3.

Skills cannot be raised above Level 2 during the *Personal Growth* stage

As they spend the points, they should make notes of the various aspects of their characters' lives before the pandemic hit, covered where they grew up, where and what they learned, and any other details that give insight into why they think or act like they do.

WHERE DID THEY GROW UP?

Although the details of each characters' childhood will be different, this period is generally considered to be the first 10-15 years of their life, where many of their attitudes and outlooks on life will be set. A player should put some thought into how and where they were raised, and what impact that had on the person that they have become.

Were they raised on a farm, developing a strong Physicality and understanding of the natural world, or were they raised by academically focused parents where Reason was valued above all else?

Were they an early athletic talent, coached for many years after school in one particular sport?

Were they a street urchin, stealing to stay alive and relying on their Acumen and Dexterity to not get caught?

Were they perhaps raised in a circus where their Influence and ability to Entertain was what kept the family fed?

During this phase, players should spent 1 CDP on raising a RAPID Range Attribute, and 4 CDP on Skills.

Players should make a note of where and how their character was raised and summarize any defining events that may have shaped them while growing up in a few sentences.

RAPID Range Attributes

REASON (RSN): How smart, how quick, and how well educated a character is, in addition to how well they process and retain data.

Characters with a high Reason tend to be good at skills that require a high degree of mental agility and cognitive ability.

Reason Skills: Farming, First Aid, General Knowledge, Local Knowledge, *Pharmacology**, Research, *Surgery**, *Tactical Knowledge**

ACUMEN (ACU): The midpoint between perception & cunning, Acumen affects a PC's ability to read a situation or person and defines how well they can turn things to their advantage.

Characters with a high Acumen score are very in tune with their surroundings and tend to rely heavily on their instincts.

Acumen Skills: Barter, Gambling, *Lock-Picking**, Navigation, Perception, Scavenging, Streetwise, Survival

PHYSICALITY (PHY): Not simply a measure of brute strength, Physicality also defines how tough, or how athletic a character is, and can also be a representation of how much self-control, discipline, and will-power a character can exert over themselves.

Characters with a high Physicality are often capable of not only amazing feats of strength, but also discipline.

Physicality Skills: Athletics, *Demolitions**, Hunting, Intimidation, Melee Combat, Stealth, Unarmed Combat

INFLUENCE (INF): Influence is a measure of a character's presence, charm, charisma, or sheer physical beauty, in addition to how well they are able to use that to their advantage.

Characters with a high Influence are often able to convince or manipulate or bend others to their will.

Influence Skills: Animal Handling, Charm, Deception, Entertainment, Inspiration, *Psychology**

DEXTERITY (DEX): Dexterity is a combination of innate agility, reflexes, and hand-eye coordination. Not only quick on their feet, but these characters are also able to react deftly to rapidly evolving situations.

Characters with a high Dexterity tend to not only be good with firearms, but they are also adept at activities that require nimbleness, fancy footwork, or quick fingers.

Dexterity Skills: *Armorsmith**, Dodge, Driving, Ranged Combat, Sleight of Hand, Stealth, Tinkerer, *Vehicle Knowledge**, *Weaponsmith**

ADVANCED CUSTOMIZATION

ASSUMING THAT IT MATCHES THE CHARACTER CONCEPT, A PLAYER MAY DECIDE DURING THE PERSONAL GROWTH STAGE OF BACKSTORY GENERATION TO REDUCE AN ATTRIBUTE TO -1 (WEAK) AND REDISTRIBUTE THAT CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT POINT TO A DIFFERENT ATTRIBUTE.

THE PLAYER MUST FILL IN THE GAPS FOR THE GM WHO MUST AGREE ON THE REASON WHY IT MAKES SENSE FOR THIS CHARACTER TO BE BELOW AVERAGE IN SOME REGARD. THE PLAYER SHOULD DO THIS ONLY IF THEY ARE AWARE OF THE ONGOING NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCE, AND GENERALLY ONLY BECAUSE IT MATCHES THE CHARACTER CONCEPT.

FOR EXAMPLE: A PLAYER MAY DECIDE TO CREATE A CHARACTER THAT IS THE WISE, OLDER MATRIARCH OF A SETTLEMENT AND WHO USES HER INSTINCTS RATHER THAN HER REFLEXES TO STAY ALIVE. THE PLAYER MAY FEEL THAT BOTH A LOWER DEXTERITY AND PHYSICALITY COULD BE OFFSET BY A HIGHER REASON AND ACUMEN FROM YEARS OF OBSERVANT BEHAVIOR. AFTER MAKING THE CASE TO THE GM DURING SESSION XERO AND THEN FILLING IN THE GAPS FOR THE REST OF THE GROUP AND TO MATCH THIS TO THE CHARACTER'S BACKSTORY, THE GM WOULD ALLOW THESE TWO SUBSTITUTED POINTS OF THE RAPID RANGE TO BE REDISTRIBUTED ACCORDINGLY.

ALTHOUGH THEY CAN THEORETICALLY BE RAISED TO A MAXIMUM OF +4 (HUMAN PEAK) THROUGH CHARACTER EVOLUTION (SEE PAGE 177), NO ATTRIBUTE CAN GO ABOVE 3 DURING CHARACTER CREATION. THE ONLY EXCEPTION TO THIS RULE IS, AT THE GM'S DISCRETION AND IF THE PLAYER CAN FILL IN THE GAPS AS TO WHY, THE PLAYER MAY CHOOSE TO REASSIGN 2 SKILL CDP TO INCREASE ANY SINGLE RAPID RANGE VALUE TO +4. THIS WOULD REPRESENT INTENSE TRAINING OR DEVELOPMENT THE CHARACTER HAS UNDERTAKEN DURING THE COURSE OF THEIR LIFE AT THE EXPENSE OF ADDITIONAL SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE.

FOR EXAMPLE: A PLAYER MAY DECIDE THAT THEIR CHARACTER WAS A LUMBERJACK WHO IS EXCEPTIONALLY STRONG WITH A +4 PHY, BUT THAT THEY CORRESPONDINGLY HAVE TWO LESS CDP TO SPEND ON SKILLS DUE TO ALL THOSE LONG-YEARS OF LONG-DAYS WIELDING AN AXE.

Who Will You Be?

THEY GROW UP SO FAST

Some players may want to play a character who is on the younger side of things, who won't have had the opportunity to go through all the steps in the Backstory Generation process fully.

How this is handled depends largely on the type of game being run. If this is a one-off (or limited number of sessions), it is recommended that the character starts with all CDP so that they can perform to the same level as other characters.

However, if in a campaign setting where the intent is to see the characters develop over multiple sessions, the PC doesn't get any CDP during the Professional Development stage and instead, they receive the balance of the CDP at the end of the first, or possibly the second session. The player gets to spend them normally, and the character can be seen to have "grown up quickly" under the intense pressure of this new world.

EDUCATION

No matter if it was from books, through an apprenticeship, an impactful mentor, or alone on the hard streets, experiences during this Education stage of their life allows a character to spend 1 Attribute CDP on increasing a RAPID Range attribute and 2 Skill CDP on any Skill of their choosing.

Make a note of how and where your character got their Education, summarizing in a few sentences any specific lessons they learned or people that may have influenced, hindered, or mentored them during this period.

THE MOST IMPORTANT LESSONS

AFTER HER FATHER DIED JUST AS SHE WAS GRADUATING FROM HIGH SCHOOL, ALINA NEEDED TO FIND A WAY TO HELP SUPPORT HER MOTHER AND TWO SISTERS. PUTTING ANY ASPIRATIONS OF THE OLYMPICS TO ONE SIDE AND, USING THE SMALL INHERITANCE SHE GOT FROM HER FATHER, SHE TAUGHT HERSELF BOOKKEEPING AND OPENED HER OWN DOJO.

ALINA PUTS 1 CDP INTO RAISING HER DEXTERITY ATTRIBUTE TO 2 AND PUTS 1 CDP EACH INTO UNARMED COMBAT AND DODGE, BRINGING BOTH TO LEVEL 2.

HOBBIES & INTEREST

This Hobby & Interest phase is when a player can add some additional depth to their character by rounding out their skills and RAPID Range. They get 1 more Character Development Point to apply to any attribute and 4 final Character Development Points to spend on any Skills they choose that reflect their passions, interests, and hobbies, the things that really made them tick as a person.

Make a note in a few sentences of what it was that made your character who they were before the pandemic – what did they do for fun? What were their hobbies?

HOW WAS YOUR WEEKEND?

ALINA REMAINED DRIVEN, ALWAYS LOOKING TO SURPASS HERSELF. IN ADDITION TO TAE KWON DO, SHE TOOK UP JUDO AND KICKBOXING, BOTH TO A COMPETITIVE LEVEL. EQUALLY CONSUMED WITH THE SUCCESS OF HER DOJO, ALINA RAN MULTIPLE CLASSES A DAY. HER BOYFRIEND, BILLY, WHO RAN A CLOSE THIRD FOR HER ATTENTION, WAS AN AVID OUTDOORSMAN AND TAUGHT HER TO LOVE CAMPING. IT WAS CERTAINLY BETTER THAN BEING AROUND PEOPLE.

WITH 1 LAST ATTRIBUTE CDP TO SPEND, SHE PUTS IT INTO ACUMEN. SHE HAS 4 SKILL CDP REMAINING AND SPENDS 1 CDP EACH TO GET TO SURVIVAL 1 AND STREETWISE 1, 1 CDP TO GET INSPIRATION 1, AND THE FINAL SKILL CDP TO BRING CHARM TO LEVEL 2.PUTS 1 CDP EACH INTO UNARMED COMBAT AND DODGE, BRINGING BOTH TO LEVEL 2.

STEP 2: PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Everyone had to make money before the virus and during the Professional Development stage, a character picks a Profession (see page 63) to help define how they made money before the virus, as well as which skills they learned.

At this stage, a player receives 2 Character Development Point that they can spend on any RAPID Range attribute and an additional 5 Points to spend on any of the skills associated with their chosen Profession. Each Profession has Vocational Skills that the players can spend CDP on and during this stage those Vocation Skills can be raised to Level 3, reflecting the years they spent honing those skills while on the job.

Professions are deliberately vague in order to allow players to add their own color and flavor, and they should take a moment to further define what their job was within that profession. Within each Profession, there is a lot of room for differentiation and players should consider how the skills tie together for their character.

FOR EXAMPLE: A Driver may have owned their own rig and spent years on the highways of the US or perhaps they had been a taxi driver in a major metropolitan area. An Outdoorsman may have been a Farmer who spent his life tending crops or a trail guide used to living in the mountains, a Performer may have been a singer, an athlete, or even a novelist, whilst a character choosing Law Enforcement could just as easily have spent years as an FBI agent in a large city as been a deputy sheriff in a small, sleepy town.

If there is no Profession listed that a players wish to pick - and if they can *Fill in The Gaps* for the rest of the group and GM - they may define their own Profession and spend 5 Skill CDP on what they determine to be the Vocational Skills associated with their choice of career.

Additionally, if players are able to *Fill in The Gaps* for the group, they can substitute putting points into one of the Vocational skills in favor of another, non-Vocational skill if it matches their character design or concept. Any non-Vocational skills chosen in this way can be raised to Level 3.

Make a note of what it was that they did for work before the virus and summarize in 1-2 sentences any defining events or interactions they may have had during this time in their life, particularly as it comes to helping define their choice of skills and overarching character.

HOW'D THAT DOJO GO, YO?

DESPITE A STEEP LEARNING CURVE, ALINA LEARNED TO RUN HER DOJO PROFITABLY AND OVER THE NEXT FEW YEARS, SHE BUILT A SUCCESSFUL BUSINESS WITH A STERLING REPUTATION. EVEN THOUGH IT WAS LOCATED IN A LESS THAN DESIRABLE PART OF TOWN, ALINA QUICKLY LEARNED HOW TO NAVIGATE LOCAL STREET POLITICS AND AVOID PISSING OFF THE WRONG PEOPLE.

ALINA SPENDS BOTH OF THE FINAL 2 ATTRIBUTE CDP ON PHYSICALITY, BRINGING IT TO 2.

SHE CHOOSES **PERFORMER** FOR HER PROFESSION AS SHE SPENDS SO MUCH OF HER TIME TEACHING CLASSES AND MOTIVATING PEOPLE, AND HAS 5 SKILL CDP TO SPEND ON ATHLETICS, CHARM, DECEPTION, DODGE, ENTERTAINMENT, INSPIRATION OR PERCEPTION. DURING THIS STAGE SHE CAN RAISE ANY SKILL TO LEVEL 3 AT THE COST OF 2 SKILL CDP.

SHE CHOOSES TO PUT 1 CDP INTO TAKING PERCEPTION 1, 2 CDP INTO RAISING HER ATHLETICS TO 3 AND, ADDITIONALLY, SHE *FILLS IN THE GAPS* AND AGREES WITH THE GM THAT PART OF HER WORK AT THE DOJO TEACHING MARTIAL ARTS SHOULD ALLOW HER TO SPEND THE LAST TWO SKILL CDP ON BRINGING UNARMED COMBAT TO LEVEL 3.

PROFESSIONS

ACADEMIC: Years of study and research have honed an Academic's mind to a sharp point where they are able to quickly absorb large amounts of data that they are then able to correlate and analyze.

Academic Vocational Skills: General Knowledge, Perception, *Pharmacology**, *Psychology**, Research, Streetwise, *Surgery**

DRIVER: Quick reflexes combined with acute spatial awareness give a driver the advantage when in control of anything from a car to a bike to a buggy. Drivers always seem to be able to get the best out of their ride, no matter how tight the situation.

Driver Vocational Skills: Driving, Dodge, *Lock-Picking**, Navigation, Perception, Stealth, *Vehicle Mechanics**

ENTREPRENEUR: Having spent their lives knowing how to rally others to their ideas and turn a dollar, Entrepreneurs are good at uniting people behind a vision and getting them to move towards a common end-goal.

Entrepreneur Vocational Skills: Barter, Charm, Deception, Inspiration, Perception, Research, Streetwise

LAW ENFORCEMENT: Whether on the front lines or working a desk, Law Enforcement officials may have spent years enforcing the laws of a society that no longer exists, however those skills make them even more valuable now than they were before the fall. In the absence of anyone else, their innate sense of right and wrong often puts them into leadership positions.

Law Enforcement Vocational Skills: Athletics, Driving, Intimidation, Perception, Ranged Combat, Stealth, Streetwise

MECHANIC: Mechanics just seem to have a knack for figuring out what goes where and, in a world where everything is falling apart, being able to fix things and keep them running is among the most valuable skills. Mechanics who are particularly adept at keeping vehicles running – or converting them to an alternate fuel source – are highly sought after.

Mechanic Vocational Skills: *Armorsmith**, Barter, Driving, Scavenging, Tinkerer, *Vehicle Mechanic**, *Weaponsmith**

MEDIC: With a profound lack of medicine or access to medical equipment, anyone with any degree of relevant training, from a Vet Technician to an EMT to a Doctor, can literally be the difference between life and death. Their highly sought knowledge combined with often highly developed people skills make them welcomed into most groups and communities.

Medic Vocational Skills: First Aid, General Knowledge, Perception, *Pharmacology**, Research, *Psychology**, *Surgery**

MILITARY: Disciplined and strong-willed, those with any degree of military training have a strong edge in this new world over those that don't. No matter if they have spent their career dodging death on the front lines or were an officer responsible for the lives of the men under their command, soldiers inevitably find their skills in high demand.

Military Vocational Skills: Athletics, *Demolitions**, Dodge, Ranged Combat, Survival, T*actical Knowledge**, Unarmed Combat

OUTDOORSMAN: Often more at home in nature than with other people, Outdoorsmen know how to live off the land, and are as well versed in flora and fauna, as well as being as adept at following the tracks of another creature as they are at hiding their own.

Outdoorsman Vocational Skills: Animal Handling, Farming, Hunting, Local Knowledge, Melee Combat, Perception, Survival

OUTLAW: Whether they were a low-level crook, the head of a biker chapter, or a government spook, Outlaws found themselves living on the fringe of society and tend to have an eclectic skill set that will raise less eyebrows now than they did before.

Outlaw Vocational Skills: Deception, Intimidation, *Lock-Picking**, Perception, Sleight of Hand, Streetwise, Unarmed Combat

PERFORMER: Someone who has taken their natural abilities and talent or their raw charisma and, over the years, have honed their skills to become some form of performer or entertainer. No matter whether they are natural showmen, a poet with a beautiful turn of phrase or trying to organize some kind of game, Performers can usually find a way to captivate and distract those around them, no matter the grimness of the new world.

Performer Vocational Skills: Athletics, Charm, Deception, Dodge, Entertainment, Inspiration, Perception

POLITICIAN: Fast talking and quickly able to sense how to win someone's trust or get the upper hand in a debate, Politicians make valuable and capable leaders. Using their ability to inspire, unite, and build consensus, many surviving Politicians find themselves in leadership positions, often despite themselves.

Politician Vocational Skills: Barter, Charm, Deception, Inspiration, Local Knowledge, Perception, *Psychology**

TRADER: With pre-made goods of any value being increasingly hard to find and production lines non-existent there is a growing and essential need for those that understand the art of procurement and supply-chain management to act as brokers and supply what is required. Traders are experts in the art of negotiation and barter and are driven by a need to strike the best deal.

Trader Vocational Skills: Barter, Charm, Deception, Perception, Scavenging, Streetwise, Tinkerer.

STEP 3: WHY THEY ACT LIKE THEY DO

Characters are as complex as the players who create them and have all had lives before coming together as part of the group.

Each of them is driven by something or has motives that explain why they act like they do and the outcomes they will seek. *Complications* & *Motivations* help capture and detail potential baggage they may be dragging with them, as well as providing another dimension when fleshing out a characters' background and understanding the actions they may take in any given situation.

Additionally, whether or not they choose to share any of this with other characters in their group, *Complications* and *Motivations* provide a placeholder with enough details for the player and GM to work on future plot developments and personalized story hooks that align and intersect with the larger stories being told (see *Chapter 10: Moderating The Distemper*).

No matter whether a player took the *Backstory Generation* route or picked from the various *Paradigms* available, they will still need to choose both a *Complication* and a *Motivation* from the *Complications* and *Motivations* sidebars on pages X and X.

If they prefer an element of randomness, they may roll 2d6 on **Table 6: Complications** and 2d6 on **Table 7: Motivations** below and weave the results into their Backstory.

Players are highly encouraged to create something bespoke that fits the desired character background if none of the available choices resonate with them and they can *Fill in the Gaps* with the GM and create something unique.

A character's *Complications* and *Motivation* are a one- or two-word summary of what drives them and will give players a good indicator of how they will interpret the actions of others or react to various situations. *Complications* and *Motivations* are deliberately vague and high-level, allowing each player to match that to their character and their backstory and provide their own depth.

Players should spend a minute detailing their *Complications* and *Motivations*.

What is the dark secret they are hiding from others in the group?

What is the obligation that is holding them back or driving them forward?

Who and where are the *NPCs* that they have an obligation towards?

Does *Protect* also tie into their *Background Complication*, such as having a *Code of Honor* that can leave no innocent unaided, or is it just because they know that safety comes in numbers?

What are they looking to *Rediscover* or *Rebuild*?

If their motivation is to *Stay Alive*, will they put their own safety at risk for others?

TABLE 6: COMPLICATIONS	
2	ADDICTION
3	BETRAYAL
4	CRIMINAL PAST
5	DAREDEVIL
6	DARK SECRET
7	FAMILY OBLIGATION
8	FAMOUS
9	ON THE RUN
10	OUTSTANDING DEBT
11	GUILT
12	PERSONAL ENEMY

TABLE 7: MOTIVATIONS	
2	ACCUMULATE
3	FIND SAFETY
4	HEDONISM
5	MAKE AMENDS
6	PREACH
7	PROTECT
8	REBUILD
9	REDISCOVER
10	REUNITE
11	STAY ALIVE
12	TAKE ADVANTAGE

Who Will You Be?

WHY LOOK IF YOU CAN LEAP?

DESPITE EVERYTHING THAT HAS HAPPENED, ALINA HAS NEVER LOST HER BELIEF IN HERSELF AND HER ABILITIES, BUT THIS INNER STRENGTH SOMETIMES MANIFESTS IN THE FORM OF A BRAVADO THAT BORDERS ON CRAZINESS. SHE PICKS *DAREDEVIL* AS HER *COMPLICATION* BECAUSE, NO MATTER HOW RISKY THE SITUATION, ALINA ALWAYS SEEMS TO FIND HERSELF IN THE MIDDLE.

A REALIST AT HEART WHO KNOWS THE OLD DAYS ARE NEVER COMING BACK, ALINA IS CONSTANTLY LOOKING FOR SOMEWHERE THAT FEELS SAFE ENOUGH THAT SHE CAN STOP RUNNING AND STOP SLEEPING WITH ONE EYE OPEN. SHE'S NOT SURE SHE WILL FIND IT, BUT SHE'S NOT GOING TO STOP LOOKING. SHE PICKS FIND *SAFETY* AS HER *MOTIVATION*.

COMPLICATIONS

ADDICTION
Booze, opium, sex, cigarettes, killing, the character has a hole in their soul that they feel compelled to try and fill, no matter the personal cost to them or those around them. As supplies and resources become increasingly rare, their addiction may drive them to take irrational risks in order to satiate their need.

BETRAYAL
A betrayal can be something that eats away at the character and may sway their actions as they try to right the wrong that they believe they have been dealt. They might have a harder time trusting now or find themselves with a relentless need for revenge.

CRIMINAL PAST
Something happened somewhere before the pandemic and the character has a history of criminal actions that will come back to haunt them. This could possibly in the form of a cellmate, a former prison-guard, or the person they wronged.

DAREDEVIL
The character can't help themself; they just love taking risks. All too often that means they will involuntarily subject others in their group to the same risks, whether they wish to accept the consequences or not.

DARK SECRET
Perhaps they caused the death of a loved one, betrayed someone's trust or stole the food from a starving child, whatever it is, the character has something in their background that they don't want to get out and haunts them when they close their eyes.

FAMILY OBLIGATION
Whether it's a parent that the character is trying to get back to or a sick sibling that they need to provide for, there is a family tie somewhere that they need to put over their own interest. This can expose the character, via their loved ones, to risk.

FAMOUS
Fame may have been a blessing for some before the pandemic, but it will be a curse for others now. Something that the character did before, continues to make them recognizable after, and this may drive unexpected reactions – good or bad – from NPCs they encounter.

ON THE RUN
There are a thousand reasons to run or hide, but they will all result in the character wanting to keep a low-profile or moving in the opposite direction they were coming from and anyone that might know them. This might tie to something pre-pandemic, or it might be something that happened as recently as yesterday.

OUTSTANDING DEBT
Before or after the fall of society, the character has either gotten on the wrong side of someone or made a commitment or has some other kind of debt that must still be paid. Whether this is monetary or goods or a life-threatening obligation, there is always the knowledge that the debt needs to be paid.

GUILT
No matter if it is survivors' guilt at having made it this far or whether they are tormented by past actions, the character is harboring enough guilt about something in their background that continues to drive their behaviors and reactions. They will find themselves constantly thinking about what they could have done differently or the consequences of their actions .

PERSONAL ENEMY
Paths have crossed somewhere, and a feud has formed with an NPC – or perhaps even another player – who will stop at nothing to get even or take their revenge on the character.

MOTIVATIONS

ACCUMULATE
Some people find comfort in the gathering and acquisition of items. No matter if it's food, bullets, or gold, the more they can find, the more at ease that character feels. Sometimes they might even be trying to acquire things they fundamentally don't care about, but the act of getting it – sometimes just putting their hands on the item – will bring them comfort.

FIND SAFETY
There is a huge difference between getting a night's sleep and being able to sleep well. In a world with no authority, no police, and no protection, having somewhere that a character can feel safe – and someone to watch over them while they sleep - can encourage them to keep moving and to put up with the darkness of the work around them.

HEDONISM
Some people will take any opportunity to blot out the dark and harsh reality of what has happened. Pills, alcohol, partying, sex, no matter what it is that gets them off, the temporary endorphin rush is all they chase and the only thing that distracts them from the day-to-day horror of their new existence.

MAKE AMENDS
Guilt can do terrible things to a person's mind, particularly over the course of months or years. For some, trying to atone for mistakes or sins - real or imagined - will make them go out of their way to do things right, even though they are ultimately may not be doing the right thing.

PREACH
Compelled to share what they believe are the words of wisdom or knowledge needed for others to survive, some characters find themselves unable to stop themselves evangelizing. Although this is very often tied to a religious belief, there are no end of topics or subjects on which some people will choose to base their belief system around. Sometimes there is an outcome in mind – such as making a convert out of a listener – but just as often, they are talking for the sake of talking.

PROTECT
With so few people left, the urge to protect – even at the expense of their own well-being – has become overwhelming for some. No matter if it's limited to the people in their immediate orbit, those with whom they share strong bonds, or random strangers who are in danger, this character's driving urge is to look after fellow humans, often putting themselves at risk to do so.

REBUILD
Although so many are dead, the infrastructure of the world remains largely intact and, for many, getting things working again is a path on the road to jump-starting society. Whether this is on a local level by having a cabin with a working generator or attempting to unite a town filled with like-minded survivors, these characters are always working on their plans.

REDISCOVER
A great deal of knowledge has been lost along the way, particularly anything that had been fully digitized, and some people are determined to recover as much of that as possible. Libraries and bookstores, although they have been largely raided by now, are treasure troves of information about skills and expertise that are in danger of being lost forever and some characters will actively seek them out for the treasures they contain.

REUNITE
Some people may have loved ones that they are relentless about trying to find whilst others might be trying to get back to the town they grew up in, but there is a drive so strong to get back to somewhere or someone that it drowns out all other decision making.

STAY ALIVE
There is nothing more urgent than self-preservation. People have seen the world collapse around them and their own personal drive to keep going supersedes logic, reason, and loyalty.

TAKE ADVANTAGE
No matter what has happened and what is going on, some people will always find a way to turn things to their own advantage, often at the expense of someone else.

Complications and *Motivations* also tie directly into how a character's *Morality* score may be impacted (See *Morality* on page 179) and how quickly a character reaches their *Breaking Point* (see *Breaking Point* on page 178).

There is no need to share *Complications* & *Motivations* with anyone else in the group except for the GM, just have at least a vague idea in your own mind as to what happened. If the *Complications* & *Motivations* involve NPCs, make sure you write down any relevant information for later reference in the Background Information & Notes section on your character sheet.

STEP 4: SECONDARY STATS

Now that all Attribute and Skill CDP have been spent, players calculate their secondary stats.

WOUND POINTS: Characters start with **10 WP + Physicality + Dexterity AMod**

RESILIENCE POINTS: Characters start with **6 RP + Physicality AMod**

DEFENSIVE MODIFIER MELEE: Characters start with a DMM equal to their **Physicality AMod + Dodge SMod**

DEFENSIVE MODIFIER RANGE: Characters start with a DMR equal to their **Dexterity AMod + Dodge SMod**

INITIATIVE MODIFIER RANGE: Characters start with an Initiative Modifier equal to their **Dexterity AMod + Acumen AMod + Perception SMod**

ENCUMBRANCE: Characters start with an Encumbrance limit of **6 + Physicality AMod**

BREAKING POINT: Characters start with a base *Breaking Point* value of **3 + Reason AMod + Acumen AMod**. See *Breaking Point* on page 178 for more details on how this factors into play.

MORALITY: Characters start with a base *Morality* value of 3. See *Morality* on page 179 for more details on how this factors into play.

ALINA'S SECONDARY STATS

HAVING RAISED BOTH HER PHYSICALITY AND DEXTERITY BY 2, ALINA IS A BEAST BY ANYONE'S STANDARDS.

WOUND POINTS: SHE ADDS A TOTAL OF 4 POINTS FROM PHYSICALITY & DEXTERITY TO THE BASE FOR 10, FOR A TOTAL OF 14 WP.

RESILIENCE POINTS: SHE ADDS 2 POINTS FROM HER PHYSICALITY TO THE BASE OF 6 FOR 8 RP.

DEFENSIVE MODIFIERS: ALINA GETS TO ADD THE 2 POINTS FROM HER PHYSICALITY TO HER MELEE MODIFIER AND THE 2 POINTS FROM HER DEXTERITY TO THE RANGED MODIFIER, GIVING HER A DMM AND DMR OF 2.

INITIATIVE: WITH A DEXTERITY OF 2, AN ACUMEN OF 1, AND 1 LEVEL IN PERCEPTION, SHE GETS A TOTAL INITIATIVE MODIFIER OF +4.

ENCUMBRANCE: ALINA ADDS HER PHYSICALITY MODIFIER OF 2 TO THE BASE OF 6 FOR A TOTAL OF 7 ENCUMBRANCE.

STEP 5: WEAPONS & EQUIPMENT

Players can pick a Primary and a Secondary Weapon from Tables 12 to 15 on pages 129-130 and receive 1d6 rounds of ammunition for both weapons, which they should note on their character sheet.

When picking weapons, players should consider the availability of ammo and may find it prudent to take at least one melee weapon, to ensure that running out of ammo at a truly critical moment isn't the end of the character's options. Players may decide to take two Melee weapons, even though that leaves them at a disadvantage if they need to cover ground to get to their target.

They can pick 1 Common item from the Miscellaneous Equipment table (see page 131), and each character starts with a Basic Survival Kit, which includes a tent (or other temporary shelter) and a sleeping bag. They also have 2 days' worth of food and water in the form of 2 Rations (see Rations on page 138 for more details).

Additionally, players may pick one Incidental item that provides no combat value but may otherwise be useful, such as a compass, a lighter, flashlight, a photograph of a loved one, or a map of the area.

The total weight of the items a player picks cannot exceed their characters' Encumbrance limit (see Encumbrance on page 45). Although they can have an essentially endless amount of equipment, if they are unable to carry it all at the same time then they will need to find somewhere safe to store it when it's not in use.

Many ordinary, everyday items such as a lighter or flashlight or transistor radio have no encumbrance value as they are so small, but a GM may decide enough small items equate to a point or two of Encumbrance.

Make a note of everything you have with you on your character sheet. Be aware that if you don't have it written on your sheet, you don't have it in game (unless you spend a Distemper Dice to miraculously find one in your backpack).

More details on Equipment and Encumbrance can be found in Chapter 7: What Do You Have?

WHAT'S IN HER BAG?

ALINA'S HIGH PHYSICALITY AND UNARMED COMBAT SKILLS MEAN THAT SHE DOES ALMOST AS MUCH DAMAGE WITH HER BARE HANDS AS WITH A WEAPON BUT, IN ADDITION TO HER SURVIVAL KIT AND RATIONS, SHE PICKS A BATON AND A HATCHET AS HER WEAPONS.

AS HER INCIDENTAL ITEM, SHE STILL HAS HER DAD'S ZIPPO LIGHTER. ALTHOUGH NEVER A SMOKER, SHE'S HAD IT WITH HER AS A MEMENTO SINCE HE DIED, AND IT'S BEEN INVALUABLE WHEN TRYING TO START FIRES.

PERSONAL DATA

Name: Alina Garcia

Profession: Dojo Owner

Age: 29 **Weight:** 131 lbs **Height:** 5'5" **Gender:** Female

Complication: DAREDEVIL **Motivation:** FIND SAFETY

REASON: 0 **ACUMEN:** 1 **PHYSICALITY:** 2 **INFLUENCE:** 0 **DEXTERITY:** 2

COMBAT SKILLS -3 1 2 3 4 5
- Demolitions* (PHY) ▨□□□□□
- Melee (PHY) □□□□□
- Ranged (DEX) □□□□□
- Unarmed (PHY) ●●●□□

SWAY SKILLS 1 2 3 4 5
- Animal Handling (INF) □□□□□
- Barter (ACU) □□□□□
- Charm (INF) ●●□□□
- Deception (INF) □□□□□
- Entertainment (INF) □□□□□
- Inspiration (INF) ●□□□□
- Intimidation (PHY) □□□□□

MECHANIC SKILLS -3 1 2 3 4 5
- Armor* (DEX) ▨□□□□□
- Tinkerer (DEX) □□□□□
- Vehicles* (DEX) ▨□□□□□
- Weapons* (DEX) ▨□□□□□

INNATE SKILLS 1 2 3 4 5
- Athletics (DEX) ●●●□□
- Dodge (DEX) ●●□□□
- Driving (DEX) □□□□□
- Gambling (ACU) □□□□□
- Hunting (PHY) □□□□□
- Navigation (ACU) □□□□□
- Perception (ACU) □□□□□
- Scavenging (ACU) ●□□□□
- Survival (ACU) ●□□□□

KNOWLEDGE SKILLS -3 1 2 3 4 5
- Farming (REA) □□□□□□
- General (REA) □□□□□□
- Local (REA) □□□□□□
- Psychology* (REA) ▨□□□□□
- Research (REA) □□□□□□
- Tactical* (REA) ●●□□□□

MEDICINE SKILLS -3 1 2 3 4 5
- First Aid (REA) □□□□□□
- Pharmacology* (REA) ▨□□□□□
- Surgery* (REA) ▨□□□□□

CRIMINAL SKILLS -3 1 2 3 4 5
- Lock-Picking* (REA) ▨□□□□□
- Sleight of Hand (DEX) □□□□□□
- Stealth (DEX) □□□□□□
- Streetwise (ACU) ●□□□□

SECONDARY STATS

Wound Points: 10 + **14** DEX **DM Melee:** -4 DEX **Initiative:** DEX +3 CU + PER

Resilience Points: 6 + **8** HY **DM Ranged:** -4 HY **Encumbrance:** **8** + PHY

Morality: 3 **Breaking Point:** 3 + DEA + PHI **4** □□□□□□□□ **CDP:** **Distemper Dice:** □□□□□□

WEAPONS AND EQUIPMENT

Name: Tactical Baton **Type:** Ⓜ R E S **Range:** Close **Cond:** Used **Enc:** 1 **Ammo:** -
WP: 4 + 2d3 **RP:** 100% **Notes:** - □□□□□□□□□□

Name: Brass Knuckles **Type:** Ⓜ R E S **Range:** Engaged **Cond:** Used **Enc:** 1 **Ammo:** -
WP: +1 **RP:** 100% **Notes:** +1 WP damage to Unarmed Combat. Requires a Ready Weapon action to equip □□□□□□□□□□

Name: **Type:** Ⓞ M R E S **Range:** **Cond:** **Enc:** **Ammo:**
WP: **RP:** % **Notes:** -

Name: Unarmed Combat **Type:** Ⓜ R E S **Range:** **Cond:** **Enc:** **Ammo:** N/A
WP: 1d3 + **RP:** 100% **Notes:** 1d3 + PHY + Unarmed Combat Damage □□□□□□□□□□

Equipment: Binoculars **Enc:** 1 **Notes:** +1 Perception Check

Equipment: - **Enc:** - **Notes:** -

Equipment: Basic Survival Kit **Enc:** 1 **Notes:** Tent, Sleeping Bag

Rations Type: Standard **# Days:** 2 **Enc:** 1 **Notes:**

ARMOR

Type: **Enc:** **DM:** **Notes:**

Alina was raised from a young age by her father to be an athlete, while her mother taught her how to get people to do what she wanted. Her Grandmother taught her not to take shit from anyone. In high school she competed at the national level in Track and Field, as well as at the local level with Judo and, later, Tae Kwon Do. Her goal was to one day become an Olympian.

After her father died just as she was graduating from high school, Alina needed to find a way to help support her mother and two sisters. Putting any aspirations of the Olympics to one side and, using the small inheritance she got from her father, she taught herself bookkeeping and opened her own Dojo.

Alina remained driven, always looking to surpass herself. In addition to Tae Kwon Do, she took up Judo and Kickboxing, both to a competitive level. Equally consumed with the success of her Dojo, Alina ran multiple classes a day. Her boyfriend, Billy, who ran a close third for her attention, was an avid outdoorsman and taught her to love camping. It was certainly better than being around people.

Despite a steep learning curve, Alina learned to run her Dojo profitably and over the next few years, she built a successful business with a sterling reputation. Even though it was located in a less than desirable part of town, Alina quickly learned how to navigate local street politics and avoid pissing off the wrong people.

Despite everything that has happened, Alina has never lost her belief in herself and her abilities, but this inner strength sometimes manifests in the form of a bravado that borders on craziness. She picks Daredevil as her Complication because, no matter how risky the situation, Alina always seems to find herself in the middle.

A realist at heart who knows the old days are never coming back, Alina is constantly looking for somewhere that feels safe enough that she can stop running and stop sleeping with one eye open. She's not sure she will find it, but she's not going to stop looking.

As her incidental item, she still has her dad's Zippo lighter. Although never a smoker, she's had it with her as a memento since he died, and it's been invaluable when trying to start fires.

Even before the virus, Alina had never trusted dogs, and had never trusted anyone that did trust dogs. Any time dogs come up in conversation, she is only too happy to give her opinion and tell people how they were blinded by cuteness.

Alina Garcia

RELATIONSHIPS

Name:	Relationship Modifier:	Name:	Relationship Modifier:

STEP 6: FINISHING TOUCHES

At this stage, you can capture anything that this process didn't catch that may help you flesh out your character or create a greater attachment to them. These might be personality quirks, tics, or any other trait helps bring them to life for you.

Do they hum songs? Are they sarcastic?

Do they have a deck of cards that they are always shuffling, even if they never seem to want to play?

Do they have a wedding ring or a crucifix around their neck that they touch in times of stress?

Make a note of anything on your character sheet in the Background Information & Notes section so that they are always front of mind.

ALINA GARCIA

ALINA WAS RAISED FROM A YOUNG AGE BY HER FATHER TO BE AN ATHLETE, WHILE HER MOTHER TAUGHT HER HOW TO GET PEOPLE TO DO WHAT SHE WANTED. HER GRANDMOTHER TAUGHT HER NOT TO TAKE SHIT FROM ANYONE. IN HIGH SCHOOL SHE COMPETED AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL IN TRACK AND FIELD, AS WELL AS AT THE LOCAL LEVEL WITH JUDO AND, LATER, TAE KWON DO. HER GOAL WAS TO ONE DAY BECOME AN OLYMPIAN.

AFTER HER FATHER DIED JUST AS SHE WAS GRADUATING FROM HIGH SCHOOL, ALINA NEEDED TO FIND A WAY TO HELP SUPPORT HER MOTHER AND TWO SISTERS. PUTTING ANY ASPIRATIONS OF THE OLYMPICS TO ONE SIDE AND, USING THE SMALL INHERITANCE SHE GOT FROM HER FATHER, SHE TAUGHT HERSELF BOOKKEEPING AND OPENED HER OWN DOJO.

ALINA REMAINED DRIVEN, ALWAYS LOOKING TO SURPASS HERSELF. IN ADDITION TO TAE KWON DO, SHE TOOK UP JUDO AND KICKBOXING, BOTH TO A COMPETITIVE LEVEL. EQUALLY CONSUMED WITH THE SUCCESS OF HER DOJO, ALINA RAN MULTIPLE CLASSES A DAY. HER BOYFRIEND, BILLY, WHO RAN A CLOSE THIRD FOR HER ATTENTION, WAS AN AVID OUTDOORSMAN AND TAUGHT HER TO LOVE CAMPING. IT WAS CERTAINLY BETTER THAN BEING AROUND PEOPLE.

DESPITE A STEEP LEARNING CURVE, ALINA LEARNED TO RUN HER DOJO PROFITABLY AND OVER THE NEXT FEW YEARS, SHE BUILT A SUCCESSFUL BUSINESS WITH A STERLING REPUTATION. EVEN THOUGH IT WAS LOCATED IN A LESS THAN DESIRABLE PART OF TOWN, ALINA QUICKLY LEARNED HOW TO NAVIGATE LOCAL STREET POLITICS AND AVOID PISSING OFF THE WRONG PEOPLE.

DESPITE EVERYTHING THAT HAS HAPPENED, ALINA HAS NEVER LOST HER BELIEF IN HERSELF AND HER ABILITIES, BUT THIS INNER STRENGTH SOMETIMES MANIFESTS IN THE FORM OF A BRAVADO THAT BORDERS ON CRAZINESS. SHE PICKS DAREDEVIL AS HER COMPLICATION BECAUSE, NO MATTER HOW RISKY THE SITUATION, ALINA ALWAYS SEEMS TO FIND HERSELF IN THE MIDDLE.

A REALIST AT HEART WHO KNOWS THE OLD DAYS ARE NEVER COMING BACK, ALINA IS CONSTANTLY LOOKING FOR SOMEWHERE THAT FEELS SAFE ENOUGH THAT SHE CAN STOP RUNNING AND STOP SLEEPING WITH ONE EYE OPEN. SHE'S NOT SURE SHE WILL FIND IT, BUT SHE'S NOT GOING TO STOP LOOKING.

AS HER INCIDENTAL ITEM, SHE STILL HAS HER DAD'S ZIPPO LIGHTER. ALTHOUGH NEVER A SMOKER, SHE'S HAD IT WITH HER AS A MEMENTO SINCE HE DIED, AND IT'S BEEN INVALUABLE WHEN TRYING TO START FIRES.

EVEN BEFORE THE VIRUS, ALINA HAD NEVER TRUSTED DOGS, AND HAD NEVER TRUSTED ANYONE THAT DID TRUST DOGS. ANY TIME DOGS COME UP IN CONVERSATION, SHE IS ONLY TOO HAPPY TO GIVE HER OPINION AND TELL PEOPLE HOW THEY WERE BLINDED BY CUTENESS.

PARADIGMS

Although many players enjoy creating and detailing every aspect of their character, there are times when Players may lack a clear character concept, may want a starting point to build off, or may just lack the time to devote to character creation without slowing the group down, or, on the other side of the table, there might also be times when a GM needs to introduce an NPC on the fly. These are all good use cases for using Paradigms.

Designed as a quick alternative to Backstory Generation, Paradigms exist to facilitate rapid character creation by providing the wire-frame of a character onto which players can add the specific details and personality that bring them to life. Paradigms offer players the choice of taking on specific roles or "types" of character that fit well into the world and they come predefined with RAPID Range attributes, Secondary Stats, and matching Skills and Equipment. This means a player really has to give their character a name, choose their Motivations & Complications, define a backstory, and start playing.

In addition to a predefined set of RAPID Range attributes, Secondary Stats and Skills that have all been balanced to provide a well-rounded character, each Paradigm also comes with a suggested set of starting weapons and equipment which matches their skills and background, leaving the player to just pick an Incidental item.

Many of the Paradigms included with Distemper are tropes taken directly from pop-culture and should be familiar to most, such as the cop, the biker, or the petty criminal – but, with just a little flavor, those vague stereotypes can become much more rounded and fun to play.

A Law Enforcement Paradigm can just as easily be a tough, big city cop with a deeply ingrained sense of justice as it can be a small-town deputy. While the Military Paradigm lends itself easily to becoming a mercenary using the skills they learned on battlefields across the globe, it could just as well be a battle-weary soldier who had hung up his boots before the pandemic but now doesn't seem to be able to avoid conflict no matter where he goes.

Players are strongly encouraged to take some time to think about who their character is going to be and how that ties their skills and abilities together. In order for a Paradigm to meet their vision, they are encouraged to make any minor alterations (such as substituting one or more Skill for another), to get them the exact build they are looking for.

The Paradigms provided - *Bar Owner, Beat Cop, Biker, EMT, Family Doctor, Farmer, Flea Market Trader, Hot Rod Mechanic, Mayor, Mercenary, Petty Criminal, Preacher, Rural Sheriff, School Teacher, Semi-Pro Athlete* and *Trucker* – are not intended to be completely comprehensive, and more will be made available over time. Many of the descriptions provided for the Paradigms refer to who they were before the Dog Flu and it's up to the players to decide who they will be in the new world.

YOU GOT NO CLASS

ALTHOUGH THERE ARE MULTIPLE PARADIGMS AVAILABLE DURING CHARACTER CREATION, THESE ARE LITTLE MORE THAN A THEMATIC COLLECTION OF SKILLS THAT HELP PROVIDE DEFINITION AND FLAVOR TO A CHARACTER AND, UNLIKE MANY OTHER RPGS, THERE ARE NO REAL CHARACTER CLASSES WITHIN DISTEMPER.

WHILE CHARACTER CLASSES WITH PREDEFINED ABILITIES AND WEAPONS ARE PERFECTLY SUITED TO OTHER GAMES, DISTEMPER WAS INTENDED TO BE MORE OF A SANDBOX THAN A THEME PARK AND THE SILOS THAT CAN UNINTENTIONALLY BE PRESENTED BY CLASSES DON'T FIT WITH THE OVERARCHING GAME DESIGN.

JUST AS WITH PEOPLE IN REAL LIFE, CHARACTERS IN DISTEMPER ARE CAPABLE OF LEARNING ALMOST ANYTHING THEY TURN THEIR MINDS TOWARDS AND A PARADIGM IS NOT THERE TO RESTRICT, SIMPLY TO PROVIDE FLAVOR. AS AN EXAMPLE, OVER TIME AND THROUGH THE EXPENDITURE OF CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT POINTS, THERE IS NO REASON THAT A PACIFIST DOCTOR COULDN'T BECOME SIGNIFICANTLY MORE EFFECTIVE IN COMBAT. SEE CHARACTER EVOLUTION ON PAGE 177 FOR MORE DETAILS.

Some players may take *Apprentices* (see *Apprentices* on page 190) and when they recruit this NPC, they should decide on a *Paradigm* for them.

Additionally, a player needing to create a new character may decide to promote an NPC to become a PC that they play. This NPC might be a member of their community (see Communities on page 187) or someone they have interacted with previously, and the player and GM may agree on a Paradigm that matches that NPCs description, allowing the player to jump into the game more easily.

In a similar vein, GM's may decide to take a paradigm and turn it into an Antagonist Level NPC (see *Hell Is Other People* on page 145).

Character sheets are available for Paradigms with the stats and skills provided are available for download at DistemperVerse.com/paradigms.

