

SKILLS AND STUNTS

DEFINING SKILLS

A skill represents a particular field of expertise your character has, a way they interact with the world around them. Skills are rated on the adjective ladder. The higher the rating, the better your character is at the skill. Taken together, your list of skills gives you a picture of that character's potential for action at a glance—what you're best at, what you're okay at, and what you're not so good at.

We define skills in two ways in Fate—in terms of the game actions that you can do with them, and the context in which you can use them. There are only a handful of basic game actions, but the number of potential contexts is infinite.

THE BASIC GAME ACTIONS

We cover these in more detail in Actions and Outcomes, but here's a quick reference so that you don't have to flip all the way over there right now.

Overcome: True to its name, you tackle some kind of challenge, engaging task, or hindrance related to your skill.

Create an Advantage: You attempt to take advantage of aspects already in the story, or place a new aspect (or discover an aspect you didn't know about) that gives you and your allies an edge in a situation.

Attack: You try to harm someone in a conflict. That harm may be physical, mental, emotional, or social in nature.

Defend: You try to keep someone from harming you, getting past you, or creating an advantage to use against you.

DEFINING STUNTS

A stunt is a rules element that changes how a skill functions for your character, always to your benefit. Unlike skills, which are about the sort of things anyone can do in your campaign, stunts are about individual characters. For that reason, the next several pages are about how to make your own stunts, but we'll also have example stunts listed under each skill in the Default Skill List.

Having stunts in your game allows you to differentiate characters that have the same skills as one another.

Landon and Cynere both have a high Fight skill, but Cynere also has the Warmaster stunt, which makes her better at creating advantages with the skill. This differentiates the two characters a great deal—Cynere has a unique capability to analyze and understand her enemies' weaknesses in a way Landon doesn't.

One might imagine Cynere starting a fight by testing an enemy with moves and jabs, carefully assessing her opponent's limits before moving in for a decisive strike, whereas Landon is happy to wade in and chop away.

STUNTS AND REFRESH

Taking a new stunt beyond the first three reduces your character's refresh rate by one.

BUILDING STUNTS

You have complete freedom to invent your own stunts, as long as your GM approves. We recommend most stunts fall into one of three categories: adding a new action to a skill, adding a bonus to an action, or creating a new, interesting effect. We also have a list of all the things that stunts can potentially do, to help you when you're coming up with them for your game. When in doubt, look at the listed stunts for guidance, as well as those the example characters have.

ADDING A NEW ACTION TO A SKILL

The most basic option for a stunt is to allow a skill to do something that it normally can't do. It adds a new action onto the base skill in certain situations, for those with this stunt. This new action can be one that's available to another skill (allowing one skill to swap for another under certain circumstances), or one that's not available to any skill.

Here are some new action stunts:

- ♦ **Backstab.** You can use Stealth to make physical attacks, provided your target isn't already aware of your presence.
- ♦ **The Fight in the Dog.** You can use Provoke to enter the kinds of contests that you'd normally need Physique for, whenever your ability to psych your opponent out with the force of your presence alone would be a factor.
- ♦ **You're Never Safe.** You can use Burglary to make mental attacks and create advantages against a target, by staging a heist in such a way as to shatter their confidence in their security.

Just because you have a stunt doesn't mean you always have to use it when it becomes relevant. Using a stunt is always a choice, and you can opt not to use a stunt if you don't think it would be appropriate or you just don't want to.

ADDING A BONUS TO AN ACTION

Another use for a stunt is to give a skill an automatic bonus under a particular, very narrow circumstance, effectively letting a character specialize in something. The circumstance should be narrower than what the normal action allows, and only apply to one particular action or pair of actions.

The usual bonus is +2 to the skill total. However, if you want, you can also express the bonus as two shifts of additional effect after the roll succeeds, if that makes more sense.

Here are some examples of adding a bonus to an action:

- ♦ **Arcane Expert.** Gain a +2 bonus to create an advantage using Lore, whenever the situation has specifically to do with the supernatural or occult.
- ♦ **Lead in the Air.** Any time you're using a fully automatic weapon and you succeed at a Shoot attack, you automatically create a Fair (+2) opposition against movement in that zone until your next turn. (Normally, you'd need to take a separate action to set up this kind of interference, but with the stunt, it's free.)
- ♦ **Child of the Court.** Gain a +2 bonus to any attempt to overcome obstacles with Rapport when you're at an aristocratic function, such as a royal ball.

CREATING A RULES EXCEPTION

A final way to make a stunt is to create some kind of narrow exception to the way the normal rules function. The only limit to this is that a stunt can't change any of the basic rules for aspects in terms of invoking, compelling, and the fate point economy. Those always remain the same.

Here are some stunts that create rules exceptions:

- ♦ **Ritualist.** Use Lore in place of another skill during a challenge, allowing you to use Lore twice in the same challenge.
- ♦ **Hogtie.** When you use Crafts to create a Hogtied (or similar) advantage on someone, you can always actively oppose any overcome rolls to escape the hogtie (also using Crafts), even if you're not there.
- ♦ **Riposte.** If you succeed with style on a Fight defense, you can choose to inflict a 2-shift hit rather than take a boost.

BALANCING STUNT UTILITY

If you look at most of the example stunts, you'll notice that the circumstances under which you can use them are pretty narrow compared to the base skills they modify. That's the sweet spot you want to shoot for with your own stunts—you want them to be limited enough in scope that it feels special when you use them, but not so narrow that you never see them come up after you take them.

If the stunt effectively takes over all of the skill's base actions, it's not limited enough. You don't want a stunt replacing the skill it modifies.

The two main ways to limit a stunt are by keeping its effects to a specific action or pair of actions, or by limiting the situations in which you can use it. For the best results, use both.

You can also restrict a stunt by only allowing it to be used once in a certain period of game time, such as once per conflict, once per scene, or once per session.

FATE POINT-POWERED STUNTS: another way to restrict how often a stunt comes into play is to have it cost a fate point to use. This is a good option if the desired stunt effect is very powerful, or there doesn't seem to be a good way for you to change the wording of the stunt to make it come up less often in play.

Lenny's considering a stunt for Landon called "My Blade Strikes True." He wants it to add two shifts to any successful Fight attack when he wields his personal, custom-forged family sword. Amanda thinks that's too strong to be a free stunt without some further restriction.

Lenny thinks about it, and says, "Well, how about if it lets me do that whenever I'm fighting a member of a rival family with my heirloom sword?" Amanda asks, "Were we going to establish rival families in this game? I thought the point was for you guys to travel all over the place." Lenny agrees that it probably wouldn't come up often enough, and thinks some more.

Then it comes to him. "How about this—what if, when someone uses their 2-point stress box to absorb one of my Fight attacks with the sword, I can make them use their mild consequence instead?" Amanda likes this, because it'll come up in nearly every conflict Landon gets into, but it won't be something he can take advantage of every exchange. She asks for a further restriction of one use per conflict, and they call it done.

On Landon's sheet, Lenny writes: *My Blade Strikes True*. Once per conflict, you can force the opponent to use a mild consequence instead of a 2-point stress box on a successful Fight attack with your heirloom sword.

STUNT FAMILIES

If you want to get detailed about a particular kind of training or talent, you can create a stunt family for it. This is a group of stunts that are related to and chain off of each other somehow.

This allows you to create things like fighting styles or elite schools in your setting, and helps you get specific about what types of specialized competencies are available, if you want to give your game a sense of having distinct “character classes.”

Creating a stunt family is easy. You make one stunt that serves as a prerequisite for all the others in the family, qualifying you to take further stunts up the chain. Then, you need to create a handful of stunts that are all related somehow to the prerequisite, either stacking the effects or branching out into another set of effects.

Stacking: the simplest way of handling a related stunt is just making the original stunt more effective in the same situation. If the stunt added an action, narrow it further and give the new action a bonus. If the stunt gave a bonus to an action, give an additional +2 bonus to the same action or add an additional two-shift effect to that action. If the stunt made a rules exception, make it even more of an exception.

Keep in mind that the upgraded stunt effectively replaces the original—look at it as a single super-stunt that costs two slots (and two refresh) for the price of being more powerful than other stunts.