PERSONAL DATA

Name: **Profession:** **Bar Owner**

Age: **Weight:**   **Height:**   **Gender:**

Complication: **Motivation:**

REASON: ⟨ 1 ⟩ **ACUMEN:** ⟨ 2 ⟩ **PHYSICALITY:** ⟨ 0 ⟩ **INFLUENCE:** ⟨ 2 ⟩ **DEXTERITY:** ⟨ 0 ⟩

COMBAT SKILLS -3 1 2 3 4 5
- **D**emolitions* (PHY) ▨ ☐☐☐☐☐
- **M**elee (PHY) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **R**anged (DEX) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **U**narmed (PHY) ●☐☐☐☐

SWAY SKILLS 1 2 3 4 5
- **A**nimal Handling (INF) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **B**arter (ACU) ●●☐☐☐
- **C**harm (INF) ●☐☐☐☐
- **D**eception (INF) ●☐☐☐☐
- **E**ntertainment (INF) ●☐☐☐☐
- **I**nspiration (INF) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **I**ntimidation (PHY) ☐☐☐☐☐

MECHANIC SKILLS -3 1 2 3 4 5
- **A**rmor* (DEX) ▨ ☐☐☐☐☐
- **T**inkerer (DEX) ●☐☐☐☐
- **V**ehicles* (DEX) ▨ ☐☐☐☐☐
- **W**eapons* (DEX) ▨ ☐☐☐☐☐

INNATE SKILLS 1 2 3 4 5
- **A**thletics (DEX) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **D**odge (DEX) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **D**riving (DEX) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **G**ambling (ACU) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **H**unting (PHY) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **N**avigation (ACU) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **P**erception (ACU) ●●☐☐☐
- **S**cavenging (ACU) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **S**urvival (ACU) ☐☐☐☐☐

KNOWLEDGE SKILLS -3 1 2 3 4 5
- **F**arming (REA) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **G**eneral (REA) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **L**ocal (REA) ●●☐☐☐
- **P**sychology* (REA) ●●☐☐☐
- **R**esearch (REA) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **T**actical* (REA) ▨ ☐☐☐☐☐

MEDICINE SKILLS -3 1 2 3 4 5
- **F**irst Aid (REA) ●☐☐☐☐
- **P**harmacology* (REA) ▨ ☐☐☐☐☐
- **S**urgery* (REA) ▨ ☐☐☐☐☐

CRIMINAL SKILLS -3 1 2 3 4 5
- **L**ock-Picking* (REA) ▨ ☐☐☐☐☐
- **S**leight of Hand (DEX) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **S**tealth (DEX) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **S**treetwise (ACU) ●☐☐☐☐

SECONDARY STATS

Wound Points: 10 + PHY **10** DEX   **DM Melee:** **0** DEX   **Initiative:** DEX **+4** ACU + PER

Resilience Points: 6 + **6** PHY   **DM Ranged:** **0** PHY   **Encumbrance:** **6** + PHY

Morality: 3   **Breaking Point:** 3 + REA + PHY **6** ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐   **CDP:** 0   **Distemper Dice:** ☐☐☐☐☐

WEAPONS AND EQUIPMENT

Name:	Light Pistol	Type: M (R) E S	Range: Close	Cond: Used	Enc: 1	Ammo: 6
WP: 3 + 1d6	RP: 50%	Notes:	-			

Name:	Kitchen Knife	Type: (M) R E S	Range: Close	Cond: Used	Enc: 1	Ammo: -
WP: 3 + 1d3	RP: 50%	Notes:	-			

Name:		Type: ( ) M R E S	Range:	Cond:	Enc:	Ammo:
WP:	RP: %	Notes:	-			

Name:	Unarmed Combat	Type: (M) R E S	Range:	Cond:	Enc:	Ammo: N/A
WP: 1d3 + 1	RP: 100%	Notes: 1d3 + PHY + Unarmed Combat Damage				

Equipment: Binoculars **Enc:** 1 **Notes:** +1 Perception Check when at Long or Distant Range

Equipment: - **Enc:** - **Notes:** -

Equipment: Basic Survival Kit **Enc:** 1 **Notes:** Tent, Sleeping Bag

Rations Type:	# Days:	Enc:	Notes:
Standard	2	1	

ARMOR

	Type:	Enc:	DM:	Notes:

BACKGROUND INFORMATION & NOTES

RELATIONSHIPS

Name:	Relationship Modifier:	Name:	Relationship Modifier:

75

PERSONAL DATA

Name:

Profession: **Beat Cop**

Age: **Weight:**   **Height:**   **Gender:**

Complication: **Motivation:**

REASON: ⬡ 0   **ACUMEN:** ⬡ 2   **PHYSICALITY:** ⬡ 1   **INFLUENCE:** ⬡ 0   **DEXTERITY:** ⬡ 2

COMBAT SKILLS -3 1 2 3 4 5
- Demolitions* (PHY) ◼☐☐☐☐☐
- Melee (PHY) ●☐☐☐☐
- Ranged (DEX) ●☐☐☐☐
- Unarmed (PHY) ●☐☐☐☐

SWAY SKILLS 1 2 3 4 5
- Animal Handling (INF) ☐☐☐☐☐
- Barter (ACU) ☐☐☐☐☐
- Charm (INF) ●☐☐☐☐
- Deception (INF) ☐☐☐☐☐
- Entertainment (INF) ☐☐☐☐☐
- Inspiration (INF) ☐☐☐☐☐
- Intimidation (PHY) ●☐☐☐☐

MECHANIC SKILLS -3 1 2 3 4 5
- Armor* (DEX) ◼☐☐☐☐☐
- Tinkerer (DEX) ☐☐☐☐☐
- Vehicles* (DEX) ◼☐☐☐☐☐
- Weapons* (DEX) ◼☐☐☐☐☐

INNATE SKILLS 1 2 3 4 5
- Athletics (DEX) ●●☐☐☐
- Dodge (DEX) ☐☐☐☐☐
- Driving (DEX) ●☐☐☐☐
- Gambling (ACU) ☐☐☐☐☐
- Hunting (PHY) ☐☐☐☐☐
- Navigation (ACU) ☐☐☐☐☐
- Perception (ACU) ●●☐☐☐
- Scavenging (ACU) ☐☐☐☐☐
- Survival (ACU) ☐☐☐☐☐

MEDICINE SKILLS -3 1 2 3 4 5
- First Aid (REA) ☐☐☐☐☐
- Pharmacology* (REA) ◼☐☐☐☐☐
- Surgery* (REA) ◼☐☐☐☐☐

KNOWLEDGE SKILLS -3 1 2 3 4 5
- Farming (REA) ☐☐☐☐☐
- General (REA) ☐☐☐☐☐
- Local (REA) ☐☐☐☐☐
- Psychology* (REA) ●●☐☐☐☐
- Research (REA) ☐☐☐☐☐
- Tactical* (REA) ◼☐☐☐☐☐

CRIMINAL SKILLS -3 1 2 3 4 5
- Lock-Picking* (REA) ●●☐☐☐☐
- Sleight of Hand (DEX) ●☐☐☐☐
- Stealth (DEX) ●☐☐☐☐
- Streetwise (ACU) ●☐☐☐☐

SECONDARY STATS

Wound Points: 10 + **13** DEX	**DM Melee:** -**1** DEX	**Initiative:** DEX **+6** ACU + PER
Resilience Points: 6 + **7** PHY	**DM Ranged:** **2** PHY	**Encumbrance:** **7** + PHY

Morality: 3   **Breaking Point:** 3 + REA + PHY **5** ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐   **CDP:**   **Distemper Dice:** ☐☐☐☐☐☐

WEAPONS AND EQUIPMENT

Name	Type	Range	Cond	Enc	Ammo
Light Pistol	M (R) E S	Close	Used	1	6
WP: 3 + 1d6 RP: 50% Notes: -					
Tactical Baton	(M) R E S	Close	Used	1	-
WP: 4 + 2d3 RP: 100% Notes: -					
	(:) M R E S				
WP: RP: % Notes: -					
Unarmed Combat	(M) R E S				N/A
WP: 1d3 + 2 RP: 100% Notes: 1d3 + PHY + Unarmed Combat Damage					

Equipment: Binoculars   **Enc:** 1   **Notes:** +1 Perception Check when at Long or Distant Range

Equipment: -   **Enc:** -   **Notes:**

Equipment: Basic Survival Kit   **Enc:** 1   **Notes:** Tent, Sleeping Bag

Rations Type:	# Days:	Enc:	Notes:
Standard	2	1	

ARMOR

	Type:	Enc:	DM:	Notes:

Years of patrolling the same beat created a strong link between this cop and their community. While little of which may now remain, many cops who have survived have found themselves still in positions of helping those around them.

As the laws they had sworn to uphold no longer exist, being able to use some of the less savory skills they picked up while mixing with the criminal element of society, combined with their soft skills and inherent understanding of the psyche combined, have made them the backbone of many groups.

RELATIONSHIPS

Name:	Relationship Modifier:	Name:	Relationship Modifier:

Paradigms - Beat Cop

PERSONAL DATA

Name: **Profession:** **Biker**

Age: **Weight:** **Height:** **Gender:**

Complication: **Motivation:**

REASON: ⟨0⟩ **ACUMEN:** ⟨2⟩ **PHYSICALITY:** ⟨1⟩ **INFLUENCE:** ⟨0⟩ **DEXTERITY:** ⟨2⟩

COMBAT SKILLS -3 1 2 3 4 5
- **D**emolitions* (PHY) ■ ■ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **M**elee (PHY) ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **R**anged (DEX) ■ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **U**narmed (PHY) ■ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

SWAY SKILLS 1 2 3 4 5
- **A**nimal Handling (INF) ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **B**arter (ACU) ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **C**harm (INF) ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **D**eception (INF) ■ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **E**ntertainment (INF) ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **I**nspiration (INF) ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **I**ntimidation (PHY) ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

MECHANIC SKILLS -3 1 2 3 4 5
- **A**rmor* (DEX) ◪ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **T**inkerer (DEX) ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **V**ehicles* (DEX) ■ ■ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **W**eapons* (DEX) ◪ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

INNATE SKILLS 1 2 3 4 5
- **A**thletics (DEX) ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **D**odge (DEX) ■ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **D**riving (DEX) ■ ■ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **G**ambling (ACU) ■ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **H**unting (PHY) ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **N**avigation (ACU) ■ ■ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **P**erception (ACU) ■ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **S**cavenging (ACU) ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **S**urvival (ACU) ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

KNOWLEDGE SKILLS -3 1 2 3 4 5
- **F**arming (REA) ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **G**eneral (REA) ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **L**ocal (REA) ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **P**sychology* (REA) ◪ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **R**esearch (REA) ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **T**actical* (REA) ◪ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

MEDICINE SKILLS -3 1 2 3 4 5
- **F**irst Aid (REA) ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **P**harmacology* (REA) ◪ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **S**urgery* (REA) ◪ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

CRIMINAL SKILLS -3 1 2 3 4 5
- **L**ock-Picking* (REA) ■ ■ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **S**leight of Hand (DEX) ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **S**tealth (DEX) ■ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **S**treetwise (ACU) ■ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

SECONDARY STATS

Wound Points: 10 + **13** DEX	**DM Melee:** -**1** DEX	**Initiative:** DEX +**5** ACU + PER
Resilience Points: 6 + **7** PHY	**DM Ranged:** **2** PHY	**Encumbrance:** **7** + PHY

Morality: 3   **Breaking Point:** 3 + REA + PHY **5** ☐☐☐☐☐☐   **CDP:**   **Distemper Dice:** ☐☐☐☐☐

WEAPONS AND EQUIPMENT

Name: Light Pistol	**Type:** M ⓇE S	**Range:** Close	**Cond:** Used	**Enc:** 1	**Ammo:** 6
WP: 3 + 1d6 **RP:** 50%	**Notes:**	-			

Name: Baseball Bat	**Type:** Ⓜ R E S	**Range:** Close	**Cond:** Used	**Enc:** 1	**Ammo:** -
WP: 4 + 1d6 **RP:** 100%	**Notes:**	-			

Name:	**Type:** Ⓜ R E S	**Range:**	**Cond:**	**Enc:**	**Ammo:**
WP: **RP:** %	**Notes:**	-			

Name: Unarmed Combat	**Type:** Ⓜ R E S	**Range:**	**Cond:**	**Enc:**	**Ammo:** N/A
WP: 1d3 + 2 **RP:** 100%	**Notes:** 1d3 + PHY + Unarmed Combat Damage				

Equipment: Walkie-Talkie	**Enc:** 1	**Notes:** Allows characters to communicate up to a range of 20 miles
Equipment: -	**Enc:** -	**Notes:** -
Equipment: Basic Survival Kit	**Enc:** 1	**Notes:** Tent, Sleeping Bag

Rations Type: Standard	**# Days:** 2	**Enc:** 1	**Notes:**

ARMOR

Type:	**Enc:**	**DM:**	**Notes:**

As difficult as it may have been to have lived as the embodiment of foot loose and fancy free, many bikers are finding that lifestyle increasingly hard to maintain in the new world.

Driving skills and an unerring sense of navigation that have been honed by years on the open road require fuel to be useful and many bikers who aren't ready to settle down quite yet have found themselves prizing gasoline above all else, including food and ammo. Their ability to be reasonably self-sufficient on their bike, combined with their ability to fight to protect what's theirs - or take what's yours - make them people to take seriously.

RELATIONSHIPS

Name:	Relationship Modifier:	Name:	Relationship Modifier:

PERSONAL DATA

Name: **Profession:**   **EMT**

Age: **Weight:**   **Height:**   **Gender:**

Complication: **Motivation:**

REASON: ⟨2⟩   **ACUMEN:** ⟨1⟩   **PHYSICALITY:** ⟨0⟩   **INFLUENCE:** ⟨1⟩   **DEXTERITY:** ⟨1⟩

COMBAT SKILLS   -3 1 2 3 4 5
- Demolitions* (PHY) ◪□□□□□
- Melee (PHY) □□□□□
- Ranged (DEX) □□□□□
- Unarmed (PHY) □□□□□

SWAY SKILLS   1 2 3 4 5
- Animal Handling (INF) □□□□□
- Barter (ACU) □□□□□
- Charm (INF) ●□□□□
- Deception (INF) □□□□□
- Entertainment (INF) □□□□□
- Inspiration (INF) ●□□□□
- Intimidation (PHY) □□□□□

MECHANIC SKILLS   -3 1 2 3 4 5
- Armor* (DEX) ◪□□□□□
- Tinkerer (DEX) □□□□□
- Vehicles* (DEX) ◪□□□□□
- Weapons* (DEX) ◪□□□□□

INNATE SKILLS   1 2 3 4 5
- Athletics (DEX) □□□□□
- Dodge (DEX) □□□□□
- Driving (DEX) ●□□□□
- Gambling (ACU) □□□□□
- Hunting (PHY) □□□□□
- Navigation (ACU) ●□□□□
- Perception (ACU) ●●□□□
- Scavenging (ACU) ●□□□□
- Survival (ACU) □□□□□

KNOWLEDGE SKILLS   -3 1 2 3 4 5
- Farming (REA) □□□□□
- General (REA) □□□□□
- Local (REA) ●●□□□
- Psychology* (REA) ●●□□□
- Research (REA) ●□□□□
- Tactical* (REA) ◪□□□□

MEDICINE SKILLS   -3 1 2 3 4 5
- First Aid (REA) ●●□□□
- Pharmacology* (REA) ◪□□□□□
- Surgery* (REA) ◪□□□□□

CRIMINAL SKILLS   -3 1 2 3 4 5
- Lock-Picking* (REA) ●●□□□
- Sleight of Hand (DEX) □□□□□
- Stealth (DEX) □□□□□
- Streetwise (ACU) ●□□□□

SECONDARY STATS

Wound Points: 10 + **11** DEX	**DM Melee:** **0** DEX	**Initiative:** DEX **+4** ACU + PER
Resilience Points: 6 + **6** PHY	**DM Ranged:** **1** PHY	**Encumbrance:** **6** + PHY

Morality: 3   **Breaking Point:** 3 + REA / + PHY **6** □□□□□□□   **CDP:**   **Distemper Dice:** □□□□□

WEAPONS AND EQUIPMENT

Name: Light Pistol	**Type:** M Ⓡ E S	**Range:** Close	**Cond:** Used	**Enc:** 1	**Ammo:** 6
WP: 3 + 1d6 **RP:** 50%	**Notes:** –				

Name:	**Type:** Ⓜ M R E S	**Range:**	**Cond:**	**Enc:**	**Ammo:**
WP: **RP:** %	**Notes:**				

Name:	**Type:** Ⓜ M R E S	**Range:**	**Cond:**	**Enc:**	**Ammo:**
WP: **RP:** %	**Notes:** –				

Name: Unarmed Combat	**Type:** Ⓜ R E S	**Range:**	**Cond:**	**Enc:**	**Ammo:** N/A
WP: 1d3 + 0 **RP:** 100%	**Notes:** 1d3 + PHY + Unarmed Combat Damage				

Equipment: First Aid Kit   **Enc:** 1   **Notes:** +1 to any First Aid Check; heals 1+1d3 over a 24 hour period

Equipment: **Enc:**   **Notes:**

Equipment: Basic Survival Kit   **Enc:** 1   **Notes:** Tent, Sleeping Bag

Rations Type: Standard	**# Days:** 2	**Enc:** 1	**Notes:**

ARMOR

Type:	**Enc:**	**DM:**	**Notes:**

Many EMTs who survived have found their limited medial knowledge to be almost as much of hindrance as a help as they know enough to be helpful in the smaller things, but rarely are they skilled enough to be able to help with the bigger things.

However, even if dealing with bullet wounds and other more life-threatening injuries isn't their specialty, their ability to help keep people healthy and hole is still seen as a gift that few have, and they never find themselves short of new patients to help.

Paradigms - EMT

RELATIONSHIPS

Name:	Relationship Modifier:	Name:	Relationship Modifier:

PERSONAL DATA

Name: **Profession:**   **Family Doctor**

Age: **Weight:**   **Height:**   **Gender:**

Complication: **Motivation:**

REASON: ⟨3⟩   **ACUMEN:** ⟨1⟩   **PHYSICALITY:** ⟨0⟩   **INFLUENCE:** ⟨2⟩   **DEXTERITY:** ⟨0⟩

COMBAT SKILLS   -3 1 2 3 4 5
- Demolitions* (PHY) ◪☐☐☐☐☐
- Melee (PHY) ☐☐☐☐☐
- Ranged (DEX) ☐☐☐☐☐
- Unarmed (PHY) ☐☐☐☐☐

SWAY SKILLS   1 2 3 4 5
- Animal Handling (INF) ☐☐☐☐☐
- Barter (ACU) ☐☐☐☐☐
- Charm (INF) ●☐☐☐☐
- Deception (INF) ☐☐☐☐☐
- Entertainment (INF) ☐☐☐☐☐
- Inspiration (INF) ●☐☐☐☐
- Intimidation (PHY) ☐☐☐☐☐

MECHANIC SKILLS   -3 1 2 3 4 5
- Armor* (DEX) ◪☐☐☐☐☐
- Tinkerer (DEX) ☐☐☐☐☐
- Vehicles* (DEX) ◪☐☐☐☐☐
- Weapons* (DEX) ◪☐☐☐☐☐

INNATE SKILLS   1 2 3 4 5
- Athletics (DEX) ●☐☐☐☐
- Dodge (DEX) ☐☐☐☐☐
- Driving (DEX) ☐☐☐☐☐
- Gambling (ACU) ☐☐☐☐☐
- Hunting (PHY) ☐☐☐☐☐
- Navigation (ACU) ☐☐☐☐☐
- Perception (ACU) ●●☐☐☐
- Scavenging (ACU) ●☐☐☐☐
- Survival (ACU) ☐☐☐☐☐

KNOWLEDGE SKILLS   -3 1 2 3 4 5
- Farming (REA) ☐☐☐☐☐☐
- General (REA) ●☐☐☐☐☐
- Local (REA) ☐☐☐☐☐☐
- Psychology* (REA) ●●☐☐☐☐
- Research (REA) ●☐☐☐☐☐
- Tactical* (REA) ◪☐☐☐☐☐

MEDICINE SKILLS   -3 1 2 3 4 5
- First Aid (REA) ●●☐☐☐
- Pharmacology* (REA) ●●☐☐☐
- Surgery* (REA) ●●☐☐☐

CRIMINAL SKILLS   -3 1 2 3 4 5
- Lock-Picking* (REA) ◪☐☐☐☐☐
- Sleight of Hand (DEX) ●☐☐☐☐
- Stealth (DEX) ☐☐☐☐☐
- Streetwise (ACU) ☐☐☐☐☐

SECONDARY STATS

Wound Points: 10 + PHY **10** DEX	**DM Melee:** −0 DEX	**Initiative:** DEX **+3** CU + PER
Resilience Points: 6 + **6** PHY	**DM Ranged:** −0 PHY	**Encumbrance:** **6** + PHY

Morality: 3   **Breaking Point:** 3 + REA / + PHY **7** ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐   **CDP:**   **Distemper Dice:** ☐☐☐☐☐

WEAPONS AND EQUIPMENT

Name: Light Pistol	**Type:** M Ⓡ E S	**Range:** Close	**Cond.** Used	**Enc:** 1	**Ammo:** 6
WP: 3 + 1d6 **RP:** 50%	**Notes:** −			☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐	

Name:	**Type:** Ⓜ M R E S	**Range:**	**Cond.**	**Enc:**	**Ammo:**
WP: **RP:** %	**Notes:**			☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐	

Name:	**Type:** Ⓜ M R E S	**Range:**	**Cond.**	**Enc:**	**Ammo:**
WP: **RP:** %	**Notes:** −			☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐	

Name: Unarmed Combat	**Type:** Ⓜ R E S	**Range:**	**Cond.**	**Enc:**	**Ammo:** N/A
WP: 1d3 + 0 **RP:** 100%	**Notes:** 1d3 + PHY + Unarmed Combat Damage			☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐	

Equipment: Doctors Bag	**Enc:** 1	**Notes:** +2 to any First Aid or Surgery Check; heals 1+2d3 over a 24 hour period
Equipment:	**Enc:**	**Notes:**
Equipment: Basic Survival Kit	**Enc:** 1	**Notes:** Tent, Sleeping Bag

Rations Type: Standard	**# Days:** 2	**Enc:** 1	**Notes:**

ARMOR

	Type:	**Enc:**	**DM:**	**Notes:**

Family Doctors invariably got into medicine as they had a drive to help everyone but, since the pandemic, many have had to fight the realization that can really help almost no one, which drives them harder to help those they can.

Which supplies and facilities are in desperately short supplies, many Doctors are finding themselves in the position of having little to give except the most basic of aid, and a good dose of compassion. For this reason, Doctors are often the lifeblood of a group or fledgling community, as they are extremely smart and better informed than most other survivors and are often looked to as leaders as much as they are healers.

RELATIONSHIPS

Name:	Relationship Modifier:	Name:	Relationship Modifier:

PERSONAL DATA

Name: **Profession:** **Farmer**

Age: **Weight:** **Height:** **Gender:**

Complication: **Motivation:**

REASON: ⬡ 0 **ACUMEN:** ⬡ 1 **PHYSICALITY:** ⬡ 2 **INFLUENCE:** ⬡ 0 **DEXTERITY:** ⬡ 2

COMBAT SKILLS -3 1 2 3 4 5
- **D**emolitions* (PHY) ◪☐☐☐☐☐
- **M**elee (PHY) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **R**anged (DEX) ●☐☐☐☐
- **U**narmed (PHY) ☐☐☐☐☐

SWAY SKILLS 1 2 3 4 5
- **A**nimal Handling (INF) ●☐☐☐☐
- **B**arter (ACU) ●☐☐☐☐
- **C**harm (INF) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **D**eception (INF) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **E**ntertainment (INF) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **I**nspiration (INF) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **I**ntimidation (PHY) ☐☐☐☐☐

MECHANIC SKILLS -3 1 2 3 4 5
- **A**rmor* (DEX) ◪☐☐☐☐☐
- **T**inkerer (DEX) ●☐☐☐☐
- **V**ehicles* (DEX) ◪☐☐☐☐☐
- **W**eapons* (DEX) ◪☐☐☐☐☐

INNATE SKILLS 1 2 3 4 5
- **A**thletics (DEX) ●☐☐☐☐
- **D**odge (DEX) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **D**riving (DEX) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **G**ambling (ACU) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **H**unting (PHY) ●☐☐☐☐
- **N**avigation (ACU) ●☐☐☐☐
- **P**erception (ACU) ●☐☐☐☐
- **S**cavenging (ACU) ●☐☐☐☐
- **S**urvival (ACU) ●●☐☐☐

KNOWLEDGE SKILLS -3 1 2 3 4 5
- **F**arming (REA) ●●☐☐☐
- **G**eneral (REA) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **L**ocal (REA) ●☐☐☐☐
- **P**sychology* (REA) ◪☐☐☐☐☐
- **R**esearch (REA) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **T**actical* (REA) ◪☐☐☐☐☐

MEDICINE SKILLS -3 1 2 3 4 5
- **F**irst Aid (REA) ●☐☐☐☐
- **P**harmacology* (REA) ◪☐☐☐☐☐
- **S**urgery* (REA) ◪☐☐☐☐☐

CRIMINAL SKILLS -3 1 2 3 4 5
- **L**ock-Picking* (REA) ◪☐☐☐☐☐
- **S**leight of Hand (DEX) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **S**tealth (DEX) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **S**treetwise (ACU) ☐☐☐☐☐

SECONDARY STATS

Wound Points: 10 + **14** DEX	**DM Melee:** **2** DEX	**Initiative:** DEX **+4** ACU + PER
Resilience Points: 6 + **8** PHY	**DM Ranged:** **2** PHY	**Encumbrance:** **8** + PHY
Morality: 3	**Breaking Point:** 3 + DEA + PHI **4** ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐	**CDP:** **Distemper Dice:** ☐☐☐☐☐☐

WEAPONS AND EQUIPMENT

Name:	Type:	Range:	Cond:	Enc:	Ammo:
Shotgun	M (R) E S	Medium	Used	1	5
WP: 3 + 1d6 **RP:** 50%	Notes:	–			
Hatchet	(M) R E S	Close	Used	1	–
WP: 3 + 1d6 **RP:** 100%	Notes:	–			
	(:) M R E S				
WP: **RP:** %	Notes:	–			
Unarmed Combat	(M) R E S				N/A
WP: 1d3 + 2 **RP:** 100%	Notes: 1d3 + PHY + Unarmed Combat Damage				

Equipment: Hunting Traps x4	Enc: 1	Notes: +2 to Hunting Checks
Equipment: –	Enc: –	Notes: –
Equipment: Basic Survival Kit	Enc: 1	Notes: Tent, Sleeping Bag

Rations Type:	# Days:	Enc:	Notes:
Standard	2	1	

ARMOR

	Type:	Enc:	DM:	Notes:

As someone who has spent years learning how to become as tight as possible with nature, farmers are amongst the most valuable survivors who, arguably, hold the key to the survival of the race.

Their experience with either livestock or crops means that farmers are able to provide for large numbers of survivors, assuming they can get the help and have the right conditions, and for that reason alone, many communities are centering on or around farmland, and looking to the stewards of the land to help provide for the seemingly never-ending supply of hungry mouths.

RELATIONSHIPS

Name:	Relationship Modifier:	Name:	Relationship Modifier:

PERSONAL DATA

Name:

Profession: **Flea Market Trader**

Age: **Weight:** **Height:** **Gender:**

Complication: **Motivation:**

REASON: 1 **ACUMEN:** 2 **PHYSICALITY:** 0 **INFLUENCE:** 2 **DEXTERITY:** 0

COMBAT SKILLS -3 1 2 3 4 5
- **D**emolitions* (PHY) ◨ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **M**elee (PHY) ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **R**anged (DEX) ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **U**narmed (PHY) ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

SWAY SKILLS 1 2 3 4 5
- **A**nimal Handling (INF) ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **B**arter (ACU) ● ● ☐ ☐ ☐
- **C**harm (INF) ● ● ☐ ☐ ☐
- **D**eception (INF) ● ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **E**ntertainment (INF) ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **I**nspiration (INF) ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **I**ntimidation (PHY) ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

MECHANIC SKILLS -3 1 2 3 4 5
- **A**rmor* (DEX) ◨ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **T**inkerer (DEX) ● ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **V**ehicles* (DEX) ◨ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **W**eapons* (DEX) ◨ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

INNATE SKILLS 1 2 3 4 5
- **A**thletics (DEX) ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **D**odge (DEX) ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **D**riving (DEX) ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **G**ambling (ACU) ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **H**unting (PHY) ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **N**avigation (ACU) ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **P**erception (ACU) ● ● ☐ ☐ ☐
- **S**cavenging (ACU) ● ● ☐ ☐ ☐
- **S**urvival (ACU) ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

KNOWLEDGE SKILLS -3 1 2 3 4 5
- **F**arming (REA) ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **G**eneral (REA) ● ● ☐ ☐ ☐
- **L**ocal (REA) ● ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **P**sychology* (REA) ◨ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **R**esearch (REA) ● ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **T**actical* (REA) ◨ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

MEDICINE SKILLS -3 1 2 3 4 5
- **F**irst Aid (REA) ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **P**harmacology* (REA) ◨ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **S**urgery* (REA) ◨ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

CRIMINAL SKILLS -3 1 2 3 4 5
- **L**ock-Picking* (REA) ◨ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **S**leight of Hand (DEX) ● ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **S**tealth (DEX) ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **S**treetwise (ACU) ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

SECONDARY STATS

Wound Points: 10 + PHY **10** DEX **DM Melee:** **0** DEX **Initiative:** DEX **+4** ACU + PER

Resilience Points: 6 + **6** PHY **DM Ranged:** **0** PHY **Encumbrance:** **6** + PHY

Morality: 3 **Breaking Point:** 3 + REA + **6** PHY ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐ **CDP:** **Distemper Dice:** ☐☐☐☐☐

WEAPONS AND EQUIPMENT

Name: Baseball Bat	Type: (M) R E S	Range: Close	Cond: 10	Enc: 1	Ammo: -
WP: 4 + 1d6 **RP:** 100%%	**Notes:**	-			☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐
Name:	Type: M R E S	Range:	Cond:	Enc:	Ammo:
WP: **RP:** %	**Notes:**				
Name:	Type: (_) M R E S	Range:	Cond:	Enc:	Ammo:
WP: **RP:** %	**Notes:**	-			
Name: Unarmed Combat	Type: (M) R E S	Range:	Cond:	Enc:	Ammo: N/A
WP: 1d3 + 0 **RP:** 100%	**Notes:** 1d3 + PHY + Unarmed Combat Damage				☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐

Equipment: Walkie-Talkie **Enc:** 1 **Notes:** Allows characters to communicate up to a range of 20 miles

Equipment: - **Enc:** - **Notes:** -

Equipment: Basic Survival Kit **Enc:** 1 **Notes:** Tent, Sleeping Bag

Rations Type: Standard	# Days: 2	Enc: 1	Notes:

ARMOR

	Type:	Enc:	DM:	Notes:

No one loves a bargain more than someone who actively spends their time looking for one, and before the pandemic, these folks could be found trawling flea markets and pawn shops, always looking for ways to turn trash into treasure.

With supplies being so scarce and barter becoming a necessity to get the things needed, someone who is good at finding items of worth and being able to trade those for necessities will generally be welcome in any group.

RELATIONSHIPS

Name:	Relationship Modifier:	Name:	Relationship Modifier:

Paradigms - Flea Market Trader

PERSONAL DATA

Name: **Profession:**   Hot Rod Mechanic

Age: **Weight:**   **Height:**   **Gender:**

Complication: **Motivation:**

REASON: ⟨ 1 ⟩   **ACUMEN:** ⟨ 1 ⟩   **PHYSICALITY:** ⟨ 1 ⟩   **INFLUENCE:** ⟨ 0 ⟩   **DEXTERITY:** ⟨ 2 ⟩

COMBAT SKILLS -3 1 2 3 4 5
- **D**emolitions* (PHY) ■ ■ ■ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **M**elee (PHY) ■ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **R**anged (DEX) ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **U**narmed (PHY) ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

SWAY SKILLS 1 2 3 4 5
- **A**nimal Handling (INF) ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **B**arter (ACU) ■ ■ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **C**harm (INF) ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **D**eception (INF) ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **E**ntertainment (INF) ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **I**nspiration (INF) ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **I**ntimidation (PHY) ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

MECHANIC SKILLS -3 1 2 3 4 5
- **A**rmor* (DEX) ◨ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **T**inkerer (DEX) ■ ■ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **V**ehicles* (DEX) ■ ■ ■ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **W**eapons* (DEX) ◨ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

INNATE SKILLS 1 2 3 4 5
- **A**thletics (DEX) ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **D**odge (DEX) ■ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **D**riving (DEX) ■ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **G**ambling (ACU) ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **H**unting (PHY) ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **N**avigation (ACU) ■ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **P**erception (ACU) ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **S**cavenging (ACU) ■ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **S**urvival (ACU) ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

KNOWLEDGE SKILLS -3 1 2 3 4 5
- **F**arming (REA) ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **G**eneral (REA) ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **L**ocal (REA) ■ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **P**sychology* (REA) ◨ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **R**esearch (REA) ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **T**actical* (REA) ◨ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

MEDICINE SKILLS -3 1 2 3 4 5
- **F**irst Aid (REA) ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **P**harmacology* (REA) ◨ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **S**urgery* (REA) ◨ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

CRIMINAL SKILLS -3 1 2 3 4 5
- **L**ock-Picking* (REA) ■ ■ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **S**leight of Hand (DEX) ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **S**tealth (DEX) ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **S**treetwise (ACU) ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

SECONDARY STATS

Wound Points: 10 + PHY **13** DEX	**DM Melee:** -**1** DEX	**Initiative:** DEX **+3** ACU + PER
Resilience Points: 6 + **7** PHY	**DM Ranged:** **2** PHY	**Encumbrance:** **7** + PHY

Morality: 3   **Breaking Point:** 3 + REA + PHY **5** ☐☐☐☐☐☐   **CDP:**   **Distemper Dice:** ☐☐☐☐☐

WEAPONS AND EQUIPMENT

Name: Light Pistol	**Type:** M Ⓡ E S	**Range:** Close	**Cond:** Used	**Enc:** 1	**Ammo:** 6
WP: 3 + 1d6 **RP:** 50%	**Notes:** —				☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐

Name: Baseball Bat	**Type:** Ⓜ R E S	**Range:** Close	**Cond:** Used	**Enc:** 1	**Ammo:** —
WP: 4 + 1d6 **RP:** 100%%	**Notes:** —				☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐

Name:	**Type:** Ⓜ R E S	**Range:**	**Cond:**	**Enc:**	**Ammo:**
WP: **RP:** %	**Notes:** —				

Name: Unarmed Combat	**Type:** Ⓜ R E S	**Range:**	**Cond:**	**Enc:**	**Ammo:** N/A
WP: 1d3 + 2 **RP:** 100%	**Notes:** 1d3 + PHY + Unarmed Combat Damage				☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐

Equipment: Binoculars	**Enc:** 1	**Notes:** +1 Perception Check
Equipment: —	**Enc:** —	**Notes:** —
Equipment: Basic Survival Kit	**Enc:** 1	**Notes:** Tent, Sleeping Bag

Rations Type: Standard	**# Days:** 2	**Enc:** 1	**Notes:**

ARMOR

	Type:	**Enc:**	**DM:**	**Notes:**

Although something as luxurious and intrinsically worthless as a hot rod might be a thing of the past, the ability to put things together and keep them working has become more valuable than ever.

Their first love will always be cars, but they are nothing if not adaptable and many of them have found themselves turning their talents towards more useful and practical projects that often involve upgrading their base of operations.

RELATIONSHIPS

Name:	Relationship Modifier:	Name:	Relationship Modifier:

Name:
Profession: **Mayor**

Age: **Weight:** **Height:** **Gender:**

Complication: **Motivation:**

REASON: ⬡ 1 **ACUMEN:** ⬡ 2 **PHYSICALITY:** ⬡ 0 **INFLUENCE:** ⬡ 2 **DEXTERITY:** ⬡ 0

COMBAT SKILLS -3 1 2 3 4 5
- Demolitions* (PHY) ◪☐☐☐☐☐
- Melee (PHY) ☐☐☐☐☐
- Ranged (DEX) ☐☐☐☐☐
- Unarmed (PHY) ☐☐☐☐☐

SWAY SKILLS 1 2 3 4 5
- Animal Handling (INF) ☐☐☐☐☐
- Barter (ACU) ■☐☐☐☐
- Charm (INF) ■■☐☐☐
- Deception (INF) ■☐☐☐☐
- Entertainment (INF) ☐☐☐☐☐
- Inspiration (INF) ■■☐☐☐
- Intimidation (PHY) ■☐☐☐☐

MECHANIC SKILLS -3 1 2 3 4 5
- Armor* (DEX) ◪☐☐☐☐☐
- Tinkerer (DEX) ☐☐☐☐☐
- Vehicles* (DEX) ◪☐☐☐☐☐
- Weapons* (DEX) ◪☐☐☐☐☐

INNATE SKILLS 1 2 3 4 5
- Athletics (DEX) ☐☐☐☐☐
- Dodge (DEX) ☐☐☐☐☐
- Driving (DEX) ☐☐☐☐☐
- Gambling (ACU) ☐☐☐☐☐
- Hunting (PHY) ☐☐☐☐☐
- Navigation (ACU) ☐☐☐☐☐
- Perception (ACU) ☐☐☐☐☐
- Scavenging (ACU) ☐☐☐☐☐
- Survival (ACU) ☐☐☐☐☐

KNOWLEDGE SKILLS -3 1 2 3 4 5
- Farming (REA) ☐☐☐☐☐
- General (REA) ■■☐☐☐
- Local (REA) ■☐☐☐☐
- Psychology* (REA) ■■■☐☐
- Research (REA) ☐☐☐☐☐
- Tactical* (REA) ◪☐☐☐☐☐

MEDICINE SKILLS -3 1 2 3 4 5
- First Aid (REA) ☐☐☐☐☐
- Pharmacology* (REA) ◪☐☐☐☐☐
- Surgery* (REA) ◪☐☐☐☐☐

CRIMINAL SKILLS -3 1 2 3 4 5
- Lock-Picking* (REA) ◪☐☐☐☐☐
- Sleight of Hand (DEX) ☐☐☐☐☐
- Stealth (DEX) ☐☐☐☐☐
- Streetwise (ACU) ■☐☐☐☐

SECONDARY STATS

Wound Points: 10 + PHY **10** DEX	**DM Melee:** −0 DEX	**Initiative:** DEX **+2** ACU + PER
Resilience Points: 6 + **6** PHY	**DM Ranged:** −0 PHY	**Encumbrance:** **6** + PHY

Morality: 3 **Breaking Point:** 3 + REA / + PHY **6** ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐ **CDP:** **Distemper Dice:** ☐☐☐☐☐☐

WEAPONS AND EQUIPMENT

Name	Type	Range	Cond	Enc	Ammo
Baseball Bat	Ⓜ R E S	Close	Used	1	−
WP: 4 + 1d6 **RP:** 100% **Notes:** −					
Knife	Ⓜ R E S	Close	Used	1	−
WP: 3 + 1d3 **RP:** % **Notes:** −					
	Ⓜ R E S				
WP: **RP:** % **Notes:** −					
Unarmed Combat	Ⓜ R E S				N/A
WP: 1d3 + 0 **RP:** 100% **Notes:** 1d3 + PHY + Unarmed Combat Damage					

Equipment: Walkie-Talkie **Enc:** 1 **Notes:** Allows characters to communicate up to a range of 20 miles

Equipment: − **Enc:** − **Notes:** −

Equipment: Basic Survival Kit **Enc:** 1 **Notes:** Tent, Sleeping Bag

Rations Type:	# Days:	Enc:	Notes:
Standard	2	1	

ARMOR

Type:	Enc:	DM:	Notes:

90

Even though their constituents, community or town may be gone, the leader in them never seems to die and they are often the driving force behind a group.

Skilled in a variety of different ways to work with an audience or an individual, they can be very effective at getting people to rally behind ideas and concepts and work towards a greater goal.

RELATIONSHIPS

Name:	Relationship Modifier:	Name:	Relationship Modifier:

Paradigms - Mayor

PERSONAL DATA

Name:

Profession: **Mercenary**

Age: **Weight:**   **Height:**   **Gender:**

Complication: **Motivation:**

REASON: 0   **ACUMEN:** 1   **PHYSICALITY:** 2   **INFLUENCE:** 0   **DEXTERITY:** 2

COMBAT SKILLS -3 1 2 3 4 5
- Demolitions* (PHY) ■■□□□□
- Melee (PHY) □□□□□
- Ranged (DEX) ■■□□□□
- Unarmed (PHY) ■□□□□

SWAY SKILLS 1 2 3 4 5
- Animal Handling (INF) □□□□□
- Barter (ACU) □□□□□
- Charm (INF) □□□□□
- Deception (INF) ■□□□□
- Entertainment (INF) □□□□□
- Inspiration (INF) □□□□□
- Intimidation (PHY) ■□□□□

MECHANIC SKILLS -3 1 2 3 4 5
- Armor* (DEX) ◪□□□□□
- Tinkerer (DEX) □□□□□
- Vehicles* (DEX) ◪□□□□□
- Weapons* (DEX) ■■□□□□

INNATE SKILLS 1 2 3 4 5
- Athletics (DEX) ■□□□□
- Dodge (DEX) □□□□□
- Driving (DEX) □□□□□
- Gambling (ACU) □□□□□
- Hunting (PHY) ■□□□□
- Navigation (ACU) □□□□□
- Perception (ACU) □□□□□
- Scavenging (ACU) □□□□□
- Survival (ACU) ■■□□□

KNOWLEDGE SKILLS -3 1 2 3 4 5
- Farming (REA) □□□□□
- General (REA) □□□□□
- Local (REA) □□□□□
- Psychology* (REA) ◪□□□□□
- Research (REA) □□□□□
- Tactical* (REA) ■■■□□□

MEDICINE SKILLS -3 1 2 3 4 5
- First Aid (REA) ■□□□□
- Pharmacology* (REA) ◪□□□□□
- Surgery* (REA) ◪□□□□□

CRIMINAL SKILLS -3 1 2 3 4 5
- Lock-Picking* (REA) ◪□□□□□
- Sleight of Hand (DEX) □□□□□
- Stealth (DEX) ■□□□□
- Streetwise (ACU) □□□□□

SECONDARY STATS

Wound Points: 10 + **14** DEX	**DM Melee:** 2 DEX	**Initiative:** DEX **+3** CU + PER
Resilience Points: 6 + **8** HY	**DM Ranged:** 2 PHY	**Encumbrance:** **8** + PHY

Morality: 3   **Breaking Point:** 3 + DEA + PHY **4** □□□□□□   **CDP:**   **Distemper Dice:** □□□□□

WEAPONS AND EQUIPMENT

Name	Type	Range	Cond	Enc	Ammo
Automatic Rifle	M (R) E S	Long	Used	2	30

WP: 5 + 2d6 **RP:** 100% % **Notes:** Automatic Burst: Hits other characters at Engaged Range of the target □□□□□□□□□□□□□

Name	Type	Range	Cond	Enc	Ammo
Hunting Knife	(M) R E S	Close	Used	1	-

WP: 2 + 1d3 **RP:** % **Notes:** Requires DEX of 1 to use or -2 CMod □□□□□□□□□□□□□

Name	Type	Range	Cond	Enc	Ammo
	(:) M R E S				

WP: **RP:** % **Notes:** -

Name	Type	Range	Cond	Enc	Ammo
Unarmed Combat	(M) R E S				N/A

WP: 1d3 + 3 **RP:** 100% **Notes:** 1d3 + PHY + Unarmed Combat Damage □□□□□□□□□□□□□

Equipment	Enc	Notes
Binoculars	1	+1 Perception Check
Walkie-Talkie	1	Allows characters to communicate up to a range of 20 miles
Basic Survival Kit	1	Tent, Sleeping Bag

Rations Type:	# Days:	Enc:	Notes:
Standard	2	1	

ARMOR

Type:	Enc:	DM:	Notes:

Turning a military career into something that paid considerably more for only a little more danger, mercenaries have spent the lives taking risks and honing a very dangerous and effective skillset.

Often find themselves at the center of decision making in any group, they are quick to develop plans and put them into effect, and rarely shy away from the direct approach to problem resolution.

RELATIONSHIPS

Name:	Relationship Modifier:	Name:	Relationship Modifier:

PERSONAL DATA

Name:

Profession: Petty Criminal

Age: **Weight:** **Height:** **Gender:**

Complication: **Motivation:**

REASON: ⬡ 0   **ACUMEN:** ⬡ 1   **PHYSICALITY:** ⬡ 1   **INFLUENCE:** ⬡ 1   **DEXTERITY:** ⬡ 2

COMBAT SKILLS   -3 1 2 3 4 5
- Demolitions* (PHY) ■☐☐☐☐☐
- Melee (PHY) ●☐☐☐☐
- Ranged (DEX) ●☐☐☐☐
- Unarmed (PHY) ●☐☐☐☐

SWAY SKILLS   1 2 3 4 5
- Animal Handling (INF) ☐☐☐☐☐
- Barter (ACU) ☐☐☐☐☐
- Charm (INF) ●☐☐☐☐
- Deception (INF) ●●☐☐☐
- Entertainment (INF) ☐☐☐☐☐
- Inspiration (INF) ☐☐☐☐☐
- Intimidation (PHY) ☐☐☐☐☐

MECHANIC SKILLS   -3 1 2 3 4 5
- Armor* (DEX) ■☐☐☐☐☐
- Tinkerer (DEX) ☐☐☐☐☐
- Vehicles* (DEX) ◨☐☐☐☐☐
- Weapons* (DEX) ◨☐☐☐☐☐

INNATE SKILLS   1 2 3 4 5
- Athletics (DEX) ●☐☐☐☐
- Dodge (DEX) ●☐☐☐☐
- Driving (DEX) ☐☐☐☐☐
- Gambling (ACU) ●☐☐☐☐
- Hunting (PHY) ☐☐☐☐☐
- Navigation (ACU) ☐☐☐☐☐
- Perception (ACU) ●☐☐☐☐
- Scavenging (ACU) ●☐☐☐☐
- Survival (ACU) ☐☐☐☐☐

KNOWLEDGE SKILLS   -3 1 2 3 4 5
- Farming (REA) ☐☐☐☐☐☐
- General (REA) ☐☐☐☐☐☐
- Local (REA) ☐☐☐☐☐☐
- Psychology* (REA) ◨☐☐☐☐☐
- Research (REA) ☐☐☐☐☐☐
- Tactical* (REA) ◨☐☐☐☐☐

MEDICINE SKILLS   -3 1 2 3 4 5
- First Aid (REA) ☐☐☐☐☐☐
- Pharmacology* (REA) ◨☐☐☐☐☐
- Surgery* (REA) ◨☐☐☐☐☐

CRIMINAL SKILLS   -3 1 2 3 4 5
- Lock-Picking* (REA) ●●☐☐☐☐
- Sleight of Hand (DEX) ●☐☐☐☐
- Stealth (DEX) ●●☐☐☐☐
- Streetwise (ACU) ●☐☐☐☐

SECONDARY STATS

Wound Points: 10 + **13** DEX	**DM Melee:** -**1** DEX	**Initiative:** DEX **+4** ACU + PER
Resilience Points: 6 + **7** PHY	**DM Ranged:** **2** PHY	**Encumbrance:** **7** + PHY

Morality: 3   **Breaking Point:** 3 + DEA + PHY **4** ☐☐☐☐☐☐   **CDP:**   **Distemper Dice:** ☐☐☐☐☐

WEAPONS AND EQUIPMENT

Name: Light Pistol	Type: M (R) E S	Range: Close	Cond: Used	Enc: 1	Ammo: 6
WP: 3 + 1d6	RP: 50%	Notes: -			

Name: Knife	Type: (M) R E S	Range: Close	Cond: 7	Enc: 1	Ammo: -
WP: 3 + 1d3	RP: %	Notes: -			

Name:	Type: ( ) M R E S	Range:	Cond:	Enc:	Ammo:
WP:	RP: %	Notes: -			

Name: Unarmed Combat	Type: (M) R E S	Range:	Cond:	Enc:	Ammo: N/A
WP: 1d3 + 2	RP: 100%	Notes: 1d3 + PHY + Unarmed Combat Damage			

Equipment: Standard Lockpicks	Enc: 1	Notes: +2 to Lock Picking Attempts
Equipment: -	Enc: -	Notes: -
Equipment: Basic Survival Kit	Enc: 1	Notes: Tent, Sleeping Bag

Rations Type:	# Days:	Enc:	Notes:
Standard	2	1	

ARMOR

Type:	Enc:	DM:	Notes:

Having spent a life skirting the lines of society has prepared some better than others for the reality they now face.