Here’s a stunt that stacks: **Advanced Ritualist.** (requires Ritualist.) You gain a +2 bonus when you use Lore in place of another skill during a challenge. This allows you to use Lore twice in the same challenge.

Branching: when you branch, you create a new stunt that relates to the original in terms of theme or subject matter, but provides a wholly new effect. If you look at stacking effects as expanding a stunt or skill vertically, you can look at branching effects as expanding them laterally.

If your original stunt added an action to a skill, a branching stunt might add a different action to that skill, or it might provide a bonus to a different action the skill already has, or create a rules exception. The mechanical effect isn’t connected to the prerequisite stunt at all, but provides a complementary bit of awesome.

Let’s take a look at the Deceive skill. If you look at the skill description, there are several avenues that we might enhance with stunts: lying, sleight of hand and misdirection, disguise, creating cover stories, or social conflict.

So let’s make our first stunt something like this: **Fast Talk.** You get a +2 to overcome obstacles with Deceive, provided you don’t have to talk to the person you’re trying to deceive for more than a few sentences before blowing past them.

Here are some potential options for branching off of that stunt:

Quick Disguise. (requires Fast Talk.) You’re able to put together a convincing disguise in a heartbeat, using

- ♦ items from your surroundings. You can roll Deceive to create a disguise without any time to prepare, in nearly any situation.

Instant Cover. (requires Fast Talk.) You can whip up a cover story like no one’s business, even if you haven’t made an

- ♦ effort to establish it beforehand. Any time you overcome an obstacle in public using Deceive, automatically add a situation aspect representing your cover story, and stick a free invocation on it.

Hey, What’s That? (requires Fast Talk.) Gain a +2 bonus whenever you’re using Deceive to momentarily distract someone, as long as part of the distraction involves saying something.

Every one of those stunts thematically relates to very quick, spontaneous uses of Deceive, but they each have a different flavor of awesome.

THE DEFAULT SKILL LIST

Each skill description contains a list of game actions that you can use the skill for. This list is not necessarily exhaustive—see our guidelines for what to do with edge cases.

Skills are one of your primary mechanical ways to reinforce the setting you're using or creating for your game. The skills provided in this list are deliberately generic so that they can be used in a variety of settings, and the stunts provided continue this trend by not being tied to any particular setting.

When you're creating your own setting for use with Fate, you should also create your own skill list. The default list we provide is a good starting point, but creating skills specific to your world can help make it seem richer by reinforcing the story with mechanics. Stunts, too, should reflect the kinds of abilities available in your world.

Skills and Gear: Some of the skills, like Shoot and Crafts, imply the need for gear. We presume by default that if you have a skill, you also have the tools you need to use it, and that the effectiveness of those tools is built into the skill result. If you want to make gear special, you'll want to look at the Extras chapter.

SKILL	OVERCOME	CREATE AN ADVANTAGE	ATTACK	DEFEND
Athletics	X	X		X
Burglary	X	X		
Contacts	X	X		X
Crafts	X	X		
Deceive	X	X		X
Drive	X	X		X
Empathy	X	X		X
Fight	X	X	X	X
Investigate	X	X		
Lore	X	X		
Notice	X	X		X
Physique	X	X		X
Provoke	X	X	X	
Rapport	X	X		X
Resources	X	X		
Shoot	X	X	X	
Stealth	X	X		X
Will	X	X		X

ATHLETICS

The Athletics skill represents your character's general level of physical fitness, whether through training, natural gifts, or genre-specific means (like magic or genetic alteration). It's how good you are at moving your body. As such, it is a popular choice for nearly any action-y character.

Athletics is all but ubiquitous among every genre appropriate for Fate—it would only be unnecessary in a game that focused exclusively on interpersonal interaction and had no physical conflict.

Overcome: Athletics allows you to overcome any obstacle that requires physical movement—jumping, running, climbing, swimming, etc. If it resembles something you'd do in the decathlon, you roll Athletics. You use overcome actions with Athletics to move between zones in a conflict if there's a situation aspect or other obstacle in your way. You also roll Athletics to chase or race in any contests or challenges that rely on these types of activities.

Attack: Athletics is not meant as an attack skill.

You might decide that Athletics is inappropriate for defense against firearms or other high-tech ranged weapons in your setting. There really isn't any other skill that defends against them, though. If you make this decision, it will make those weapons very, very dangerous. Or have another skill defend against them.

Athletics Stunts

- ♦ **Sprinter.** You move two zones for free in a conflict without rolling, instead of one, provided there are no situation aspects restricting movement.
-
- ♦ **Hardcore Parkour.** +2 to overcome actions with Athletics if you are in a chase across rooftops or a similarly precarious environment.
-
- ♦ **Dazing Counter.** When you succeed with style on a defend action against an opponent's Fight roll, you automatically counter with some sort of nerve punch or stunning blow. You get to attach the *Dazed* situation aspect to your opponent with a free invoke, instead of just a boost.

BURGLARY

The Burglary skill covers your character's aptitude for stealing things and getting into places that are off-limits.

In genres that rely on the use of a lot of technology, this skill also includes a proficiency in the related tech, allowing the character to hack security systems, disable alarm systems, and whatnot.

Create an Advantage: You can case a location with Burglary, to determine how hard it will be to break into and what kind of security you're dealing with, as well as discover any vulnerabilities you might exploit. You can also examine the work of other burglars to determine how a particular heist was done, and create or discover aspects related to whatever evidence they may have left behind.

Attack: Burglary isn't used for attacks.

Defend: Same here. It's not really a conflict skill, so there's not a lot of opportunity to use it to defend.

Burglary Stunts

- ♦ **Always a Way Out.** +2 on Burglary rolls made to create an advantage whenever you're trying to escape from a location.

Security Specialist. You don't have to be present to provide active opposition to someone trying to overcome security measures you put in place or worked on. (Normally, a character would roll against passive opposition for that.)

-
- ♦ **Talk the Talk.** You can use Burglary in place of Contacts whenever you're dealing specifically with other thieves and burglars.

CONTACTS

Contacts is the skill of knowing and making connections with people. It presumes proficiency with all means of networking available in the setting.

Overcome: You use Contacts to overcome any obstacle related to finding someone you need to find. Whether that's old-fashioned "man on the street" type of work, polling your information network, or searching archives and computer databases, you're able to hunt down people or somehow get access to them.

You can also create an advantage that represents what the word on the street is about a particular individual, object, or location, based on what your contacts tell you. These aspects almost always deal with reputation more than fact, such as *Known as a Mean Guy* or *Notorious Swindler*. Whether that person lives up to their reputation is anybody's guess, though that doesn't invalidate the aspect—people often have misleading reputations that complicate their lives.

Attack: Contacts isn't used for attacks; it's hard to harm someone simply by knowing people.

Contacts Stunts

- ♦ **Ear to the Ground.** Whenever someone initiates a conflict against you in an area where you've built a network of contacts, you use Contacts instead of Notice to determine turn order, because you got tipped off in time.

-
- ♦ **Rumormonger.** +2 to create an advantage when you plant vicious rumors about someone else.

The Weight of Reputation. You can use Contacts instead of Provoke to create advantages based on the fear generated by the sinister reputation you've cultivated for yourself and all the shady associates you have. You should have an appropriate aspect to pair with this stunt.

CRAFTS

Crafts is the skill of working with machinery, for good or ill.

The default skill is called Crafts because it's what we use in the examples, but this skill might vary a great deal depending on the setting and what kind of technology is available. In a modern or sci-fi setting, this might be Engineering or Mechanics instead.

If building constructs and creating items is a big part of your game, check out Extras for a discussion of what might result from the use of Crafts.

Create an Advantage: You can use Crafts to create aspects representing features of a piece of machinery, pointing out useful features or strengths you can use to your advantage (*Armor-Plated*, *Rugged Construction*) or a vulnerability for you to exploit (*Flaw in the Cross-Beam*, *Hasty Work*).

Attack: You probably won't use Crafts to attack in a conflict, unless the conflict is specifically about using machinery, like with siege weaponry. GMs and players, talk over the likelihood of this happening in your game if you have someone who is really interested in taking this skill. Usually, weapons you craft are likely to be used with other skills to attack—a guy who makes a sword still needs Fight to wield it well!