With their ability to find and procure valuable items, often without raising eyebrows or drawing undue attention, is becoming increasingly useful in a world where there is increasingly little of value, and everyone wants it.

Paradigms - Petty Criminal

RELATIONSHIPS

Name:	Relationship Modifier:	Name:	Relationship Modifier:

PERSONAL DATA

Name: **Profession:**   # Preacher

Age: **Weight:**   **Height:**   **Gender:**

Complication: **Motivation:**

REASON: ⬡ 2   **ACUMEN:** ⬡ 1   **PHYSICALITY:** ⬡ 0   **INFLUENCE:** ⬡ 2   **DEXTERITY:** ⬡ 0

COMBAT SKILLS   -3 1 2 3 4 5
- **D**emolitions* (PHY) ◩☐☐☐☐☐
- **M**elee (PHY) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **R**anged (DEX) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **U**narmed (PHY) ☐☐☐☐☐

SWAY SKILLS   1 2 3 4 5
- **A**nimal Handling (INF) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **B**arter (ACU) ●●☐☐☐
- **C**harm (INF) ●☐☐☐☐
- **D**eception (INF) ●☐☐☐☐
- **E**ntertainment (INF) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **I**nspiration (INF) ●●☐☐☐
- **I**ntimidation (PHY) ☐☐☐☐☐

MECHANIC SKILLS   -3 1 2 3 4 5
- **A**rmor* (DEX) ◩☐☐☐☐☐
- **T**inkerer (DEX) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **V**ehicles* (DEX) ◩☐☐☐☐☐
- **W**eapons* (DEX) ◩☐☐☐☐☐

INNATE SKILLS   1 2 3 4 5
- **A**thletics (DEX) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **D**odge (DEX) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **D**riving (DEX) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **G**ambling (ACU) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **H**unting (PHY) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **N**avigation (ACU) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **P**erception (ACU) ●●☐☐☐
- **S**cavenging (ACU) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **S**urvival (ACU) ☐☐☐☐☐

KNOWLEDGE SKILLS   -3 1 2 3 4 5
- **F**arming (REA) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **G**eneral (REA) ●●☐☐☐
- **L**ocal (REA) ●☐☐☐☐
- **P**sychology* (REA) ●●☐☐☐
- **R**esearch (REA) ●☐☐☐☐
- **T**actical* (REA) ◩☐☐☐☐

MEDICINE SKILLS   -3 1 2 3 4 5
- **F**irst Aid (REA) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **P**harmacology* (REA) ◩☐☐☐☐☐
- **S**urgery* (REA) ◩☐☐☐☐☐

CRIMINAL SKILLS   -3 1 2 3 4 5
- **L**ock-Picking* (REA) ◩☐☐☐☐☐
- **S**leight of Hand (DEX) ●☐☐☐☐
- **S**tealth (DEX) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **S**treetwise (ACU) ☐☐☐☐☐

SECONDARY STATS

Wound Points: 10 + PHY **10** DEX   **DM Melee:** **-0** DEX   **Initiative:** DEX **+3** CU + PER

Resilience Points: 6 + **6** PHY   **DM Ranged:** **-0** PHY   **Encumbrance:** **6** + PHY

Morality: 3   **Breaking Point:** 3 + REA / + PHI **6** ☐☐☐☐☐☐   **CDP:**   **Distemper Dice:** ☐☐☐☐☐

WEAPONS AND EQUIPMENT

Name: Light Pistol	Type: M ⓇR E S	Range: Close	Cond: Used	Enc: 1	Ammo: 6
WP: 3 + 1d6	RP: 50%	Notes: –			☐☐☐☐☐☐
Name:	Type: M R E S	Range:	Cond:	Enc:	Ammo:
WP:	RP: %	Notes:			
Name:	Type: Ⓜ M R E S	Range:	Cond:	Enc:	Ammo:
WP:	RP: %	Notes: –			
Name: Unarmed Combat	Type: ⓂM R E S	Range:	Cond:	Enc:	Ammo: N/A
WP: 1d3 + 0	RP: 100%	Notes: 1d3 + PHY + Unarmed Combat Damage			

Equipment: Loudspeaker	Enc: 1	Notes: +1 Intimidate or Inspiration checks
Equipment: –	Enc: –	Notes: –
Equipment: Basic Survival Kit	Enc: 1	Notes: Tent, Sleeping Bag

Rations Type: Standard	# Days: 2	Enc: 1	Notes:

ARMOR

	Type:	Enc:	DM:	Notes:

Driven by a deep spirtuality and belief system, Preachers have spent their lives preaching the gospel of their religion and converting others to their cause.

Equally adept at listening, they are able to discern ways to convince the devoted or lost or unwitting that their way is the right way.

Coming in many forms, from street preachers belonging to no formal church and who wander endlessly as they evangelize, to ordained ministers with a parrish under their control, they can often be called on to rally likeminded souls to their mission.

Paradigms - Preacher

RELATIONSHIPS

Name: Relationship Modifier: Name: Relationship Modifier:

Name:

Profession: **Rural Sheriff**

Age: 　　**Weight:** 　　**Height:** 　　**Gender:**

Complication: 　　**Motivation:**

REASON: ⟨1⟩ 　**ACUMEN:** ⟨1⟩ 　**PHYSICALITY:** ⟨0⟩ 　**INFLUENCE:** ⟨2⟩ 　**DEXTERITY:** ⟨1⟩

COMBAT SKILLS -3 1 2 3 4 5
- **D**emolitions* (PHY) ■ ☐☐☐☐☐
- **M**elee (PHY) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **R**anged (DEX) ● ☐☐☐☐
- **U**narmed (PHY) ☐☐☐☐☐

SWAY SKILLS 1 2 3 4 5
- **A**nimal Handling (INF) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **B**arter (ACU) ● ☐☐☐☐
- **C**harm (INF) ● ☐☐☐☐
- **D**eception (INF) ● ☐☐☐☐
- **E**ntertainment (INF) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **I**nspiration (INF) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **I**ntimidation (PHY) ● ☐☐☐☐

MECHANIC SKILLS -3 1 2 3 4 5
- **A**rmor* (DEX) ■ ☐☐☐☐☐
- **T**inkerer (DEX) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **V**ehicles* (DEX) ◨ ☐☐☐☐☐
- **W**eapons* (DEX) ◨ ☐☐☐☐☐

INNATE SKILLS 1 2 3 4 5
- **A**thletics (DEX) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **D**odge (DEX) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **D**riving (DEX) ● ☐☐☐☐
- **G**ambling (ACU) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **H**unting (PHY) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **N**avigation (ACU) ● ☐☐☐☐
- **P**erception (ACU) ●● ☐☐☐
- **S**cavenging (ACU) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **S**urvival (ACU) ☐☐☐☐☐

KNOWLEDGE SKILLS -3 1 2 3 4 5
- **F**arming (REA) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **G**eneral (REA) ● ☐☐☐☐
- **L**ocal (REA) ● ☐☐☐☐
- **P**sychology* (REA) ●● ☐☐☐
- **R**esearch (REA) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **T**actical* (REA) ●● ☐☐☐

MEDICINE SKILLS -3 1 2 3 4 5
- **F**irst Aid (REA) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **P**harmacology* (REA) ◨ ☐☐☐☐☐
- **S**urgery* (REA) ◨ ☐☐☐☐☐

CRIMINAL SKILLS -3 1 2 3 4 5
- **L**ock-Picking* (REA) ◨ ☐☐☐☐☐
- **S**leight of Hand (DEX) ● ☐☐☐☐
- **S**tealth (DEX) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **S**treetwise (ACU) ● ☐☐☐☐

Wound Points: 10 + **11** DEX 　**DM Melee:** 0 DEX 　**Initiative:** DEX **+4** ACU + PER

Resilience Points: 6 + **6** PHY 　**DM Ranged:** -1 PHY 　**Encumbrance:** **6** + PHY

Morality: 3 　**Breaking Point:** 3 + REA + PHY **5** ▯▯▯▯▯▯▯ 　**CDP:** 　**Distemper Dice:** ▯▯▯▯▯▯

Name: Heavy Pistol 　**Type:** M Ⓡ E S 　**Range:** Close 　**Cond:** Used 　**Enc:** 1 　**Ammo:** 9
WP: 3 + 2d3 　**RP:** 50% 　**Notes:** - 　▯▯▯▯▯▯▯▯▯▯▯▯

Name: Tactical Baton 　**Type:** Ⓜ R E S 　**Range:** Close 　**Cond:** Used 　**Enc:** 1 　**Ammo:** -
WP: 4 + 2d3 　**RP:** 100% 　**Notes:** - 　▯▯▯▯▯▯▯▯▯▯▯▯

Name: 　**Type:** Ⓜ︎ M R E S 　**Range:** 　**Cond:** 　**Enc:** 　**Ammo:**
WP: 　**RP:** % 　**Notes:** - 　▯▯▯▯▯▯▯▯▯▯▯▯

Name: Unarmed Combat 　**Type:** Ⓜ R E S 　**Range:** 　**Cond:** 　**Enc:** 　**Ammo:** N/A
WP: 1d3 + 0 　**RP:** 100% 　**Notes:** 1d3 + PHY + Unarmed Combat Damage 　▯▯▯▯▯▯▯▯▯▯▯▯

Equipment: Binoculars 　**Enc:** 1 　**Notes:** +1 Perception Check

Equipment: Walkie-Talkie 　**Enc:** 1 　**Notes:** Allows characters to communicate up to a range of 20 miles

Equipment: Basic Survival Kit 　**Enc:** 1 　**Notes:** Tent, Sleeping Bag

Rations Type: Standard 　**# Days:** 2 　**Enc:** 1 　**Notes:**

Type: 　**Enc:** 　**DM:** 　**Notes:**

Part psychologist, part politician, with just a dash of law-enforcement, the small-town sheriff will just as often be adept at influencing a situation and mediating a positive outcome for all involved as they will be at enforcing the law.

Knowing how to instinctively read and understand a situation and then be able to manipulate it to their advantage and exuding the authority to push people into their point of view.

RELATIONSHIPS

Name:	Relationship Modifier:	Name:	Relationship Modifier:

PERSONAL DATA

Name: **Profession:**   School Teacher

Age: **Weight:**   **Height:**   **Gender:**

Complication: **Motivation:**

REASON: 2   **ACUMEN:** 1   **PHYSICALITY:** 0   **INFLUENCE:** 2   **DEXTERITY:** 0

COMBAT SKILLS   -3 1 2 3 4 5
- **D**emolitions* (PHY) ▨ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **M**elee (PHY) ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **R**anged (DEX) ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **U**narmed (PHY) ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

SWAY SKILLS   1 2 3 4 5
- **A**nimal Handling (INF) ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **B**arter (ACU) ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **C**harm (INF) ● ● ☐ ☐ ☐
- **D**eception (INF) ● ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **E**ntertainment (INF) ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **I**nspiration (INF) ● ● ☐ ☐ ☐
- **I**ntimidation (PHY) ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

MECHANIC SKILLS   -3 1 2 3 4 5
- **A**rmor* (DEX) ▨ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **T**inkerer (DEX) ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **V**ehicles* (DEX) ▨ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **W**eapons* (DEX) ▨ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

INNATE SKILLS   1 2 3 4 5
- **A**thletics (DEX) ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **D**odge (DEX) ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **D**riving (DEX) ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **G**ambling (ACU) ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **H**unting (PHY) ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **N**avigation (ACU) ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **P**erception (ACU) ● ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **S**cavenging (ACU) ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **S**urvival (ACU) ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

KNOWLEDGE SKILLS   -3 1 2 3 4 5
- **F**arming (REA) ● ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **G**eneral (REA) ● ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **L**ocal (REA) ● ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **P**sychology* (REA) ● ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **R**esearch (REA) ● ● ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **T**actical* (REA) ▨ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

MEDICINE SKILLS   -3 1 2 3 4 5
- **F**irst Aid (REA) ● ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **P**harmacology* (REA) ▨ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **S**urgery* (REA) ▨ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

CRIMINAL SKILLS   -3 1 2 3 4 5
- **L**ock-Picking* (REA) ▨ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **S**leight of Hand (DEX) ● ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **S**tealth (DEX) ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **S**treetwise (ACU) ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

SECONDARY STATS

Wound Points: 10 + PHY **10** DEX	**DM Melee:** −0 DEX	**Initiative:** DEX **+2** ACU + PER
Resilience Points: 6 + **6** PHY	**DM Ranged:** −0 PHY	**Encumbrance:** **6** + PHY

Morality: 3   **Breaking Point:** 3 + REA / + PHY **6** ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐   **CDP:**   **Distemper Dice:** ☐☐☐☐☐

WEAPONS AND EQUIPMENT

Name	Type	Range	Cond	Enc	Ammo
Baseball Bat	(M) R E S	Close	Used	1	−
WP: **RP:** %	**Notes:**				
	M R E S				
WP: **RP:** %	**Notes:**				
	( ) M R E S				
WP: **RP:** %	**Notes:** −				
Unarmed Combat	(M) R E S				N/A
WP: 1d3 + 0 **RP:** 100%	**Notes:** 1d3 + PHY + Unarmed Combat Damage				

Equipment: Binoculars   **Enc:** 1   **Notes:** +1 Perception Check

Equipment: **Enc:**   **Notes:**

Equipment: Basic Survival Kit   **Enc:** 1   **Notes:** Tent, Sleeping Bag

Rations Type:	# Days:	Enc:	Notes:
Standard	2	1	

ARMOR

	Type:	Enc:	DM:	Notes:

100

Not prepared at all to survive the apocalypse, they have survived so far by using their knowledge to their advantage.

Knowing a lot about a lot, they are often able to convince others that their ideas are both solid and worth listening to, even if they often lack the ability to carry out the plans themselves.

Paradigms - School Teacher

RELATIONSHIPS

Name:	Relationship Modifier:	Name:	Relationship Modifier:

Name:

Profession: **Semi-Pro Athlete**

Age: **Weight:** **Height:** **Gender:**

Complication: **Motivation:**

REASON: ⟨0⟩ **ACUMEN:** ⟨0⟩ **PHYSICALITY:** ⟨2⟩ **INFLUENCE:** ⟨1⟩ **DEXTERITY:** ⟨2⟩

COMBAT SKILLS -3 1 2 3 4 5
- **D**emolitions* (PHY) ◧☐☐☐☐☐
- **M**elee (PHY) ●☐☐☐☐
- **R**anged (DEX) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **U**narmed (PHY) ●●☐☐☐

SWAY SKILLS 1 2 3 4 5
- **A**nimal Handling (INF) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **B**arter (ACU) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **C**harm (INF) ●☐☐☐☐
- **D**eception (INF) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **E**ntertainment (INF) ●☐☐☐☐
- **I**nspiration (INF) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **I**ntimidation (PHY) ●☐☐☐☐

MECHANIC SKILLS -3 1 2 3 4 5
- **A**rmor* (DEX) ◧☐☐☐☐☐
- **T**inkerer (DEX) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **V**ehicles* (DEX) ◧☐☐☐☐☐
- **W**eapons* (DEX) ◧☐☐☐☐☐

INNATE SKILLS 1 2 3 4 5
- **A**thletics (DEX) ●●●☐☐
- **D**odge (DEX) ●●☐☐☐
- **D**riving (DEX) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **G**ambling (ACU) ●☐☐☐☐
- **H**unting (PHY) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **N**avigation (ACU) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **P**erception (ACU) ●●☐☐☐
- **S**cavenging (ACU) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **S**urvival (ACU) ☐☐☐☐☐

KNOWLEDGE SKILLS -3 1 2 3 4 5
- **F**arming (REA) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **G**eneral (REA) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **L**ocal (REA) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **P**sychology* (REA) ◧☐☐☐☐☐
- **R**esearch (REA) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **T**actical* (REA) ◧☐☐☐☐☐

MEDICINE SKILLS -3 1 2 3 4 5
- **F**irst Aid (REA) ●☐☐☐☐
- **P**harmacology* (REA) ◧☐☐☐☐☐
- **S**urgery* (REA) ◧☐☐☐☐☐

CRIMINAL SKILLS -3 1 2 3 4 5
- **L**ock-Picking* (REA) ◧☐☐☐☐☐
- **S**leight of Hand (DEX) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **S**tealth (DEX) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **S**treetwise (ACU) ☐☐☐☐☐

SECONDARY STATS

Wound Points: 10 + **14** DEX	**DM Melee:** **2** DEX	**Initiative:** DEX **+4** ACU + PER
Resilience Points: 6 + **8** PHY	**DM Ranged:** **2** PHY	**Encumbrance:** **8** + PHY

Morality: 3 **Breaking Point:** 3 + REA / + PHY **3** ☐☐☐☐☐☐ **CDP:** **Distemper Dice:** ☐☐☐☐☐☐

WEAPONS AND EQUIPMENT

Name: Baseball Bat	Type: Ⓜ R E S	Range: Close	Cond: Used	Enc: 1	Ammo: -
WP: 4 + 1d6	RP: 100%	Notes: -			☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐

Name: Brass Knuckles	Type: Ⓜ R E S	Range: Close	Cond: Used	Enc: 1	Ammo: -
WP: 4 + 1d6	RP: 100%	Notes: +1 WP to Unarmed Combat. Requires a Ready Weapon action			☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐

Name:	Type: M R E S	Range:	Cond:	Enc:	Ammo:
WP:	RP: %	Notes: -			

Name: Unarmed Combat	Type: Ⓜ R E S	Range:	Cond:	Enc:	Ammo: N/A
WP: 1d3 + 4	RP: 100%	Notes: 1d3 + PHY + Unarmed Combat Damage			

Equipment: Binoculars	Enc: 1	Notes: +1 Perception Check
Equipment: -	Enc: -	Notes: -
Equipment: Basic Survival Kit	Enc: 1	Notes: Tent, Sleeping Bag

Rations Type:	# Days:	Enc:	Notes:
Standard	2	1	

ARMOR

	Type:	Enc:	DM:	Notes:

Having spent as much of their life dreaming of being famous as training to be successful, they are in great shape and have the confidence and belief in themselves that they will continue to survive and thrive no matter what else happens around them.

In addition to being strong and fast, they know how to use their fame from before the pandemic to their best advantage to get those around them to do their bidding in return for perceived favor and protection.

RELATIONSHIPS

Name:	Relationship Modifier:	Name:	Relationship Modifier:

Paradigms - Semi-Pro Athlete

Name:

Profession: **Trucker**

Age: | **Weight:** | **Height:** | **Gender:**

Complication: | **Motivation:**

REASON: ⬡ 0 **ACUMEN:** ⬡ 2 **PHYSICALITY:** ⬡ 1 **INFLUENCE:** ⬡ 0 **DEXTERITY:** ⬡ 2

COMBAT SKILLS -3 1 2 3 4 5
- **D**emolitions* (PHY) ■ ■ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **M**elee (PHY) ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **R**anged (DEX) ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **U**narmed (PHY) ■ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

SWAY SKILLS 1 2 3 4 5
- **A**nimal Handling (INF) ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **B**arter (ACU) ● ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **C**harm (INF) ● ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **D**eception (INF) ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **E**ntertainment (INF) ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **I**nspiration (INF) ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **I**ntimidation (PHY) ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

MECHANIC SKILLS -3 1 2 3 4 5
- **A**rmor* (DEX) ◪ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **T**inkerer (DEX) ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **V**ehicles* (DEX) ◪ ● ● ☐ ☐ ☐
- **W**eapons* (DEX) ◪ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

INNATE SKILLS 1 2 3 4 5
- **A**thletics (DEX) ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **D**odge (DEX) ● ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **D**riving (DEX) ● ● ☐ ☐ ☐
- **G**ambling (ACU) ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **H**unting (PHY) ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **N**avigation (ACU) ● ● ☐ ☐ ☐
- **P**erception (ACU) ● ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **S**cavenging (ACU) ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **S**urvival (ACU) ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

KNOWLEDGE SKILLS -3 1 2 3 4 5
- **F**arming (REA) ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **G**eneral (REA) ● ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **L**ocal (REA) ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **P**sychology* (REA) ◪ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **R**esearch (REA) ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **T**actical* (REA) ◪ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

MEDICINE SKILLS -3 1 2 3 4 5
- **F**irst Aid (REA) ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **P**harmacology* (REA) ◪ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **S**urgery* (REA) ◪ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

CRIMINAL SKILLS -3 1 2 3 4 5
- **L**ock-Picking* (REA) ◪ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **S**leight of Hand (DEX) ● ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **S**tealth (DEX) ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- **S**treetwise (ACU) ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

SECONDARY STATS

Wound Points: 10 + **13** DEX	**DM Melee:** -**1** DEX	**Initiative:** DEX **+5** CU + PER
Resilience Points: 6 + **7** HY	**DM Ranged:** **2** PHY	**Encumbrance:** **7** + PHY

Morality: 3 | **Breaking Point:** 3 + REA + **5** PHY ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐ | **CDP:** | **Distemper Dice:** ☐☐☐☐☐☐

WEAPONS AND EQUIPMENT

Name: Baseball Bat	**Type:** Ⓜ R E S	**Range:** Close	**Cond:** 10	**Enc:** 1	**Ammo:** –
WP: 4 + 1d6	**RP:** 100% %	**Notes:** –			

Name: Light Pistol	**Type:** M Ⓡ E S	**Range:** Close	**Cond:** Used	**Enc:** 1	**Ammo:** 6
WP: 3 + 1d6	**RP:** 50%	**Notes:** –			

Name:	**Type:** Ⓞ M R E S	**Range:**	**Cond:**	**Enc:**	**Ammo:**
WP:	**RP:** %	**Notes:** –			

Name: Unarmed Combat	**Type:** Ⓜ R E S	**Range:**	**Cond:**	**Enc:**	**Ammo:** N/A
WP: 1d3 + 2	**RP:** 100%	**Notes:** 1d3 + PHY + Unarmed Combat Damage			

Equipment: Walkie-Talkie	**Enc:** 1	**Notes:** Allows characters to communicate up to a range of 20 miles
Equipment:	**Enc:** 1	**Notes:**
Equipment: Basic Survival Kit	**Enc:** 1	**Notes:** Tent, Sleeping Bag

Rations Type: Standard	**# Days:** 2	**Enc:** 1	**Notes:**

ARMOR

Type:	**Enc:**	**DM:**	**Notes:**

Having spent years on the highways and byways of the US, truckers not only know their way around but over the years have seen many places that might serve as a destination or offer supplies and resources.

A good sense of direction combined with enough mechanical ability to ensure their vehicle can get to their ultimate destination, truckers often prefer to keep moving to avoid becoming a stationary target.

Paradigms - Trucker

RELATIONSHIPS

Name:	Relationship Modifier:	Name:	Relationship Modifier:

PERSONAL DATA

Name: Pesky LaRue
Profession: Petty Criminal

Age: 32 **Weight:** 168 lbs **Height:** 5'7" **Gender:** Male

Complication: CRIMINAL PAST **Motivation:** FIND SAFETY

REASON: 0 **ACUMEN:** 2 **PHYSICALITY:** 1 **INFLUENCE:** 1 **DEXTERITY:** 1

COMBAT SKILLS (-3 1 2 3 4 5)
- Demolitions* (PHY): -3
- Melee (PHY): 2
- Ranged (DEX): —
- Unarmed (PHY): —

SWAY SKILLS (1 2 3 4 5)
- Animal Handling (INF): —
- Barter (ACU): —
- Charm (INF): 1
- Deception (INF): 1
- Entertainment (INF): —
- Inspiration (INF): —
- Intimidation (PHY): 1

MECHANIC SKILLS (-3 1 2 3 4 5)
- Armor* (DEX): -3
- Tinkerer (DEX): —
- Vehicles* (DEX): -3
- Weapons* (DEX): -3

INNATE SKILLS (1 2 3 4 5)
- Athletics (DEX): 2
- Dodge (DEX): 1
- Driving (DEX): —
- Gambling (ACU): —
- Hunting (PHY): —
- Navigation (ACU): —
- Perception (ACU): 2
- Scavenging (ACU): —
- Survival (ACU): —

KNOWLEDGE SKILLS (-3 1 2 3 4 5)
- Farming (REA): —
- General (REA): —
- Local (REA): —
- Psychology* (REA): -3
- Research (REA): —
- Tactical* (REA): -3

MEDICINE SKILLS (-3 1 2 3 4 5)
- First Aid (REA): —
- Pharmacology* (REA): -3
- Surgery* (REA): -3

CRIMINAL SKILLS (-3 1 2 3 4 5)
- Lock-Picking* (REA): 2
- Sleight of Hand (DEX): 2
- Stealth (DEX): —
- Streetwise (ACU): 1

SECONDARY STATS

Wound Points: 10 + PHY **12** DEX	DM Melee: **2** DEX	Initiative: DEX **+5** ACU + PER
Resilience Points: 6 + **7** PHY	DM Ranged: **2** PHY	Encumbrance: **7** + PHY

Morality: 3 **Breaking Point:** 3 + REA + PHY **5** **CDP:** **Distemper Dice:**

WEAPONS AND EQUIPMENT

Name	Type	Range	Cond	Enc	Ammo
Baseball Bat	(M) R E S	Close	Used	1	-
WP: 4 + 1d6	RP: 100%	Notes: -			
Knife	(M) R E S	Close	Used	1	-
WP: 3 + 1d3	RP: %	Notes: -			
	( ) M R E S				
WP:	RP: %	Notes: -			
Unarmed Combat	(M) R E S				N/A
WP: 1d3 +	RP: 100%	Notes: 1d3 + PHY + Unarmed Combat Damage			

Equipment: Binoculars	Enc: 1	Notes: +1 Perception Check
Equipment: -	Enc: -	Notes: -
Equipment: Basic Survival Kit	Enc: 1	Notes: Tent, Sleeping Bag

Rations Type:	# Days:	Enc:	Notes:
Standard	2	1	

ARMOR

Type:	Enc:	DM:	Notes:

Although christened Percy Larue, Pesky was given his nickname before he could walk. Raised on the east side of Chicago, Pesky lived with his crack-addicted mother and younger brother, Elias. At an early age he got as good at hiding the truth as he was at shop-lifting food. Pesky dropped out of high school at 14 and spent the next few years hustling to make enough food for him and his family. A local thief – Fat Fingered Frankie – took a liking to the young boy and helped him up his skills as a petty thief.

As he grew, Pesky found he had a way with the ladies who loved his 'bad boy trying to be good' shtick almost as much as their boyfriends hated it and although Pesky was able to avoid being sucked into a gang, he never made it beyond being a petty criminal who had multiple run-ins with the law. After the death of his mom, he felt increasingly responsible for his younger brother. Then the virus came.

Pesky still feels Betrayed by Marty Kaczynski, who he had partnered with early on as he tried to get out of Illinois and head south. Kaczynski had beaten him while he slept and stole his horse and supplies, leaving Pesky for dead.

Pesky doesn't know if Kaczynski is still alive or not, he just knows that he still dreams of what he'll do once he catches up to him.

After Marty left him for dead, Pesky's self-preservation instinct is now constantly in overdrive and he has one single imperative driving him – no matter what it takes or who you have to throw in front of a bullet: Stay Alive!

Pregens - Pesky LaRue

RELATIONSHIPS

Name:	Relationship Modifier:	Name:	Relationship Modifier:

PERSONAL DATA

Name: Helen Bartholomew **Profession:** FBI Field Agent (Retired)

Age: 38 **Weight:** 127 lbs **Height:** 5'4" **Gender:** Female

Complication: ADDICTION **Motivation:** MAKE AMENDS

REASON: ⟨2⟩ **ACUMEN:** ⟨2⟩ **PHYSICALITY:** ⟨0⟩ **INFLUENCE:** ⟨0⟩ **DEXTERITY:** ⟨1⟩

COMBAT SKILLS -3 1 2 3 4 5
- **D**emolitions* (PHY) ▨☐☐☐☐☐
- **M**elee (PHY) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **R**anged (DEX) ●☐☐☐☐
- **U**narmed (PHY) ●☐☐☐☐

SWAY SKILLS 1 2 3 4 5
- **A**nimal Handling (INF) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **B**arter (ACU) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **C**harm (INF) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **D**eception (INF) ●☐☐☐☐
- **E**ntertainment (INF) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **I**nspiration (INF) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **I**ntimidation (PHY) ●☐☐☐☐

MECHANIC SKILLS -3 1 2 3 4 5
- **A**rmor* (DEX) ▨☐☐☐☐☐
- **T**inkerer (DEX) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **V**ehicles* (DEX) ▨☐☐☐☐☐
- **W**eapons* (DEX) ▨☐☐☐☐☐

INNATE SKILLS 1 2 3 4 5
- **A**thletics (DEX) ●☐☐☐☐
- **D**odge (DEX) ●☐☐☐☐
- **D**riving (DEX) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **G**ambling (ACU) ●☐☐☐☐
- **H**unting (PHY) ●☐☐☐☐
- **N**avigation (ACU) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **P**erception (ACU) ●●☐☐☐
- **S**cavenging (ACU) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **S**urvival (ACU) ☐☐☐☐☐

KNOWLEDGE SKILLS -3 1 2 3 4 5
- **F**arming (REA) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **G**eneral (REA) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **L**ocal (REA) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **P**sychology* (REA) ●●☐☐☐
- **R**esearch (REA) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **T**actical* (REA) ▨☐☐☐☐☐

MEDICINE SKILLS -3 1 2 3 4 5
- **F**irst Aid (REA) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **P**harmacology* (REA) ▨☐☐☐☐☐
- **S**urgery* (REA) ▨☐☐☐☐☐

CRIMINAL SKILLS -3 1 2 3 4 5
- **L**ock-Picking* (REA) ●●☐☐☐☐
- **S**leight of Hand (DEX) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **S**tealth (DEX) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **S**treetwise (ACU) ●☐☐☐☐

SECONDARY STATS

Wound Points: 10 + **11** DEX **DM Melee:** **-1** DEX **Initiative:** DEX **+5** ACU + PER

Resilience Points: 6 + **6** PHY **DM Ranged:** **2** PHY **Encumbrance:** **6** + PHY

Morality: 3 **Breaking Point:** 3 + REA + PHY **7** ☐☐☐☐☐☐ **CDP:** **Distemper Dice:** ☐☐☐☐☐

WEAPONS AND EQUIPMENT

Name	Type	Range	Cond	Enc	Ammo
Heavy Pistol	M (R) E S	Close	Used	1	5

WP: 3 + 2d3 **RP:** 100% **Notes:** – ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐

Name	Type	Range	Cond	Enc	Ammo
Hatchet	(M) R E S	Engaged	Used	1	–

WP: 3 + 1d6 **RP:** 50% **Notes:** – ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐

Name	Type	Range	Cond	Enc	Ammo
	( ) M R E S				

WP: **RP:** % **Notes:** – ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐

Name	Type	Range	Cond	Enc	Ammo
Unarmed Combat	(M) R E S				N/A

WP: 1d3 + **RP:** 100% **Notes:** 1d3 + PHY + Unarmed Combat Damage ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐

Equipment: Binoculars **Enc:** 1 **Notes:** +1 Perception Check

Equipment: – **Enc:** – **Notes:** –

Equipment: Basic Survival Kit **Enc:** 1 **Notes:** Tent, Sleeping Bag

Rations Type:	# Days:	Enc:	Notes:
Standard	2	1	

ARMOR

Type:	Enc:	DM:	Notes:

Born and raised in Portland, Helen Bartholomew knew from a young age that she wanted to follow in her father's footsteps and become a cop. As she came close to graduating high-school, her father convinced her that she would be wasted as a street cop and that he believed her path was to join the FBI.

Taking to law enforcement like a fish to water, Helen quickly became a field agent and was stationed in San Antonio and her eye for detail and bold nature made her an asset in working against the human trafficking of the cartels.

However, the endless stream of brutality and human misery brought out another trait she shared with her father and Helen found herself drinking more and more to cope with the stress.

It wasn't long until she was drinking before, and then during work, which finally came to the attention of her bosses and lead to an early retirement on medical grounds.

Moving back to Oregon just before the pandemic started, Helen watched her family die while she survived, something that is still weighing heavily on her that she still doesn't understand.

Helen will take any opportunity to scavenge for supplies and she is noticeably delighted when she finds alcohol, even if neither the joy nor the booze last very long.

RELATIONSHIPS

Name:	Relationship Modifier:	Name:	Relationship Modifier:

Name: John Egalitas
Profession: Influencer

Age: 33 **Weight:** 180 lbs **Height:** 5'10" **Gender:** Male

Complication: FAMOUS **Motivation:** TAKE ADVANTAGE

REASON: 0 **ACUMEN:** 1 **PHYSICALITY:** 0 **INFLUENCE:** 3 **DEXTERITY:** 0

COMBAT SKILLS -3 1 2 3 4 5
- Demolitions* (PHY) ◨☐☐☐☐☐
- Melee (PHY) ☐☐☐☐☐
- Ranged (DEX) ☐☐☐☐☐
- Unarmed (PHY) ☐☐☐☐☐

SWAY SKILLS 1 2 3 4 5
- Animal Handling (INF) ☐☐☐☐☐
- Barter (ACU) ●☐☐☐☐
- Charm (INF) ●●☐☐☐
- Deception (INF) ●●●☐☐
- Entertainment (INF) ●●●●☐
- Inspiration (INF) ●●☐☐☐
- Intimidation (PHY) ☐☐☐☐☐

MECHANIC SKILLS -3 1 2 3 4 5
- Armor* (DEX) ◨☐☐☐☐☐
- Tinkerer (DEX) ☐☐☐☐☐
- Vehicles* (DEX) ◨☐☐☐☐☐
- Weapons* (DEX) ◨☐☐☐☐☐

INNATE SKILLS 1 2 3 4 5
- Athletics (DEX) ☐☐☐☐☐
- Dodge (DEX) ☐☐☐☐☐
- Driving (DEX) ☐☐☐☐☐
- Gambling (ACU) ☐☐☐☐☐
- Hunting (PHY) ☐☐☐☐☐
- Navigation (ACU) ☐☐☐☐☐
- Perception (ACU) ●●☐☐☐
- Scavenging (ACU) ☐☐☐☐☐
- Survival (ACU) ☐☐☐☐☐

KNOWLEDGE SKILLS -3 1 2 3 4 5
- Farming (REA) ☐☐☐☐☐☐
- General (REA) ●☐☐☐☐
- Local (REA) ●☐☐☐☐
- Psychology* (REA) ◨☐☐☐☐☐
- Research (REA) ☐☐☐☐☐
- Tactical* (REA) ◨☐☐☐☐☐

MEDICINE SKILLS -3 1 2 3 4 5
- First Aid (REA) ☐☐☐☐☐
- Pharmacology* (REA) ◨☐☐☐☐☐
- Surgery* (REA) ◨☐☐☐☐☐

CRIMINAL SKILLS -3 1 2 3 4 5
- Lock-Picking* (REA) ◨☐☐☐☐☐
- Sleight of Hand (DEX) ●☐☐☐☐
- Stealth (DEX) ☐☐☐☐☐
- Streetwise (ACU) ☐☐☐☐☐

SECONDARY STATS

Wound Points: 10 + PHY **10** DEX **DM Melee:** 0 DEX **Initiative:** DEX **+3** ACU + PER

Resilience Points: 6 + **6** PHY **DM Ranged:** 0 PHY **Encumbrance:** **6** + PHY

Morality: 3 **Breaking Point:** 3 + DEA + PHY **4** | | | | | | **CDP:** **Distemper Dice:** | | | | |

WEAPONS AND EQUIPMENT

Name: Baseball Bat	Type: (M) R E S	Range: Close	Cond: Used	Enc: 1	Ammo: -
WP: 4 + 1d6 RP: 100%%	Notes:	-			
Name: Knife	Type: (M) R E S	Range: Close	Cond: Used	Enc: 1	Ammo: -
WP: 3 + 1d3 RP: %	Notes:	-			
Name:	Type: ( ) M R E S	Range:	Cond:	Enc:	Ammo:
WP: RP: %	Notes:	-			
Name: Unarmed Combat	Type: (M) R E S	Range:	Cond:	Enc:	Ammo: N/A
WP: 1d3 + RP: 100%	Notes: 1d3 + PHY + Unarmed Combat Damage				

Equipment: Binoculars **Enc:** 1 **Notes:** +1 Perception Check

Equipment: - **Enc:** - **Notes:** -

Equipment: Basic Survival Kit **Enc:** 1 **Notes:** Tent, Sleeping Bag

Rations Type:	# Days:	Enc:	Notes:
Standard	2	1	

ARMOR

Type:	Enc:	DM:	Notes:

Caucasian, Brown hair, Blue eyes, looks like he hasn't exercised a day in his life.

John grew up in a Medium sized Town in Illinois to a middle class household. He was an only child and spent most of his time messing around with friends, Seemingly being able to talk himself out of any confrontation. He also excelled in early schooling.

In his later education he was able to obtain a bachelors degree in accounting. he went to a relatively decent university.

He put his Bachelors degree to use after graduating, but quickly found it boring. Instead, he become a traveling stand up comedian, living on a shoestring. Eventually his gamble paid off, and he had become something of a local celebrity.

John is a kleptomaniac and he knows it. it always gave him some sort of satisfaction to steal. The only time he stole for money was his early career as a comedian. The only thing that motivates him now after the world went to shit is that someday it will back to normal.

Pregens – John Egalitas

RELATIONSHIPS

Name:	Relationship Modifier:	Name:	Relationship Modifier:

PERSONAL DATA

Name: Emmy Briar

Profession: Political Staffer

Age: 27 **Weight:** 130 lbs **Height:** 5'4" **Gender:** Female

Complication: PERSONAL ENEMY **Motivation:** BUILD

REASON: (1) **ACUMEN:** (1) **PHYSICALITY:** (0) **INFLUENCE:** (2) **DEXTERITY:** (1)

COMBAT SKILLS   -3 1 2 3 4 5
- **D**emolitions* (PHY) ▨ ☐☐☐☐☐
- **M**elee (PHY) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **R**anged (DEX) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **U**narmed (PHY) ☐☐☐☐☐

SWAY SKILLS   1 2 3 4 5
- **A**nimal Handling (INF) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **B**arter (ACU) ■■☐☐☐
- **C**harm (INF) ■■☐☐☐
- **D**eception (INF) ■☐☐☐☐
- **E**ntertainment (INF) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **I**nspiration (INF) ■☐☐☐☐
- **I**ntimidation (PHY) ☐☐☐☐☐

MECHANIC SKILLS   -3 1 2 3 4 5
- **A**rmor* (DEX) ▨ ☐☐☐☐☐
- **T**inkerer (DEX) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **V**ehicles* (DEX) ▨ ☐☐☐☐☐
- **W**eapons* (DEX) ▨ ☐☐☐☐☐

INNATE SKILLS   1 2 3 4 5
- **A**thletics (DEX) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **D**odge (DEX) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **D**riving (DEX) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **G**ambling (ACU) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **H**unting (PHY) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **N**avigation (ACU) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **P**erception (ACU) ■■☐☐☐
- **S**cavenging (ACU) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **S**urvival (ACU) ☐☐☐☐☐

KNOWLEDGE SKILLS   -3 1 2 3 4 5
- **F**arming (REA) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **G**eneral (REA) ■☐☐☐☐
- **L**ocal (REA) ■☐☐☐☐
- **P**sychology* (REA) ■■■☐☐
- **R**esearch (REA) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **T**actical* (REA) ■■☐☐☐

MEDICINE SKILLS   -3 1 2 3 4 5
- **F**irst Aid (REA) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **P**harmacology* (REA) ▨ ☐☐☐☐☐
- **S**urgery* (REA) ▨ ☐☐☐☐☐

CRIMINAL SKILLS   -3 1 2 3 4 5
- **L**ock-Picking* (REA) ▨ ☐☐☐☐☐
- **S**leight of Hand (DEX) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **S**tealth (DEX) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **S**treetwise (ACU) ■■☐☐☐

SECONDARY STATS

Wound Points: 10 + **11** DEX   **DM Melee:** -0 DEX   **Initiative:** DEX **+4** CU + PER

Resilience Points: 6 + **6** PHY   **DM Ranged:** -0 PHY   **Encumbrance:** **6** + PHY

Morality: 3   **Breaking Point:** 3 + REA + PHY **5** ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐   **CDP:**   **Distemper Dice:** ☐☐☐☐☐☐

WEAPONS AND EQUIPMENT

Name	Type	Range	Cond	Enc	Ammo
Baseball Bat	(M) R E S	Close	Used	1	-
WP: 4 + 1d6 RP: 100%% Notes: -					
Knife	(M) R E S	Close	Used	1	-
WP: 3 + 1d3 RP: % Notes: -					
	( ) M R E S				
WP: RP: % Notes: -					
Unarmed Combat	(M) R E S				N/A
WP: 1d3 + RP: 100% Notes: 1d3 + PHY + Unarmed Combat Damage					

Equipment: Binoculars   **Enc:** 1   **Notes:** +1 Perception Check

Equipment: -   **Enc:** -   **Notes:** -

Equipment: Basic Survival Kit   **Enc:** 1   **Notes:** Tent, Sleeping Bag

Rations Type:	# Days:	Enc:	Notes:
Standard	2	1	

ARMOR

	Type:	Enc:	DM:	Notes:

Apolitical campaign operative looking to make a difference without being in the spotlight.

"A very observant child, and good at taking chances. Able to navigate & read the room to mitigate consequences and wheel and deal for more favorable outcomes.

Looking for a life of influence but just outside the public's view he was interning with the local newspaper when not picking up shifts bar-tending. Distilling fact from fiction, exaggeration from bullshit. Digging into the details for the real story.

Working the campaign trail for a home town hero running for office. Finding the right people for interviews, wheeling and dealing for speaking engagements, making an opponent's note cards come up missing from their jacket pocket or assistant's clip board. Not all politics are on the up and up.As such a valuable asset in campaigning, higher offices call for more… versatile tactics"

Working the campaign trail for a home town hero running for office. Finding the right people for interviews, wheeling and dealing for speaking engagements, making an opponent's note cards come up missing from their jacket pocket or assistant's clip board. Not all politics are on the up and up.

Pregens – Emmy Briar

RELATIONSHIPS

Name:	Relationship Modifier:	Name:	Relationship Modifier:

113

PERSONAL DATA

Name: Mikey Doyle

Profession: Mechanic

Age: 48   **Weight:** 171 lbs   **Height:** 5'9"   **Gender:** Male

Complication: DARK SECRET   **Motivation:** HEDONISM

REASON: 1   **ACUMEN:** 1   **PHYSICALITY:** 1   **INFLUENCE:** 0   **DEXTERITY:** 2

COMBAT SKILLS   -3 1 2 3 4 5
- Demolitions* (PHY) ■■☐☐☐☐
- Melee (PHY) ☐☐☐☐☐☐
- Ranged (DEX) ■☐☐☐☐☐
- Unarmed (PHY) ☐☐☐☐☐☐

SWAY SKILLS   1 2 3 4 5
- Animal Handling (INF) ☐☐☐☐☐
- Barter (ACU) ●☐☐☐☐
- Charm (INF) ☐☐☐☐☐
- Deception (INF) ☐☐☐☐☐
- Entertainment (INF) ☐☐☐☐☐
- Inspiration (INF) ☐☐☐☐☐
- Intimidation (PHY) ☐☐☐☐☐

MECHANIC SKILLS   -3 1 2 3 4 5
- Armor* (DEX) ◪☐☐☐☐☐
- Tinkerer (DEX) ●●☐☐☐☐
- Vehicles* (DEX) ●●●☐☐☐
- Weapons* (DEX) ●●☐☐☐☐

INNATE SKILLS   1 2 3 4 5
- Athletics (DEX) ●☐☐☐☐
- Dodge (DEX) ●☐☐☐☐
- Driving (DEX) ☐☐☐☐☐
- Gambling (ACU) ☐☐☐☐☐
- Hunting (PHY) ●☐☐☐☐
- Navigation (ACU) ☐☐☐☐☐
- Perception (ACU) ☐☐☐☐☐
- Scavenging (ACU) ●☐☐☐☐
- Survival (ACU) ●☐☐☐☐

KNOWLEDGE SKILLS   -3 1 2 3 4 5
- Farming (REA) ☐☐☐☐☐☐
- General (REA) ☐☐☐☐☐☐
- Local (REA) ☐☐☐☐☐☐
- Psychology* (REA) ◪☐☐☐☐☐
- Research (REA) ☐☐☐☐☐☐
- Tactical* (REA) ◪☐☐☐☐☐

MEDICINE SKILLS   -3 1 2 3 4 5
- First Aid (REA) ☐☐☐☐☐☐
- Pharmacology* (REA) ◪☐☐☐☐☐
- Surgery* (REA) ◪☐☐☐☐☐

CRIMINAL SKILLS   -3 1 2 3 4 5
- Lock-Picking* (REA) ◪☐☐☐☐☐
- Sleight of Hand (DEX) ●☐☐☐☐☐
- Stealth (DEX) ☐☐☐☐☐☐
- Streetwise (ACU) ●☐☐☐☐☐

SECONDARY STATS

Wound Points: 10 + **13** DEX	**DM Melee:** **2** DEX	**Initiative:** DEX **+3** CU + PER
Resilience Points: 6 + **7** PHY	**DM Ranged:** **3** PHY	**Encumbrance:** **7** + PHY
Morality: 3	**Breaking Point:** 3 + REA / + PHY **5** ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐	**CDP:** **Distemper Dice:** ☐☐☐☐☐

WEAPONS AND EQUIPMENT

Name	Type	Range	Cond	Enc	Ammo
Light Pistol	M (R) E S	Close	Used	1	6
WP: 3 + 1d6 **RP:** 50% **Notes:** -					
Knife	(M) R E S	Close	Used	1	-
WP: 3 + 1d3 **RP:** % **Notes:** -					
	( ) M R E S				
WP: **RP:** % **Notes:** -					
Unarmed Combat	(M) R E S				N/A
WP: 1d3 + **RP:** 100% **Notes:** 1d3 + PHY + Unarmed Combat Damage					

Equipment	Enc	Notes
Binoculars	1	+1 Perception Check
-	-	-
Basic Survival Kit	1	Tent, Sleeping Bag

Rations Type:	# Days:	Enc:	Notes:
Standard	2	1	

ARMOR

Type:	Enc:	DM:	Notes:

Mikey was always good with his hands growing up, taking his toys apart to see how they worked more than playing with them (much to his parents chagrin).