Defend: As with attacking, Crafts doesn't defend, unless you're somehow using it as the skill to control a piece of machinery that you block with.

SO MANY CRAFTS... If you're going to do this, make sure that you have a reason for it besides pedantry—if the only thing that splitting the skills gets you is the same effects with different names, you should keep it more generalized and use stunts to handle the specialties.

Crafts Stunts

- ♦ **Always Making Useful Things.** You don't ever have to spend a fate point to declare that you have the proper tools for a particular job using Crafts, even in extreme situations (like being imprisoned and separated from all your stuff). This source of opposition is just off the table.
- ♦ **Better than New!** Whenever you succeed with style on an overcome action to repair a piece of machinery, you can immediately give it a new situation aspect (with a free invoke) reflecting the improvements you've made, instead of just a boost.
- ♦ **Surgical Strikes.** When using Crafts in a conflict involving machinery, you can filter out unwanted targets from whole-zone attacks without having to divide up your shifts (normally, you'd need to divide your roll between your targets).

DECEIVE

Deceive is the skill about lying to and misdirecting people.

Overcome: Use Deceive to bluff your way past someone, or to get someone to believe a lie, or to get something out of someone because they believe in one of your lies. For nameless NPCs, this is just an overcome roll, but for PCs or named NPCs, it requires a contest, and the target opposes with Empathy. Winning this contest could justify placing a situation aspect on your target, if buying into your lie could help you in a future scene.

You can also use Deceive to do small tricks of sleight-of-hand and misdirection.

Attack: Deceive is an indirect skill that creates a lot of opportunities you can capitalize on, but it doesn't do direct harm to an individual.

Defend: You can use Deceive to throw off Investigation attempts with false information and to defend against efforts made to discern your true motives with the Empathy skill.

Deceive Stunts

- ♦ **Lies upon Lies.** +2 to create a Deceive advantage against someone who has believed one of your lies already during this session.
- ♦ **Mind Games.** You can use Deceive in place of Provoke to make mental attacks, as long as you can make up a clever lie as part of the attack.
- ♦ **One Person, Many Faces.** Whenever you meet someone new, you can spend a fate point to declare that you've met that person before, but under a different name and identity. Create a situation aspect to represent your cover story, and you can use Deceive in place of Rapport whenever interacting with that person.

Social Skills and Other Characters: Many of the social skills have actions that let you change the emotional state of another character or make them accept some fact in the story (like believing one of your lies). A successful use of a social skill does *not* confer the authority to force another character to act contrary to their nature or how the person controlling the character sees them. If another PC gets affected by one of your skills, the player gets input on how their character responds. They can't negate your victory, but they can choose what it looks like.

So, you may successfully Provoke by getting in their face and screaming at them, intending to scare them into hesitation and create an advantage. But if the other player doesn't imagine his character reacting that way, you should work out an alternative—maybe you make him so angry that he's unbalanced by his rage, or you embarrass him by making a spectacle around him in public.

As long as you get your advantage, you're fine. Use it as an opportunity to create story with other people, instead of shutting them down.

DRIVE

The Drive skill is all about operating vehicles and things that go fast.

Like Crafts, how the Drive skill appears in your games is going to depend a lot on how much action you intend to have inside of vehicles or other forms of transportation, and what kind of technology is available in your setting.

For example, a low-tech setting (like *Hearts of Steel*) might have Ride instead of Drive, because the main transportation is animal-based. A futuristic setting revolving around people in a space opera military might have Drive (for cars), Pilot (for starships), and Operate (for tanks or heavy military vehicles).

Different Vehicles, Different Skills: The advice is the same as for Crafts—don't go nuts with reskinning this skill unless it makes a real, tangible difference in your game. Especially consider the option of having one skill that's modified by stunts (see Building Stunts).

Create an Advantage: You can use Drive to determine the best way to get somewhere in a vehicle, and a good enough roll might allow you to learn features of the route that get expressed as aspects, or declare that you know a *Convenient Shortcut* or something similar. You can also just read the Athletics description, and then make it about a vehicle. Advantages created using Drive often revolve around getting good positioning, doing a fancy maneuver (*Did a Barrel Roll*, anyone?), or putting your opponent in a bad spot.

Defend: Avoiding damage to a vehicle in a physical conflict is one of the most common uses of Drive. You can also use it to defend against advantages being created against you or overcome actions of someone trying to move past you in a vehicle.

Drive Stunts

- ♦ **Hard to Shake.** +2 to Drive whenever you're pursuing another vehicle in a chase scene.
-
- ♦ **Pedal to the Metal.** You can coax more speed out of your vehicle than seems possible. Whenever you're engaged in any contest where speed is the primary factor (such as a chase or race of some kind) and you tie with your Drive roll, it's considered a success.
-
- ♦ **Ramming Speed!** When ramming another vehicle, you ignore two shifts of damage. So if you ram and hit for four shifts, you only take two yourself.

EMPATHY

Empathy involves knowing and being able to spot changes in a person's mood or bearing. It's basically the emotional Notice skill.

Create an Advantage: You can use Empathy to read a person's emotional state and get a general sense of who they are, presuming you have some kind of interpersonal contact with them. Most often, you'll use this to assess the aspects on another character's sheet, but sometimes you'll also be able to create new aspects, especially on NPCs. If the target has some reason to be aware that you're trying to read them, they can defend with Deceive or Rapport.

Attack: Empathy can't really be used in this capacity.

Special: Empathy is the main skill you use to help others recover from consequences that are mental in nature.

Empathy Stunts

- ♦ **Lie Whisperer.** +2 to all Empathy rolls made to discern or discover lies, whether they're directed at you or someone else.
-
- ♦ **Nose for Trouble.** You can use Empathy instead of Notice to determine your turn order in a conflict, provided you've gotten a chance to observe or speak to those involved for at least a few minutes beforehand during this scene.

FIGHT

The Fight skill covers all forms of close-quarters combat (in other words, within the same zone), both unarmed and using weapons. For the ranged weapons counterpart, see Shoot.

Overcome: Since you don't really use Fight outside of a conflict, it's not often used to overcome obstacles. You might use it to display your fighting prowess in a demonstration, or to participate in some kind of regulated bout or sport fighting, which would allow you to use this skill in a contest.

Create an Advantage: You'll probably use Fight for most of the advantages you create in a physical conflict. Any number of special moves can be covered with advantages: a targeted strike to stun, a "dirty move," disarming, and so on. You could even use Fight to assess another fighter's style, spotting weaknesses in his or her form that you can exploit.

Defend: You use Fight to defend against any other attack or create an advantage attempt made with Fight, as well as pretty much any action where violently interposing yourself could prevent it from happening. You can't use this skill to defend against Shoot attacks, unless the setting is fantastical enough that you can catch missiles or swat them from the air or use laser swords to deflect blasters.

Fight Stunts

- ♦ **Heavy Hitter.** When you succeed with style on a Fight attack and choose to reduce the result by one to gain a boost, you gain a full situation aspect with a free invocation instead.
-
- ♦ **Backup Weapon.** Whenever someone's about to hit you with a *Disarmed* situation aspect or something similar, spend a fate point to declare you have a backup weapon. Instead of a situation aspect, your opponent gets a boost, representing the momentary distraction you suffer having to switch.

The Art(s) of Fighting: It's a given that most games that you play with Fate will feature a decent amount of action and physical conflict. This is another area of emphasis, like with the Crafts skill, where the skills you choose to have for combat speak volumes on what your game's about. In the examples, we've got Fight and Shoot as separate skills, to give us a basic division without getting too much into minutiae. Notably, though, this suggests that fighting with a weapon and fighting bare-handed are pretty much the same—there's no inherent advantage in doing one over the other. It's a pretty common choice to further separate unarmed and armed melee—into Fists and Weapons, for example. You could specialize even further if you wanted different classes of weapons to have their own skills (Swords, Polearms, Axes, Plasma Guns, Slugthrowers, etc.), but again, we recommend you not go too crazy with this unless it's really important to your setting. Specialized weapon use can also be modeled by using extras.