As he got older, he turned his quick hands to car repairs, fixing up the 1974 Impala his grandfather left him when he died. Drifting into the Army after high-school, he was assigned to the motor pool where he put his natural abilities to good use and picked up additional knowledge of engines.

However, he also liked to use his hands for fighting which finally got him kicked out of the Army and soon landed him in jail. Each time he got out, his love of booze and fighting seemed to also find a way to get himself sent back again.

On one of his breaks from prison, he met a lady and moved in with her and her kids and things felt sort of normal. He even got a job as a mechanic and was earning an honest living in more than a decade.

But as normal and quiet as things felt, they also felt dull and boring and Mikey found himself drinking more and more after work. One drunken night, he got into an argument with a co-worker and, although he testified he didn't recall doing it, he beat the man to death.

Like almost all convicts, he was released from captivity when there weren't enough guards left to run the prisons and he has kept moving and kept his secret to himself.

Pregens - Mikey Doyle

RELATIONSHIPS

Name:	Relationship Modifier:	Name:	Relationship Modifier:

PERSONAL DATA

Name: Anna Sidorov

Profession: Midwife

Age: 34   **Weight:** 134 lbs   **Height:** 5'3"   **Gender:** Female

Complication: LOSS   **Motivation:** STAY ALIVE

REASON: ⟨2⟩   **ACUMEN:** ⟨2⟩   **PHYSICALITY:** ⟨1⟩   **INFLUENCE:** ⟨0⟩   **DEXTERITY:** ⟨0⟩

COMBAT SKILLS   -3 1 2 3 4 5
- **D**emolitions* (PHY) ◩☐☐☐☐☐
- **M**elee (PHY) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **R**anged (DEX) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **U**narmed (PHY) ☐☐☐☐☐

SWAY SKILLS   1 2 3 4 5
- **A**nimal Handling (INF) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **B**arter (ACU) ●☐☐☐☐
- **C**harm (INF) ●☐☐☐☐
- **D**eception (INF) ●☐☐☐☐
- **E**ntertainment (INF) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **I**nspiration (INF) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **I**ntimidation (PHY) ☐☐☐☐☐

MECHANIC SKILLS   -3 1 2 3 4 5
- **A**rmor* (DEX) ◩☐☐☐☐☐
- **T**inkerer (DEX) ●☐☐☐☐
- **V**ehicles* (DEX) ◩☐☐☐☐☐
- **W**eapons* (DEX) ◩☐☐☐☐☐

INNATE SKILLS   1 2 3 4 5
- **A**thletics (DEX) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **D**odge (DEX) ●☐☐☐☐
- **D**riving (DEX) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **G**ambling (ACU) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **H**unting (PHY) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **N**avigation (ACU) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **P**erception (ACU) ●☐☐☐☐
- **S**cavenging (ACU) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **S**urvival (ACU) ●☐☐☐☐

KNOWLEDGE SKILLS   -3 1 2 3 4 5
- **F**arming (REA) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **G**eneral (REA) ●☐☐☐☐
- **L**ocal (REA) ●☐☐☐☐
- **P**sychology* (REA) ◩☐☐☐☐
- **R**esearch (REA) ●☐☐☐☐
- **T**actical* (REA) ◩☐☐☐☐☐

MEDICINE SKILLS   -3 1 2 3 4 5
- **F**irst Aid (REA) ●●●☐☐
- **P**harmacology* (REA) ●●☐☐☐
- **S**urgery* (REA) ◩☐☐☐☐☐

CRIMINAL SKILLS   -3 1 2 3 4 5
- **L**ock-Picking* (REA) ◩☐☐☐☐☐
- **S**leight of Hand (DEX) ●☐☐☐☐
- **S**tealth (DEX) ☐☐☐☐☐
- **S**treetwise (ACU) ☐☐☐☐☐

SECONDARY STATS

Wound Points: 10 + **11** DEX   **DM Melee:** **2** DEX   **Initiative:** DEX **+3** ACU + PER

Resilience Points: 6 + **7** PHY   **DM Ranged:** **1** PHY   **Encumbrance:** **7** + PHY

Morality: 3   **Breaking Point:** 3 + REA / + 7 PHY ☐☐☐☐☐☐   **CDP:**   **Distemper Dice:** ☐☐☐☐☐

WEAPONS AND EQUIPMENT

Name	Type	Range	Cond	Enc	Ammo
Baseball Bat	Ⓜ R E S	Close	Used	1	-
WP: 4 + 1d6 RP: 100% Notes: -					
Knife	Ⓜ R E S	Close	Used	1	-
WP: 3 + 1d3 RP: % Notes: -					
	: M R E S				
WP: RP: % Notes: -					
Unarmed Combat	Ⓜ R E S				N/A
WP: 1d3 + RP: 100% Notes: 1d3 + PHY + Unarmed Combat Damage					

Equipment	Enc	Notes
Binoculars	1	+1 Perception Check
-	-	-
Basic Survival Kit	1	Tent, Sleeping Bag

Rations Type:	# Days:	Enc:	Notes:
Standard	2	1	

ARMOR

Type:	Enc:	DM:	Notes:

Refuges from Iraq, Anna's family emigrated to the US when she was 13 and although heavily Americanized, she still retains some of her family's strict moral values.

Raised in Deerborn, Michigan, Anna's parents worked endless hours at multiple jobs, leaving her as the primary caregiver to her younger siblings. Her natural compassion and love of children lead her towards a career in medicine until she ultimately became a midwife at a hospital in Detroit.

Like all healthcare workers, she found her herself thrust onto the front lines of the pandemic but when the hosptial she worked at closed, she moved back to Deerborn to help her family and their community as best she could. Quickly overwhelmed by *the distmper,* she realized her skills were uselss in the face of this level of death.

Now, having lost everything to the Dog Flu, Anna finds she has become much harder and determined, and she makes an effort to retain compassion for those around her in difficult times.

Pregens - Anna Sidorov

RELATIONSHIPS

Name:	Relationship Modifier:	Name:	Relationship Modifier:

COMBAT OVERVIEW

Although it's entirely possible to take a peaceful and thoughtful approach to playing *Distemper*, the very nature of the world that the players will be exploring means that conflict is not only plausible, but highly probable.

After all, if you have something that's actually worth having, you can reasonably expect someone to try and take it away from you, and you will have to be prepared to fight to keep it.

This section of the guide walks you through the basics of combat, from how to decide in which order each participant goes, to how to recover and recuperate once the bullets have stopped flying.

COMBAT ROUNDS

Combat is split into *Combat Rounds*, commonly just referred to as *Rounds*. Each *Round* lasts 3-5 seconds and is enough time for a player to perform two *Combat Actions*.

A *Round* is broken up into three phases: *Initiative, Actions* and *Resolution.*

INITIATIVE

Unless a character *Gets the Drop* (see the *Getting the Drop* sidebar on page 119), everyone involved must Roll for Initiative each round to decide the order in which combat unfolds.

Each combatant rolls **2d6 + Dexterity AMod + Acumen AMod + Perception SMOD + CMods** awarded by the GM. The highest

MAKING AN ATTACK ROLL

Like other dice checks, for an *Attack* to be successful an players must score 9 or above with the following roll:

2d6

+ AMod

(Physicality for Melee & Unarmed attacks, Dexterity for Ranged attacks)

+ SMod

(for Melee Combat, Ranged Combat, Unarmed Combat, or *Demotions**)

+ CMod

(as determined by the GM)

+ Weapon Modifier

(see Weapons on tables 12-15 on pages 130-131)

– The Melee Defensive Modifier (DMM) or Ranged Defensive Modifier (DMR) of the opposing character

Note: If a player rolls a double six and gets a *Moment of High Insight* (see page 31), the GM may decide that an Attack Roll against an NPC is instantly fatal.

FOR EXAMPLE: A character with *Ranged Combat 2* would roll **2d6 +2 AMod** for their Dexterity and **+2 SMod** for *Ranged Weapons 2* for a total of **2d6 +2 +2.**

score wins and each character acts in goes in descending order until reaching the participant who got the lowest *Initiative* score.

In the event of a tie, PCs always beat NPCs and if multiple PCs tie, then the character with the highest combined Perception SMod, and Dexterity and Acumen AMods wins. If there is still no winner, attacks by those characters are tied for *Initiative* and should be considered as taking place simultaneously.

As combat is fluid and the situation can rapidly change, *Initiative* is rolled at the beginning of each combat round to reflect the chaos and uncertainty of each engagement.

In the second & subsequent *Rounds*, any character who was neither attacked, nor attacked anyone else in the previous *Round* adds +1 to their next *Initiative* Roll.

GETTING THE DROP

When the tension is rising between characters and combat feels inevitable, one participant may choose to act ahead of everyone else, thereby *Getting the Drop*. In game-terms, this amounts to the character taking one action before anyone else rolls for *Initiative*. This could involve the character readying a weapon, moving to a better position, or sucker-punching an opponent. However, as a consequence of getting the drop, they incur a -3 CMod penalty on the next *Initiative* roll.

Only one combatant can attempt to *Get the Drop* and if multiple characters attempt it, as with the *Initiative* roll, it is the character with the highest combined Dexterity and Acumen AMods who wins.

It is also possible that the GM may decide that an NPC is going to try and *Get the Drop* on the players. If both the player and GM are planning on making this move, whichever character has the highest combined Perception, Dexterity and Acumen Modifiers wins.

Remember, a character who *Gets the Drop* automatically incurs a -3 CMod on the next *Initiative* Roll.

Players may choose to defer their action until later in the Round, effectively going out of order. They can choose when to act, and can go after a specific character, or wait till the very end of the round.

ACTIONS

Each combatant gets two *Combat Actions* during each *Round*, in addition to any number of *Incidental Actions* (see *Incidental Actions* on page 122 for more detail). Players can choose to use two different *Combat Actions* during their turn or take the same *Action* twice.

As shown on **Table 8: Combat Actions** below, there are 18 *Combat Actions* available, each of which is described in greater detail on the following pages:

Aim, Attack, Charge, Coordinate, Cover Fire, Defend, Distract, Fire from Cover, Grappling, Inspire, Move, Rapid Fire, Ready Weapon, Reposition, Skill Check, Sprint, Subdue, and *Take Cover.*

TABLE 8: COMBAT ACTIONS	
1	AIM
2	ATTACK
3	CHARGE
4	COORDINATE
5	COVER FIRE
6	DEFEND
7	DISTRACT
8	FIRE FROM COVER
9	GRAPPLING
10	INSPIRE
11	MOVE
12	RAPID FIRE
13	READY WEAPON
14	REPOSITION
15	ATTRIBUTE OR SKILL CHECK
16	SPRINT
17	SUBDUE
18	TAKE COVER

RESOLUTION

Once all combatants have taken both of their *Combat Actions*, dealt, or received damage, and after any deferred or delayed attacks take place (such as a grenade exploding, gas kicking in, or a character *Repositioning*) the *Round* is considered *Resolved* and the next *Round* begins with a fresh *Initiative* roll.

Reminder: Anyone that didn't attack and wasn't attacked in the last round gets a +1 on their next Initiative roll.

COMBAT ACTIONS

AIM

Whether a literal "looking down the barrel" or an analysis of an opponent's fighting style to find a weakness, taking *Aim* as an action gives a +2 CMod to the character's next attack against the target they have called. Although the bonus from an Aim action can carry across multiple actions and even across *Combat Rounds*, it must be immediately followed by an *Attack*, or the bonus is lost. If the character switches their target, they lose any existing *Aim* bonus.

ATTACK

No matter if it's by fist, club, gun, or rocket-launcher, any attack a character makes uses the *Attack* action. Making a second *Attack* in the same Round provides a +1 CMod as the first *Attack* helps the character zero in on their target's exact position.

CHARGE

When attempting to close the gap between themselves and an enemy, a character may choose to *Charge* at them. This uses both actions but allows a character to essentially perform two moves coupled with a Melee or Unarmed Combat *Attack*.

COORDINATE

To attempt to *Coordinate* an attack between multiple characters on a single target, one character must choose a target that they can clearly see and make a *Tactical Knowledge** or Perception check. On a Success, any ally at Close Range to the *Coordinating* character gains a +2 CMod to attacks against the target until the start of the next round. On a *Wild Success*, this carries over into the next Round as a +1 CMod.

COVER FIRE

Characters with a ranged weapon and enough ammunition can lay down *Cover Fire* to try and pin down their enemies and provide cover for an ally. Using this action requires the character to make a separate attack against each enemy they are trying to suppress. Upon a *Success*, suppressed characters suffer no damage but get a -2 CMod to their next action, attack, skill, or attribute check. Using *Cover Fire* as an action twice in the same *Round* provides a +1 CMod on the second use.

DEFEND

Often the wise move is to simply defend. Whether this is by parrying a blow, attempting to dodge a shot, or using the environment to their advantage, someone choosing to *Defend* adds +2 to their Defensive Modifiers (DM) for the next incoming *Attack*. Any character attempting to defend twice in the same *Round* against the same attacker gets a +1 CMod on the second defensive roll.

DISTRACT

Choosing an enemy at *Close Range* and making a *Successful* Intimidation, *Tactical Knowledge** or Perception check *Distracts* the enemy who then loses one of their *Combat Actions* this turn. On a *Wild Success*, they lose both of their *Actions* this turn. On a *Dire Failure*, the enemy is not fazed by this attempt to *Distract* them and actually becomes Inspired (see below).

FIRE FROM COVER

Characters who are in cover (see *Take Cover* below) can use both *Combat Actions* in one *Round* to come out of cover, fire their weapon, and return to cover without losing their Defensive Modifier advantage on incoming attacks.

GRAPPLING

One character can attempt to *Grapple* another in order to prevent them from escaping, to pin them in place, to generally reduce their effectiveness in combat, or to disarm them. A *Grappling* attempt is an *Opposed Check* and is covered in greater detail in *Grappling & Subduing* on page 122.

INSPIRE

Characters who are at *Close Range* of a friendly character or NPC may choose to make an Inspiration check. If *Successful*, the target gains an additional *Combat Action* during this round and, on a *Wild Success*, they also gain an additional action in the next *Combat Round*. On a *Dire Failure*, the attempt to Inspire goes awry and they end up *Distracting* the target instead (see *Distract* above).

MOVE

Players may use an action to *Move* and change range bands (see *Range* on page 127).

RAPID FIRE

Sometimes it is better to sacrifice quality for quantity and a character can make two rushed attacks against the same target in a single action. To reflect their haste, the first attack has a -1 CMod and the second attack has a -3 CMod.

Using this action, a character can attack four times in one round, although their aim will get progressive worse. If a character uses Rapid Fire twice in one round, on the second use they get a -2 CMod and a -4 CMod to their attacks.

READY WEAPON

Unless they have already stated that their weapon is in their hands, armed, and ready to go, characters must use a *Combat Action* to *Ready Weapon* to draw, cock, or otherwise prime their weapon for use. Characters using *Unarmed Combat* generally aren't required to *Ready Weapon* unless they are going to equip something like Brass Knuckles for use.

Some weapons are single shot (such as a bow) and require *Readying* after each use, whereas Melee weapons have an almost infinite use. However, most weapons sit somewhere in-between and when it needs reloading, a character is required to spend a *Combat Action* to *Ready Their Weapon*.

Additionally, some weapons may be inherently temperamental while others may malfunction or break due to a *Dire Failure*, requiring a character to use a *Ready Weapon* action to clear a jam or having to pull an axe free from a door.

REPOSITION

Sometimes a battle can be won by getting the higher ground or by flanking the enemy and this action allows a character to *Reposition* and attempt to get into an advantageous position for the next round.

Additionally, characters who are engaged in Unarmed Combat who wish to disengage can only do so by using Reposition to get away from their attacker.

Note: Unlike most other Actions, any Repositioning is deferred until the very end of the Combat Round, and the character moves during the Resolution phase after all other attacks and actions are complete. If multiple characters are positioning, NPCs always go before PCs.

ATTRIBUTE or SKILL CHECK

There might be times when a character needs to use a non-combat related skill while in the midst of combat, such as when trying to force open a rusted door or providing lifesaving First Aid to a fallen comrade while a firefight ensues around them. Any use of an *Attribute* or *Skill* while engaged in combat uses a single *Combat Action*.

SPRINT

Characters might occasionally need to cover a lot of ground quickly and they can use both actions to Sprint, covering 3 times the normal amount of ground in a single move. At the end of the action, the character must make a *Successful* Athletics check to avoid finding themselves out of breath and so winded they have to rest. On a *Failure*, they lose one of their *Combat Actions* in the following round, and go last in the Inititive order. On a Dire Failure, they lose 1 Resilience Point and are unable to make a *Move*, *Reposition*, *Sprint* or *Athletics* action in the following round.

SUBDUE

Similar to *Grappling*, there will be times when killing someone is not the preferred options and a character may attempt to *Subdue* their opponent. Although this functions as a normal attack roll, the amount of WP damage dealt is reduced by 50% while retaining the full amount of RP damage. See *Grappling & Subduing* on page 122 for more details.

TAKE COVER

More than just ducking, *Taking Cover* means that there is something that the character can hide behind or otherwise use as a makeshift shield to deflect an incoming attack. *Taking Cover* gives a +2 DM for all attacks that take place during that *Combat Round*.

CALLED SHOTS

Players can attempt a *Called Shot* by picking a specific part of an opponent's body (such as their head or limb) or an object (such as the gun an opponent is carrying). They must state before making the check that they are making a *Called Shot* and what they are trying to achieve, and they must get a *Wild Success* to connect, otherwise the *Attack* misses completely.

If the *Attack* connects then it is up to the player & GM to decide what happens – a successful blow to the head with a baton might knock the recipient immediately unconscious, an arrow to the leg might disable a pursuer or a pistol shot might remotely detonate a charge of C4.

INCIDENTAL ACTIONS

Incidental Actions are things that a character might do in combat that are considered to take little to no time, such as ascertaining the position of all combatants or shouting a warning to another combatant.

In addition to *Combat Actions*, each combatant gets any number of *Incidental Actions*, and it is up to the GM and the players to decide how many *Incidental Actions* make sense in any given *Combat Round*.

TACTICAL ADVANTAGES

Combat in Distemper is intended to be harsh and unforgiving. Players will need to use their brains and seize on any *Tactical Advantage* available to them in any given situation to ensure victory.

In game terms, a *Tactical Advantage* can be anything that a character does to improve their chances of getting the upper hand against an enemy. This might be by flanking an otherwise engaged enemy, getting the high ground and height advantage, using the *Tactical Knowledge** skill, or by coordinating an *Attack* with another character, but whatever form it takes, a *Tactical Advantage** gives players up to a +2 CMod.

GRAPPLING & SUBDUING

There will be times when killing someone isn't the right option and attempting to beat them into unconsciousness with a bat is just as likely to accidentally kill them as knock them out.

In situations where non-lethal (or at least, less-lethal) force might be required and using either *Grapple* or *Subdue* as a *Combat Action* might be the appropriate solution.

Characters who state they are trying to Subdue an opponent and who are using appropriate methods, such as their fists or a club, can choose to inflict 50% of the usual WP damage while retaining the full amount of RP damage. Although it is still entirely possible to kill someone when attempting to *Subdue* them, the chances of Incapacitating them are greatly improved.

For example, someone using a baton to *Subdue* someone would still roll 4+2d3 Damage, for a range of 6-10. If they rolled a 2 and a 3, they would usually inflict 4+2+3, or 9 WP damage and 9 RP damage. Because they said they were *Subduing* the target, they instead inflicted 50% of the WP damage, rounded down yet still inflict 100% of the RP damage, for a total of 4 WP and 9 RP damage.

Another option (with the added benefit that the target is more likely to remain conscious) is to *Grapple* an opponent and prevent them from getting away.

When *Grappling*, both sides should make an *Opposed Check* (see *Opposed Checks* on page 36) using any AMods or SMods appropriate to the situation. For the character Grappling, this would be Physicality and Unarmed Combat, but for the character being Grappled, they can use Physicality and Unarmed Combat or Dexterity and Dodge. The group should *Fill in the Gaps* as to

If the *Grappler* making the attempt is *Successful* and their opponent Fails, they have *Grappled* their target and inflict 1 RP damage. The target is unable to move or take part in combat until they are released.

If they *Fail* and their target was *Successful* in their roll, the *Grappler* suffers 1 RP damage, and their target remains free.

If both parties are simultaneously *Successful* or *Fail*, the *Grappling* attempt has failed, either through poor execution or better defense.

A target who is *Successfully Grappled* can use their next action to make an *Opposed Grappling* check to break free, but they are otherwise unable to move or take part in combat.

DAMAGE & HEALING

Like their real-world counterparts, characters are only able to sustain a certain amount of damage before they are either rendered unconscious or killed. Healing from wounds can take a significant amount of time and can leave a character permanently and irrevocably injured for life.

Different types of damage will impact characters in different ways but share similar mechanics. Each character has two values - Wound Points and Resilience Points - which represent their overall physical and mental health and from which damage is subtracted.

WOUND POINTS & DEATH

Wound Points (WP) represent how strong and tough a character is and how much physical damage they can sustain before they are killed.

Wound Point damage can come in various forms, usually through some kind of trauma such as falling, being smashed into by a moving vehicle, attacked with a melee weapon, getting badly burned, a gunshot wound or being caught in an explosion.

A character can also lose Wound Points in other ways, such as for drowning, inhaling some types of gasses, diseases, or being poisoned.

When a character reaches 0 Wound Points, they become both *Mortally Wounded* and *Incapacitated* (see *Resilience Points & Incapacitation* below). Unless they receive medical attention and are *Stabilized* (see page 127), the character has **4 rounds + Physicality Modifiers** until they *Die*.

Unless the character suffers a *Mortal Wound* (see below), they will naturally heal at the rate of 1 Wound Point per day of rest.

Medical care can improve that healing rate a little, but not much.

RESILIENCE POINTS & INCAPACITATION

Resilience Points (RP) represent a characters' mental fortitude and constitution, and reflect how much stress, strain and overwork they can endure before they become *Panicked* or are rendered *Incapacitated* and unable to continue.

Characters that push themselves to their limits and beyond, who are unable to catch their breath and recover from great exertion, who have seen or perhaps done terrible things, or characters facing hopeless and overwhelming odds can all suffer *Resilience Point* damage at the discretion of the GM.

All successful attacks also inflict *Resilience Point* damage. This is usually at the rate of 50% of the WP damage inflicted (rounded down). Some weapons (such as a baton) that does the same amount of RP damage as it does WP damage. See the Weapons tables on pages X-X.

When a character reaches half of their *Resilience Points* (rounded down) then there is a significant chance of them being overwhelmed by the hopelessness of the situation or their injuries, and they may find themselves *Panicking*, and they will need to roll on the *Panic Table* to see how this affects their actions (see *Panic* on page 124).

Upon reaching 0 Resilience Points, a character becomes *Incapacitated*, immediately passing out and collapsing to the ground. They will remain *Incapacitated* for 1d6 Rounds – Physicality Modifier, for a range of 1-6 rounds, with a minimum of 1 round.

Although they will recover consciousness within a short period of time, they are unable to do anything whilst they are *Incapacitated*. While *Incapacitated*, a

character takes no more additional WP or RP damage, unless they are specifically targeted by an NPC or delayed weapon effect (such as a grenade).

Upon regaining consciousness, a character recovers 1 I each Round that they are not in combat, up to half of their maximum. A PC recovers all RP with a good night's sleep.

As characters tend to have a lower RP than WP value, there is a chance that they will be Incapacitated before being *Mortally Wounded*, particularly if a blunt force object (such as a bat) or fists are being used.

FOR EXAMPLE: Alina Garcia has a RAPID Range of 01202 has 14 WP and 8 RP. She is attacked by an enemy with a club that does 5+1d6 damage and, as it causes blunt force trauma, it does 100% RP damage. The enemy does 9 WP/RP damage, Incapacitating Alina and leaving her with 5 WP. Alina will take no further damage unless the enemy expressly decides to cave his skull in while unconscious.

Luckily, Alina survives and recovers 4 Resilience Points over the course of the next 4 rounds, as she suffers no further injuries. She would have to make up the rest of their Resilience points defect by resting overnight.

PANICKING

Resilience Points are a reflection of a character's fortitude and their ability to handle stress in high-pressure situations.

The more *Resilience Point* damage a character suffers, the more difficult it becomes to retain control as they are adversely impacted and affected by what is going on around them. This can potentially cause them to have a panic attack, rendering them temporarily useless.

If a character is reduced to half of their RP total (rounded down) as a result of combat or other injury, there is a good chance that they will panic and act in an unexpected and uncharacteristic manner. To avoid *Panicking*, a character must make a *Successful* Reason, Inspiration or *Psychology** check.

On a *Wild Success*, they rally and recover 2 RP.

If they *Fail* this check then they have *Panicked*. The character must fill in a *Stress box* towards their *Breaking Point* (see *Breaking Point* on page 178) and, additionally, roll 2d6 and compare the outcome to *Table 10: Panic Effects*.

On a *Dire Failure*, the character instantly becomes *Catatonic* until combat is over, and they must fill in two *Stress boxes* towards their *Breaking Point*.

Until combat is complete, the character must make an additional *Panic* check each time they sustain more damage.

TABLE 9: PANIC EFFECTS		
2	CATATONIC	CHARACTER FALLS TO THE GROUND AND IS UNABLE TO MOVE FOR 1D3 ROUNDS
3	SEVERE ANXIETY	CHARACTER IS UNABLE TO TAKE ANY COMBAT ACTIONS FOR 1D3 ROUNDS
4	RATTLED	UNABLE TO FOCUS PROPERLY, −2 ON NEXT INITIATIVE ROLL
5	OUTBURST	CHARACTER STARTS TO VERBALLY ATTACK OR BLAME SOMEONE CLOSE BY
6	INTIMIDATED	CHARACTER RECEIVES A −3 CMOD ON ATTACKS FOR THE NEXT 1D3 ROUNDS
7	TWITCH	UNABLE TO CONTROL THEIR SPAMS, −2 CMOD ON ALL ATTACKS FOR 1D3 ROUNDS
8	LOOSE GRIP	WHATEVER THEY ARE HOLDING, THEY DROP
9	FROZEN IN PLACE	CHARACTER LOSES THEIR ACTIONS FOR THE NEXT ROUND
10	SCREAM	CHARACTER SPENDS THE NEXT ROUND SCREAMING, OBLIVIOUS TO EVERYTHING
11	ESCAPE	THE CHARACTER DISENGAGES AND ATTEMPTS TO GET OUT OF RANGE OF COMBAT
12	BERSERK	THE CHARACTER ATTEMPTS TO ATTACK THE CLOSEST NPC OR PC

DAMAGE

Damage is weapon specific and is usually reflective of the weapon type but can also be idiosyncratic to the individual weapon.

FOR EXAMPLE: each Light Pistol does the same amount of damage but a particularly well (or poorly) maintained Light Pistol, or one that had a Hair Trigger modification (see v0.8), or one loaded with dum-dum rounds might have a vagary assigned to how much damage they do or their overall effectiveness in combat.

To a greater or lesser degree, all weapons inflict both WP & RP damage, with edged and ranged weapons generally inflicting more Wound Point than Resilience Point Damage.

However, certain types of weapons or actions – such as concussive or falling or blunt-force or drowning – will inflict the same amount of RP as WP damage. It should always be remembered that incoming damage is offset by *Defensive Modifiers* (see page 45).

Weapons have both a base and a variable damage value to reflect the fluid dynamic of each combat situation and because no two wounds are exactly alike.

FOR EXAMPLE: a Shotgun is listed as doing 5+2d6 WP damage. This means that each time a character is shot with one, they will take 5 base damage and 2d6 of variable damage. This provides a total range of 7 to 17 WP.

As mentioned above, depending on the type of weapon used, each attack also inflicts anywhere from half to the full amount of the Wound Point damage as Resilience Point damage. The amount of RP damage inflicted is listed on the Weapons chart and for weapons dealing 50% RP damage, it is rounded down.

This means that a successful Light Pistol attack that does 5 WP damage also does 2 RP damage, whereas a Successful attack with a Club attack that does 7 WP damage also deals 100% RP damage thereby inflicting 7 RP damage.

Certain weapons will also have *Special Damage* types (such as Flamethrowers) or deal damage in a specific way, and they are covered in the *Special Damage* section.

Armor can provide some protection from damage and adds both a DMM and DMR for the wearer. See *Chapter 7: What Do You Have?* for more details

HEALING

All injured characters will heal naturally over time, but the rate and extent to which they heal is affected by how badly they were wounded.

A character who suffered damage during combat but was not *Mortally Wounded* heals at the rate of 1 WP per day. If a character is in a halfway decent medical facility and under the care of a medical professional with either a Doctors' Bag or First Aid Kit who makes a Successful First Aid or *Surgery** check, this effectively doubles their healing, and they recover at the rate of 2 WP a day.

However, if the character was *Mortally Wounded* as a result of combat, then their wounds are considered to be potentially more severe with the chance of lasting damage.

As part of this recovery process, they heal at half of the normal rate, and it takes two days of rest and recuperation to heal 1 WP. Under the eyes of a medical professional with a Doctors' Bag who makes a success First Aid or *Surgery** check, they heal at the normal rate of 1 WP a day.

Someone attempting to provide medical care to an injured

HEALING SUPPLIES

Knowledge alone isn't enough to heal someone, and characters are going to need to find some form of medicines if they are looking to survive. Although this might come in the form of certain pieces of equipment such as a First Aid Kit or Doctors bag (see *Table 16: Misc. Equipment* page 131), players made need to find or even create their own medicines and supplies.

Although many have already been stripped clean long ago, characters searching for medical supplies may be able to Scavenge them in hospitals, doctors' offices, military bases, and other similar locations.

Other characters who have *Pharmacology**, Research, Survival, *Surgery**, or General Knowledge might be able to source or mix chemical compounds, or natural, herbalist remedies, depending on the setting.

character without any medical supplies can make a First Aid or *Surgery** check and, on a *Wild Success*, the recovering character heals as if they do have the supplies.

On a *Dire Failure*, there is a good chance that the character causes more damage or exacerbates the existing injuries, possibly even causing an Infection (see below).

Characters who have been *Mortally Wounded* will need to check and see if they have *Lasting Wounds* (see below).

Any character who was cut or shot during combat will also need to check for *Infections* while healing (see below).

With the exception of *Stabilizing* someone, healing checks cannot be made during combat.

STABILIZING

Characters who have had their *Wound Points* reduced to 0 damage become *Mortally Wounded*. Unless their condition is *Stabilized*, they will *Die* within **4 Rounds + Physicality Modifiers** (a range for 2-8 rounds).

This emergency help can be provided by anyone who makes a successful First Aid or *Surgery** roll or who gets a *Wild Success* on a Reason or General Knowledge check. If successful, they are able to stabilize the *Mortally Wounded* patient, who remains *Incapacitated* for **1d6 Rounds-PHY Modifier** (for a range of 1-3 rounds).

If the attempt to *Stabilize* the character takes place during combat, it requires the use of both of the characters actions. Only one attempt can be made to stabilize a character in any round.

RESTING

To recover *Resilience Points*, characters need to take time to *Rest*. Although the exact definition of Resting is open to interpretation by the GM, it most often means sleeping or, at the very least, sitting still and with no exertion.

There might be times when the character can take care of light duties such as cooking or mending weapons, but they must remain relatively sedentary, and not move or expend a great deal of energy.

INFECTION

If a character was shot, stabbed, or cut during combat then there is a chance that their wounds might become infected. Once combat is done, characters who suffered that kind of damage must make a Physicality check to see if their wound becomes *Infected*.

On a Failure, the character will become sick for 1d3 days and need to be able to rest and recuperate somewhere relatively warm and dry. If they *Fail*, they must make another Physicality check to avoid suffering *Lasting Wounds* (see below).

On a *Dire Failure*, the character is sick for 1d6 days and automatically suffers a Lasting Wound.

FALLING DAMAGE

Damage from falling can be lethal, and players suffer 3 points of both WP and RP damage for each 10' that they fall.

The GM may allow a falling character who gets a *Wild Success* on an Athletics check to somehow twist or grab or otherwise mitigate damage from falling, but players had better be prepared to *Fill in The Gaps* as to how.

DROWNING

Characters who are fully submerged in water can hold their breath for **6 Rounds + PHY Modifie**r, for a range for 4 to 10 rounds. If they remain under water, they must get a Success on a Physicality check each round or suffer 3 WP and RP of damage. Each time they *Successfully* make this check, they will get a -1 CMod toward their next attempt.

If that character reaches 0 WP, they will become *Incapacitated* (see above) and unless rescued, they will drown and *Die*.

Similar to Stabilizing, a character attempting to aid another character who became Mortally Wounded due to Drowning damage must make a Successful First Aid, *Surgery**, General Knowledge, or Survival check to provide the right kind of CPR and get them breathing again.

A *Dire Failure* means they may have cracked a rib or made things worse.
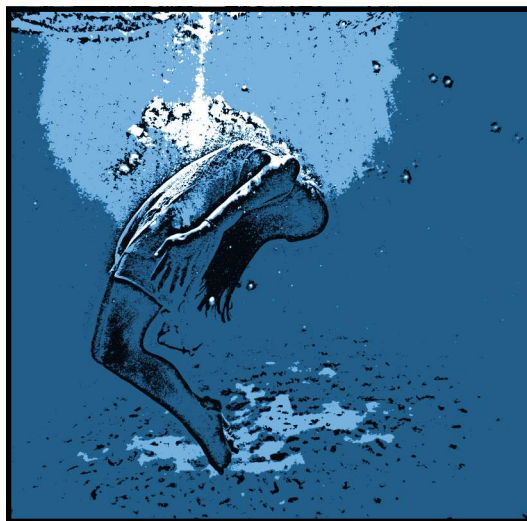
SICKNESS AND DISEASE

In the wake of the Dog Flu, disease and pestilence remain rife. Although a year on, most of the dead bodies have liquefied, the germs and danger remain prevalent. Characters who are exposed to particularly toxic conditions, such as being thrown into a pit of dead bodies, may need to make a Physicality check to avoid getting a disease.

If they do become sick on infected, they must make a successful Physicality check to avoid becoming progressively unwell for 1d6 days, at which point they become *Incapacitated* and *Mortally Wounded*. If this happens, they will need to make a successful Physicality check or suffer a *Lasting Wound* as a result of their sickness.

SPECIAL DAMAGE

Some weapon types have specific damage or effects and are listed on the Weapons table in the Weapons & Equipment chapter.

This includes weapons such as a Flamethrower that continues to burn over time, or a gas that will knock a PC out without killing them.

SUBSISTENCE DAMAGE

PCs need to eat and drink at regular intervals in order to stay healthy. A character can go two days without eating or drinking with no adverse impact but on the third and subsequent days of not eating, they take Subsistence damage at the rate of 1 WP and 1 RP per day.

If they drop to 0 RP, they are too weak to move and become *Incapacitated*. At 0 WP, they become *Mortally Wounded* and will *Die* unless they are resuscitated by someone.

As with other types of *Death*, this can be staved off by surrendering *Distemper Dice* (see page 37). Players are able to last for an additional number of days equivalent to how many *Distemper Dice* they surrender.

Assuming the players find a food source – tinned goods, plants, fruit, vegetables, game, fowl, or fish – they start to heal at a rate of 1 WP and 1 RP per day until they are at full health again.

Players that have become *Incapacitated* in this manner will need to be fed by another character until they heal enough to look after themselves.

LASTING WOUNDS

Characters who are injured severely enough may suffer the long-term effects of the damage.

Once combat is done, a character who was *Mortally Wounded* needs to make a successful Physicality role to avoid taking *Lasting Damage*. If they fail the check then they must roll 2d6 and suffer the corresponding injury, as listed on *Table 10: Lasting Wounds*.

This damage will usually have an irrevocable ingame consequence, such as *Losing an Eye*, which causes a lack of depth perception and brings a -1 on certain rolls that require hand-eye coordination.

Although the player and GM may be able to Make The Case as to a reason why it would be possible to heal from this wound over time, generally these are untreatable. The GM will need to work with the group to build a storyline that explains how this healing takes place.

It is quite possible that a character gets more than one *Lasting Wound* if they are in combat often, and they can receive the same result multiple times. If this happens, the results are compounded and so getting *Minor Brain Damage*, which inflicts -1 on all Reason checks, for a second time would mean that character incurs -2 on all Reason checks.

TABLE 10: LASTING WOUNDS		
2	LOST EYE	−1 ON ACU & DEX CHECKS
3	MINOR BRAIN INJURY	−1 REASON
4	LAME	−1 DEXTERITY
5	SHAKEN	−1 MAX RP
6	WEAKENED	−1 MAX WP
7	HEARING LOSS	−1 ACUMEN
8	SCARRING	−1 INFLUENCE
9	FRAGILE	−1 PHYSICALITY
10	SKITTISH	−1 INITIATIVE MOD
11	CRIPPLED	−2 DEXTERITY
12	SHELL SHOCK	−2 MAX RP

RANGE

Range is an important factor to be taken into consideration during combat and it is handled in an abstract manner. Rather than have absolute distances that require measurement, each character's position to another is relative.

The Range bands are *Engaged, Close, Medium, Long and Distant*, with each band having a value that ranges from 2-6, as laid out on *Table 11: Range Bands* and described below.

To move between bands takes the same number of combat rounds

TABLE 11: RANGE BANDS	
1	ENGAGED (+1)
2	CLOSE (+2)
3	MEDIUM (+3)
4	LONG (+4)
5	DISTANT (+5)

as the sum of the bands being covered. This means it takes:

- 1 Round to move from Engaged to Close
- 3 rounds to move from Engaged to Medium
- 6 rounds to move from Engaged to Long
- 10 rounds to move from Engaged to Distant

ENGAGED: Close enough to wrestle, Engaged combat gives a +1 CMod to Melee attacks and a -1 to Ranged attacks.

For VTTs: Less than 5' away

CLOSE: If you can still taunt and threaten your opponent, then combat is at Close range. Melee combat can only take place with a weapon that has an Extended Melee Attack (such as a Spear) and suffers a -1 CMod penalty.

Close Range is ideal for Pistols, although any type of Ranged Weapon gets a +1 Range CMod to an attack.

For VTTs: Somewhere between 5-15'

MEDIUM: Far enough away that a pistol shot would be wasted without taking aim but close enough to throw a grenade, Medium range gives no Modifiers to any attack and is perfect for carbines or a bow.

For VTTs: Somewhere between 15'-75'

LONG: Too far for an accurate pistol shot but perfect for Rifles, being at long range gives a -5 to any pistol shot but a +1 to a Rifle shot.

For VTTs: Somewhere between 75'-150'

DISTANT: Far enough away that characters will not be able to hear each other without radio equipment and may not even be able to see one another clearly. Only someone with a Hunting Rifle equipped with a score or a Sniper's Rifle can strike from this range.

For VTTs: Anything further than 150'

HANDLING CHARACTER DEATH

As part of *Session Xero*, the group should agree how they want to handle death within the game.

Combat in *Distemper* is intentionally designed to be deadly and as players can - and should! - get very attached to their characters, losing them can be hard and for some and in some cases, almost game breaking.

There are a few considerations for the group around how character death should be handled.

1. Actions have consequences. *Distemper* was designed to be deadly and unforgiving and if players take wild and unnecessary risks, they should expect their character to die. However, it is up to the GM to make sure that a player who is being foolhardy understands the risks they are taking before they take them.

2. Death is inevitable in this new world. The best anyone can hope for is that their death is meaningful and when it does happen, the player should take the opportunity to *Fill in the Gaps* and further the collective narrative.

3. The only escape from *Death* is that a player surrenders all their Distemper Dice in exchange for 1 WP and 1 RP per dice surrendered.

4. At a GMs discretion, if the character killed has no *Distemper Dice*, the group may be allowed to surrender **all** their *Distemper Dice* to prevent this one character's death. The number of dice surrendered is non-negotiable and every *Distemper Dice* at the table goes back to the GM.

When a character does die, the group should discuss how to replace the player character. This can be handled in a few different ways.

1. If the player has an *Apprentice* (see page 190), they can choose to play them as their main character and then attempt to recruit a new *Apprentice*.

2. If the player doesn't have an *Apprentice*, they can choose to elevate an NPC that is associated with the group and pick a Paradigm or Profession that matches what the players know of them

3. The player can go through *Backstory Generation* or *Pick A Paradigm* and create a new character

4. The player can pick a Pregenerated Character, change their name if they wish, and start using that.

NOTE: Like in life, death is a meaningful consequence in *Distemper* and for the good of the game, GMs should resist the temptation to fudge results to keep a character alive, except in extraordinary circumstances. Instead, they should take the opposite to work with the players and *Fill in the Gaps* to make the character's death heroic, meaningful, and memorable.

No matter how death is handled, remember Rule Xero - to ensure the whole group is always having fun - and it is up to everyone present to ensure that a character's death doesn't bog downplay or become a negative play experience for anyone at the table.

Chapter 7: What Do You Have?

In good working order, the right weapons & equipment can be the literal difference between life and death for characters in *Distemper*.

Although there are still many valuable items for the players to find, nothing new is being produced - at least, not mass-produced - and caring for their weapons and equipment will be a necessity if they are hoping for any kind of longevity.

Characters with the right skills might be able to craft their own weapons, but finding the components needed, or the facilities and tools to build them will bring their own unique set of challenges.

Each character starts the game with a Primary and a Secondary Weapons picked from the Weapons lists on pages 130-131. If they choose a firearm or something else that requires ammunition then they also get 1d6 rounds of ammo, which they should note on their character sheet. Given the relative scarcity of ammunition in the world, it is a wise choice for characters to pick at least one Melee weapon or take a ranged weapon with less restrictive ammunition requirements (such as a Slingshot or Bow), or choose to develop their Unarmed Combat abilities (see *Ranged vs Melee vs Unarmed Combat* on page 135 for more details) so that they have some degree of self-reliance.

In addition to weapons, each character gets a Basic Survival Kit that includes a *Tent* and a *Sleeping Bag.* They also get 2 *Rations*, enough for a character to eat and remain healthy for 2 days (see *Rations* on Page 136).

They may also pick one piece of equipment from **Table 16: Misc Equipment** on page 131. This is generally something that will provide some benefit to the character although it's usually in a non-combat related way, such as a pair of binoculars, a walkie-talkie, or a toolkit.

Lastly, players may pick one personal, miscellaneous *Incidental Item* that may be useful in helping them bring their character to life. This might be the photo of a dead loved one that relates to the characters background and without which they lose their mind, or it could be something that helps the player breathe some ingame personality into their character, such as a deck of playing cards or dice. It might even provide some small, tangible benefit that makes gameplay easier but provides no combat value, such as a Zippo lighter or compass. Examples are given in Table 17 on page 131.

The only hard limitation on what a player may choose is how much they can carry, as determined by their *Encumbrance* (see *Encumbrance* on page 45). Although a character can carry more than their *Encumbrance* limit during the course of play, they can only start the game deliberately over encumbered if the GM believes it serves the narrative.

Additionally, the GM may decide to place additional limitations based on or related to the setting – perhaps the characters have been living on a farm together and waiting the pandemic out, meaning that they obviously won't have access to military grade equipment.

All weapons and equipment are considered to be in Used Condition when the game starts unless the the group can *Make the Case* as to why they have brand new equipment.
See *Item Condition* on page 132.

It is important to make a note of all the weapons, ammo, equipment, rations, and Incidental Items on your character sheet, because if you don't have it written on your sheet, your character doesn't have it in the game. The only workaround to this is spending a *Distemper Dice* (see *Distemper Dice* on page 37) to bend reality and miraculously find it.

Each Paradigm begins with weapons and equipment designed to match their skillset and theme, but these should be considered as simple guidelines for enabling rapid gameplay and players are encouraged to tailor their load-out to their own tastes. As with other characters,

Paradigms start with 1d6 ammo for any Ranged weapon.