INVESTIGATE

Investigate is the skill you use to find things out. It's a counterpart to Notice—whereas Notice revolves around situational alertness and surface observation, Investigate revolves around concentrated effort and in-depth scrutiny.

Overcome: Investigate obstacles are all about information that's hard to uncover for some reason. Analyzing a crime scene for clues, searching a cluttered room for the item you need, even poring over a musty old tome to try and find the passage that makes everything make sense.

Racing against the clock to collect evidence before the cops show up or disaster occurs is a classic way to use Investigate in a challenge. If that sounds broad, consider the following as just a few of the possibilities for using Investigate: eavesdropping on a conversation, looking for clues at a crime scene, examining records, verifying the truth of a piece of information, conducting surveillance, and researching a cover story.

Attack: Investigate isn't used to make attacks.

Defend: Same here.

Investigate Stunts

- ♦ **Attention to Detail.** You can use Investigate instead of Empathy to defend against Deceive attempts. What others discover through gut reactions and intuition, you learn through careful observation of microexpressions.
- ♦ **Eavesdropper.** On a successful Investigate roll to create an advantage by eavesdropping on a conversation, you can discover or create one additional aspect (though this doesn't give you an extra free invocation).

LORE

The Lore skill is about knowledge and education. As with some other skills, we called it Lore because that fits the particular flavor of our examples—other games might call it Scholarship, or Academics, or something like that.

If your game has a reason to prioritize different fields of knowledge as being separate from one another, you might have several skills that follow the same basic template. For example, you might have a Lore skill that's reserved for supernatural and arcane knowledge, and a Scholar skill for more traditional education.

Overcome: You can use Lore to overcome any obstacle that requires applying your character's knowledge to achieve a goal. For example, you might roll Lore to decipher some ancient language on a tomb wall, under the presumption that your character might have researched it at some point.

Attack: Lore isn't used in conflicts. (In our examples, the magic that Zird the Arcane uses is based on Lore, so that's a unique exception to this—he could conceivably use Lore for magical attacks and defenses. See the Extras chapter for more details about ways to do magic and powers.)

Defend: Lore isn't used to defend.

Lore Stunts

I've Read about That! You've read hundreds—if not thousands—of books on a wide variety of topics. You can spend a

- ♦ fate point to use Lore in place of *any other skill* for one roll or exchange, provided you can justify having read about the action you're attempting.

-
- ♦ **Shield of Reason.** You can use Lore as a defense against Provoke attempts, provided you can justify your ability to overcome your fear through rational thought and reason.

-
- ♦ **Specialist.** Choose a field of specialization, such as herbology, criminology, or zoology. You get a +2 to all Lore rolls relating to that field of specialization.

NOTICE

Notice is the skill of situational awareness and spotting things.

Overcome: You don't really use Notice to overcome obstacles too often but when you do it's used in a reactive way: noticing something in a scene, hearing a faint sound, spotting the concealed gun in that guy's waistband.

Attack: Notice isn't really used for attacks.

Defend: You can use Notice to defend against any uses of Stealth to get the drop on you or ambush you, or to discover that you're being observed.

Notice Stunts

- ♦ **Danger Sense.** You have an almost preternatural capacity for detecting danger. Your Notice skill works unimpeded by conditions like total concealment, darkness, or other sensory impairments in situations where someone or something intends to harm you.

-
- ♦ **Body Language Reader.** You can use Notice in place of Empathy to learn the aspects of a target through observation.

PHYSIQUE

The Physique skill is a counterpart to Athletics, representing the character's natural physical aptitudes, such as raw strength and endurance. In our example game, we have this skill broken out as something separate in order to create two distinct types of physical characters—the nimble guy (represented by Athletics) and the strongman (represented by Physique).

In your game, you might not find this distinction necessary to make with separate skills—though you might still let players make that distinction with stunts and aspects.

Overcome: You can use Physique to overcome any obstacles that require the application of brute force—most often to overcome a situation aspect on a zone—or any other physical impedance, like prison bars or locked gates. Of course, Physique is the classic skill for arm-wrestling matches and other contests of applied strength, as well as marathons or other endurance-based challenges.