A complete list of weapons, equipment, armor, and rations can be found on the charts on pages 130-131.
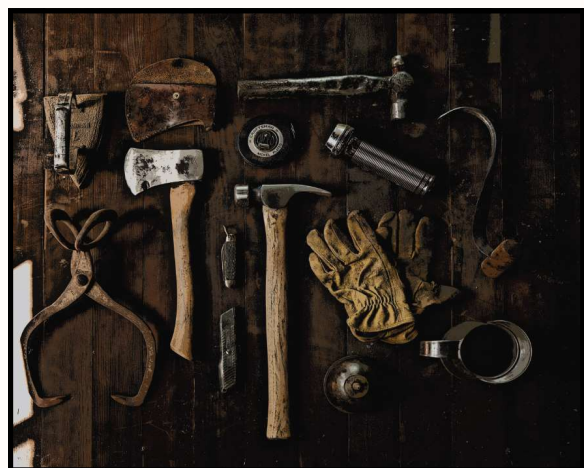
Table 12: Melee Weapons

NAME	TYPE	SKILL	RANGE	RARITY	WP	RP	ENC	NOTES
BASEBALL BAT	MELEE	MELEE	CLOSE	COMMON	4 + 1D6	100%	1	
BRASS KNUCKLES	MELEE	UNARMED	ENGAGED	UNCOMMON	1	100%	0	+1 WP DAMAGE TO UNARMED COMBAT. REQUIRES A READY WEAPON ACTION TO EQUIP
BULLWHIP	MELEE	ATHLETICS	CLOSE	UNCOMMON	1+1D3	100%	1	REQUIRES DEX OF 2 TO USE OR −1 CMOD. CAN DISARM AN OPPONENT ON A WILD SUCCESS, REQUIRING THEM TO READY WEAPON BEFORE USE
CLUB	MELEE	MELEE	ENGAGED	COMMON	5 + 1D6	100%	2	REQUIRES PHY OF 1 TO USE OR −2 CMOD ON ATTACKS
FIRE AXE	MELEE	MELEE	CLOSE	UNCOMMON	3 + 2D3	50%	1	
HATCHET	MELEE	MELEE	ENGAGED	COMMON	3 + 1D6	50%	1	
HUNTING KNIFE	MELEE	MELEE	ENGAGED	COMMON	2 + 2D3	50%	0	REQUIRES DEX OF 1 TO USE OR −2 CMOD
KITCHEN KNIFE	MELEE	MELEE	ENGAGED	COMMON	2 + 1D3	50%	0	
MACHETE	MELEE	MELEE	CLOSE	UNCOMMON	3 + 2D3	50%	1	
MAKESHIFT CLUB	MELEE	MELEE	CLOSE	COMMON	3 + 1D3	100%	1	
SLEDGEHAMMER	MELEE	MELEE	ENGAGED	UNCOMMON	3 + 3D3	100%	2	REQUIRES PHY OF 2 TO USE OR −3 CMOD
SPEAR	MELEE	MELEE	CLOSE	UNCOMMON	2 + 2D6	50%	2	REQUIRES PHY & DEX OF 1 TO USE OR −3 CMOD
STAFF	MELEE	MELEE	CLOSE	COMMON	2+2D3	100%	2	REQUIRES DEX OF 1 TO USE OR −2 CMOD
SWORD	MELEE	MELEE	ENGAGED	UNCOMMON	3 + 3D3	50%	1	
TACTICAL BATON	MELEE	MELEE	ENGAGED	UNCOMMON	4 + 2D3	100%	1	
WOOD AXE	MELEE	MELEE	CLOSE	COMMON	5 + 1D3	50%	2	REQUIRES PHY OF 1 TO USE OR −3 CMOD

Table 13: Ranged Weapons

NAME	TYPE	SKILL	RANGE	RARITY	WP	RP	ENC	AMMO	NOTES
AUTOMATIC RIFLE	RANGED	RANGED	LONG	UNCOMMON	5 + 2D6	50%	2	30	AUTOMATIC BURST: HITS OTHER CHARACTERS AT ENGAGED RANGE OF THE TARGET
BLACK POWDER RIFLE	RANGED	RANGED	LONG	UNCOMMON	5 + 1D6	50%	2	1	
BOW	RANGED	RANGED	MEDIUM	COMMON	4 + 1D6	50%	1	1	BOW & ARROWS CAN BE CRAFTED
CARBINE	RANGED	RANGED	MEDIUM	UNCOMMON	5 + 1D6	50%	1	30	AUTOMATIC BURST: HITS OTHER CHARACTERS AT ENGAGED RANGE OF THE TARGET
COMPOUND BOW	RANGED	RANGED	LONG	UNCOMMON	4 + 2D3	50%	2	1	ARROWS CAN BE CRAFTED
CROSSBOW	RANGED	RANGED	MEDIUM	UNCOMMON	4 + 1D6	50%	2	1	BOLTS CAN BE REUSED IF THEY ARE RECOVERED
HEAVY PISTOL	RANGED	RANGED	CLOSE	UNCOMMON	3 + 2D3	50%	1	9	
HUNTING RIFLE	RANGED	RANGED	LONG	COMMON	5 + 1D6	50%	2	12	CAN BE EQUIPPED WITH SCOPE FOR A +1 CMOD; −3 AT CLOSE & ENGAGED
LIGHT PISTOL	RANGED	RANGED	CLOSE	COMMON	3 + 1D6	50%	1	6	
SAWED OFF	RANGED	RANGED	CLOSE	UNCOMMON	2 + 3D6	50%	2	2	+2 DAMAGE AT ENGAGED RANGE, HITS TARGETS GROUPED AT ENGAGED RANGE OF THE TARGET
SHOTGUN	RANGED	RANGED	MEDIUM	COMMON	5 + 2D6	50%	2	5	HITS GROUPED TARGETS AT ENGAGED RANGE OF THE TARGET
SLING-SHOT	RANGED	RANGED	SHORT	COMMON	1+1D3	100%	0	1	MUNDANE, COMMON ITEMS SUCH AS STONES CAN BE AMMO
SNIPER'S RIFLE	RANGED	RANGED	DISTANT	RARE	2 + 3D6	50%	2	10	SCOPE GIVES A +3 CMOD AT DISTANT; −3 AT CLOSE & ENGAGED
TASER	RANGED	RANGED	CLOSE	UNCOMMON	0	100%	2	−	A SUCCESSFUL ATTACK INCAPACITATES THE TARGET FOR THE REMAINDER OF THAT TURN AND REQUIRES A SUCCESSFUL PHY CHECK OR THEY ARE SHOCKED FOR 1 ADDITIONAL TURN

Table 14: Explosive Weapons

NAME	TYPE	SKILL	RANGE	RARITY	WP	RP	ENC	AMMO	NOTES
GRENADE	EXPLOSIVE	ATHLETICS	CLOSE	UNCOMMON	2 + 2D6	100%	0	1	FULL DAMAGE AT ENGAGED, 50% AT CLOSE, 25% AT CLOSE RANGE
MORTAR	EXPLOSIVE	DEMOLITIONS*	DISTANT	RARE	5 + 2D6	100%	2	1	FULL DAMAGE AT ENGAGED, 50% AT CLOSE, 25% AT CLOSE RANGE
ROCKET LAUNCHER	EXPLOSIVE	DEMOLITIONS*	DISTANT	RARE	3 + 3D6	100%	3	1	FULL DAMAGE AT ENGAGED, 50% AT CLOSE, 25% AT CLOSE RANGE

Table 15: Special Weapons

NAME	TYPE	SKILL	RANGE	RARITY	WP	RP	ENC	AMMO	NOTES
FLAME-THROWER	SPECIAL	DEMOLITIONS*	CLOSE	RARE	3 + 2D6	100%	2	1	BURNING DAMAGE: 1 WP/RP PER ROUND FOR 3 ROUNDS
MOLOTOV COCKTAIL	SPECIAL	ATHLETICS	CLOSE	UNCOMMON	1 + 1D3	100%	0	1	DETONATES IMMEDIATELY ON A FAILURE; BURNING DAMAGE: 1 WP/RP PER ROUND FOR 3 ROUNDS
TRANQUILIZER GUN	SPECIAL	RANGED	MEDIUM	RARE	0	100%	1	1	2 RP DAMAGE PER ROUND FOR 3 ROUNDS; ON A WILD SUCCESS, IT'S AN INSTANT KNOCKOUT FOR 1D6 – PHY MOD ROUNDS; CAN ALSO BE LOADED WITH POISONS

Table 16: Misc. Equipment

NAME	TYPE	ENC	NOTES
BACKPACK	COMMON	1	+4 ENCUMBRANCE
BASIC ANGLER'S KIT	COMMON	1	+1 TO FISHING ATTEMPTS
BASIC SURVIVAL KIT	COMMON	2	TENT, SLEEPING BAG, 2 DAYS OF RATIONS (ENC IS 1, WITHOUT RATIONS)
BICYCLE REPAIR KIT	COMMON	0	
BINOCULARS	COMMON	1	+1 PERCEPTION CHECK WHEN AT LONG OR DISTANT RANGE
DOCTOR'S BAG	UNCOMMON	1	+2 TO ANY FIRST AID OR SURGERY CHECK; HEALS 1+2D3 OVER A 24 HOUR PERIOD
FIRE-STARTING KIT	UNCOMMON	0	
FIRST AID KIT	COMMON	1	+1 TO ANY FIRST AID CHECK; HEALS 1+1D3 OVER A 24 HOUR PERIOD
FLASHBANG	UNCOMMON	1	AFFECTS ALL CHARACTERS AT CLOSE RANGE, REQUIRES A PHY CHECK OR TARGET IS BLINDED FOR 1D3 ROUNDS
FLASHLIGHT	COMMON	0	
GRAPPLING HOOK	UNCOMMON	1	+1 TO ATHLETICS CHECKS WHEN CLIMBING
INSTANT CAMERA	UNCOMMON	1	6 CHARGES, +1 CHARM WHEN USED ON PEOPLE IN PICTURES
HORSESHOE TOOLS	UNCOMMON	1	
LOUDSPEAKER	UNCOMMON	1	+1 INTIMIDATE OR INSPIRATION CHECKS
PROFESSIONAL ANGLER'S SET	UNCOMMON	1	+2 TO FISHING ATTEMPTS
ROAD FLARE	COMMON	1	
ROPE	COMMON	1	
SMOKE GRENADE	UNCOMMON	1	CHARACTERS AT CLOSE RANGE TO THE EXPLOSION MUST MAKE A PHY CHECK OR BE BLINDED FOR 1D3 ROUNDS
SURVIVALISTS KIT	UNCOMMON	2	WATERPROOF TENT, SLEEPING BAG, FIRE-STARTING KIT, 7 DAYS OF RATIONS
STANDARD LOCK-PICKS	UNCOMMON	0	+2 TO LOCK PICKING ATTEMPTS
CRIMINAL LOCK-PICKS	UNCOMMON	0	+1 TO LOCK PICKING ATTEMPTS
HUNTING TRAPS	COMMON	1	
TOOLKIT	COMMON	1	+1 MECHANICS* CHECK
WALKIE-TALKIES	UNCOMMON	1	ALLOWS CHARACTERS TO COMMUNICATE UP TO A RANGE OF 20 MILES
WEAPONS TOOLKIT	UNCOMMON	1	REQUIRED FOR WEAPONS MAINTENANCE AND REPAIRS
WORKMAN'S TOOLKIT	UNCOMMON	1	+2 MECHANICS* CHECK

Table 17: Incidental Equipment

NAME	TYPE	ENC	NOTES
ZIPPO LIGHTER	INCIDENTAL	0	
DISPOSABLE LIGHTERS	INCIDENTAL	0	
MAP OF AREA	INCIDENTAL	0	
PERSONAL ITEM (PHOTO)	INCIDENTAL	0	
WALKMAN	INCIDENTAL	0	
EYE GLASSES	INCIDENTAL	0	
DECK OF PLAYING CARDS	INCIDENTAL	0	
MUSICAL INSTRUMENT	INCIDENTAL	1	+1 ENTERTAINMENT OR INSPIRATION ATTEMPTS
POCKET KNIFE	INCIDENTAL	1	

Table 18: Armor

NAME	TYPE	ENC	DM	NOTES
CHAINMAIL	UNCOMMON	2	3	REQUIRES PHY OF 1 TO USE OR –1 CMOD TO ALL MOVEMENT BASED ACTIONS
LEATHER	COMMON	1	1	
MAKESHIFT SHIELD	COMMON	1	1	
METAL HELMET	UNCOMMON	0	1	
PLATE STEEL	COMMON	3	4	REQUIRES PHY OF 1 TO USE OR –2 CMOD TO ALL MOVEMENT BASED ACTIONS
RIOT GEAR	UNCOMMON	2	2	
RIOT SHIELD	UNCOMMON	1	2	
TACTICAL	UNCOMMON	1	2	

Table 19: Rations

NAME	TYPE	ENC	DAYS	NOTES
STANDARD	COMMON	0.5	1	
LUXURY	UNCOMMON	0.5	2	
MILITARY GRADE	UNCOMMON	0.25	1	

ITEM CONDITION

Each weapon, piece of armor, item of equipment or method of transportation has a limited lifespan and will degrade over time and with usage. Although a character can recharge, maintain, or even repair some of their belongings, there are certain items that cannot be repaired if broken (to say nothing of a shortage of people with the skills to fix things) and players should expect everything to irreparably break at some point.

TABLE 20: ITEM CONDITION	
1	PRISTINE
2	USED
3	WORN
4	DAMAGED
5	BROKEN

Each weapon, piece of equipment, and item of armor is in one of five Condition states - *Pristine, Used, Worn, Damaged* or *Broken*, as laid out on **Table 20: Item Condition** and described in the *Weapon & Item Condition* sidebar.

The condition state will change over time as the item is used, as it takes damage, if it is misused, or as the result of *Dire Failures*.

Eventually, without regular maintenance, the condition of any item will be reduced to *Broken*, at which point it is functionally useless unless someone has the skills and equipment to repair it again.

UPKEEP, & DETERIORATION

Although all equipment is *Pristine* when produced, this assumes the item is brand-new and has never been used or subjected to rough handling. Most of the items found, looted, or scavenged by characters will be, at best, *Used*, if not *Worn* or *Damaged*, to reflect use, damage, or a general lack of care by the previous owners. It is up to the GM to decide, depending on where and how the item was found, the condition the item is in.

FOR EXAMPLE: if a character picks up a fallen opponent's weapon during a firefight, the GM might decide that the item is that item is more likely to be *Worn* than a gun which has been looted from the drawer next to a dead man's bed, which might only be *Used*.

When a weapon or piece of equipment has been used as part of the narrative, it requires some form of maintenance or it's condition will drop down to the next state. Similarly, if an item is in use and the character gets a *Dire Failure*, the item drops two levels of condition.

Although what constitutes *has been used as part of the narrative* is open to interpretation, as a rule of thumb it should be an event, rather than an action. This means that rather than each single shot from a pistol being considered a use, it would be a combat engagement, or even the entirely of an encounter, that would require the maintenance check to ensure it's clean and ready to use again. Similarly, spending a night in a tent would require no check,

WEAPON & ITEM CONDITION

During their lifetime, all items are in one of 5 conditions, *Pristine, Used, Worn, Damaged* or *Broken*, as described below.

PRISTINE: Any item that has not been used and is effectively still in its wrapper or box is considered *Pristine*. It is not prone to misfiring or breaking, and is working as the designer or creator has intended. After one or two uses, the item is considered to be *Used*.

Items cannot be returned to *Pristine* condition once they are *Used*.

USED: An item that has been used multiple times but is still considered to be in great working order with no concerns for the user is considered Used.

WORN: Once an item has been in service for a while and has some nicks and scrapes to prove it, it is considered *Worn*. Although the item really isn't in danger of misfiring or breaking while in use, the owner will need to provide enough upkeep to make sure its condition doesn't drop any further.

DAMAGED: When an item has been used repeatedly and possibly handled roughly, when it's effectiveness, efficiency or reliability are in question, it is considered *Damaged*.

A *Damaged* item will generally continue to function, but any skill check involving the use of it incurs a -1 CMod until it is repaired back to at least a *Worn* condition.

A *Dire Failure* while using a *Damaged* item immediately changes its condition to *Broken*.

BROKEN: If it even functions at all, it clearly no longer works as intended and *Broken* items are one repair attempt away from being discarded.

Someone with Level 3 in a relevant skill can attempt to repair a Broken item to *Damaged*, but it can never be repaired to *Worn* or *Used* again.

UPKEEP CHECKS

All items require some form of occasional but regular *Upkeep Check* to prevent them from dropping down a rank of condition (see *Table 20: Item Condition*).

Various skills can be used to attempt the check depending on the item involved, such as Ranged Combat for guns or *Vehicle** Mechanics for cars. Characters must have at least 1 level in that Skill.

On a Success the item remains at the same level and on a failure, it drops one rank. On a Wild Success, the condition improves one rank and on a Dire Failure, the item is immediately Broken.

but if the player is sleeping rough for a week as they move between places, a check should be made to ensure they have folded and stored their kit correctly, and not damaged or ripped any of the parts.

Every time an item is used, damaged, misfires, or fails due to a Dire Failure, the player should make a *Upkeep Check* to ensure it's still working as intended. If they are Successful, the condition remains the same, and on a Wild Success, the item gains an additional level of condition (although it can never go above *Used* in such a manner).

If they fail, the Condition of that item should be reduced by a level, two levels on a Dire Failure.

A *Moment of High Insight* restores the item to being *Used*, no matter it's previous condition and a *Moment of Low Insight* reduces the item to being *Broken*.

If an item ever becomes *Broken*, it is non-functioning, and can no longer be used for its original purpose. Unless a character gets a Wild Success on an *Upkeep Check*, the item remains broken beyond all hope of repair.

Characters trying to maintain weapons or equipment must attempt a Skill check that is related to the specific item, such as Ranged Combat, Melee Combat, Tinkerer, or *Armorsmith** for weapons or Hunting or Survival for an Angling kit, and they must have at least 1 level in that Skill to attempt this upkeep. The exact skills used should be agreed on by the group but may be fairly broad.

FOR EXAMPLE: in order to clean and maintain firearms, a character must have at least one level in Ranged Combat, Tactical Knowledge*, Weaponsmith*, or Tinkerer.

If a character fails this attempt, the condition of the item is reduced by one level, and upon a Dire Fail, the item is instantly reduced to *Broken*.

Unlike many ranged weapons which, with the right upkeep, can last indefinitely, all but the most highly crafted melee weapons will eventually break. A pistol which is cleaned regularly and properly cared for might last decades, but a baseball bat can only crack so many skulls before it's weakened too much to be useful.

Whilst most melee weapons can be maintained by a lay person, it requires professional training to repair them. A Successful Upkeep Check using Melee Combat, Tactical Knowledge, Tinker, or *Weaponsmith** check is required after use to ensure that the weapon doesn't lose a level in condition. Any attempt to repair a melee weapon requires a character to have Level 3 Melee Combat or *Weaponsmith**.

CHARGES

In addition to regular Upkeep Checks to maintain their functionality, some weapons and items also require some sort of Charge to keep them in use. Characters are going to have to ensure they have a good supply of whatever they need, be it ammunition, batteries, fishhooks, bait, the right tools, or other specialized supplies they require to keep their equipment in working condition.

Ammunition is expended each time a weapon is fired, and players will need to carefully track it on their character sheets, using the boxes provided. Ammunition is weapon type specific and isn't interchangeable and so Light Pistols and Heavy Pistols require their own specific ammo, just as do Bows and Crossbows.

For other items that require charges, each use reduces that total number by 1 and when they reach 0, the item can no longer be used until it is resupplied, reloaded, or recharged. This charge might be new batteries for a flashlight, new hooks or fishing line for an angler's kit, or additional medicines or gauze for a First Aid Kit.

Recharging these items generally requires no skill check but the character might need to make a *Scavenging* check in order for them to find more charges, and then they will need to spend time getting the item ready for use again, such as changing batteries.

Many items have no condition value (as they require no maintenance) but these items are generally fairly fragile, and the GM may decide that they may break with rough handling. A player who falls and drops their walkie-talkie may find it inoperable when they pick it up again.

WEAPONS

Weapons are defined by the characteristics of **Type, Range, Damage, Rarity, Encumbrance** and where appropriate, **Ammo and Max Rounds**. Each of these characteristics are laid out for each weapon in Tables X-X on pages X-X, with any specific vagaries or special conditions for the various Weapons being detailed in the *Notes* section.

TYPE

Weapons fall into one of 5 categories – **Melee, Ranged, Unarmed, Explosive** and **Special.**

MELEE WEAPONS: This is any weapon, blunt or edged, that can

be used at Engaged or Close range (see *Range* on page 127). This could be anything from a finely crafted item made with a specific purpose in mind, such as a sword or hunting knife, to a repurposed, commonplace item, such as a baseball bat, hatchet, or a tree branch being used as a club. Although almost all but the most finely crafted of melee weapons will eventually break with use, they will never run out of ammunition.

Given the shortage of available ammunition and the relative ease with which they can be made, Melee Combat are commonplace. Anything from a large branch to a hatchet to a good knife can be used in self-defense and it's rare to find anyone who isn't carrying some form of melee weapon, even if it is just a pocketknife.

Melee weapons are generally very limited in range and are mostly used when Engaged, although longer weapons with a greater reach, such as a spear or staff, can be used without penalty at both Engaged and Close range, but cannot be used at Medium range or beyond.

Some weapons require a certain level of Physicality or Dexterity in order to use correctly and characters who don't meet those requirements suffer a negative CMod. These specifics are noted for each individual weapon on *Table 12: Melee Weapons*.

RANGED WEAPONS: This includes any projectile-based weapon, such as a pistol, bow, or slingshot, which is designed to be used from a distance. Unlike melee weapons, ranged
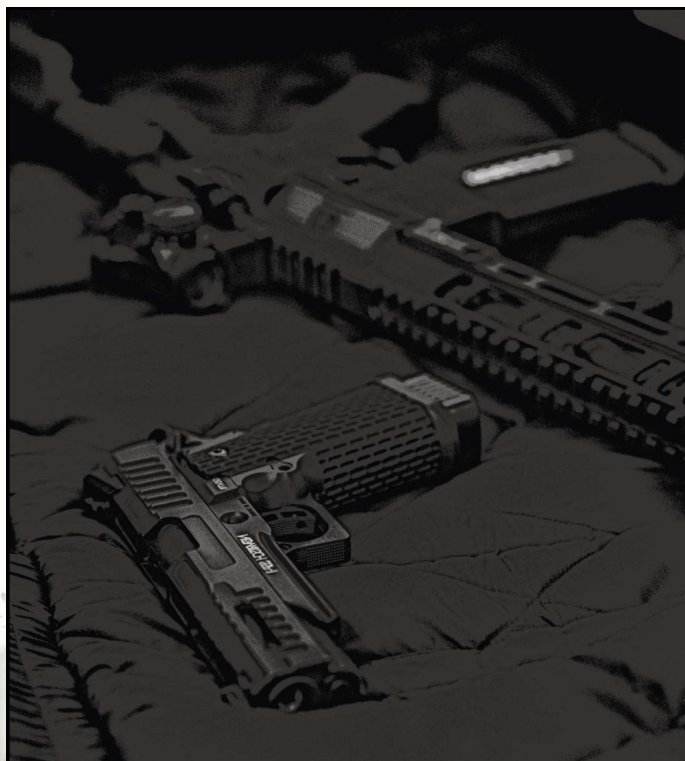
weapons hold a specific amount of ammunition before they are empty and require reloading. Each ranged weapon also has a limitation on how it can be used within the various range bands (see *Range* on page 127).

Ammunition is becoming increasingly rare but enough remains that a gun is still a common sight, although people are careful not to waste bullets when they don't have to.

Each weapon has an ideal range band at which it is most effective, but these weapons can also be used in the next range band down with no penalty. This means that a Shotgun with a range of Medium can also be used at Close range, or a Pistol with a range of Close can be used at Engaged without suffering a penalty.

Ranged weapons can fire one band up with a -3 CMod. This means that a Pistol with a range of Close can be used at Medium range but is much less likely to hit.

Using any Ranged weapon at more than one range band down from their specified range gives an automatic -2 CMod to any attack. This means that when using an Automatic Rifle or Hunting Rifle with a range of Long at either Close or Engaged, both attacks would incur a -2 CMod.

Some weapons, such as a Sniper's Rifle, have additional penalties at different ranges, to reflect their cumbersome nature when used so far out of their default. This is detailed in the Notes section for each weapon.

UNARMED WEAPONS: Although this might seem like a non-sequitur, it includes brass-knuckles, rolls of coins or something else that would cause additional damage when added to a clenched fist. Like melee weapons, these have no reload requirements and unlike any other weapon type, there is no requirement to *Ready Weapon* before using it. Although useful when *Subduing* and *Grappling* (see page 122), Unarmed combat attacks typically cause less damage than either Melee or Ranged Combat.

EXPLOSIVE ATTACKS: Although the effective blast radius for each Explosive attack varies by weapon, the commonality is that the damage is

RANGED VS MELEE VS UNARMED COMBAT

ALL CHARACTERS START THE GAME WITH THE CHOICE OF A PRIMARY AND A SECONDARY WEAPON. PLAYERS SHOULD GIVE SOME THOUGHT TO HOW THEIR CHARACTER IS GOING TO FACE THE CHALLENGES IN THE WORLD AROUND THEM, A CHOICE THAT MAY TIE INTO THEIR BACKSTORY.

ALTHOUGH IT IS THE PLAYERS' CHOICE, GIVEN THE RELATIVE SCARCITY OF AMMUNITION AVAILABLE IN THE WORLD, IF THEY PICK A RANGED WEAPON AS A PRIMARY WEAPON THEN IT IS HIGHLY RECOMMENDED THAT THEY PICK A MELEE WEAPON OR BECOME PROFICIENT IN UNARMED COMBAT AS AN INEXHAUSTIBLE BACK-UP.

EACH TYPE OF COMBAT HAS DIFFERENT BENEFITS AND DRAWBACKS WITHIN DISTEMPER AND CHARACTERS SHOULD PLAY TO THEIR STRENGTHS IN THEIR CHOICE OF ENGAGEMENT AND WEAPONS.

RANGED COMBAT: ALTHOUGH DEADLY AT THE RIGHT DISTANCE, RANGED COMBAT REQUIRES AMMUNITION AS WELL AS THE TIME TO RELOAD A WEAPON. GIVEN THAT A CHARACTER WITH A FIREARM WILL TOO OFTEN LOSE A KNIFE-FIGHT, PLAYERS ENGAGING IN RANGED COMBAT WILL NEED TO KEEP ENOUGH DISTANCE FROM THEIR OPPONENTS TO BE ABLE TO ATTACK WITHOUT BEING ATTACKED. THEY WILL ALSO NEED TO ENSURE THEY HAVE ENOUGH AMMUNITION OF THE RIGHT CALIBER ON HAND TO KEEP FIRING. IN ADDITION, RANGED COMBAT NEED CONSTANT UPKEEP AND CLEANING, OR THEY WILL JAM MORE FREQUENTLY AND CAN BECOME NON-FUNCTIONING IN COMBAT, REQUIRING REPAIRING. (SEE ITEM CONDITION ON PAGE 132 FOR MORE DETAILS).

MELEE COMBAT: FOR MELEE COMBAT TO BE EFFECTIVE, A CHARACTER WILL NEED TO BE WITHIN CLOSE OR ENGAGED RANGE OF AN OPPONENT TO STRIKE, LEAVING THEM VULNERABLE TO RANGED ATTACKS WHILE THEY CLOSE THAT GAP. HOWEVER, WHEN WITHIN RANGE, MELEE COMBAT ARE AS EFFECTIVE AND DANGEROUS AS FIREARMS, WITH THE ADDITIONAL BONUS OF NOT NEEDING TO BE RELOADED. UNLESS MADE BY A CRAFTSMAN, MANY MELEE COMBAT WILL DECAY OVER TIME AND BECOME SIGNIFICANTLY LESS USEFUL AND DEADLY. THEY MAY EVEN BREAK DURING COMBAT (SEE PAGE 132).

UNARMED COMBAT: ALTHOUGH SOMETHING OF A MISNOMER AS UNARMED COMBAT CAN BE AUGMENTED BY ITEMS SUCH AS BRASS KNUCKLES, ALL CHARACTERS HAVE AN UNARMED COMBAT ATTACK THAT DOES 1D3 OF DAMAGE + ANY AMODS FOR PHYSICALITY OR SMODS FROM LEVELS IN UNARMED COMBAT. WHILE UNARMED COMBAT LACKS THE RAW DAMAGE OUTPUT OF RANGED OR MELEE COMBAT, IT HAS THE UNDISPUTED UPSIDE OF REQUIRING NOTHING BUT A CHARACTER'S FIST, FEET, AND HEAD TO CAUSE SIGNIFICANT DAMAGE TO ANOTHER CHARACTER WHICH CAN BE PARTICULARLY USEFUL WHEN ALL OTHER OPTIONS HAVE BEEN EXHAUSTED. UNARMED COMBAT ALSO INFLICTS RESILIENCE POINTS AT THE SAME LEVEL AS WOUND POINTS, MEANING THAT IT IS EASIER TO INCAPACITATE SOMEONE THAN TO KILL THEM.

TRULY UNARMED COMBAT - THAT IS, COMBAT WITHOUT ANY TYPE OF WEAPON OR ADDITION - DOESN'T REQUIRE A *READY WEAPON* ACTION.

WHILST UNARMED COMBAT DAMAGE OUTPUT CAN BE SOMEWHAT WEAK BY COMPARISON TO RANGED OR MELEE COMBAT, UNARMED COMBAT HAS THE UPSIDE OF PRESENTING ADDED CHALLENGES FOR THE PERSON BEING ATTACKED, IN TERMS OF MOBILITY. AS CHARACTERS NEED TO BE AT ENGAGED RANGED WITH THEIR OPPONENT FOR UNARMED COMBAT TO TAKE PLACE, ONCE THEY HAVE STARTED FIGHTING, THE DEFENDER MUST USE A *REPOSITION* COMBAT ACTION TO GET AWAY FROM THEIR ATTACKER (SEE *COMBAT ACTIONS* ON PAGE 119).

AS *REPOSITION* HAPPENS AT THE END OF THE ROUND, THIS MEANS THAT THE ATTACKER MAY STILL BE ABLE TO INFLICT ENOUGH DAMAGE TO PREVENT THIS FROM HAPPENING OR ATTEMPT TO *GRAPPLE* OR *SUBDUE* THEM. MORE IMPORTANTLY, ANY OPPONENT TRYING TO GET AWAY WOULD NEED TO WIN *INITIATIVE* IN THE FOLLOWING ROUND AND USE A *MOVE* ACTION TO ATTEMPT TO PUT DISTANCE BETWEEN THEM AND THEIR ATTACKER (SEE *CHASES*, ON PAGE 142).

THIS ENTANGLEMENT MEANS THAT AN ATTACKING CHARACTER CAN MAKE ANY ATTEMPT BY AN OPPONENT TO WITHDRAW A SIGNIFICANT CHALLENGE IF THEY AREN'T PREPARED TO STAND THEIR GROUND AND FIGHT BACK.

indiscriminately applied to everyone at *Engaged* or *Close* range when they hit.

Although Explosives are even scarcer than ammunition, they can still be found.

Although some Explosives require equipment to be used (such as a Rocket Launcher), many others are thrown by a character. Handheld explosives such as grenades or a Molotov cocktail can be thrown as far as Medium range with a successful Athletics check to avoid fumbling or having it fall short and exploding at *Close* range to the character. Launched explosives (such as rocket launchers) have individual ranges, listed in the notes.

Each type of Explosive has its own ideal range at which it is the most effective, but when they explode, they do full damage to any characters who are at the Engaged range from the explosion, and 50% to any characters at Close range. This means that a character using an explosive device and fumbling the check could easily detonate something at Close range, injuring themselves and anyone else around them.

Although rare, there are some larger, military or industrial explosive devices that will do full damage at both Engaged and Close range and then 25% damage at Medium range. This will be detailed in the notes section for each individual weapon.

SPECIAL ATTACKS:
This includes anything that doesn't neatly fit into one of the other categories, such as a flamethrower or bear-trap. Each Special Attack will have specific details in the Notes section on the Weapons Chart.

Some weapons don't fall neatly into one of the other categories, and these are considered Special Weapons. This might be a flame-thrower that does damage over time, or a tranquilizer dart that knocks a character unconscious or infects them with poison. The specifics for various Special Weapons are detailed in the notes section for each weapon.

RANGE

Each weapon has a specific range band at which it is most effective and trying to use them at more than one band outside of that range will bring negative impacts.

FOR EXAMPLE:
Pistols have a range of Close and are significantly less effective at Long range.

See *Table 11: Range Bands* and *Range* on page 127 for a reminder of how range bands work.

TABLE 11: RANGE BANDS	
2	ENGAGED
3	CLOSE
4	MEDIUM
5	LONG
6	DISTANT

DAMAGE

As no two attacks or wounds are exactly alike, all weapons have both a fixed amount of damage in addition to a random amount of damage to reflect the vagaries of each situation.

The damage inflicted by each weapon is listed on Tables X-X (on pages X-X) and is written in the format **Fixed + Random**. This means that a Fire Axe does 3 + 2d3 Wound Point damage (for a range of 5 to 9) while a Shotgun does 5+2d6 damage (for a range of 7 to 17).

In addition to dealing Wound Point damage, each successful attack also inflicts some Resilience Point damage to reflect the stresses and trauma of wounds suffered. This means that, in many cases, a character will become *Incapacitated* before they *Die* (see page 123).

Most weapons inflict 50% of the total Wound Point as damage dealt to the target's Resilience points (rounded down), although there are some weapons that deal so much blunt force damage (such as a baseball bat) that they inflict 100% RP damage.

This means that a character who is hit with a Hatchet that has a 50% RP value and suffers 4 WP of damage also sustains 2 RP of damage. Another character hit with a Baton that has a 100% RP value who suffers 4 WP damage will also suffer 4 RP damage.

The amount of RP damage done by each weapon is listed in tables 12-15 on pages 130-131 under the RP column.

Unless otherwise note against the specific weapon type, Explosive damage does full WP and the same amount of RP damage to everyone within the Engaged range band, and half of the damage (rounded down) to anyone at Close range. The damage is calculated once for the explosion and the same amount is dealt to each person who is caught in the blast.

FOR EXAMPLE:
A Grenade will do 2+2d6 WP Damage to everyone within the Engaged range band, for a spread of 4-14 WP, and anywhere from 2-WP damage to everyone at Close Range.

Special damage is weapon specific and is listed in

the item's description. As an example, a Flamethrower does 4+2d6 for a range of 6-16 and then inflicts an additional 1 WP and RP damage for the next 3 rounds to reflect the ongoing damage inflicted from burning.

RARITY

Rarity denotes how common this weapon – and the ammunition required to use it - is in the game world, either to find or to make. Items are either *Common*, *Uncommon*, or *Rare*, which may be reflective of where the game is set.

FOR EXAMPLE: Many homes in the US have a Light Pistol or Shotgun for home defense, making both *Common* rarity items. Heavy Pistols tend to be more of the domain of professionals or the more extreme fan and are *Uncommon* items, purely due to the fact they aren't found quite as often. However, if your game is set in a different region (such as Europe), a weapon considered *Common* in the US might be considered *Uncommon* or rare in your setting.

By the same token it would be easy enough to turn a chair leg into a club or build a very basic bow, making them also Common Rarity items, but finding a police-grade baton is more likely to be Uncommon.

Although available, the chances of finding a high-powered sniper rifle or flamethrower in the average home basement is significantly less likely than at a military or police facility is arguably less likely, making them both Rare items.

AMMO RARITY

As a rule of thumb, the Ammo required has a rarity value that is usually the same as the Weapon's rarity, but this is not always the case. A sawed-off shotgun is an *Uncommon* weapon, while shotgun shells are Common. This will be called out in the individual weapon's *Notes* section.

Rarity really is a guide for the GM more than the players and if the group has made a military base their home and perhaps flamethrowers, RPGs and mortars would be Common in that campaign.

ENCUMBRANCE

Each weapon is of a different size or shape, and this is reflected in their Encumbrance value. For more details, see *Encumbrance* on page 45.

MAX ROUNDS

Although not a consideration for melee weapons, Ammo denotes how many rounds make up a full load for each Ranged weapon. Bows, Crossbows or Slings have a Max Round of 1, 6 is common for Light Pistols, whereas a Rifle might have a clip of 30.

Players will need to track Ammo on their character sheet as they use it, and they should constantly be looking to resupply.

ARMOR

Although purpose-made armor of any quality is becoming increasingly rare, there are certain makeshift items (such as the lid of a garbage can being used as a shield) or types of clothing (such as a heavy leather jacket) that afford some degree of protection. Examples are listed below on **Table X: Armor**.

Like Weapons, each item of Armor has a *Rarity* value that denotes how easy it will be to come across, an *Encumbrance* value that gets added to a characters' total, and a *Defense Modifier*.

The *Defense Modifiers* get added to a character's total DM while they have the item equipped and the item remains functional. This means that a character with a Physicality of 1 and Dexterity of 2 (and a corresponding +1 DMM and a +2 DMR) who equips the Tactical Armor they find in the back of an abandoned squad car now gets a +2 DM for a total of +3 DMM and +4 DMR.

As with all equipment, Armor has a Condition value that will drop over time and as the armor takes damage. Only characters with the *Armorsmith** Skill can make an Upkeep check can prevent it from dropping down a level, and only a character with *Armorsmith** 3 or above can attempt to repair armor. Characters should expect most armor that they find to deteriorate over time and with enough damage, to the point of complete uselessness.

Starting characters cannot pick any items of armor as part of their starting equipment, unless the GM specifically allows for it.

EQUIPMENT

In addition to weapons, all characters start with a Basic Survival Kit that is made up of a tent or other temporary shelter and a sleeping bag. This Basic Survival Kit has an Encumbrance of 1 but that only applies when the character is carrying it, not when they have set up camp. Therefore, characters who have a semi-permanent camping spot will not have it apply against their Encumbrance level.
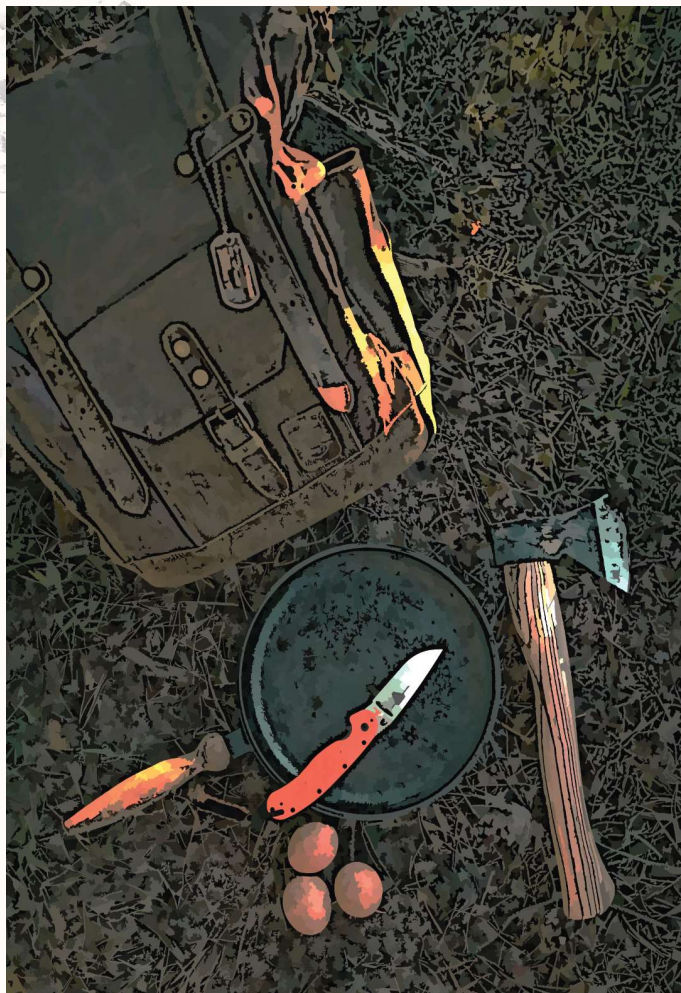
Many pieces of equipment are available, and each player can pick a Common item from the Miscellaneous Equipment table on page 131 during character creation. The GM may also agree that it makes sense for a character with a specialized background to have an additional item of equipment, possibly even an *Uncommon* item, such as a doctor having a Doctor's Bag or an Outdoorsman having a Professional Angler's Set.

Whilst many pieces of Equipment are simply required to perform a specific task and have no additional effects (such as needing a toolkit to try and repair a walkie-talkie) there are some that have unique qualities listed that may impact gameplay, such as First Aid Kit that add +1 CMod to a First Aid check or Binoculars adding a +1 CMod to a Perception check when spying on an enemy from a distance. These special qualities are called out on *Table 16: Misc. Equipment* on page 131.

Although everything has weight, some items are extremely light and not worth considering towards the Encumbrance total (such as batteries, a pocketknife, or a lighter), but the GM may decide that enough of them constitutes a point of Encumbrance to reflect them

becoming increasingly awkward to be carried.

In addition to their Basic Survival Kit and their piece of equipment, characters may also pick one Incidental item that provides no combat value but may otherwise be useful, such as a compass, flashlight, or map of the area. This tends to have no Encumbrance value but may require charges.

RATIONS, FOOD & SUBSISTENCE

Food and water come in the form of Rations, and each character gets 2 days' worth in the form of 2 Standard Rations (see *Table X: Rations* below).

Standard Rations weigh 0.5 Encumbrance and so the 2 Rations characters start with have a combined Encumbrance of 1

Finding a regular supply of food and water will always be something that a character must be considering. Whether it is foraged, hunted, or scavenged (see *Living Off the Land* on page 180), they will need to keep their supplies up or risk-taking subsistence damage.

See *Subsistence Damage* on page 127 for more details.

Table 20: Rations

NAME	TYPE	ENC	DAYS
STANDARD	COMMON	0.5	1
LUXURY	UNCOMMON	0.5	2
MILITARY GRADE	UNCOMMON	0.25	1

HOW WILL YOU GET AROUND?

Transportation is just one more thing that the virus has irrevocably changed, and all forms of commercial transport are gone. Although the planes, buses, subways, boats, and trains may all still physically exist, the expertise and infrastructure needed to run them have disappeared, most likely forever

Cars, trucks, and motorbikes are plentiful and can be found in abundant supply almost anywhere, from the side of a street to parking lots to car showrooms. Survivors can now have the car of their dreams, if they are just willing to look in enough malls or garages in high-end neighborhoods.

Unfortunately, the gasoline required to run them is going stale and even finding any is becoming harder with each month. However, if a character has the knowledge of how to convert a car so that it will run on some form of alcohol, and if they can then set up a still and produce enough fuel to keep it running, they can certainly find something they want to drive in the abundance of cars, trucks, and bikes that remain.

However, for most people who are still struggling with the very basics of survival, the idea of converting a car to drive on an alternative fuel source is wildly out of reach.

Many survivors have, location and roads permitting, taken to using bicycles as they require no fuel and little in the way of maintenance or repairs, and have no range limit. Best of all, in the minds of many riders, it means they are mobile and self-sufficient, and the use of bikes is becoming increasingly commonplace as gasoline continues to spoil. Many migrators use bikes for at least part of their journey, assuming they have roads to ride upon.

Horses can be found in the wild in many parts of the country. Many ranchers died during the outbreak and some who saw what was coming had the compassion and forethought to release their herds, rather than letting them die of starvation in their pens.

Table 21: Transportation

NAME	RARITY	SIZE	SPEED	WP	RANGE	SPECIALTY QUALITIES
BICYCLE	COMMON	1	2	10		
BUGGY	UNCOMMON	3		50		
CAR	COMMON	3				
HORSE	UNCOMMON	2	3			
MOTORBIKE	COMMON	1				
SPORTS CAR	UNCOMMON	3				
TRUCK	COMMON	4				
WAGON	UNCOMMON	4				
WALKING	COMMON	1	1			

Finding them is one thing, catching and breaking them in is quite another, but for those who know what they're doing horses have reasserted themselves as one of man's greatest working partners. Wagons and buggies are more commonly used now than they have been in a century and horses are, once again, the optimal form of transport.

Depending on the setting, some groups might find transport restricted to bicycles, horses, or by foot, whereas for other, more mobile (and perhaps even nomadic) groups, transport may be amongst their primary concerns.

In game terms, vehicles (which includes animals being used for transport) are defined by the characteristics of *Rarity, Size, Speed, Wound Points, Encumbrance* and *Range*. These are laid out for each mode of transport in **Table 20: Transportation** and are described below.

RARITY

As with weapons and equipment, each vehicle has a Rarity value, indicating how easy they are for the players to find. As a rule of thumb, a Common vehicle can be found almost anywhere but PCs will actively have to go looking for Uncommon or Rare vehicles, such as a high-end sports car or specific type of military vehicle.

Additionally, some vehicles or animals may be idiosyncratic enough to require specialized knowledge to use, reflected by at least 1 Level in Driving or Animal Handling.

SIZE

A vehicle's size ranges from 1 (Small) to 6 (Huge) and determines both how easy it is to hit, as well as the number of passengers it can carry. As a rule of thumb, a vehicle can carry the same number of passengers as its size, excluding the driver. This means that a Bicycle (Size 1, Small) can carry a driver and a passenger whilst a Car (Size 3, Average) can comfortably carry four people.

A large enough vehicle can also provide cover against ranged attacks, with size 3 vehicles giving a +1 DMR, a +2 DMR at size 4, +3 DMR at size 5, and +4 at size 6. Vehicles of Size 1 or 2 provide no modifiers to ranged attacks.

SPEED

Each mode of transport has a Speed value that ranges from 1 to 5 and is a relative measure of both acceleration and top speed. As laid out on **Table 20: Transportation**, the average human runs at a Speed of 1, a Speed of 2 is roughly as fast as someone on a bicycle on good ground. A Speed of 3 is equivalent a horse galloping, a Speed of 4 being the acceleration of a Sedan, and a Speed of 5 would be a motorbike or sports vehicle going flat out.

Speed only really comes into play during *Chases* (see *Chases* on page 142). If vehicles are involved in a chase, each level of Speed from 3 and above gives a +1 CMod to Driving checks.

WOUND POINTS

Whether it is caused by bad roads, spoiled fuel, careless driving, or bullet damage, vehicles are similar to characters in that they have a certain amount of damage they can take until they stop working.

A vehicle that loses half of its WP is Wrecked and must be at least partially repaired before it is usable again and if a vehicle gets to 0 WP, it needs to be Written Off, as it cannot be used again.

Someone attempting repairs on a vehicle with 50% or more of its WP remaining must make a Successful Vehicle Mechanic check and have a unit of Uncommon Supplies available, but if the vehicle has less than 50% of its WP remaining then repairs can only be completed at a suitable facility and with the right tools.

ENCUMBRANCE

As with characters, each mode of transport can carry a certain number of items, as specified by the vehicle's Encumbrance limit.

At double the vehicle's Encumbrance value, it drops

CARTS

Sometimes characters will need to carry more weapons, equipment or supplies than their encumbrance limit allows, and they may find themselves needing a cart or sled.

This can be as simple as a wheelbarrow or dolly they have found, up to a makeshift sled constructed from two logs and a piece of sturdy cloth.

Characters can carry triple their Encumbrance level in a cart that has wheels and double it for a sled that they are pulling.

down a Speed rank.

RANGE

Range denotes how far a vehicle or animal can move over an 8-hour period. For most forms of transport, 8 hours is the most they can go in a single day without incurring some form of penalty. See *Modes of Transport* below for more details.

MODES OF TRANSPORT

At times, characters may find themselves needing to travel over a prolonged distance, just one more thing that will prove more challenging than before the pandemic. Working gasoline or diesel is scarce, horses have to be acquired and cared for, and walking is exhausting and can be extremely dangerous as the open road quickly makes people easy targets.

In order to keep a vehicle or horse moving, characters will need to find a regular supply of fuel or food, as well as perform maintenance by way of an *Upkeep Check* (see page 132) or allow rest periods.

Horses can survive on grass or hay but require grains, fruits, or vegetables to balance out their diets and, depending on the time of year, but this may not be an easy task in the open. Horses require 1 Ration a day which, in the right environment, can easily be *Scavenged* or *Foraged* (see *Living Off The Land* on page 180 for more details).

All other things being equal, humans and horses can travel for 8 hours a day and will then need to stop and rest for 8 hours, and then sleep for an additional 8 hours to regain their strength. If they push beyond this limit, they incur 1 RP damage per each additional hour they travel and must stop to rest before becoming Incapacitated at 0 RP.

Cars and bikes will require a successful Vehicle Upkeep Check once a day to ensure they are kept in good working order. This could be making sure the chains on a bike are in place or finding enough gasoline to continue onward and will be either a Driving, a Vehicle Knowledge, or an Acumen check. The group may need to *Fill in the Gaps* about what happens.3

WALKING

Humans can walk 3 MPH and can reasonably expect to cover 15-20 miles in one 8-hour day.

No maintenance is required beyond wearing shoes and ensuring characters consume 1 Ration per day. If they don't, then they move at half-speed the following day.

BICYCLES

In the right environment, bikes are an easy choice for transportation. A player on a bicycle can travel at 6 MPH but needs good road conditions, or they can drop down to as little as 1 MPH. A character in good condition on decent roads can easily expect to cover 30-40 miles in a single day by bicycle.

Bikes require regular maintenance in the form of tire repair and other tasks such as ensuring the brakes work, reflected by a Vehicle Upkeep check.

HORSES

A horse in good condition has a traveling speed of 4 MPH and can be expected to cover 25-30 miles a day.

Horses can run at 30MPH in a gallop but can only keep this up for a few miles before becoming fatigued and needing to rest. Due to this
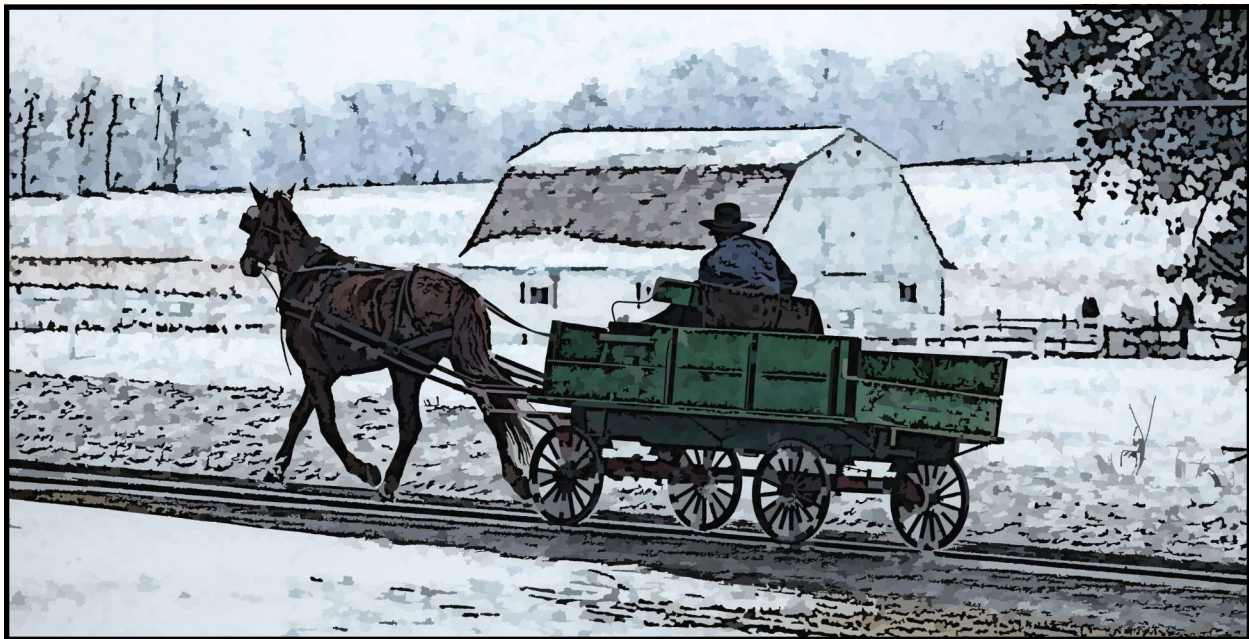
CHASES

Whether it is by characters on foot, in vehicles, or riding animals, there may be times when a chase takes place. Speed is usually the deciding factor, although skills also play a part.

A *Chase* is resolved if the party being chased puts enough distance between them and whoever is chasing them, or when the pursuer has caught up with their target. As laid out on **Table 20: Transportation**, each mode of transport has a speed value and the pursuer must have the same speed value or higher to maintain the chase, or they will be outpaced by 1 range band per round.

If the party being *Chased* gets to Distant range, the *Chase* is over.

The GM should determine which range bands the different sides are to one another when the *Chase* starts (see *Range* on page 127), although a chase cannot start at a distance greater than Long Range.

Assuming that they are able to keep up with one another, the chase involves both parties making a series of *Opposing Checks* (see *Opposed Checks* on page 36) using Athletics, Driving, or Animal Handling.

- • If both parties are Successful in this check, there is no change to the range, and the pursuit is maintained.
- • If the character being pursued fails their check, the pursuer advances a range band (or maintains the same distance).
- • If the pursuer fails their check, they fall back a range band from their target. If this means they are now at Distant range, then the *Chase* is over.

Assuming that both sides are evenly matched, it's possible that chases will continue for a while unless one side takes more aggressive actions, such attempting to attack the other side, or possibly even use their vehicle as a weapon to alter the outcome of the chase and bring it to a close.

---

speed, a player could easily cover 2 miles in less than 10 minutes on horseback.

Horses require 1 Ration of food a day, which may be problematic if PCs are spending any length of time with a horse in an environment without an easily accessible natural food supply, such as a city.

Horses will need shoes on a monthly basis, which requires a Successful Animal Handling check as well as Horseshoe Tools. If the players don't know how they do this, they will need to find someone with the tools and knowledge, or the horses cannot be ridden.

BUGGIES

Although often little more than a horse-drawn cart, a buggy is a quick and efficient way of moving one or more people and a limited quantity or weight of items between places. Characters in a buggy can quadruple their Encumbrance limit. Although some buggies are big enough to require two horses, they are relatively rare, as a single-horse buggy is more manageable.

A buggy can move at about 4 MPH and can expect to cover 25-30 miles in an 8-hour period, depending on the terrain.

In addition to requiring one Ration of food for the horse, the buggy also requires one Vehicle Mechanics check per day to avoid issues.

WAGONS

Wagons are larger than buggies and generally require two horses

to pull them, particularly when fully laden. Although the relative scarcity of horses makes this a somewhat rare vehicle, wagons are the only reliable method of transporting a large number of items over a significant distance. A wagon drawn by two horses can carry an Encumbrance of 60.

A wagon can move anywhere from 2-3 MPH and can expect to cover 15-20 miles in an 8-hour period, depending on the terrain.

In addition to 1 Ration per day per horse, a Wagon requires a Successful Vehicle Upkeep check each day to ensure proper operation.

CARS, MOTORBIKES & TRUCKS

Cars are plentiful but gas is more problematic. Even in the best of conditions, a car or motorbike can only expect to average 30 – 50 MPH, due to the ever-worsening road conditions and impact to performance that bad gasoline has on an engine.

Due to the weakness and inefficiency of gas, cars can't go more than 8 hours without needing a refill and so players can reasonably expect to go 250-300 miles in a day if they are able to find enough gas stations and resupply.

Unlike humans or animals, cars have no need to stop

but driving at night is more dangerous than during the day, partially due to roads starting to crack with a lack of maintenance, forcing players to drop to 20 MPH.

Assuming multiple drivers and the only stops being for gas, players can reasonably expect to travel 500-600 miles in a 24-hour period.

Unless characters are performing a Successful Vehicle Upkeep check each day, they can only expect a vehicle to last 1d6 days before becoming useless.

FUEL

Whatever regular gasoline remains after the looting and riots has either spoiled or is on its way to spoiling. Diesel has no more than another year, two at the outside, before it goes the same way. Although it will still power vehicles, the continued degradation of gasoline affects performance and causes the vehicles' engine to become clogged, until they eventually stop working.

Several groups are attempting to get refineries operational again as controlling a supply of gasoline would translate to instant power. Although there are some, like those in New Philly, who plan on using the gas for the good of its citizens there are several groups who have no such noble aspirations and simply plan on profiting from this. There are rumors of an unlikely warlord in Texas who is planning to fuel his army for conquest now that he has gotten the gas flowing.

Due to the amount of damage caused to engines by spoiled gasoline and general wear and tear of driving on roads that are no longer being maintained, players must make a Vehicle Upkeep check each day to keep their vehicle running. In addition, characters intending to keep a specific vehicle for any length of them should plan on having that vehicle serviced by a mechanic with the right tools and facilities on at least a bi-weekly basis to prevent sediment build-up in the engine.

The relative abundance of vehicles might lead players to decide to abandon anything that's broken, find something else that will start and has enough gas to just keep them moving for a few more miles.

ETHANOL & METHANOL STILLS

One viable alternative is for a mechanic to convert an engine to run on one of two types of alcohol – ethanol or methanol.

Ethanol is created from raw, organic materials such as rotting or wasted vegetables and is much less efficient than gasoline and requires approximately roughly three times as much alcohol to go the same distance. Additionally, ethanol-powered vehicles move nowhere near as quickly as those running on gasoline and their Speed is dropped down by one level.

Methanol stills recycle wood products and are significantly less efficient than ethanol, but of much higher octane. Although it takes 5-6 times the amount of methanol to go the same distance as gasoline, vehicles seemingly suffer no loss of power. Methanol powered vehicles can only travel half as far as they would on regular gasoline.

To create a still capable of producing the quality of ethanol or methanol needed to fuel a vehicle requires both the know-how as well as a certain level of skill. Characters should make a Successful *Vehicle Mechanics** or get a Wild Success on a General Knowledge or Tinkerer check (and be prepared to *Fill in the Gaps*) to see if they

already know how to do this. If not, they might have to find somewhere with a library and see if there is a book available that they can learn from. Alternatively, they might need to find a NPC who already has the knowledge to help them build a still.

Once they have the know-how, a character must have the tools and equipment in order to assemble the still. This may require the characters to Scavenge in order to find the 8 units of *Uncommon Supplies* required (see *Supplies* on page 180).

When the characters have all the items needed, it requires a Successful *Vehicle Mechanics** or Tinkerer check and two *Daily Activity* blocks (see *Activities* on page 192) to construct and test the still.

Similar to building a working still, converting the engine of a vehicle to run on ethanol also requires specific tools and knowledge. To successfully undertake this task, a character must have *Vehicle Mechanics** 3, in addition to the tools and the right facilities.

While most garages or car-shops will have these tools, it might not be in an area that has no power, requiring the characters to find and get a generator running. Unless they already have the tools and equipment to hand, they will be required to Scavenge 8 units of *Uncommon* Supplies.

Once they have everything they require, they must get a *Success* on a *Vehicle Mechanics** check and spend three Daily Activity blocks working on it in order to successfully convert and then test the engine.

In addition to the daily Upkeep checks while in use, any vehicle converted in such a manner would require additional Weekly maintenance, and a character would need to take one *Daily Activity* block in each week and make a Successful *Vehicle Mechanics** check to keep it running.

Now that they have a vehicle capable of running on ethanol or methanol, characters who can find enough materials can distill them down into fuel. Both types of engine use *Common* Supplies that can be found with a *Scavenging* check.

For each unit of *Common* Supplies used, it takes two Daily Activity blocks for the still to convert these raw materials into enough alcohol to power a vehicle for 3 days. The still must be stationary while this happens.

Keeping vehicles moving using ethanol and methanol is no small undertaking and will require an investment of time in gathering the supplies, as well as converting and maintaining vehicles. Groups intending to be mobile in this manner might have to construct something of a fleet that has a tanker as well as a mobile still on the back of a truck that converts whatever is found along the way.

HELL IS OTHER PEOPLE

The loss of life caused by the Dog Flu was devastating and unprecedented and with roughly two billion people remaining, the world now has a population similar to that around the mid-to-late 18th century.

Although the extent of the loss had previously been inconceivable and the direct impact to society was catastrophic, there are still enough people left to make life easier - or significantly more difficult - for the others who remain.

Players will inevitably encounter people on their travels - from the weak, tired, hungry and desperate columns migrating to what they pray will be a better life, to the owner of the roadside tavern that has information they need, to the hordes of bad guys that they will likely have to kill along the way - Non-Player Characters (NPCs) make up the bulk of the world that the players inhabit and will interact with. All of these NPCs are voiced by the GM.

Included in this chapter are breakdowns of some of the groups that players will likely encounter. These loose outlines should be tailored by the GM to ensure that anyone the players encounter match the theme of the campaign being run.

The motivations for each group are discussed but despite any variances and idiosyncrasies between the groups, everyone shares the same common needs - food, shelter, security - even if they go about securing those things in different ways.

As laid out in *First Impressions and Gut Checks* on page 148, when characters meet and interact with NPCs, there are mechanics to see what sense they get from one another. However, one thing players should bear in mind is that no matter what dice rolls say, anyone that has survived this long has done it either by being strong or being protected by someone else who is strong. There are few, if any, true "innocents" left in this world - even children - and players should be careful not to underestimate anyone they meet.

Also included with the description of each group are some profiles for sample NPCs that the players might encounter, ranging from Frontier Nurses to Fledgling Warlords. These profiles are intended to make it easier for a GM to introduce a rounded NPC on the fly that has the appropriate attributes and skills for their roles.

Although NPCs have similar stats to player characters, they rarely need to be so well defined and are usually boiled away to their bare characteristics, with the GM making minor tweaks as needed. When in doubt, an NPC should have a RAPID Range of 00000, with possibly a single attribute at 1 to emphasize a defining characteristic (see *The Base Model* on page 145).

These NPCs will also often be armed, and weapons requiring ammunition will have a value showing how many rounds they have. And so, an NPC with Shotgun (5+2d6) [7] has 7 rounds.

NPCs are broken into 4 categories, based upon the threat they pose to the characters: *Friendlies, Goons, Foe,* and *Antagonists.*

THE BASE MODEL

GM might find themselves needing statistics for an NPC on the fly, most commonly the RAPID Range, Secondary Stats and Skills. The Base Model for any NPC is laid out below and should be tweaked by the GM as required.

BASE MODEL 00000
WP 10 RP 6 DMM 0 DMR 0 INIT 2D6 ENC 6
SKILL 1, SKILL 1
WEAPONS OR EQUIPMENT

For examples of tweaking the Base Model to the right purpose, if the NPC is a quick thinker, then they may have a Reason of 1 or if they are an enforcer then they might have a Physicality or Dexterity of 1, perhaps even 2.

There are also two placeholders for Skills, which are at the GM's discretion, common combinations might be one utility skill, such as Scavenging, Driving, Dodge or Charm, or a combat related skill, such as Melee Combat, Ranged Combat or Unarmed Combat. Skills for a Base Model NPC can never be Level 3.

FRIENDLIES: Friendlies are other survivors that the players encounter who either have no special skills, mean the characters no malice, pose no real threat, or are there to move the plot along. A GM should focus on finding their "voice" rather than on their statistics, although stats are needed, and if statistics are needed, they should use the Base Model on page 145.

GOONS: Goons are the bullies, brutes, heavies, and scum that are looking for a leader and an excuse for violence. They have enough malice in their hearts to be dangerous but usually not enough brains to know how to fully capitalize on this.

Goons are generally at a lower level than player characters and while they shouldn't be too much of a threat in a one-on-one situation, several goons in a group can pose a serious danger to any player, or even a small group of players.

Goons have slightly higher Physicality and Dexterity and will have up to four skills at Level 1.

FOES: Foes are NPCs that can hold their own against most characters. They have a slightly broader skill set and better RAPID Range than Goons and are roughly equivalent to a starting PC.

Foes start with above average Acumen, Physicality and Dexterity and they have two skills at Level 2 and three skills at Level 1.

If a Foe is going to be a recurring character in the story, then the GM might consider giving them a Profession and choosing from the appropriate Vocational skills to help with background definition as quickly aligning a skillset.

ANTAGONISTS: Antagonists are the real bad guys of the piece, the recurring enemy, the evil mastermind, the boss. They are superior to any single starter player and a group should be cautious before engaging, unless they have superior numbers, overwhelming firepower, or the element of surprise. Preferably all three.

Although an example RAPID Range is suggested below, GMs should give an *Antagonist* a Paradigm and choose any single RAPID Range attribute to be at Level 3, three other attributes at Level 2, and the last one at Level 1.

In addition, they have one Skill at Level 3, two Skills at Level 2, and three Skills at Level 1.

THE COMPANY OF STRANGERS

Despite the staggering death toll as a result of the pandemic, there are still billions of survivors remaining and it's likely that characters will interact with NPCs on a regular basis and in a variety of ways and settings. Although there are different groups the characters will meet, there are some common characteristics they share.

For many obvious reasons, humans are the probably biggest single danger the players will face and learning how to deal with them is going to be key if they plan on surviving. The virus has thrown humanity back to the 1800s in more ways than just population and technology, with frontier justice being the only rule of law that still exists. The west is wilder now than it has ever been.

However, despite the unimaginable loss of life, there are still a considerable number of survivors now all competing for the same limited resources that will drive their very survival. Combine that with the inherent uncertainties of living in a post-pandemic world and trust is at an all-time low.

Characters should always be cautious when dealing with strangers as contact with other humans is fraught with risk. Players are going to want to keep a healthy skepticism and wariness of any strangers they meet, no matter how innocuous they might appear.

Some strangers may have goods, others may have services, others may have information or even the possibility of employment with payment in bullets or food, but more than one cannibal has claimed a victim that just wasn't suspicious enough.

Players entering towns and cities or dealing with strangers are going to need to be on their toes and aware of their surroundings at all times.

SETTLEMENTS & STRANGERS

Humans are essentially pack animals and there are many towns, cities, settlements, outposts, and other hubs where people have started to gather again. Some congregate just to trade, others might just be passing through or looking around, some might even be there out of loneliness and the need for companionship or the drive to have somewhere to call home again.

No matter how well they find themselves positioned, at some point even the most self-sufficient group may need to venture into a town or city. Whether they are looking for something specific and rare like medical supplies, escorting someone to their former home to gather photos and mementos, looking for a market to trade at, cities and towns can offer enough danger to make a player think twice before entering, as well as rewards great enough to make that risk worthwhile.

As described in Chapter 3, many cities are still burning and are uninhabitable. Many others have all but been abandoned and left to the gangs and scavengers who are prepared to fight over the scant remains to eke out an existence in anarchy.

Some of the hubs that characters may encounter will have a semblance of hierarchy – a clear owner or leader, often with a gang or a militia or some other authority behind them to enforce their rules.

This might range from the owner of an outpost with a private army who is trying to get what passes for "rich" these days, to a warlord trying to take over an area and secure resources for him and his men, to the mayor of a small town backed by the remnant city council and sheriff's department who are trying to maintain normalcy, to a religious leader with an army of unquestioning and brainwashed zealots behind him, to an ex-police or military leader who has marshaled forces to serve them.

Someone, whoever that is, has set the laws and rules, no matter how complex, simplistic, ridiculous, insane or barbaric they might appear.

Other places players are more anarchic still with no semblance of order. The only rule – which is usually unspoken – is *don't involve anyone else in your business*. If this rule is broken, all bets are off, and players may find themselves with more enemies than they can fight.

Despite inherent risks, there are many cities and larger towns that still exist, albeit often just as shadows of what they once were. Whilst some cities have taken an isolationist mentality (such as New York), others are attempting to become hubs for the region. New Philly, for example, is working to unite survivors within their regions and start up trade routes.

Depending on where the campaign is set, any large city in the region has the potential to be a trade or community hub but may also be the territory of a warlord or fighting gangs. It could just as easily be hiding a very nasty and deadly surprise as it is the source of good supplies.

Generally speaking, the greater the number of people there are in any one area the more competition there will be for the available resources. Without either a community working together in
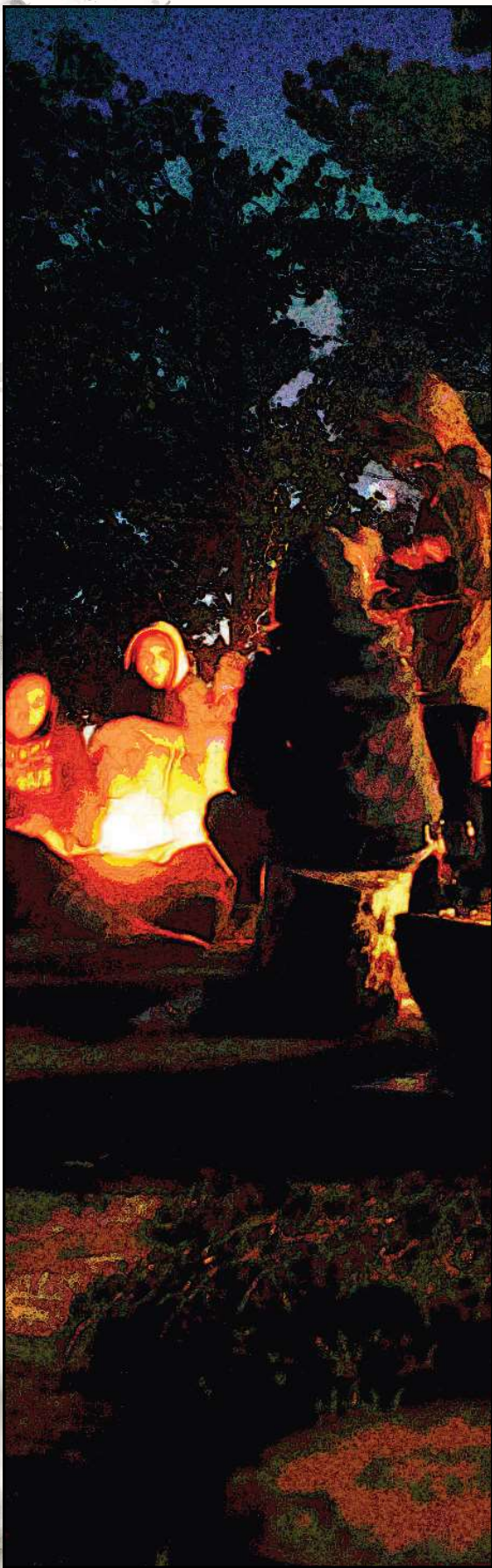
FIRST IMPRESSIONS & GUT CHECKS

When characters initially encounter a stranger, whether it is conscious or not, they will create a positive or negative impression. This can often be unintentional and could be caused by body language, an unintentional reminder of the past, or a passing familiarity to someone else but as *First Impressions* tend to stick with people, this can have long lasting impacts to a characters' ongoing relationships.

In game terms, this First Impression creates a *Relationship Modifier (RMod)*, which can range from -3 to +1 and is used in all future social checks between the PC and the NPC.

When meeting a new NPC, each player should make an Influence check to see the kind of *First Impressions* they have made. If they have a relevant Skill, such as Charm or Entertainer, they may use those SMods. Players need to *Fill in the Gaps* or role-play these encounters and if done thoughtfully, this may also potentially drive additional CMods from the GM.

On a Successful Influence check, the character makes no significant impression either way and future rolls have no Relationship Modifier (RMod) based on the First Impression.

On a Failure, the player has failed to make a good *First Impression* and, as trust is in short supply, the NPC has a -1 RMod towards the player.

On a Wild Success, the player has made a positive *First Impression* and gets a +1 *Relationship Mod* (*RMod*) on all future social checks with that NPC.

On a Dire Failure, the character did or said something that the NPC really didn't like, and they have a -3 RMod with that NPC going forward.

There is space on the character sheet for a player to make a note of relevant relationships, but the GM should also keep track of the various impressions characters make on recurring NPCs, as they may be relevant at a later time

Over time, characters may attempt to curry an NPCs favor over through the use of skills like Charm or Entertainment or *Psychology**. This will take more than one attempt but after several interactions, players may *Fill in the Gaps* and attempt another *First Impression* check to see if they can set the record straight.

In a similar manner, when a player encounters an NPC for the first time, they can attempt a *Gut Check* to see what they sense about that person. This requires a Successful Acumen or Perception check to see what their read of the NPC is, taking body language and other non-verbal communication into account.

However, players should remember that, Successful dice-checks notwithstanding, appearances will often be deceiving, and they should act on what they know, not what they guess.

NEGOTIATIONS

Although many situations are black and white, there will be times when individuals or groups may have a request or something to offer and will want to *Negotiate* some kind of settlement between the various parties. This could be haggling for the price of a pack of cigarettes with a trader or for the release of a hostage taken by an enemy militia, but the mechanic remains the same.

Negotiations are an *Opposed Check* between the two sides who are in the discussion. Although there is a definite mechanic, there will typically be a lot of back and forth and this is a great opportunity for the group to *Fill in the Gaps* and role-play.

In terms of gameplay mechanics, the side leading the negotiation uses Influence or a Sway skill to make an argument to convince the other side. This is referred to as a *Gambit* check. The other party in the negotiation makes a *Retort* check, by using their Acumen, Barter or Perception to make sure they understand the nuances of the discussion and position their response correctly.

GAMBITS & RETORTS

GAMBITS: The side leading the negotiation makes a check for their opening *Gambit* by making an Influence, Barter, Charm, Deception, Entertainment, Inspiration, or Intimidation check, depending on the situation or desired outcome.

If they Fail, their tactic or argument falls short in the eyes of their opponent who now gets a +1 CMod to their Retort check.

A Dire Fail means that their Gambit is not only patently unsuccessful but is either so weak or so offensive that the other side doesn't even need to respond, and negotiations are over.

A Success means that the Gambit had the desired effect, and the other party is interested or intrigued, and there is a -1 CMod to the Response check

A Wild Success means that the Gambit resonated with the other side, who now have a -3 CMod to their Retort.

RETORTS: The other side now gets to make a *Retort* check, using either Acumen, Streetwise, Perception or Barter, depending on the situation. This *Retort* check will determine how the Negotiations resolve themselves.

A *Fail* means they are swayed by the arguments and although there might still be stipulations, are largely agreeable to the other side's requests.

A *Dire Fail* means they are sucked in fully and give up something in addition to what was being requested.

A *Success* means they hold their position, and the Negotiation fails, unless the first party is prepared to change their position or offer.

A *Wild Success* means they tuned the other side's argument against them and may have even backed them into a corner.

If a *Negotiation* fails, another attempt cannot be made until the situation changes, either in terms of what is being asked or offered, or because external events have altered the circumstances.

NOTE: Just because one side wishes to *Negotiate*, the other side doesn't have to agree to take part, and negotiations can easily fall apart before both sides are even at the table.

It is also possible for an NPC to negotiate with a player, and whilst a player still has agency and can decide on the negotiation outcome themselves, they should be prepared to *Fill in the Gaps* as to how the exchange unfolds.

harmony or someone enforcing order, this means that players can expect a high level of anarchy and danger in larger towns. For this reason, villages and towns are often considered less volatile or openly dangerous places, although strangers are rarely likely to be welcome unless there is a large security presence.

The independent outposts that have sprung up around the country are usually in heavily trafficked areas or somewhere convenient between multiple settlements. In addition to providing enough armed guards to create a relatively safe environment to trade in (for a cut of each transaction), some even serve food and alcohol, if characters have the means to pay for it.

These outposts provide a place for people to meet in relative safety, and some even serve as seats of power. The owners usually have a contingent of guards and in some cases, this may feel like a small army. Any trouble is responded to quickly and brutally in order to show strength and maintain dominance. If it is suspected that the owner and his guards are losing power, another group may try and move in on them.

The local values may vary but trade will usually take place in bullets, batteries, or tins of food, which are the three most common forms of currency. Unspoiled fuel is also extremely valuable, and items like cigarettes and toilet paper are always in high demand. For no good reason, some people still hold precious stones and metals in high regard, even though they now have limited tangible benefits.

One thing the players should always bear in mind - wherever there are other people, there is risk, and trust should be earned and not given.

THE DOG FLU

Like many pandemics that came before it, the Dog Flu arrived without fanfare or warning and by the time doctors and epidemiologists realized what they were dealing with, it was too late.

The initial wave lasted nine months but as devastating as it was, the rate of infection seemed to dissipate during what turned out to be a long and brutal winter. However, with so few health professionals left and no real data for anyone to work with, it is still unclear if the virus has been

MECHANICS OF THE DOG FLU

To determine if a character becomes infected after coming into contact with a carrier, they must make a Physicality check and a Wild Success to resist it. There are no skills that can help with this check, but the GM may apply CMods, depending on the type, duration and severity of the exposure.

If a character becomes infected, they lose 1 WP/RP every 6 hours. When a character is down to their last RP, they must make a second Physicality check.

If they get a Wild Success on this Physicality check, their fever breaks, and they begin a slow path to recovery.

As a result of their sickness, the character permanently loses 1 point from their Physicality Attribute to reflect the lingering aftereffects. This will negatively impact the character's Wound Points, Resilience Points and Encumbrance level. Additionally, they must roll twice on the Lasting Wounds table (see *Lasting Wounds* on page 127).

Characters will recover WP & RP at half of their normal rate and for one Weekly Activity block after their infection, they are essentially bed-ridden as they recuperate.

For the following two Weekly Activity blocks, they incur WP/RP damage at twice their usual rate as they are still recovering.

If they get anything but a Wild Success on the second Physicality check, they will become consumed by aches and pains, which is followed by intense nausea and uncontrollable vomiting.

Over the course of 24 hours, the infected become weaker and suffer an increasing level of pain before spending their final few hours semi-conscious and convulsing uncontrollably. In their last few moments, they become wild and feral and attack anyone close to them, claw and biting at them. Within 3 combat rounds they will become Incapacitated and then Die.

The infected die with their faces contorted into an unmistakable look of agony.

beaten back by the cold or has simply killed everyone it was going to kill.

Although *the Distemper* is still a concern for survivors, the fear of it has taken a back seat by necessity to the more pressing requirements of everyday survival. Mass-produced masks have become extremely hard to find but most NPCs will have a scarf or bandana that they are ready to put across their mouth and nose, but few will be wearing them unless they see strangers.

Face-coverings or not, people are still cautious not to get too close to strangers until they are sure that they aren't showing early symptoms of the virus, which are initially similar to the common cold, such as a runny nose, cough, sneezing and fever.

Although the number of asymptomatic carriers of the virus was relatively low, some of them still exist and are spreading the virus. Most have done this unwittingly although a few have become aware of their actions and the consequences, and yet still choose to risk exposing others to fulfill their own needs.

Even if no one remained alive to study it now, during the pandemic there was strong evidence that seemed to suggest that any resistance to the virus was genetic and hereditary, and it's not uncommon to see multiple blood-members of the same family who have survived.

The virus is defined in game-play terms in the *Mechanics of the Dog Flu* sidebar on page 150, but due to the deadly nature of it, GMs are encouraged to treat it as a plot device. The virus is highly contagious with multiple transmission mechanism and it can be caught by anyone who is exposed to it simply by breathing the contaminated air of someone already infected, or the swapping of any kind of bodily fluids – including drinking from the same glass – and almost anyone who is infected will die.

The Dog Flu isn't something that the players should trifle with, and NPCs will immediately try to kill or escape from any players who they think might be infected without compassion, compunction, or hesitation, just as they will likely kill any dog on sight - no matter how small, friendly or benign it might seem.

The group should collectively decide during Session Xero how much of a role the virus still plays. Are there still carriers wandering around? Do animals other than canines still carry it? Is it part of the backdrop or an active concern for the players?

WHO IS LEFT?

Although intended as little more than broad strokes that should be filled in by the GM and players, below are some examples of groups that the PCs might encounter, along with some sample NPCs that should provide an easy starting point for a GM to build NPCs upon.

When the players do encounter these groups, it should be remembered that whilst they share certain behaviors and characteristics, they are not monolithic and do not think or act as one globally cohesive unit, nor do they refer to themselves by the names used below to describe them.

This means that if the players encounter a group of what are characterized here as Migrators or Bandits, it is highly unlikely that this will actually refer to themselves as such, as they simply consider themselves to be people, like anyone else, just trying to survive.

The various groups that players might encounter will also most likely be unaware - and unconcerned - with any other dealings that the players may have had with other groups. Similarly, it's unlikely NPCs will even know who or where other groups are, let alone care about their interactions with the players. That is, of course, unless they have done something particularly gruesome that may have garnered them a reputation. After all, if every Migrator who tried to head south along a particular route was butchered by some loons with mohawks and the characters have mohawks…

In addition to people, the characters are likely to run into certain animals now that humanity is scarcer than before, and the most common animals they may encounter are covered below.

The groups outlined are *Survivors, Migrators, Militias, Survivalists, Nomads, Bandits, Warlords, Zealots, Government Remnants, Cannibals* and *Animals*.

CAMPAIGN THEMES

AS THE GROUP DISCUSSES THE KIND OF CAMPAIGN THEY WANT TO TAKE PART IN AND THE NARRATIVE THEY WILL WEAVE DURING *SESSION XERO* (SEE PAGES X AND X), THEY MAY DECIDE TO FOLLOW THE SAME PATH AS ONE OF THE GROUPS BELOW.

ALTHOUGH FLESHING OUT THE WORLD AND THEIR ROLES IS BETWEEN THE GROUP AND THE GM, FOR SOME PLAYERS THE IDEA OF BEING PART OF A MILITIA OR BANDIT GROUP COULD BE AS APPEALING AS BECOMING WARLORDS OR AMASSING ZEALOT FOLLOWERS. THEY CAN TAKE IDEAS AND INSPIRATION FROM THE DESCRIPTIONS AND BUILD ON THE THEMES PRESENTED.

SURVIVORS

Although by definition this anyone still left alive, within the context of *Distemper* a *Survivor* is someone who doesn't neatly fall into any of the other groups and whose primary driver is to simply get by in this new reality. Many players themselves will fall into the category of *Survivors*.

Survivors tend to come in all flavors, shapes, and sizes and, true to the nature and essence of humanity, can be found almost anywhere. Although many survivors choose to remain by themselves or in smaller groups to avoid the problems that being near other humans can inevitably bring, most people still crave some form of companionship.

This means that loose groups of the like-minded or the similarly desperate will just as easily form as they will fall apart, and the comfort of strangers can very quickly become deadly chaos.

Players will run into *Survivors* anywhere they go, with each location and environment having its own challenges or advantages and that may have shaped whoever is left. *Survivors* often help shape the tapestry and backdrop for the campaign.

Examples of groups of *Survivors* that players might meet are:

• A group of friends that are still in a city, crammed inside their apartment building and scavenging enough to survive from the various stores and warehouses while collecting rainwater on the roof.

• What remains of a family who moved to an isolated cabin and have been forced out to find food now that their supplies are gone and are very suspicious of outsiders.

• A group of like-minded optimists who have decided to build a self-sufficient commune and are inhabiting homes in a small town or village.

• A disparate collection of lost souls wandering from place to place, using up what resources they can find and who are just desperate for someone else to watch their back.

Although essentially peaceful, many groups of Survivors have reverted to tribalism, banding together for security, and only trusting their own. Players that encounter such tribes will not find them welcoming of outsiders and they might even find themselves quickly attacked if they have strayed into what the tribe considers to be their territory, even if the transgression was unintentional.

Territory - hunting grounds, in particular - has become possibly the most valuable thing of all, as it can ensure survival for some or even many. Although most Survivors don't have the taste or passion for violence, many skirmishes have occurred between otherwise insular and peaceful clans or tribes as they establish dominance and survival for them and theirs.

Although everyone has their own take and outlook on the world after, many Survivors have been deeply traumatized by what happened before and then since and many are deeply paranoid and scared of others, particularly if they look sick. A sneeze will often be met with a gunshot.

Survivors' main concerns are securing enough food and supplies to sustain themselves and their loved ones. This occasionally requires having to fight to protect their territory.

SURVIVOR CITIZEN 01000

WP 10 RP 6 DMM 0 DMR 0
Init +1 Enc 6

Barter 1, Local 1, Scavenging 2

Hunting Knife (2+2d3)

SURVIVOR MILITIA 01101

WP 12 RP 7 DMM 1 DMR 1
Init +2 Enc 7

Athletics 1, Ranged Combat 1, Survival 2

Shotgun (5+2d6) [12]

Radio

SURVIVOR LEADER 11121

WP 12 RP 7 DMM 1 DMR 1
Init +2 Enc 7

Ranged Combat 1, Charm 1, *Tactical Knowledge** 1, Inspiration 1

Heavy Pistol (3+2d3) [9]
Hunting Rifle (5+1d6) [15]
Radio

MIGRATORS
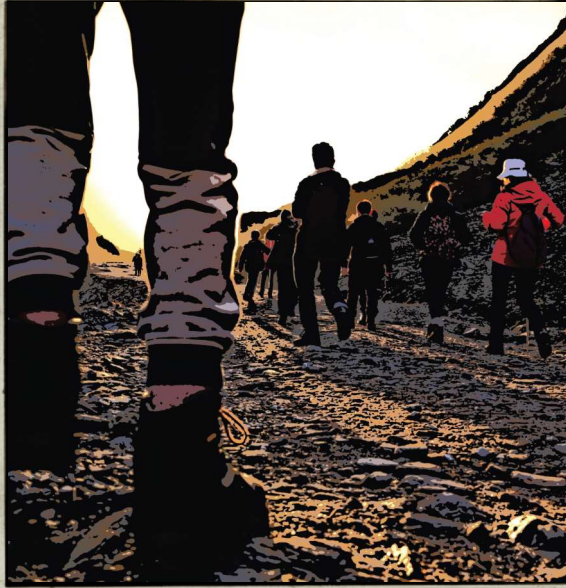
Migrators can be found heading to what they pray are greener pastures and, like Survivors, are generally non-violent and peaceful. However, they are desperate enough to be making a dangerous and potentially fruitless journey, which means they are likewise desperate enough to fight to protect themselves and their traveling companions should the need arise.

Due to the lack of fuel and working vehicles, many of these columns move by foot or bicycle and, given the inherent dangers involved - particularly as the open road makes them easy targets - very few people undertake these trips lightly. Most groups of Migrators tend to be relatively small - sometimes as few as just two or three people – although there have been some caravans of dozens of horses, buggies and vehicles that formed on what sometimes feels like an empty and endless road to nowhere.

Many of these people are chasing a hopeless dream as nowhere has escaped the virus unscathed but the notions Migrators have about finding a better life are often just lies they are telling themselves. Frequently - and assuming

anyone even manages to make it to their destination - the only thing that they find that actually lives up to their hopes is a better climate. It's not uncommon for those few that make it to wherever they are going, to move on again soon after.

Migrators will generally not be aggressive towards players (unless they are provoked) as their only considerations are getting to their ultimate destination and making sure they have enough supplies to complete the journey. Combat and hostility are things they will try to avoid as it doesn't get them any closer to their goal.

GMs should have a clear idea of where any group of Migrators the players meet are going, and why. This will often be as simple as food or shelter, but as they are making a very hazardous journey, their destination and reasoning for making the journey should be well defined.

MIGRATION LEADER 21020
WP 10 RP 6 DMM 0 DMR 0
Init +1 Enc 6

Inspiration 2, Survival 2, Charm 1, Deception 1, Navigation 1

Light Pistol (3+1d6) [12]
Hatchet (damage)

Compass (+1 Navigation checks)

LONE TREKKER 02201
WP 13 RP 8 DMM 2 DMR 1
Init +3 Enc 8

Survival 2, Ranged Combat 1, Navigation 1, Perception 1

Shotgun (5+2d6) [6]
Hunting Knife (2+2d3)
Compass (+1 Navigation checks)

MIGRATION NAVIGATOR 01211
WP 9 RP 8 DMM 2 DMR 1
Init +3 Enc 6

Survival 2, Ranged Combat 1, Navigation 1, Perception 1

Hunting Knife (4+1d6)
Shotgun (10+1d6)
Scalpel (1+1d6)

MILITIAS & GANGS

Although they may not refer or even think of themselves as militia or gang, there are many groups of individuals that have banded together in a quasi-military fashion, usually to protect what's theirs but or to be to take what someone else has. Militias generally include a predefined hierarchy and although many are essentially democratic, some voices and some votes remain worth more than others and even in the loosest militias, there is generally a clear leader.

Arguably the one thing all Militias or gangs have in common and what really separates them from Survivors is how heavily armed they are and their willingness to use those weapons with little or no hesitation when required.

Most Militias tend to be tied to a specific region, such as a town, farms, compound, or other such stronghold. They are generally not particularly interested in conquest or territorial growth, so much as they are in ensuring they have enough for them and theirs. If they are not being threatened then many militias can be peaceful enough, but if they feel that they are in danger or someone is encroaching on what's theirs, then they are prepared to respond with extreme violence.

Many of the emerging tribes are militias that are organizing and evolving. Over time, these might become warlords but are right now they are still focused on their immediate survival.

Type One: Militia Recruit

Type Two: Militia Soldier

Type Three: Militia Commander

MILITIA RECRUIT O1211
WP 9 RP 8 DMM 2 DMR 1
Init +3 Enc 6
Firearms 1, Unarmed Combat 1, Survival 2, Hunting 2
Hunting Knife (4+1d6), Shotgun (10+1d6). Scalpel (1+1d6)

GANG MEMBER O1211
WP 9 RP 8 DMM 2 DMR 1
Init +3 Enc 6
Ranged Combat 1, Unarmed Combat 1, Survival 1, Hunting 1
Hunting Knife (4+1d6), Shotgun (10+1d6). Scalpel (1+1d6)

MILITIA COMMANDER O1211
WP 9 RP 8 DMM 2 DMR 1
Init +3 Enc 6
Firearms 1, Unarmed Combat 1, Survival 2, Hunting 2
Hunting Knife (4+1d6), Shotgun (10+1d6). Scalpel (1+1d6)

SURVIVALISTS

Although the virus may not have been the form that they had anticipated it taking, there were many who had long been expecting an extinction level event to happen and had spent years getting ready for it.

Often previously referred to as "preppers", this group of survivors were arguably some of the best positioned to ride the pandemic out. This was in part due to their hardened and steadfast mentality but largely due to the hoarding and preparation that they had spent, in many cases, a lifetime undertaking. They knew something like this was coming and didn't plan on getting caught short when it did.

Survivalists can range from an individual living in a remote cabin in the woods through to an enclave but almost all will have aggressively staked out their territory. These groups are exceptionally well prepared, both in terms of hoarded supplies and, more importantly, the willingness to protect what they have from others. Part of their preparation was not only rations and water, but usually weapons and ammunition - lots of it. Enough to deal with

anyone trying to take things from them.

One of their primary characteristics is their self-reliance and mistrust of others - anyone not part of their group might not be an enemy, but they certainly aren't allies.

Although many of them are still well supplied, many preppers had planned on enough supplies to get them through a year, and that time is either rapidly approaching or has already come and gone. Many have started to venture out further and further from their bases in search of food.

Each of these groups will have a very well-prepared base of operations that will often be "off the grid" and extremely out of the way. This may take the form of a remote house, but many preppers - especially the older school preppers - are still in the bunkers designed for a nuclear war. These groups will tend to be on the smaller side, perhaps as few as a handful of people.

However, there are also numerous enclaves in the American wild who had already chosen before the pandemic to live in the back-country for a variety of reasons ranging from a desire to live free, to building their own commune based on political or religious beliefs, or due to a believe that the government were their enemy and they needed to protect themselves.

These groups could potentially range into the dozens of members and may be completely self-sufficient.

Survivalists' main concerns are ensuring they have enough supplies to last and defending their stronghold. They didn't spend years building up and pushing through the apocalypse just to give it away now.

Players interacting with Survivalists will find themselves having a hard time convincing them of good intentions. Most interactions with them will be hostile and aggressive. The fact that they have survived so long means many of them are even more aggressive about keeping what's theirs.

Type One: Cabin in the mountains

Type Two: survivalist family

Type Three: comping leader

FAMILY MEMBER 01211
WP 9 RP 8 DMM 2 DMR 1
Init +3 Enc 6
Firearms 1, Unarmed Combat 1,
Survival 2, Hunting 2
Hunting Knife (4+1d6), Shotgun
(10+1d6). Scalpel (1+1d6)

CABIN IN THE MOUNTAINS 01211
WP 9 RP 8 DMM 2 DMR 1
Init +3 Enc 6
Firearms 1, Unarmed Combat 1,
Survival 2, Hunting 2
Hunting Knife (4+1d6), Shotgun
(10+1d6). Scalpel (1+1d6)

COMPOUND LEADER 01211
WP 9 RP 8 DMM 2 DMR 1
Init +3 Enc 6
Firearms 1, Unarmed Combat 1,
Survival 2, Hunting 2
Hunting Knife (4+1d6), Shotgun
(10+1d6). Scalpel (1+1d6)

NOMADS

Like Migrators, most Nomads are found on the road but that's often the end of any similarities as Nomads generally have no destination in mind and little intention of stopping.

While some of them may be aggressive, preferring to just take what they need from the dead or the weak in order to keep moving, there are many Nomads who are simply making their way from place to place in an RV or truck or camper, scavenging from the dead as they go.

Nomads tend to move in smaller groups which makes keeping them resourced and supplied significantly easier whilst still ensuring they have enough muscle to deal with any problems they encounter on their travels.

Fuel hasn't been a problem until recently, but now that it's been more than a year since it last saw fresh production, gasoline is starting to spoil. Nomads are realizing that this is going to be a major problem, and some of them are making plans to find somewhere to settle down and stop moving whilst others have no such plans and are actively looking for solutions like switching to ethanol instead of gasoline.

Nomads will often find what seems to be a relatively untouched area and proceed to scavenge and pick through the bones of the dead, figuratively and literally. Best case is that they find a warehouse or packing-factory with good ingredients that they can live off for a few months, worst case, they find a few weaker unfortunates and take what meager rations they have and leave them for dead.

With the exception of some hardened road-warriors, such as those who belonged to biker gangs before and may have an affection for their specific vehicle after, the abundance of abandoned vehicles means that nomads tend to leave a vehicle rather than try to repair it, particular as spoiled gasoline causes an increasing number of problems to engines.

Nomads' main concerns are keeping themselves with enough supplies and fuel to stay mobile.

Type One: Nomad Tourist 01001, WP 10 RP 6 DMM 0 DMR 0 Init 0 Enc 6, Unarmed Combat 1, Survival 1 Hunting Knife (2+3d3) or Shotgun (5+2d6)

Type Two: Nomad Biker 01001, WP 10 RP 6 DMM 0 DMR 0 Init 0 Enc 6, Unarmed Combat 1, Survival 1 Hunting Knife (2+3d3) or Shotgun (5+2d6)

Type Three: Nomad Raider 01001, WP 10 RP 6 DMM 0 DMR 0 Init 0 Enc 6, Unarmed Combat 1, Survival 1 Hunting Knife (2+3d3) or Shotgun (5+2d6)

NOMAD TOURIST 01211
WP 9 RP 8 DMM 2 DMR 1
Init +3 Enc 6
Firearms 1, Unarmed Combat 1,
Survival 2, Hunting 2
Hunting Knife (4+1d6), Shotgun
(10+1d6). Scalpel (1+1d6)

NOMAD BIKER 01211
WP 9 RP 8 DMM 2 DMR 1
Init +3 Enc 6
Firearms 1, Unarmed Combat 1,
Survival 2, Hunting 2
Hunting Knife (4+1d6), Shotgun
(10+1d6). Scalpel (1+1d6)

NOMAD RAIDER 01211
WP 9 RP 8 DMM 2 DMR 1
Init +3 Enc 6
Firearms 1, Unarmed Combat 1,
Survival 2, Hunting 2
Hunting Knife (4+1d6), Shotgun
(10+1d6). Scalpel (1+1d6)

BANDITS

One of the least predictable threats in the new world, Bandits are what some people become when there are no rules in place and no one to enforce punishments and there is no one left to tell them no.

Although often nomadic in nature, there are just as many groups of bandits who have a fixed base but, having used up all local supplies, have been forced into exploring new areas and taking whatever they find.

Many of these groups are little more than highly aggressive scavengers, but some, arguably the most dangerous, are made up of ex-military and police who are using their training to ensure their own survival at the expense of anyone that tries to get in their way.

Bandits are sometimes in packs as small as 2 or 3 but a few of them have grown in size to several dozen members. This larger number makes them more inherently more dangerous but also exponentially harder to keep supplied. This need is driving some groups to venture further from their established home base, to take bigger risks and more chances.

Unlike the Warlords who have sprung up, few bandits have any aspirations to take and hold any territory. They will have a well defended base that they will fight to the death to keep intact but generally they aren't looking to draw lines on a map and stake a claim. The leaders of some bandit groups may have a bigger picture in mind, but most groups are simply living day to day and think nothing of taking what they want, particularly when they have backup behind them. Over time, many of these groups have started to live for the thrill of the conquest. Many of them rely on the element of surprise and fear and will appear out of nowhere and use explosives, noise, and violence to terrify and disorient their opposition.

Other survivors generally see bandits like cockroaches, maggots and parasites, endlessly moving and feeding with little regard for what mess or damage they leave behind.

Bandits' main concerns are ensuring they have enough supplies to last and for many groups, indulging their darker impulses is secondary, but still a priority.

Type One: Bandit Looter

Type Two: Bandit Rider

Type Three: Bandit Organizer

BANDIT ORGANIZER 01211
WP 9 RP 8 DMM 2 DMR 1
Init +3 Enc 6
Firearms 1, Unarmed Combat 1,
Survival 2, Hunting 2
Hunting Knife (4+1d6), Shotgun
(10+1d6). Scalpel (1+1d6)

LONE LOOTER 01211
WP 9 RP 8 DMM 2 DMR 1
Init +3 Enc 6
Firearms 1, Unarmed Combat 1,
Survival 2, Hunting 2
Hunting Knife (4+1d6), Shotgun
(10+1d6). Scalpel (1+1d6)

BANDIT RAIDER 01211
WP 9 RP 8 DMM 2 DMR 1
Init +3 Enc 6
Firearms 1, Unarmed Combat 1,
Survival 2, Hunting 2
Hunting Knife (4+1d6), Shotgun
(10+1d6). Scalpel (1+1d6)

WARLORDS
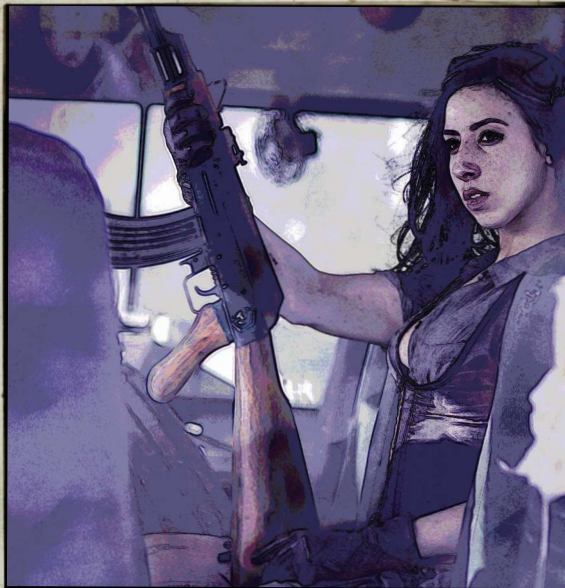
As society cracked and broke, some saw this as an opportunity to seize power, either out of some personal goal, or a sense of necessity and self-protection.

All over the world, men more dangerous and violent than the rest have begun to create armies and take territories for themselves and theirs, in order to create a sense of stability and safety for those that follow them.

Many former military personnel found themselves uniquely well-equipped by virtue of training and character to do just this and rallied troops beneath them. Securing access to equipment and vehicles, they have taken control of an area and everything in it. Some have tried to reestablish a semblance of order whilst others just wish to seize territory and consolidate their power.

Some criminal gangs found that their ability to exert control over neighborhoods and locales translated well and they have used what they had learned on the streets to get people to follow their will and execute on goals.

But, no matter how they came to be where they are, warlords are rarely fools and they quickly realized that the

old world is never coming back and that they need to exert control in order to ensure their own survival. They are generally as relentless as they are ruthless, and they rarely allow a transgression to go unanswered and players will need to be careful when interacting with them

Warlords will have a stronghold that might range from a small enclave to a town or even city. Some have spaces and supplies that they either prepared and readied before the virus or have taken from someone else who did. This could even include a police station or military base.

Warlords will inevitably have a chain of command, however loose, with at least one trusted lieutenant and confidant. They don't have the luxury of picking their soldiers anymore and now need to make do with what they can find, which often will mean that their 'armies' are little more than frightened civilians forced to carry a club or a gun.

For many of these Warlords, territory - and the resources contained within - is everything. Even though everyone now has their own map of the world and lines are blurred, warlords will be aggressive in protecting what they see as theirs, which includes everything that falls into their territory. This might include the players and their own Base of Operations.

Players may decide they themselves want to become Warlords and stake their own claim in the new frontier. This is entirely possible, and a GM should see Chapter x: Moderating Distemper for more details on how to construct and moderate that kind of campaign.

Type One: Warlord Soldier

Type Two: Warlord Lieutenant

Type Three: The Warlord

THE WARLORD 01211
WP 9 RP 8 DMM 2 DMR 1

Init +3 Enc 6

Firearms 1, Unarmed Combat 1, Survival 2, Hunting 2

Hunting Knife (4+1d6), Shotgun (10+1d6). Scalpel (1+1d6)

WARLORD LIEUTENANT 01211
WP 9 RP 8 DMM 2 DMR 1

Init +3 Enc 6

Firearms 1, Unarmed Combat 1, Survival 2, Hunting 2

Hunting Knife (4+1d6), Shotgun (10+1d6). Scalpel (1+1d6)

WARLORD SOLDIER 01211
WP 9 RP 8 DMM 2 DMR 1

Init +3 Enc 6

Firearms 1, Unarmed Combat 1, Survival 2, Hunting 2

Hunting Knife (4+1d6), Shotgun (10+1d6). Scalpel (1+1d6)

ZEALOTS
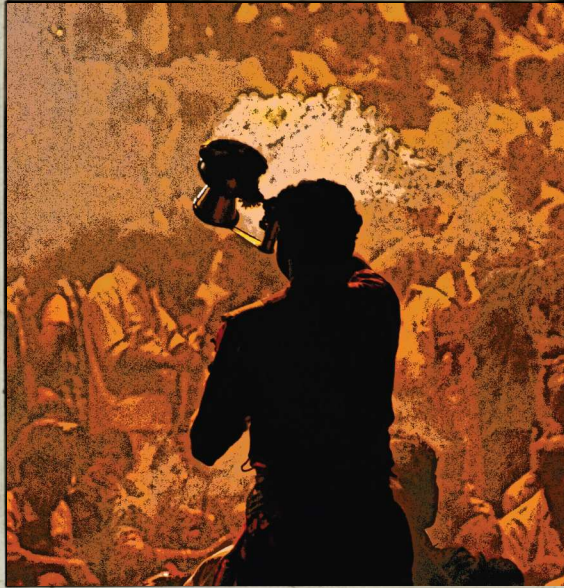
FOR MANY OF THE SURVIVORS, THE SUDDEN DEMISE OF HUMANITY REPRESENTED THE BIBLICAL "END TIMES" AND WHAT MANY OF THEM HAD SPENT THEIR LIVES DREADING (AND OTHERS HAD SPENT THEIR LIVES WAITING FOR) WAS FINALLY HERE. FEW OF THEM, HOWEVER, HAD ANY REAL IDEA WHAT TO DO.

ALTHOUGH THERE ARE A LARGE NUMBER WHO NOW LIVE BY THEIR OWN INDIVIDUAL INTERPRETATION OF THE BIBLE AND CURRENT EVENTS, THERE ARE MANY MORE WHO SOUGHT SAFETY WITHIN CIRCLES OF LIKE-MINDED INDIVIDUALS, ALL COMFORTED BY THE BELIEF THAT THEY ARE SURVIVORS OF THE RAPTURE AND ARE GOING TO HEAVEN. HOWEVER, MOST ARE AS LOST WITH HOW THEY SHOULD BE LIVING NOW THAT THEY HAVE SURVIVED.

THERE WERE SOME LEADERS WHO HAVE RISEN TO LEAD THE FLOCKS. SOME WERE TRUE MEN OF FAITH WHO WERE TRYING TO PROTECT THEIR CONGREGATIONS AND MAINTAIN VESTIGES OF THEIR BELIEF SYSTEMS BUT MANY MORE WERE DANGEROUS AND POWER-HUNGRY LAY PREACHERS. OTHERS WERE EVEN

MORE DANGEROUS CON-MEN WHO SENSED AN OPPORTUNITY AND SEIZED IT.

ALTHOUGH MANY OF THESE MINISTRIES ARE LARGELY BENIGN, AN EQUAL NUMBER ARE NOT. SEVERAL HAVE DECIDED THAT ANYONE NOT IN – OR NOT WILLING TO JOIN – THEIR MINISTRY MUST BE KILLED AND ARE ROAMING THE COUNTRY, EITHER CONVERTING OR MURDERING EVERY "HERETIC" THEY MEET.

NO MATTER HOW THEY APPROACH LIFE, THE COMMONALITY IS THAT THEY ARE ALL UNITED IN THE BELIEF THAT THEY ARE FOLLOWING GOD'S PATH AND HAVE ALL MANAGED TO GATHER FOLLOWERS IN THE FORM OF A CONGREGATION.

SOME HAVE BUILT DANGEROUS MINISTRIES THAT WILL DO ANYTHING TO MEET THE MESSIAH. AT THE VERY LEAST, THEY WILL SEND OTHERS TO MEET HIM ON THEIR BEHALF.

PLAYERS MAY ENCOUNTER ZEALOTS ANYWHERE THAT THEY ENCOUNTER OTHER SURVIVORS AND ALTHOUGH MANY WILL MAKE THEIR BELIEFS OBVIOUS, SOME ARE MORE SUBTLE AND OFTEN HAVE MALINTENT, SPYING ON THE HEATHENS WHILE THEY MAKE PLANS.

MANY GROUPS HAVE STAKED OUT THEIR OWN TERRITORIES, USUALLY BASED AROUND A SYMBOLIC BUILDING SUCH AS A CHURCH, PALACE, OR OTHER HALLOWED GROUND. THEY WILL PROTECT THIS TERRITORY WITH THE SAME FEROCITY SEEN WITH ANY OF THE OTHER GROUPS. MANY OF THESE GROUPS HAVE TRULY GONE INSANE AND THERE IS NO REASONING WITH THEM.

THERE ARE A FEW NOMADIC GROUPS OF ZEALOTS WHO BELIEVE IT IS THEIR CALLING TO FOLLOW THEIR LEADER ON AN ENDLESS JOURNEY IN SEARCH OF SUPPLIES AND CONVERTS. THEY WILL JUST AS LIKELY KILL ANYONE THEY MEET IF THEY ARE UNABLE TO CONVERT THEM.

TYPE ONE: ZEALOT FAITHFUL

TYPE TWO: ZEALOT LAY-PREACHER

TYPE THREE: ZEALOT HIGH-PRIEST

ZEALOT FAITHFUL 01211
WP 9 RP 8 DMM 2 DMR 1
Init +3 Enc 6
Firearms 1, Unarmed Combat 1, Survival 2, Hunting 2
Hunting Knife (4+1d6), Shotgun (10+1d6). Scalpel (1+1d6)

ZEALOT LAY-PREACHER 01211
WP 9 RP 8 DMM 2 DMR 1
Init +3 Enc 6
Firearms 1, Unarmed Combat 1, Survival 2, Hunting 2
Hunting Knife (4+1d6), Shotgun (10+1d6). Scalpel (1+1d6)

ZEALOT HIGH-PRIEST 01211
WP 9 RP 8 DMM 2 DMR 1
Init +3 Enc 6
Firearms 1, Unarmed Combat 1, Survival 2, Hunting 2
Hunting Knife (4+1d6), Shotgun (10+1d6). Scalpel (1+1d6)

GOVERNMENT REMNANTS

Although devastated by the pandemic and seemingly slow to recover, there are now multiple groups that claim to represent the US government with varying degrees of legitimacy.

As badly impacted as every other part of society, the US Government and military had lost so much of their leadership that they had been thrown in deep disarray, hampering their ability to provide any meaningful response to the crisis.

Under President Cunningham, who had previously been Secretary of Education and was the last remaining member of the cabinet when inaugurated, what remained of the government in Washington started to coalesce, with the White House once again serving as the de facto center of power.

Aligning himself with the sole remaining Joint Chief of Staff, Cunningham used the government's emergency broadcast system to recall as many troops and government officials to Washington as possible to help with what he calls "The Great Reclamation" - an effort to reestablish some form of

law and order, power, and ultimately, restore democracy.

Cunningham firmly believes in both the American Dream and American Exceptionalism as passionately as he does that what remains of America wants the same thing. His plan is to re-establish control over all cities and regions and to unite them again under one flag. He believes that if he can either recruit leadership or install his own leadership that are loyal to the cause in each region, that they can once again pull together and unite the various survivors.

Cunningham focused initially on amassing what forces were loyal to him in and around Washington and then set about securing the city, turning the area on both shores of the Potomac into a well-fortified city-state.

Now that everything from Downtown Washington to Arlington was under their control, the President's forces have started sweeps of the local area, informing all survivors that they encounter that they are now under the protection of the American Colonial Forces.

Some have responded to this new protection with gunfire and bloodshed, others have been more docile and accepting. Some have agreed to sign up new Army in return for food and everything now within a 30-mile radius

House has been brought under the control of the new Government.

With unrestricted access to military resources, including fuel that had been treated with military-grade stabilizers that will ensure it remains usable for at least another year, these will be some of the most well-armed and potentially aggressive NPCs the players can encounter.

There are other remnant forces that the players might meet who will claim to be a part of the government or military but who are in no way affiliated with Cunningham's Administration and in many instances, have effectively deserted their posts. Although they will have uniforms and military equipment, they are no different from other survivors, just better armed and trained, although they will continue to attempt to trade on the authority of their uniforms and weapons as much as possible. Ammunition provided, they will open fire on the players and take what they have, rather than negotiate.

For more details on the Government Remnant, see Chapter 10: Moderating The Distemper.

Type One: Remnant EMT

Type Two: Remnant Soldier

REMNANT EMT 01211
WP 9 RP 8 DMM 2 DMR 1
Init +3 Enc 6
Firearms 1, Unarmed Combat 1, Survival 2, Hunting 2
Hunting Knife (4+1d6), Shotgun (10+1d6). Scalpel (1+1d6)

REMNANT LEADER 01211
WP 9 RP 8 DMM 2 DMR 1
Init +3 Enc 6
Firearms 1, Unarmed Combat 1, Survival 2, Hunting 2
Hunting Knife (4+1d6), Shotgun (10+1d6). Scalpel (1+1d6)

REMNANT SOLIDER 01211
WP 9 RP 8 DMM 2 DMR 1
Init +3 Enc 6
Firearms 1, Unarmed Combat 1, Survival 2, Hunting 2
Hunting Knife (4+1d6), Shotgun (10+1d6). Scalpel (1+1d6)
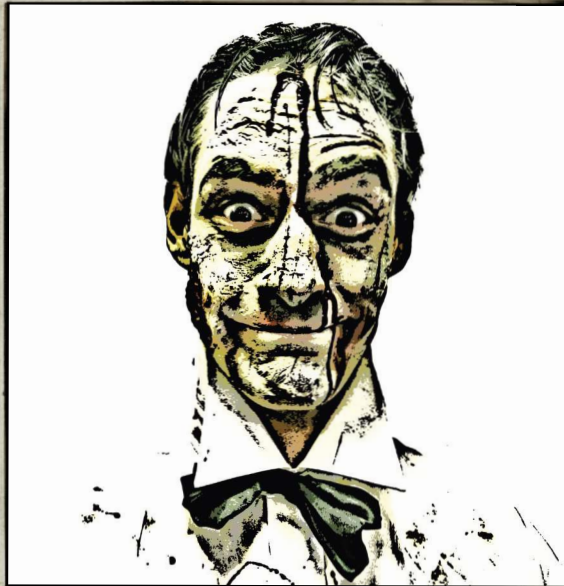
CANNIBALS

Although there are some tribes of survivors for whom human flesh has become a part of their diet, for the most part cannibalism is less of an actual group and more of a behavior. Some or all of the other groups may have fallen to this level at one point or another.

The lack of food has been a pervasive issue since several months into the outbreak and there was only so much already in the preparation chain that people could get to.

As people moved out of cities, they quickly realized there weren't enough easily accessible sources of food for people to feed from. Even the most skilled were struggling to live full time off the land while they waited for crops to take hold.

And, as distasteful as the idea may have been to most, when they were faced with starvation, cannibalism became more palatable.

Many more people have tried human flesh than will admit it but one thing that almost everyone seems to acknowledge is that it irrevocably changes people. Something in their eyes or maybe it's a mark on their soul

that shines through. It might be the smell on their breath, but something is different about them.

For some people, cannibalism dislodges something in their brain and nothing else ever satisfies them again while for others, everything after now tastes like human flesh.

For others still, the act of eating itself becomes synonymous with what they've done and they find themselves having to force every morsel of food down like everything catches in their throat.

The ugliest truth, the very worst part, is that some people have started to enjoy it.

Not just the taste of it, but the thrill of the hunt.

The illicit nature of the activity, the screams of the victim, that first bite into one of their organs. For some, this has become something dark and depraved that they can't look away from.

Player's meeting cannibals will usually have no way of knowing, although something will always feel "off" about these characters. Players getting a Wild Success or Moment of Insight on a Gut Check may sense the darkness within them and guess what they have done.

These groups of cannibals might be as small 4 people but could also be as large as se Some of them, the smaller groups, may

moving from place to place and trying to pick off stragglers from groups of survivors or migrators. They would rather not engage in open or fair combat if they can kidnap or overwhelm their target with numbers and will usually attempt any aggression when the odds are in their favor, such as having the element of surprise, or at night.

Players may find themselves the targets of cannibal groups if they are in the same place for a while in a relatively isolated location, if they are camping in the open in a cannibal's territory, or if they are moving by foot and are relatively easy targets.

Cannibals will often track and hunt their prey before jumping them to make sure of their targets. Some cannibals may approach the players and try to ingratiate themselves with the group and join them in order to kidnap one of them.

Type One: Cannibal Citizen

Type Two: Cannibal Militia

Type Three: Cannibal Leader

CANNIBAL PLANNER 01211
WP 9 RP 8 DMM 2 DMR 1
Init +3 Enc 6
Firearms 1, Unarmed Combat 1,
Survival 2, Hunting 2
Hunting Knife (4+1d6), Shotgun
(10+1d6). Scalpel (1+1d6)

CANNIBAL TRACKER 01211
WP 9 RP 8 DMM 2 DMR 1
Init +3 Enc 6
Firearms 1, Unarmed Combat 1,
Survival 2, Hunting 2
Hunting Knife (4+1d6), Shotgun
(10+1d6). Scalpel (1+1d6)

**LONE CANNIBAL 01211**
WP 9 RP 8 DMM 2 DMR 1
Init +3 Enc 6
Firearms 1, Unarmed Combat 1,
Survival 2, Hunting 2
Hunting Knife (4+1d6), Shotgun
(10+1d6). Scalpel (1+1d6)
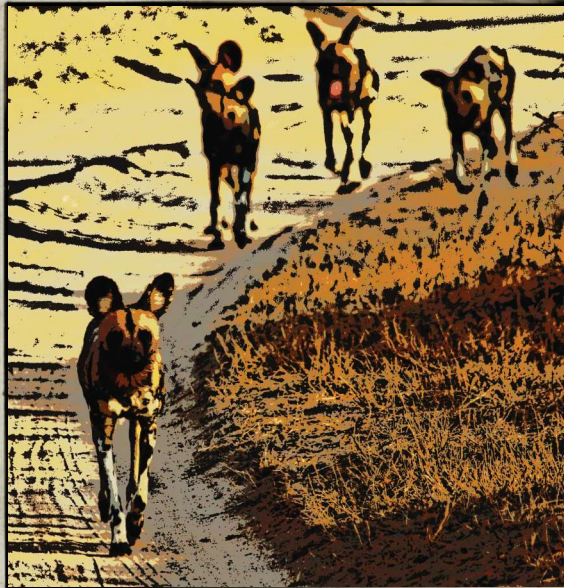
ANIMALS

With fewer humans to hunt them, wildlife is thriving, with nature being the clear winner from the pandemic. Animals of all sorts can be found everywhere, ready to be caught, tamed, or attack the players. Some animals are a good source of Rations, while others can be put to work.

Unlike before the virus, dogs (and all forms of canine) are no longer man's best friend as they can be asymptotic carriers. Most NPCs will react very badly to seeing a canine, particularly in a pack

Without massive hunting or wide-scale farming operations, wildlife has had a pretty good year without mankind's influence. Players can run into many different kinds of animals, depending on their location within the game. Examples of commonly encountered animals are below:

Bear

01711

WP 18 RP 13 DMM 7 DMR 1 Init +3 Enc 13

Athletics 2, Perception 1, Survival 2, Unarmed Combat 5

Dog

02203

WP 15 RP 8 DMM 2 DMR 3 Init +8 Enc 8

Athletics 2, Dodge 2, Navigation 2, Perception 2, Survival 1, Unarmed Combat 2

Horse

01405

WP 19 RP 10 DMM 4 DMR 5 Init +7 Enc 10

Athletics 2, Dodge 2, Navigation 2, Perception 1, Survival 1, Unarmed Combat 2

Mountain Lion

02305

WP 18 RP 9 DMM 3 DMR 5 Init +8 Enc 9

Athletics 2, Dodge 2, Perception 2, Survival 1, Unarmed Combat 3

Wolf

02304

WP 17 RP 9 DMM 3 DMR 4 Init +7 Enc 9

Athletics 2, Dodge 2, Perception 2, Survival 1, Unarmed Combat 3

ANIMALS WITH THE DISTEMPER VIRUS

All species of canines can still be infected with and carry H274 (even if they appear to be asymptomatic), however the virus has mutated once again and whilst it invariably erodes at their brains and creates heightened aggression, but it isn't necessarily terminal in all infected animals.

Smaller, weaker, domesticated dogs rarely s their infection, leaving only the large breed of canine who can be found dangerous, roving packs that are largely

Canines such as Wolves, coyot some foxes, may present one players will face, part ca the on a

who still have a fondness for dogs and may even still have one as a companion, dogs are welcome in very few places and trouble would largely follow.

Although infected dogs and wolves remain unchanged in terms of RAPID Range attributes, they gain an additional level in Athletics, Dodge and Unarmed Combat to reflect their heightened aggression.

Note: As the idea of fighting with and killing what would amount to family pets wouldn't be appealing to most people and could easily create discomfort or a negative play experience, the larger, wilder and more fierce canines mentioned above should be used by GMs when they want to give the players a less human and more feral threat.

Dog with Distemper

02203

WP 15 RP 8 DMM 2 DMR 3 Init +8 Enc 8

Athletics 3, Dodge 3, Navigation 2, Perception 2, Survival 1, Unarmed Combat 3

Wolf with Distemper

02304

WP 17 RP 9 DMM 3 DMR 4 Init +7 Enc 9

Athletics 3, Dodge 3, Perception 2, Survival 1, Unarmed Combat 4

If characters are bitten, see the Distemper virus rules on page 150.

SURVIVOR CITIZEN 01000
WP 10 RP 6 DMM 0 DMR 0
Init +1 Enc 6

Barter 1, Local 1, Scavenging 2

Hunting Knife (2+2d3)

SURVIVOR MILITIA 01101
WP 12 RP 7 DMM 1 DMR 1
Init +2 Enc 7

Athletics 1, Ranged Combat 1, Survival 2

Shotgun (5+2d6) [12]
Radio

SURVIVOR LEADER 11121
WP 12 RP 7 DMM 1 DMR 1
Init +2 Enc 7

Ranged Combat 1, Charm 1, Tactical Knowledge* 1, Inspiration 1

Heavy Pistol (3+2d3) [9], Hunting Rifle (5+1d6) [15]
Radio

Chapter 9: How Will You Survive?

No matter if you went through *Backstory Generation* (page 56, customized a *Paradigm* (page 73), or simply grabbed a *Pregen* (pages 106-117), by now you should have everything you need to play your character.

In addition to the most basic building blocks such as their name and the statistics that provide the mechanisms to interact with the game world, you should now also have all the elements you need to create your individual backstory.

Additionally, you should also understand how to make and interpret the dice checks that determine how successful your character is when performing certain tasks, as well as knowing how to navigate (and hopefully survive) combat within the gameworld.

So, what are you supposed to do next?

The glib answer lies somewhere between "grab some dice", "stay alive," and "whatever you want".

A a more thoughtful answer can be complex and may be somewhat dependent not only on the individual character, but on the goals established by the group during *Session Xero* (see pages X and X).

In an open-ended sandbox world such as *Distemper*, the narrative and directions will be driven by the actions of the group but, just like the players behind the characters, they need to have a more substantial goal than simply getting to their next meal or seeing the next sunrise.

Characters require a purpose to drive them although much of this will be defined by their choices during Backstory Generation and shaped by the encounters and campaigns the GM lays out for them. To this end, the GM's hand should be guided by the player's underlying goals when building out scenes and encounters.

In addition to larger, overarching goals, players will also need to consider what everyday life now looks like for them. Society as they know it has deteriorated and the PCs now have vastly different priorities, and concerns than they had before. Characters are going to have to figure out many of the things that they had previously taken for granted, ranging from finding replenishable food supplies and a source of clean water, to determining how they are going to stay warm or how to travel safely from place to place.

Also, in order to survive, there are going to be times when players will have to make moral choices that may have lasting impacts on their character and all their subsequent interactions in the game world. Things aren't so cut and dried now, and the absence of an absolute, societal authority means that players are going to need to define and follow their own moral codes.

Players facing difficult and ugly situations are going to need to manage their own stressful lives to avoid hitting their *Breaking Point*, and they constantly consider how their actions and the situations they encounter tie into each character's *Complications & Motivations*.

How do they feel about the murder of innocents? Have they ever eaten human flesh? Have they seen human trafficking in the new world and what did they do to stop that?

See *Morality* on page 179 and *Breaking Point* on page 178 for more details.

Some of these new considerations for players are discussed below, and GMs should put some time and thought into creating their game world to decide which challenges are part of their backdrop. See *Chapter 10: Moderating The Distemper* for more information on building and running a campaign.

Two of the most pressing questions that a group needs to put some thought into are: "Where are you going to start?" and "What do you need to do to survive for the next 48 hours?"

SESSION XERO

As discussed in *Setting The Stage – Session Xero* on page 9, when starting a new game, GMs and Players are strongly encouraged to run a *Session Xero* wherein the group sets the tone, boundaries and establish expectations for this and following sessions.

A *Session Xero* could be as short as 10 minutes if everyone is clear on what they are looking to get out of the game or if it's a one-shot, but a *Session Xero* could easily take up the entirety of the game time if everyone is creating a bespoke character or if there are extremely complex elements of the narrative that the group is weaving.

The Games Moderator should guide the group through *Session Xero*. There is a checklist in v0.8 to ensure all relevant questions are asked and facilitate quick gameplay.

The group should first agree on the format of game they are intending to play – is this a one-shot session with a defined beginning, middle and end, or is it a series of *Scenes* that tell a self-contained story, or a *Sequence of Events* similar to a trilogy of movies or series of books?

Or is this going to be an open-ended, sandbox-type campaign that might run for years with no discernible ending planned as the players establish their place in the world

The group should also discuss the type of story they are looking to collectively tell.

Do they want a violent, combat heavy story of pillaging and conquest or are they more interested in role-playing as a member of a community trying to rebuild what they can of the society they lost, whilst facing seemingly overwhelming odds?

Do they want to find a small settlement to call their own?

Do they want to become warlords? Are they interested in helping the Government with the Reclamation project?

Do their plans extend beyond simple survival to rebuilding a small corner of society or perhaps even taking a territory by force to call their own? Are they going to try and get the medical clinic of a nascent community stocked, plot out trade routes or loot, pillage, and wage war on their neighbors?

The group should also discuss their level of comfort with graphic content. At it's core, *Distemper* is a game about survival in a broken, dark, and dangerous world but the goal should never be to make players feel uncomfortable with the story or subject matter. The group should collectively decide if they want a more PG interpretation or R-rated version of this world and it is the GM's job to facilitate that exact version for them.

Once these topics have been discussed and settled, the players and GM should review the types of characters that they will be playing, the roles they intend to fill or the skills they will collectively bring. They should also discuss how the characters are going to be created - will the group be going through *Backstory Generation* together for each character as part of *Session Xero*, will they come to the game with characters they already created, or is the GM looking to use Pregens to ensure the right mix of skills and abilities that set up a specific set of role-playing options?

Although creating characters together in a group provides several advantages that range from building out a rounded party that have a complimentary mix of skills, to being able to confer on and clarify any rules that are unclear, to helping build out the PCs backstories and providing a reason why they find themselves together, the most important thing is creating a cohesive story that explains the group dynamic.

Unless they are using pregens with a GM supplied background, the group should discuss how they came to be together, how they know each other, or how they will meet. The GM may decide that each characters has pre-existing relationships with other members of the group, which is noted on their character sheet. The players involved should discuss the nature of this relationship, which could be a positive or negative relationship that could tie into the characters' *Motivations* & *Complications*. For example, one character may have a *Family Obligation* and another character could be their sibling or child.

Or it could just as easily be that two members of the group are *Rivals*, or one feels screwed over by the other character and wants some form of revenge at just the right moment.

Characters, just like the players behind them, function better when they have goals and a purpose, and through a combination of *Backstory Generation* and *Session Xero*, players should decide what these goals are. They might be tied to their *Motivations* & *Complications* - some goals really are as simple as *Finding Safety* - whilst others can be significantly more complex, such as going across the country to find a loved one. Players should take a few moments to flesh them out and make a note of them on their character sheet.

The group should discuss how much they want to share with each other about their characters. Do they want the group to know their drives and secrets? Are they vocal about what they are hoping to accomplish? Are the group all aligned in their goals? How do they work as part of a group? What are their intentions?

Lastly, the group should discuss where they are going to start the game. To this end, the group may want to consult a map of the US (or your local theater) and decide where they want the campaign to take place.

Although there are several one-off missions designed to introduce new players to the game available at DistemperVerse.com, a group planning on taking part in a longer campaign should flesh out answers to all those questions to give the GM a framework of intent to build a series of encounters on.

There is a *Sessions Xero* checklist in v0.8 and for download at **www.DistemperVerse.com**.
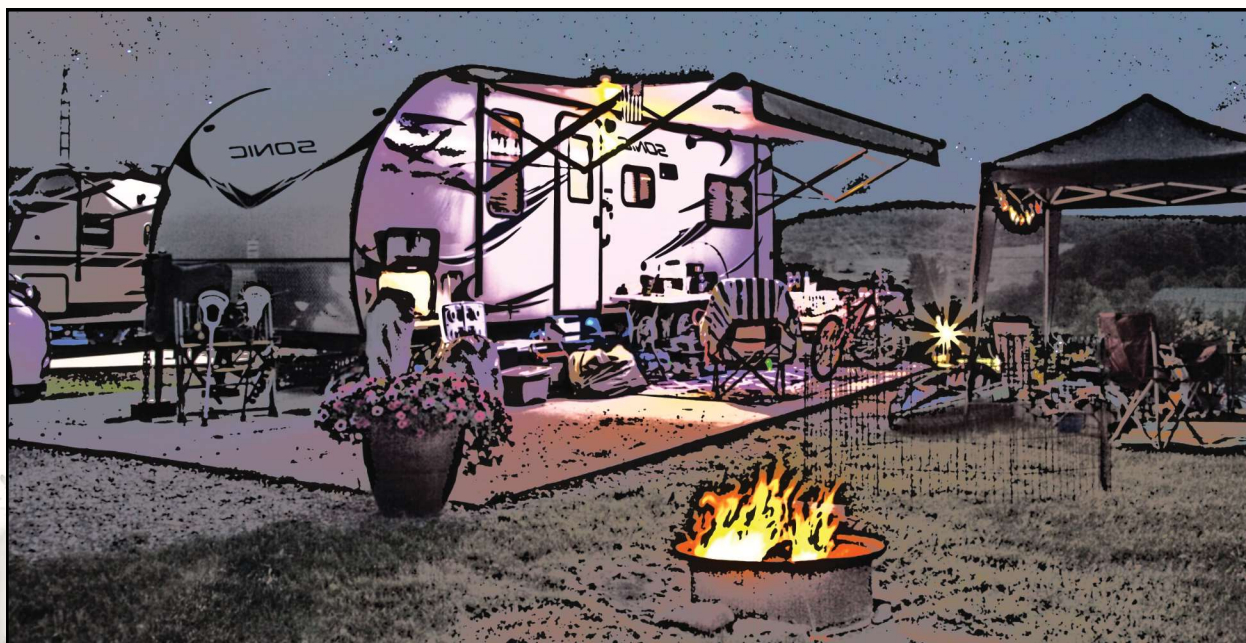
Character Evolution

As players weave their shared narrative, it is natural that they would expect to see their character evolve as they play multiple sessions and become more proficient and practiced at performing tasks and using certain skills or dealing with specific situations.

At the end of each session the GM has the discretion to award 2 or more Character Development Points (CDP) that players can use to evolve their characters. One point is generally awarded based on the contributions of the individual player while the other is based on the group performance. This might be as a result of ingame results, group cohesion, inter-player dynamics, collective role-playing, storytelling, or just good old fashion teamwork. Additional CDP may be awarded at the GMs discretion for other outstanding or emergent gameplay.

At the end of a session, CDP can be spent to learn or raise a skill or increase a RAPID Range attribute.

Learning a new Skill requires the investment of 1 Skill CDP to get to Level 1. An existing Skill can be raised by paying a number of CDP that corresponds to the total of the current level and the level that the skill is being raised to. This means that taking a Skill from Level 1 to 2 requires 3 Skill CDP, from 2 to 3 requires 5 Skill CDP, and from 3 to 4 requires 7 Skill CDP.

A RAPID Range attribute can also be increased over time by paying 3x the CDP per level being raised. So, raising an attribute from 1 to 2 requires 6 CDP, from 2 to 3 requires 9 CDP, and from 3 to 4 requires 12 CDP.

Although as part of Backstory Generation a character is limited to Level 3 in both Attributes and Skills, if the GM agrees that it makes sense as part of their Character Evolution and the player can *Fill In The Gaps* as to how they have achieved such extraordinary progression (particularly in such a broken down world), a character may evolve a RAPID Range Attribute to +4 (Human Peak) and a Skill to +4 (Life's Work).

As this level of ability can potentially create unbalance, this sort of *Evolution* should be difficult, time-consuming, and only allowed if it furthers the narrative.

NOTE: Although a character with enough CDP can raise multiple skills or attributes simultaneously, each skill or attribute can only be raised one level at a time.

BREAKING POINT

Characters in *Distemper* will be constantly faced with choices, situations, and challenges that can prove to be extremely stressful and push them to their limits. Some of these situations can be so stressful in the moment that they can cause a character to *Panic* (see *Panicking* on page 124) but, additionally, there are also the things that can wear on a character over time and cause them to reach their *Breaking Point*.

This could be the constant pangs of hunger, exposure to the elements, or even the threat of other people's cruelty, but the enduring day to day stress of their existence will eventually weigh on even the strongest, most well-balanced mind and unless they find ways to cope with and relieve stress, they will find themselves at some point having a breakdown of some sort.

A character's ability to deal with stress is partially related to their ability to work through their feelings and issues logically, as well as being self-aware about how stresses are affecting them. Each character starts the game with a *Breaking Point* equal to 3, plus their Reason and Acumen AMods. This should be marked on their character sheet, next to the series of *Stress Boxes*.

As characters encounter stresses, the pressure will continue to build up inside them and unless they can find a suitable way to cope with, or release it, they will eventually hit their *Breaking Point*. This stress might come in the form of frustration, humiliation, anger, pain, fear, extreme hunger, or a *Panic Attack* (see *Panicking* on page 124) but every negative act that eats away at a character contributes towards their overarching mental state. Unless they do something to blow off some steam, they will inevitably reach their *Breaking Point* and temporarily lose control of their rational selves, reacting in a fit of anger, rage, or hostility to those around them.

Each time a character finds themselves in an unduly stressful situation, such as not eating for a few days, spending a night asleep in the pouring rain, being antagonized repeatedly, or watching a friend get killed, there is a chance it will contribute to the deterioration of their mental state.
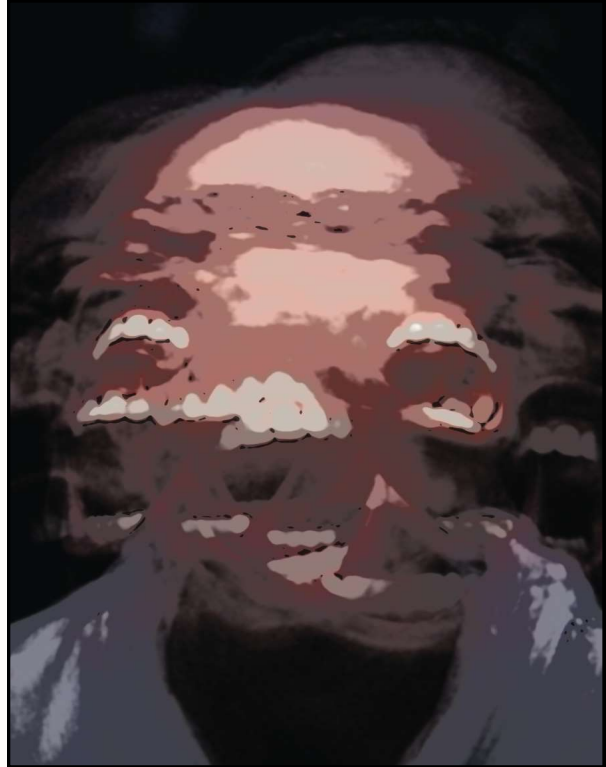
These incidents can be *Light* or *Heavy*, depending on the situation. If it is a Light *incident* – being repeatedly mocked by another player or perhaps an NPC, or consistently going hungry – then a character can make a dice check using Reason and Acumen modifiers to see if they are able to Successfully shrug it off. If not, they fill in a *Stress Box* on their sheet and it brings them closer to their *Breaking Point*.

If it is a *Heavy* incident, such as the death of a loved one or being forced into an act that conflicts with their *Motivations* or *Complications*, then there is no dice check available and the character immediately fills in a *Stress Box*.

Characters who have had a *Panic Attack* automatically fill in two *Stress Boxes*.

If this would cause them to reach their *Breaking Point*, this is deferred until after combat and they feel relatively safe and are able to process their situation.

A character's *Breaking Point* carries over from session to session and the *Stress Boxes* remain filled until a character actively takes steps to reduce them.

TABLE 22: BREAKING POINT	
1	ENTERS INTO UNARMED COMBAT WITH THE CLOSEST PC OR NPC FOR 1D3 ROUNDS OR UNTIL SUBDUED
2	THE CHARACTER EMOTIONALLY "SHUTS DOWN" AND BECOMES *INCAPACITATED* FOR 1D3 HOURS
3	VERBALLY LASHES OUT AT CLOSEST PC OR NP; ALL FUTURE INTERACTIONS WITH THAT CHARACTER INCUR A –3 RMOD
4	CHARACTER HURTS THEMSELVES, SUFFERING SUFFERS 1D3 WP & RP DAMAGE
5	GETS INTO AN ESCALATING ARGUMENT WITH THE CLOSEST PC OR NPC, ACCUSING THEM OF SOME SLIGHT OR INSULT
6	REFUSES TO ENGAGE WITH ANYONE AND IMMEDIATELY LEAVES THE SCENE FOR 1D6 HOURS

Once they reach their *Breaking Point*, the character snaps and they do something unseemly or unexpected. Players should *Fill in the Gaps* about exactly what their character does when they reach the end of their ether, but for those needing inspiration, they can roll 1d6 and check **Table 22: Breaking Point** to see how they react, and then retroactively *Fill in the Gaps* as to what happens.

Once a character has reached their *Breaking Point* and had a reaction, their bottled-up stress is released, and they begin to calm down. Their *Breaking Point* is reset to zero and all *Stress Boxes* are cleared.

Characters who are struggling and getting close to their *Breaking Point* can attempt to reduce the number of *Stress Boxes* they have filled in by doing something that helps them relieve stress. For someone with the *Hedonism Complication*, this might be going on a bender. For another character, a few days away from other people on their own might do it.

Characters can spend a *Daily Activity* block decompressing and doing something that clears a single *Stress Box*, but they will be unavailable for anything else during that time (see *Activities* on page 192).

They can also be helped to unwind by other characters who may be able to distract them, provide company, or let them talk them through their issues. A character who makes a successful Charm, Entertainment, *Psychology**, or even a Deception check, may be able to help another character deal with their stresses and the number of *Breaking Point* boxes filled in is reduced by one. On a Wild Success, the character may clear two of their *Stress Boxes*.

MORALITY

In the dark world of Distemper, players may be faced with choices that test their moral compass.

Failing to save an innocent, knowingly dooming someone else to death, eating human flesh – all of these actions can take a toll on the psyche of the character and potentially even change them. Morality is a system which reflects those choices a player or group makes and applies ingame consequences, as well as a path to redemption.

As part of either Backstory Generation or choosing a Paradigm, players will have had to pick both a Complication and a Motivation for their character. Although in some respects they are intended as no more than loose guideposts to help provide character definition for role-playing, if a character consciously and willingly undertakes actions that actively work against those values, they will find their Morality being impacted.

For example, a character with the *Family Obligation*

Complication or the *Protect* Motivation who does nothing to prevent the death of a family member or an innocent may find themselves permanently scarred by their actions or inaction.

Each character starts with a Morality score of 3 and as they are faced with specific situations or make certain choices, the GM may decide that following through on that choice will result in the loss of a Morality point.

If a character loses 3 Morality points, their Morality score drops to 0 and something inside them has irrevocably changed. The character permanently loses a point from their Influence attribute which will negatively impact future social checks and interactions, including all *First Impressions* (see page 148) and many of the Sway skills.

Once their Influence has been adjusted downwards, their *Morality* is reset to 3. Further negative actions will take their *Morality* back down to 0 and cause them to lose another point of Influence. A character cannot take their Influence below *-2 (Lame)* through this method and although they can still raise their Influence through the *Character Evolution* process (see page 177), they do so from their current Influence value.

In addition to losing a point of *Morality*, it may make sense for the character to get a new *Complication* which should tie directly into the actions that caused their *Morality* score to drop. This is in addition to their existing *Complication*. This should be agreed upon by the player and GM and, in the absence of something that makes more narrative sense, the complication chosen should be Guilt.

For a player wishing for some form of redemption, they can actively attempt to do good things, such as rescuing those in need or providing food to starving children. If their act is worthy or selfless enough, the GM may decide that they have regained a *Morality* point and their total moves upwards. If a player gets to 6 *Morality* points, their Influence is raised a level, and their Morality score is reset to 3.

NOTE: It is entirely possible for players to actively seek to do good things in order to raise their Morality points with the intended outcome being a higher Influence attribute. This can lead to some great storytelling possibilities as the players potentially build a reputation as heroes in the new world.

As always, the GM and group should be working together to decide what is and isn't worthy of gaining or losing Morality points, and how this weaves into the collaborative story being told. As this does have a material impact on the character and, per Rule Xero, no player should ever feel they are being unjustly penalized for circumstances outside of their control, although they should be prepared for the consequences of their actions.

LIVING OFF THE LAND

In order to survive, characters are going to need to be able to ensure a regular supply of food and water. There are a variety of ways they can secure what they need, as laid out below. No matter if it is through *Scavenging*, *Foraging*, *Fishing*, *Trapping* & *Hunting*, or *Farming*, characters are going to need to devote time and effort to locating supplies of food, water, and other necessary *Supplies*.

The exact methods will depend largely on the environment that the characters are in, but each requires a Successful Attribute or Skill check, with a Wild Success turning up significantly larger quantities or higher quality *Supplies* than on a regular Success.

RATIONS

The food and water that each character requires to survive are measured in units called *Rations*. Although the exact description of exactly what makes up a single *Ration* is intended to be loose enough to not require inventory micromanagement whilst keeping gameplay moving along, it is assumed to provide the caloric intake required to keep someone healthy and active for one day.

Each player needs one Ration per day to avoid taking Subsistence damage. Although a character can go two days without eating or drinking with no immediate adverse impact, on the third and subsequent days of not eating or drinking, they take Subsistence damage at the rate of 1 WP and 1 RP per day (see *Subsistence Damage* on page 127 for more details).

Each player starts the game with two units of Rations, enough to

keep them going for two days, and they will need to constantly find more to remain healthy.

Finding food supplies should always be forefront in a player's mind.

SUPPLIES

Like Rations, Supplies is a generic and deliberately vague term that covers the variety of materials and items that are required to craft certain useful items (such as an ethanol still), perform modifications to weapons, armor, and vehicles, or used in the upkeep of vehicles and shelters.

Players shouldn't be required to track each and every item that they might require, right down to the type of hammer and number of nails but the group's Base, as well as some equipment, will require weekly upkeep in the form of Supplies to remain functioning. This is detailed below in Shelter from the Storm.

As Distemper isn't intended to be a Resource Management simulator, Supplies are measured in units and depending on the type and need, can be Scavenged, or otherwise sourced at the GMs discretion. Supplies are split into Common, Uncommon and Rare, reflecting how hard they are to come by.

Players making a Successful *Scavenging* check will find two units of *Common* supplies for every *Daily Activity* block they spend looking (see *Activities* on page 192). Common items might be boards, nails, replacement tires, or other everyday items that would still be fairly easy to find, even in a world where nothing new is being manufactured.

Players getting a Wild Success find *Uncommon* supplies such as the copper wire required to hook up a generator or the tools and equipment needed to convert a vehicle to running on ethanol, or anything else that the group requires.

Players looking for *Rare* supplies must both be able to *Fill in the Gaps* as to where and how they went looking for them, as well as getting a Wild Success on the *Scavenging* check.

FOR EXAMPLE: A character who is looking for a

Rare item such as a Mortar Shell and who has gotten access to a military cache of weapons (which the GM might decide is worth an additional +2 CMod when searching) means they are much more likely to find such a specialized item.

Players searching without specific items in mind and who want more than a generic unit of *Supplies* can roll on *Tables 23* and *24* below to see what they find.

SCAVENGING

Players in urban or built-up environments are going to need to rely on *Scavenging* or possibly trade and barter in order to find food to eat, as the chances of *Farming* or *Hunting* are greatly diminished.

A groups' ability to find something worthwhile will depend largely on how heavily trafficked the area has been since the outbreak as well as any competition for the resources.

FOR EXAMPLE: Players stumbling on a small, out of the way town that seems to have been largely untouched will find it significantly easier to locate some tinned goods than in a city with a decent sized population, who will likely have already been stripped of anything of value.

The looting tables below are for GM's wanting to provide items of value and color, but if players are in the right environment and are specifically looking for food, they can spend a Daily Activity (see *Activities* on page 192) looking. On a Successful *Scavenging* check, they will find two units of *Rations* or *Supplies*, double on a Wild Success.

TABLE 23: COMMON & UNCOMMON LOOT TABLE ON A SUCCESS		
2	1D6 RATIONS IN THE FORM OF CANNED CHICKEN SOUP, CANNED FOOD, OR PROTEIN BARS	COMMON
3	+1 LUXURY RATIONS IN THE FORM OF A BOX OF SPOILED CHOCOLATES	COMMON
4	1D6 BATTERIES OR A BAG OF 3D6 ZIP TIES	COMMON
5	A WOODEN BOX IN A CUPBOARD WITH 3D6 REMAINING BULLETS OF THE PLAYERS CHOICE	COMMON
6	A *DAMAGED* RANGED WEAPON LOADED WITH 1D6 BULLETS. BECOMES *BROKEN* IMMEDIATELY UPON A *FAILURE*, BACKFIRES FOR 1+1D3 DAMAGE ON *DIRE FAILURE*	COMMON
7	A LOCKED SAFE, A SMALL JEWELRY BOX CONTAINING A HANDFUL OF RARE STONES	COMMON
8	A HEAVY DUTY LEATHER JACKET OR DUSTER, COUNTS AS LEATHER ARMOR	UNCOMMON
9	CRATE WITH 1D3 LUXURY RATIONS CONTAINING GLASS BOTTLE OF BEER, SODA OR WINE THAT HAS NOT YET EXPIRED	UNCOMMON
10	BOTTLE WITH 1D6 PAIN KILLERS, EACH HEALS 1D3 RP	UNCOMMON
11	A COMMON MELEE WEAPON SUCH AS A BASEBALL BAT, FIRE AXE OR SLEDGEHAMMER IN *USED* CONDITION	UNCOMMON
12	A PAIR OF WALKIE TALKIES IN *USED* CONDITION	UNCOMMON

| TABLE 24: RARE LOOT TABLE ON A WILD SUCCESS	
2	A STILL SEALED CONTAINER OF GROUND COFFEE OR TOILET PAPER, HIGHLY VALUABLE IN TRADE. CAN REDUCE *BREAKING POINT* BY 1 BOX	RARE
3	A FULLY STOCKED FIRST AID KIT. CAN CURE 1D3 WP.	RARE
4	A JERRY CAN WITH HIGHLY REFINED FUEL TREATED WITH CONCENTRATE THAT CAN FUEL A CAR OR BIKE FOR 8 HOURS	RARE
5	HIGH-QUALITY WORK TOOLS (+1 CMOD TO MECHANIC SKILL CHECKS)	RARE
6	A TANK OF HYDROGEN THAT COULD BE USED AS A WEAPON THAT DOES 2+2D6 EXPLOSIVE DAMAGE AT ENGAGED AND HALF DAMAGE AT CLOSE. DOES 100% RP DAMAGE.	RARE
7	AN OLD GRENADE THAT CAUSES 1+1D6 DAMAGE AT ENGAGED AND HALF DAMAGE AT CLOSE. DOES 100% RP DAMAGE. EXPLODES IMMEDIATELY ON A FAILED CHECK	RARE
8	AN OLD SMOKE GRENADE THAT OBSCURES VISION IN AT CLOSE AND ENGAGED, GIVING A -3 CMOD TO ALL SKILL CHECKS	RARE
9	ARMY WEBBING, PROVIDES +2 ENCUMBRANCE LIMIT WHEN WORN	RARE
10	A METAL WW2 ARMY HELMET. +1 DMM, NO ENCUMBRANCE VALUE	RARE
11	A PRISTINE RANGED WEAPON WITH 2D6 AMMO	RARE
12	A MAP WITH HAND-WRITTEN NOTES. A NAVIGATION CHECK TURNS UP A CACHE WITH 7 LUXURY RATIONS OF CHOCOLATE, COFFEE, CIGARETTES OR CIGARS	RARE

FORAGING

Players living in rural areas can devote time to *Foraging* in order to secure food. *Foraging* is the act of being able to know where to look and how to identify food resources in the wild. This can include a wide range of plants, mushrooms, herbs, or fruits that are growing uncultivated.

Characters in the right areas and during the right times of year who make a Successful Perception or Survival check will be able to forage two units of *Rations* made up from fruit and vegetables for each *Daily Activity* block they spend *Foraging*, double on a Wild Success.

FISHING

Fish were unaffected by the pandemic and are thriving, due to the lack of commercial fishing, and characters with an Angler's Kit and access to a suitable water source who make a Successful Physicality, Hunting or Survival check can secure two units of *Rations* for each Activity block spent *Fishing*, double on a Wild Success.
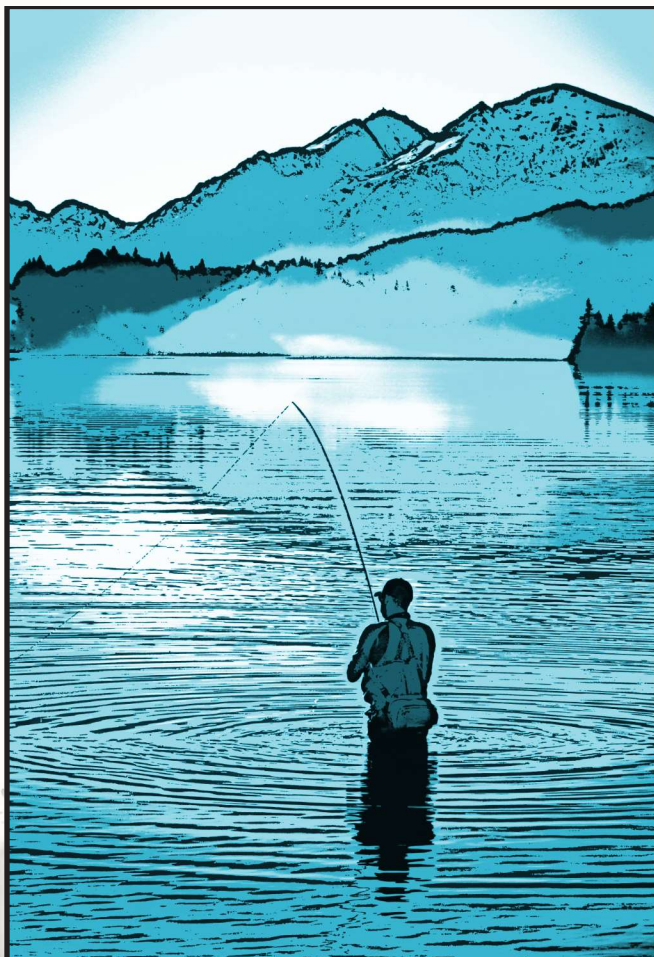
TRAPPING & HUNTING

Characters with Survival or Hunting skill have the ability to both set traps to passively capture smaller wildlife, such as rabbits, as well as actively hunt larger game, such as deer.

To set a trap, the character must have a Hunting Trap and make a successful Survival or Hunting check. After six hours, a player making a second Successful Survival or Hunting check will find one unit of Rations in their trap, doubling on a Wild Success. A player can set and check as many traps as they physically have. Traps can be constructed from one unit of Supplies and a Successful Tinkerer check.

Characters can also stalk, hunt, and cure the meat from larger game, such as pigs or elk. A player with the right equipment (Elk can't be *Hunted* with a Kitchen Knife) and who spends a *Daily Activity* block and makes a Successful Hunting check can secure ten units of Rations.

FARMING

Characters with the *Farming* skill are able to work the land and either grow fruits and vegetables or tend to a herd of animals. Doing so requires a significant commitment of time and effort that is measured in seasons, rather than days or weeks, but the return can be equally significant and can theoretically feed a group indefinitely.

Although *Farming* can be rewarding, it isn't always fun and a character actively running a farm is unlikely to be also taking part in any adventures that pull them away from their base. In a case like this, it should be encouraged that a character recruits and trains a member of their NPC entourage to become their *Apprentice* (see *Apprentices* on page 190) to run the farm for them.

To do this, a player needs to make a Successful *Farming* check and spend 2 *Monthly Activity* blocks (see below) training the NPC in order to pass along their expertise. The character will still need to check in on their *Apprentice* on a regular basis to ensure things are going well, although a *Moment of High Insight* during the training session negates this need.

At the end of the season, the character should make a *Group Farming* check, involving the character and any NPCs they have trained, to see how the harvest turned out (see *Group Checks* on page 36). If other

characters helped during the farming season or the harvest, they are also eligible to take part in a *Group Check* to determine the Success of the harvest.

If the harvest is successful – and if bandits don't steal everything – it can be assumed that the players and their NPC community have enough Rations each day for each character for 3 months.

On a Failure, there is enough food for 3 Rations per person, per week and on a Dire Failure, the whole crop was lost.

A Wild Success means there is a surplus that could be used to produce luxury items such as jams and preserves, to create a supply of Ethanol for vehicles, or to be traded with other survivors.

OTHER RESOURCES

There may be times when players need to gather other specific resources, such as wood or rock. Assuming they have access to a supply and the right tools – such as a forest and a saw - players can extract four units of Supplies of the resource for each Daily Activity block they put into it.

A SHELTER FROM THE STORM

In addition to the basics of food and water, an essential part of ongoing survival for any group is the need for some sort of permanent shelter - this *Base of Operations* provides a safe roof over their head and where they can let their guard down.

In addition to a structurally sound building that provides protections from the elements, a Base of Operations requires a constant supply of food for the occupants, heating, and various other supplies and materials - most of which the characters once took for granted. All these considerations need to be met for a group to stay healthy, both physically and mentally.

Although food, warmth and shelter are vital, humans are essentially pack animals at their core. As bigger groups are better able to provide protection and ensure an ongoing supply of food and resources, to say nothing of companionship and warmth, the group may decide at some point that they want to join a community of like-minded survivors. The group may even decide to form their own *Community* and establish a *Homestead* in order to secure a territory of their own. The mechanics for establishing a *Base of Operations*, *Homesteads*, and *Communities*, and are all covered below.

Groups who are playing shorter games, who want to play a more foot-loose campaign, or who are not interested in base or community building should consider all of the following rules optional.

BASE OF OPERATIONS

Although characters can survive indefinitely in a tent, cave, or other makeshift shelter, unless players intend for their campaign and characters to be nomadic in nature then they will need to find at least a semi-permanent and somewhat robust *Base of Operations*.

A *Base of Operations* can be anywhere that offers warmth, allows them to stay dry, and affords them a degree of safety from wildlife - including other survivors. Bases can range in size and complexity from something as simple as a cabin, all the way up to a small store, hotel, or office building. Although the exact requirements for each base will vary based on their size, they will all require a specific number of *Supplies* and *Rations* to maintain the *Base* and feed the Community each week. The details for each base are laid out on T*able 20: Homestead Requirements*.

Given all the possibilities in a largely abandoned world, the exact type of shelter should be discussed in Session Xero as it may tie into the nature of the campaign being run, and as may even be part of the collective backstory.

The group should discuss where their base is, and how they found it. Have they been a part of a larger community, or have they managed this far on their own? Was it empty or did they have to take it from someone? Are they near natural and sustainable sources of food or are they going to have to undertake regular scavenging trips to stay alive?

The case doesn't have to be grandiose as it only needs to be big enough for the characters, and possibly a few NPCs that they may recruit. As a base requires the same amount of upkeep no matter how many people are there, a group should pick a base that won't require an undue amount of attention.

TABLE 20: HOMESTEAD REQUIREMENTS
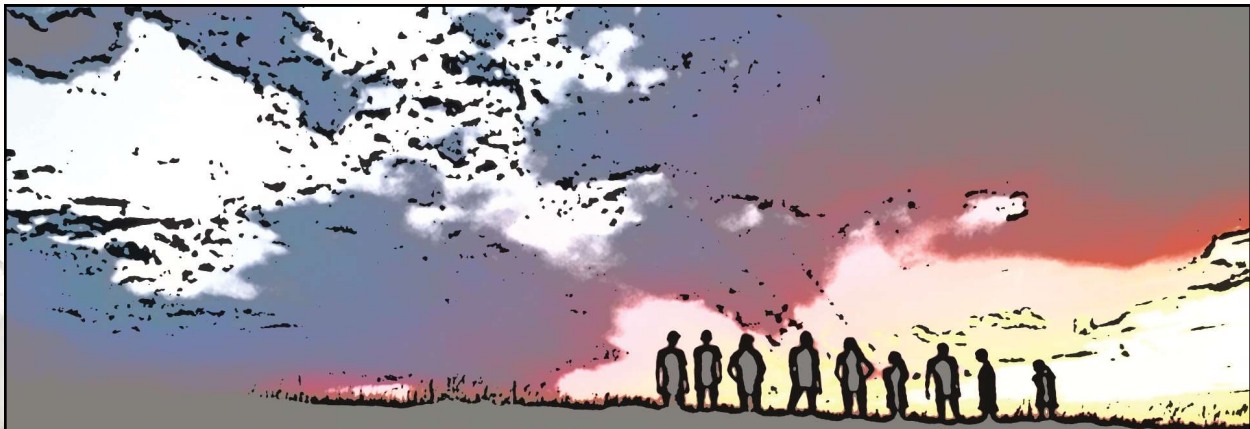
Players starting in a city or larger urban area may decide to make a base in a hotel or police station, while characters in more rural settings may find it easier to maintain and survive on a farm or in an isolated cabin. Perhaps the group found a regular house close to a food source in a town that still has power and is an attractive target, but no matter what they settle on, the base needs to be somewhere big enough for the whole group that is warm, dry, and – temporarily at least – safe.

Although it needs to be large enough for the group to serve as their home, a base should not initially be so heavily fortified or so well provisioned as to reduce the inherent challenges of survival in this new world. Securing, upgrading, and ultimately defending their home will likely be an ongoing part of any group's challenges moving forward.

For many of the reasons covered above, some groups may decide that they are going to find some horses, a recreational vehicle large enough to carry them all, or a series of vehicles that they convert to run on ethanol or methanol and just keep moving (see *Ethanol & Methanol Stills* on page 143). If a group chooses to be mobile rather than have a static location then they will face different challenges, such as the need to find fuel in a world where it is increasingly scarce, or the requirement to feed and allow horses to rest. If the group opts for this path, then they and the GM should work together to decide on suitable transportation and supply requirements in lieu of a static base.

No matter what they end up choosing, each Base requires a certain number of Supplies for repairs and maintenance each month. Whilst a farmhouse in the middle of nowhere would need fuel to keep it heated, in addition to boards, nails and the other items required for the upkeep, the recreational vehicle mentioned above would still need Supplies each month to cover tires, wear and tear on the engine, upkeep on the ethanol still, as well as the Supplies required to produce the fuel.

Given the relatively small nature and size, a Base of Operations is geared towards smaller groups and are able to provide for a dozen or less characters. They are not intended to provide extensive defensive capabilities, and while a *Base of Operations* can serve a groups' needs for even an indefinite period, they are less than ideal as a long-term sanctuary for larger numbers of people.

When a group reaches 13 characters or more, the need to put down roots becomes more important and they are considered a *Homestead*.

There is a Homestead Sheet on page 196 (and available for download from **DistemperVerse.com**) that allows you to track the various stats and details related to your base.

HOMESTEADS

As players start to add NPCs to their group (see *Recruiting NPCs* on page 199) it moves them in the direction of forming a *Community* and their collective requirements will increase.

A smaller *Base of Operations* with just a few residents will go unnoticed by most, but as a group grows to include 13 or more members (including NPCs), any permanent base they choose is considered to be a homestead.

As the associated *Community* expands, their needs will likely outgrow any single building and the

BASE SIZE

Bases come in all shapes and sizes, but one commonality is the need for upkeep. The larger the base, the more people that it can house, but the more work that will be required. Upkeep is based on the maximum occupancy rather than the actual occupancy, and so smaller groups choosing larger bases might find themselves requiring a large NPC retinue in order to have enough people to maintain their base.

Tiny

A Tiny base is really just a step up from a sleeping bag in the woods. This can be a cabin, a camper, or even a cave, but it can hold no more than four people comfortably for an extended period. This base will require 8 Supplies per month to remain functional and comfortable.

Small

A small base of operations can comfortably house up to a dozen people and could be a decent sized house or even a larger recreational vehicle. This would require 24 Supplies per month to remain functional and comfortable.

Medium

A medium base of operations is the minimum viable size required to establish a homestead. This could be a store, several houses grouped together, or a Farm with multiple buildings, but it needs to be able to support anywhere from 13 to 36 people comfortably. This base would require 72 Supplies per month to remain functional and comfortable.

Large

Large bases are things such as Small Offices or a Motel that are designed to anywhere up to about 150 people and significant upkeep each month. This base will require 3000 Supplies per month to remain functional and comfortable.

Massive

Although generally reserved for the largest of tribes, religious sects or armies who have whole teams dedicated to securing supplies, a Massive base would include an airport, a prison, hotel, or any facility designed to hold up to 1000 people. As such, bases of this size require 2000 Supplies per month to remain functional and comfortable.

Homestead may come to encompass a series of buildings, a whole village or town, or perhaps even a territory they define for themselves.

When selecting a location, players are encouraged to consider how accessible food and water supplies are, as well as how easy their *Homestead* is to defend. The bigger, the better organized, the more comfortable, or more effective that a *Homestead* appears to be from the outside, the more tempting a target it will be for someone else to try and take.

Homesteads require significantly more work to maintain than a *Base of Operations* and unless the players plan to directly source the food and effect the repairs needed to sustain the residents and facilitate the *Upkeep* of them *Homestead,* then they will need to continue recruiting NPCs, who will be expected to carry out the more mundane tasks, at the direction of the characters in exchange for food and safety..

Table 20 lays out *Homestead Maintenance* requirements and the other characteristics of the group's base and there is a *Community Workbook* available at **DistemperVerse.com** to make tracking these details significantly easier.

COMMUNITIES

There is truth to the old adage "safety in numbers" and survivors will commonly band together with others to help with group survival. Over time a group of players may decide that forging their way as a smaller group is more dangerous or difficult than joining an existing community or even starting their own.

In game terms, any group of 13 characters or more, including both PCs and NPCs, counts as a *Community*, but it can be any mixture of individuals or small groups, with the only real commonality being that the group isn't entirely made up of members of the same family unit, which would commonly be thought of and referred to as a clan.

These *Communities* are usually bound together by a common goal, even if that goal is no more complex than staying alive and watching over each other when they're sleeping. Sometimes it's less of a goal and more of a geographical location, such as securing a hunting ground, but whatever it is, it is enough to tie the community together.

Although they will rarely give themselves a collective name, the terms tribe, team, gang, militia, horde, mob, bunch, flock, herd, pack, or posse would apply equally well to the various communities that the players may encounter. Even if they do not see it as such, the upcoming warlords and religious leaders are also building communities, they just generally have more grandiose plans, ambitions, ideas, and even names than the common survivor.

No matter how they think of themselves, for any community to be effective, at the bare minimum it must offer food and safety. This

usually comes in the form of a dedicated, secure and defensible area, some organization of roles and responsibilities, and easy access to some kind of farmlands or hunting grounds with a clean water supply.

In order to sustain a *Community*, the following is required:

1. A *Homestead* large enough to house all the members of the community. This could range from several houses to a larger building, a town, or even a region or territory. This growth and expansion will largely depend on the number of NPCs that have been recruited, as Supply requirements will continue to increase as the community takes over more areas.

2. The *Community* must be able to secure ongoing access to enough food and water to keep them healthy and content. Although the leaders are expected to plan and drive this outcome, the whole community is expected to help make it happen.

3. A strong and enduring sense of security driving the belief that *Community* members are safer as a part of the *Community* than on their own, and where they can be assured a good nights' rest. The leaders will need to ensure that there are guards, early warnings, as well as enough weapons and ammunition to provide for the protection of its members.

If the players are the leaders of their *Community*, the rest of the members will look to them to drive those outcomes, or they will leave and go their own way or try and find someone who can meet these needs.

JOINING A COMMUNITY

Players who encounter an existing *Community* may attempt to join them. Depending on the nature of the *Community* and on the existing relationships that group has, this might require as little as a Successful or Wildly Successful Sway check of some kind, with the players *Filling in the Gaps*.

FOR EXAMPLE: It's possible the group has known and interacted with the community previously, have helped them in some way or perhaps even share a common goal or location or access to shared resources. If so, then they may have good enough standing with the leaders that the players can *Make the Case* that a Charm or Barter check could convince the leaders that they are better off working together and adding to the community.

Given the lack of resources and trust, however, it's much more likely to be a *Negotiation* (see *Negotiations* on page 149). This will be particularly true if the NPCs had a negative *First Impression* of the PCs or if there have been any issues between the groups. Any negative *Relationship Modifiers* will apply to this check.

If the players are accepted into the community, it's likely that they will initially have no leadership position, but may still have a vote, depending on the community structure (see below).

Members of the community are expected to contribute in any way possible. All able-bodied members must spend their time hunting, foraging, scavenging, or otherwise acting in the interest of the community. They must also be willing to fight to

protect the community without hesitation.

Players who are part of a community without any leadership role must be prepared to do what they are instructed to by the community leaders, or face *Banishment* (see below). In addition to a general lack of contribution, cowardice, or any other activity that might be viewed as working against the group's best interests will get those participants *Banished*.

STARTING A COMMUNITY

Rather than join someone else's community, players may decide to start their own. To do so, the following conditions must be met:

1. Recruit enough NPCs to have a group size of 13 or more.

2. Control, and be able to defend a base or area large enough for the current community, with room to expand.

3. Decide on a community structure, an identity, and a code of conduct.

4. Must be able to secure enough Rations for the members each week.

5. Must be able to secure enough Supplies to maintain the homestead each week.

6. Organize and provide ongoing security for the homestead and all its residents.

COMMUNITY STRUCTURE

Communities can be structured in a variety of ways although they most commonly fall into one of two groupings. If the players are joining an existing community, the GM should decide how that community acts and their structure. If the group is starting their own community, it is up to them which structure they choose, with the most common being outlined below.

A SINGLE LEADER

This is often someone seen as a savior or a wise person but who can just as easily be a dictator, a religious fanatic, or a supreme pragmatist with no ambitions for power and conquest, just an understanding of logistics and supply chain. This person usually wields full authority to make unilateral decisions and ultimately has a veto on everything. They will usually have at least one or two people who they trust for advice and to represent their interests and positions with others.

If this is a character, the group should discuss how this dynamic will work in game terms. Presumably the rest of the group will be the leaders' inner circle of advisors and essentially make group decisions, even if one character is the mouthpiece.

If the group chooses this option, the GM should take care in the structure and setup of sessions to keep the whole group involved and ensure it's not only fun for one, or a few of the players. See *Rule Xero* on page 10 for more details.

COMMITTEE

Some communities function best with a more democratic approach, and there will often be a committee of leaders that represent clans or family units or aligned factions within the community. They usually have an equal vote on decisions and generally abide by the outcomes. Although there can be self-interest and even some low-level forms of politics, the fact that the community requires each other for survival means that the greater good is usually put first.

If the group chooses this dynamic, they should decide if they make up the committee or if there are also NPCs.

189

IDENTITY & CODE OF CONDUCT

By their very nature, communities invariably have an identity that derives either from the attitudes of the people in the tribe, the areas that they inhabit, or the environments that shaped them.

This might be as intangible as a strong work ethic, a need for people to work the field, or the dark secret of cannibalism, but a group of players starting a community should put some thought into their community identity.

Of overriding importance, this community identity can become a necessity in differentiating between one group and another, particularly as they grow. Some communities may give themselves names, but the group identity is more commonly represented in one of a variety of functional ways, ranging from calls or whistles, codewords, tattoos, clothing worn in specific ways or of specific colors, or even hand signals and subtle body language.

Whatever it is, all communities have to determine a way of knowing who is one of theirs and, often just as importantly, who is not.

As a group becomes a community, they must explicitly or implicitly agree on a code of conduct to maintain order. Codes of conduct can be as simple as an agreement not to kill one another but could be more complex and involve work schedules and communal duties.

NPCs are largely given communal duties and are usually happy to carry them out if the community makes its weekly Morale Check (see below). While the players may need to train or direct the NPCs, they should not be handling the more mundane tasks.

Not following the Code of Conduct will quickly lead to disharmony and conflict within the community, which may result in Banishment.

RECRUITING NPCS

Players can recruit multiple NPCs to become part of their community, and, in addition, each player can recruit one NPC to become their Apprentice.

COMMUNITY MEMBERS

Characters can attempt to recruit NPCs as part of their community or clan via a Sway check. Due to the inherently difficult nature of gaining people's trust in this new world, a Success on this Sway check means that NPCs will initially only band temporarily with the PCs until the community's next *Morale* check, which happens weekly (see page 191).

It takes a Wild Success for PCs to be able to convince any NPC to join them long-term upon the initial recruiting attempt. Certain Sway skills, such as Inspiration or Entertainment, can help with recruiting.

GMs should factor in RMods from *First Impressions*, as well as any interactions the characters have had with the NPCs previous, and players should be prepared to *Make the Case* and *Fill in the Gaps* to see if they can find a way to get CMods to improve their chances.

The PCs may attempt to earn positive CMods whether by demonstrating their ability to provide for the NPCs or by undertaking tasks that otherwise benefit or help out the NPCs. This could be something simple, like helping out at the NPCs camp, or in a more meaningful way, such as saving someone the NPCs loved ones from a horrible fate or finding required medicines to keep someone alive.

If a player gets a Wild Success or a *Moment of High Insight* on a *Recruitment* check, the player has the option of taking that NPC to become their *Apprentice*, if they choose (see below).

PCs can recruit as many NPCs as they wish, but they must ensure that they are keeping the group *Morale* up, or NPCs will begin to leave. See *Morale*, below, for more details.

APPRENTICES

More than just a recruit or a member of the same community, an Apprentice is an NPC with whom a player character forms a strong bond or attachment, the PC can pass along skills and use as a proxy during play.

Recruiting is already difficult enough but to convince an NPC to throw their lot in with the group in such a meaningful way means that they are required to get a Wild Success (or a *Moment of High Insight*) on a Sway check.

Moments of High Insight notwithstanding, getting a Wild Success requires a roll of 14 or more, which cannot be achieved without modifiers or *Distemper Dice*. This means that, before the player can even attempt the *Apprenticeship* recruiting check, they must already have enough AMods, SMods, CMods or RMods to be able to get to a Wild Success.

For example, a character with a 0 Influence AMod, no levels in any Sway skills and no CMods or RMods could only get a maximum of 12 and would be unable to get a Wild Success. Therefore, that character would not be able to attempt to recruit an NPC to become their apprentice unless they are able to think of a way to build a relationship with them in the form of RMods or CMods. GMs should use the First

Impression as a basis and build from there, and player must Fill In the Gaps with the GM as to how they win the future apprentice over to determine applicable RMods.

Once recruited, an *Apprentice* can undertake tasks and activities on the PCs behalf, in effect acting as their proxy. This means that if a character with levels in Farming wishes to train their *Apprentice* in how to run a farm, they could leave the *Apprentice* behind to tend the farm while they explore. Conversely, the farmer might choose to stay back and send their apprentice out with the rest of the group as they go and explore close by towns and villages.

Each player character can only have one *Apprentice* at any time, and it is possible for the player to take on the role of their apprentice during play, in effect having a second character with a potentially very different skillset or background. An Apprentice cannot take on their own student unless the player character dies (see below).

Apprentices all start as a *Paradigm* of the players choosing (see *Paradigms* on page 73) and they must should roll 2d6 for both a *Motivation* and *Complication* on tables X and X. The player must also *Fill in the Gaps* around their relationship about why this NPC has been chosen as an *Apprentice*.

Over the course of a *Seasonal Activity* block, it is possible for the character to train their *Apprentice* in any single Skill that the character has, by one level. This means that a character with levels in *Farming* could spend a *Seasonal Activity* block training their Apprentice and teaching them 1 level in *Farming*. The character will be required to spend the bulk of the time with their *Apprentice*, which may limit their other *Activities* while training.

When characters receive *Character Development Points* (see X on X), they may choose to spend them on their *Apprentices*, instead of on their primary character.

If an *Apprentice* dies, the character can find and train another. If their original character dies the player may simply choose to play the *Apprentice* as their main character, who can now in turn take on an *Apprentice* of their own.

MORALE

At the end of each weekly *Activity Block*, one of the leaders of the community must make a *Morale* check to ensure the group is content and cohesive. This is a 2d6 check, with modifiers for the leader's Inspiration, Charm, Influence, or potentially even intimidation. If there is a group of leaders, they can make a *Group*

Check using their combined abilities.

The environment and conditions of the community provide positive and negative modifiers that can come into play, and the group is encouraged to *Fill in the Gaps* and *Make the Case* as to how they are dealing with the community's needs.

Although events are fluid and will be determined by the GM based on the situation, some examples of what can affect a community's morale are:

-1 CMod for each level of the group above Small to represent the difficulty of keeping a larger group cohesive. (This means -1 at Medium, -2 at Large, -3 at Huge and -4 at Nation State).

-2 CMod if there isn't enough food to support the community. This is cumulative and is incurred each week that there isn't enough food.

-5 CMod if at least one leader isn't present when the Morale check is made.

+1 CMod if there is sufficient food to provide each community member 1 Ration per day

+2 CMod if there is ample food where no one is hungry and there are multiple Rations available per day

-2 CMod is there have been open hostilities with anyone or an attack on the community or in the last week

+1 CMod for each week of peace. This is cumulative, up to a maximum of +3

-1 CMod if there aren't enough Supplies to repair the Base. This is cumulative and is incurred each week there aren't enough supplies

If the group fails the check, 1d6 people will leave. The players can make a Sway check to keep them but face a -3 CMod on any attempt.

On a Dire Failure, 1d6 people leave with no possibility of retaining them.

If the community ever drops below 13 characters, it has failed and falls apart. Any remaining NPCs will leave, unless the players make a Successful Sway check to convince them to stay.

BANISHMENT

Members of the community who break the code of conduct in an egregious enough manner will be banished from the community.

Although the exact details of the punishment involved varies from community to community, it is a virtual certainty that the member, along with any family members or other close associates, will be banished, the community will likely keep all of their items and possessions, and may additionally choose to dole out physical punishment (such as a group beating), branding or other indelible marking.

Although there is no network between most communities, if it is discovered that characters have been *Banished* from one community, they will generally not be welcomed by others.

ACTIVITIES

In game-terms, an *Activity* is something that a character does that benefits themselves, their group, or otherwise requires their attention and involvement. These *Activities* can range from things like hunting, farming, scavenging or otherwise gathering supplies,

THE PASSAGE OF TIME

Time moves at different scales during gameplay, depending on what is happening, and it is up to the GM to guide the group through the changes to maintain the right level of momentum.

Real-Time vs. Days. vs. Weeks vs. Months vs Seasons

Many of the interactions and encounters and undertakings in Distemper play out in single or multiple Scenes, where time passes in a close approximation of real-time for the characters. They will explore, scavenge, fight or talk, with each Scene usually having a purpose or outcome defined by the GM.

However, a more complex Sequence of Events – such as a group attempting to establish a working farm, to build relationships with other survivors, or the migration to a different area – can be made up of multiple Scenes or Activities that all take place on different timescales. These Sequences of Events can unfold over the course of days, weeks, months or even seasons.

The GM should be prepared to drop the group in and out of real-time at any point to allow the players to respond to situations where appropriate, such as sneaking into an enemy tribe's compound to sabotage an alcohol still during an ongoing conflict, and once resolved, the GM should then return the group to a different time scale as required, such as training Apprentices.

Days, Weeks, Months & Seasons are all tracked in terms of Activities, and a Community Workbook can be found at DistemperVerse.com to help manage Activities & the Passage of Time.

to making repairs to the homestead or structures buildings within their territory, scouting surrounding areas, recruiting NPCs, or planning and executing the conquest of a hostile neighbor.

Activities can be undertaken in various time-frames - Days, Weeks, Months and Seasons – depending on what the group is trying to achieve, and these blocks can overlap with one another. For example, a group who established a farm will measure their crop production in terms of a Seasonal Activity block

of 90 days. However, during that time frame, they will have multiple Daily Activities where they undertake other tasks, like converting a car to run on ethanol, as well as other Weekly and Monthly checks, such as when they are training Apprentices or scouting new areas.

No matter what else is going on, the feeding, upkeep, and the morale of a community is always measured in Weekly Blocks, which must be considered when working in Monthly or Seasonal Activity blocks. If they are the leaders of the community, at least one of the characters must be present with the community members when they make the weekly Morale check of they suffer a large negative consequence.

If the group is working on a larger goal or involved in a complex *Sequence of Events*, *Activities* may be measured in *Weeks*, *Months* or *Seasons*. Players should tell the GM what *Daily, Weekly, Monthly* or *Seasonal Activities* they are engaging in and then *Fill in the Gaps* about what they have done and the outcomes they are going for. They should then make any relevant dice check to see if they were successful.

Although the decision rests ultimately with the GM, there are no real limits to what a group can attempt or how many things can be done in any given time frame, except for common sense and the number of *Activity* blocks available.

FOR EXAMPLE: A character may decide to spend a Daily Activity block going Fishing. They take their Angler's kit and make a Successful Hunting or Survival check, and secure two units of Rations of fish. It is presumed that the travel involved in finding a spot, in addition to the actual task of fishing, took the whole day.

As another example, there is a town close by that the group hasn't yet explored and, after looking at the map, the players believe it will take 4 *Daily Activity* blocks to get there, look around and get back. This *Sequence of Events* might involve several encounters with NPCs, checks including skills such as Survival, Navigation, Perception, or Scavenging, or even combat. This would all be handled as one larger narrative, with the time frames changing as required.

Characters approaching their *Breaking Point* and needing to reduce their stress may choose to take a *Daily Activity* block to engage in something for themselves and try to decompress. They should *Fill in the Gaps* about what they are going to do and on a Successful check, they may remove one *Stress Block*, double on a Wild Success (see *Breaking Point* on page 178).

FOR EXAMPLE: A character who loves the outdoors might take a hike away from everyone else and on a Successful Survival check would remove one stress block. Another character, who

loves playing cards, gets a game of poker going and gets a Wild Success on a Gambling check. Not only do they remove two Stress Blocks, but the GM decides they get to take a piece of equipment from one of their gambling buddies.

COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

Each community and territory have certain requirements to ensure they are functional and the residents happy. This includes Mundane tasks such as gathering food or water, up to Complex tasks, such as ensuring the security of the community.

As the number of tasks, as well as the level of food and supplies required to keep a community healthy can be considerable, available NPCs can have tasks assigned to them that don't require the input of a PC and which happen without their direct involvement or oversight. The players or GM should roll for the NPCs success or failure in these tasks.

Each task requires a specific number of characters to perform it, depending on the size of the group. The more mouths there are to feed, the more people will need to be sourcing food, for example. Although these tasks will often be performed by NPCs, when player characters are involved, they can attempt a group check. As there may be a large number of NPCs as well as the player, this roll is simplified by ignoring the NPCs skills and adding +1 CMod for each member of the group present and involved in making the check.

The numbers of Supplies required for each base are defined below but are included in the Community Workbook available at www.DistemperVerse.com

MUNDANE TASKS

A *Mundane* task is anything that is required for the community to survive but doesn't further the plot or story. This could be perception checks inspecting the base to look for plumbing leaks, or that the hot water heaters are working, checking food stocks for pests, out gathering new stocks of food, scouting an area, or otherwise ensuring the upkeep of the community. These tasks can be measured in Daily, Weekly, Monthly or Seasonal Activity blocks.

As these tasks still have gradations of success and failure, it is up to the group to Fill in the Gaps on the extent of these tasks, and how they play out. Although there can be many other tasks assigned, several common ones are listed below.

NOTE: These tasks all require a certain number of characters but, unless there aren't enough NPCs available, these don't have to be player characters. They are called mundane tasks for a reason.

FINDING FOOD

To ensure that the community has enough food and water, one third of the total number of the group (rounded down) must spend their time sourcing Rations, also referred to as *Gathering*.

Whether that is by foraging, hunting, fishing, scavenging, or farming will depend on the type and location of the community, but one of the leaders should make a Scavenging, Hunting or Survival check and the group should *Fill in the Gaps* around the outcome.

On a Success, perhaps the characters find enough supplies for one week and with a Wild Success, perhaps they secure ample food allowing for larger

portions, or even some luxury items such as chocolate.

However, on a Failure they will not find any food (and the community's *Morale* may drop as a result), and on a Dire Failure, perhaps they find food, but it is rotten and contaminates existing food supplies.

FOR EXAMPLE: A group of 5 player characters recruit an additional 12 NPCs for a total community of 17 members. As one third of that number (rounded down) are required to Gather, this means that the group needs 6 characters to spend a Weekly Block as gatherers to ensure there are enough Rations for each member of the group to eat each day.

BASE UPKEEP

To make sure that the buildings are in good working order and that the bases defenses are being checked, one quarter of the total number of the group (rounded down) must spend their time sourcing Supplies and ensuring everything is operational.

To ensure the homestead gets the required level of upkeep and remains habitable means securing Supplies and affecting repairs where needed. Gathering supplies is a broad term and could include securing enough combustible materials for the campfire, making sure broken windows are boarded up and not letting in rain, or ensuring vehicles are kept running.

Table 20: Base Upkeep Requirements shows the number of Supplies required each week. On a Successful Scavenging check, characters secure the right amount and type of Supplies and are able to affect any repairs needed each week. On a Wild Success, they find an Uncommon unit of supplies. This should be recorded on the *Homestead Sheet* (see page 197).

On a Failure, they are unable to secure what they need. The Base removes 1 point from its Condition and the community suffers a -1 CMod on the weekly Morale check.

On a Dire Failure, something that the community relies on, such as a water heater, becomes irreparably damaged and needs to be replaced.

FOR EXAMPLE: The community mentioned above with 5 PCs and 12 NPCs requires one quarter of them to be looking after the homestead. This means that 4 characters will be required to source the requisite supplies and take care of any repairs or improvements needed. This is in addition to the 6 characters needed on gathering duties, for a total of 10 characters who are required to spend each Weekly Activity block doing nothing but meeting the community's needs. As there are 12 NPCs available, two remain available each week for any other activities the players direct them towards.

SCOUTING AN AREA

As communities will eventually exhaust all consumables in an area over time, characters may be sent out on scouting expeditions to new locations. These expeditions will generally take a Weekly Activity block and on a Success, the scouting party checks out a nearby location and returns with any relevant details about the area that might be useful to the players. This could include NPCs they met or potential food sources they identified.

On a Wild Success, they return with an additional set of Luxury Rations per member of the group.

If the group is made up entirely of NPCs, on a Failure, 1d3 members of the group don't return. This will cause a -1 CMod per person missing on the next Morale check and on a Dire Failure, no one returns, giving a -3 CMod per person missing on the next Morale check.
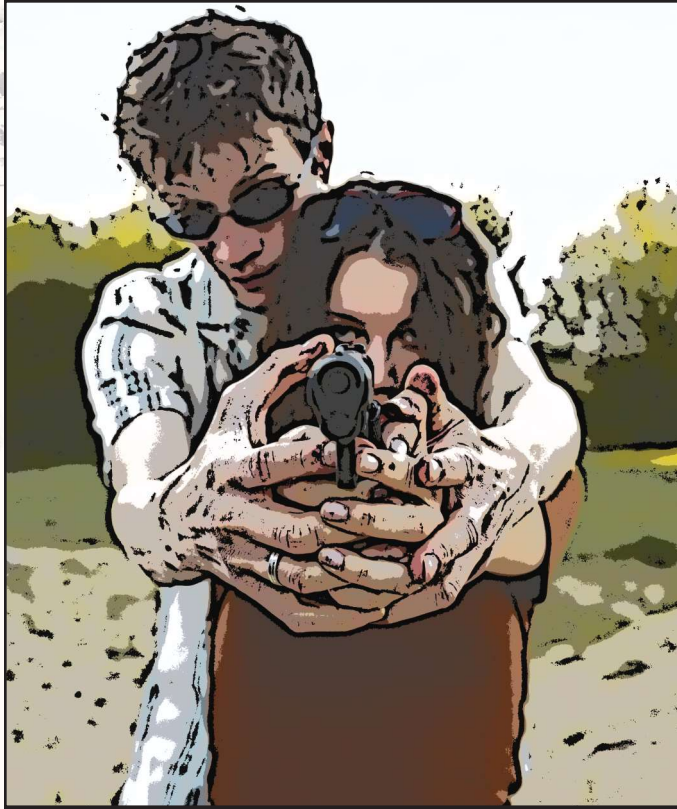
TRAINING AN APPRENTICE

Training an *Apprentice* takes a full *Seasonal Activity* block and requires most of the focus of the character providing the training. This limits the number of other *Weekly Activities* the character involved can undertake, although that may largely depend on the skills being trained. Characters training their apprentice in something like Farming or *Pharmacology** will very likely require them to stay close to home, whereas it might be decided that another character training their apprentice in Hunting can spend 1 or 2 Daily Activity blocks a week, or 4 weeks in a Seasonal Activity block training them, and the rest of the time the Apprentice is practicing.

COMPLEX TASKS

Some activities are considered *Complex* and involve the direct involvement of the PCs or their Apprentices. These tasks may include securing a territory, expanding into a new area, achieving a specific objective that requires its own *Sequence of Events* (such as getting a bullet mill operational), or perhaps even leading an attack on an opposing community. *Complex* tasks cannot be performed by NPCs without the involvement of player characters.

As with *Mundane* tasks, until there is a reason to drop into real-time (such as role play between the players, a negotiation with NPCs, or combat), these tasks should be outlined between the players and GM, with the players making checks where appropriate.

However, as *Complex* tasks are generally considered to be those driving the narrative forward, they should require more than a single role to complete and they may even take up the bulk of play-sessions, depending on the *Sequence of Events* that the players are executing upon.

A *Community* and *Base of Operations Workbook* is available at **DistemperVerse.com** that facilitates and automates the tracking of *Activities* over the course of *Days*, *Weeks*, *Months* and *Seasons*, so that the group can focus on driving the narrative forward without getting bogged down into excessive book-keeping.

EVENTS

For each week filled with only Mundane tasks, the GM should make an Event Check to see if there are any external events that are outside of the group's control. To do this, the GM should roll 2d6 at the beginning of each Weekly Activity block and look on **Table 25: Weekly Events** below, to see if anything noteworthy happens. If it does, the GM has the opportunity to weave the event into the week's activities.

On a 6-8, there are no Events, and the week unfolds as planned.

See the upcoming "Eventful Day" supplement for playable examples of the events.

TABLE 25: WEEKLY EVENTS	
2	FRIENDLY STRANGERS TURN UP
3	BAD WEATHER
4	A RANDOM PACK WITH 1D3 INFECTED DOGS TURN UP
5	
6	
7	
8	
9	
10	1 NPC GETS SICK
11	ENVIRONMENTAL CHALLENGE
12	UNFRIENDLY STRANGERS TURN UP

HOMESTEAD SHEET

DISTEMPER

The world as we knew it is over.

80% of humanity has been wiped out and what's left isn't very nice.

Distemper is a survival/horror Tabletop Roleplaying Game (TTRPG) combining simple to learn yet robust game mechanics with collaborative storytelling elements to put the focus firmly on building a compelling shared narrative, but without sacrificing any of the fun or the crunch.

Set very much in the here and now, players take on the role of survivors in a realistic, near post-apocalypse setting as they deal with having to find food and shelter - to say nothing of staying safe - in a world where everything is in short supply, particularly trust.

Distemper has no zombies, no mutants, no vampires, no alien invaders, no lasers, no magic potions, and no fantastic creatures. There is just the gnawing cold, constant hunger and, scariest of all, other humans to contend with. They come in a variety of forms, including Survivors, Migrators, Militias, Survivalists, Nomads, Bandits, Cannibals, Warlords, Zealots and Government Remnants

GAME FEATURES:

• Real world post-apocalyptic setting that takes place a year from now

• Simple to learn 2d6 based mechanics

• Fast and deadly combat system offset with Negotiation and Social Skills

• Classless characters with multiple creation options ranging from a Backstory Generation life-pathing system that guides players through every step of a characters life, to customizing from one of the 16 easily recognizable Paradigms, to picking from a library of pregenerated characters.

• Multiple mechanics such as Panic, Breaking Point, Morality, First Impressions and Gut Instincts help keep the game deeply personal for the characters

• NPC recruitment, Community and Homesteading rules allow groups to execute on a grander vision of enlisting other survivors to help in their rebuilding efforts, or perhaps to raise an army for conquest

CORE RULEBOOK

v07