Attack: Physique is not used to harm people directly—see the Fight skill for that.

Special: The Physique skill gives you additional physical stress or consequence slots. Average (+1) or Fair (+2) gives you a 3-point stress box. Good (+3) or Great (+4) gives you a 3-point and a 4-point stress box. Superb (+5) and above give you an additional mild consequence slot along with the additional stress boxes. This slot can only be used for physical harm.

Physique Stunts

- ♦ **Grappler.** +2 to Physique rolls made to create advantages on an enemy by wrestling or grappling with them.
-
- ♦ **Take the Blow.** You can use Physique to defend against Fight attacks made with fists or blunt instruments, though you always take 1 shift of stress on a tie.
-
- ♦ **Tough as Nails.** Once per session, at the cost of a fate point, you can reduce the severity of a moderate consequence that's physical in nature to a mild consequence (if your mild consequence slot is free), or erase a mild consequence altogether.

PROVOKE

Provoke is the skill about getting someone's dander up and eliciting negative emotional response from them—fear, anger, shame, etc. It's the "being a jerk" skill.

To use Provoke, you need some kind of justification. That could come entirely from situation, or because you have an aspect that's appropriate, or because you've created an advantage with another skill (like Rapport or Deceive), or because you've assessed your target's aspects (see Empathy).

This skill requires that your target can feel emotions—robots and zombies typically can't be provoked.

Create an Advantage: You can create advantages representing momentary emotional states, like *Enraged*, *Shocked*, or *Hesitant*. Your target opposes with Will.

Attack: You can make mental attacks with Provoke, to do emotional harm to an opponent. Your relationship with the target and the circumstances you're in figure a great deal into whether or not you can use this action.

Defend: Being good at provoking others doesn't make you better at avoiding it yourself. You need Will for that.

Provoke Stunts

- ♦ **Armor of Fear.** You can use Provoke to defend against Fight attacks, but only until the first time you're dealt stress in a conflict. You can make your opponents hesitate to attack, but when someone shows them that you're only human your advantage disappears.
-
- ♦ **Provoke Violence.** When you create an advantage on an opponent using Provoke, you can use your free invocation to become the target of that character's next relevant action, drawing their attention away from another target.
-
- ♦ **Okay, Fine!** You can use Provoke in place of Empathy to learn a target's aspects, by bullying them until they reveal one to you. The target defends against this with Will. (If the GM thinks the aspect is particularly vulnerable to your hostile approach, you get a +2 bonus.)

RAPPORT

The Rapport skill is all about making positive connections to people and eliciting positive emotion. It's the skill of being liked and trusted.

Create an Advantage: Use Rapport to establish a positive mood on a target or in a scene or to get someone to confide in you out of a genuine sense of trust. You could pep talk someone into having *Elevated Confidence*, or stir a crowd into a *Joyful Fervor*, or simply make someone *Talkative* or *Helpful*.

Attack: Rapport doesn't cause harm, so you don't use it for attacks.

Defend: Rapport defends against any skill used to damage your reputation, sour a mood you've created, or make you look bad in front of other people. It does not, however, defend against mental attacks. That requires Will.

Rapport Stunts

- ♦ **Best Foot Forward.** Twice per session, you may upgrade a boost you receive with Rapport into a full situation aspect with a free invocation.
- ♦ **Demagogue.** +2 to Rapport when you're delivering an inspiring speech in front of a crowd. (If there are named NPCs or PCs in the scene, you may target them all simultaneously with one roll rather than dividing up your shifts.)
- ♦ **Popular.** If you're in an area where you're popular and well-liked, you can use Rapport in place of Contacts.
- ♦ You may be able to establish your popularity by spending a fate point to declare a story detail, or because of prior justification.

RESOURCES

Resources describes your character's general level of material wealth in the game world and ability to apply it. This might not always reflect cash on hand, given the different ways you can represent wealth in a particular setting—in a medieval game, it might be tied to land or vassals as much as gold; in the modern day, it might mean a number of good lines of credit.

This skill is in the default list to give you a basic, easy way to handle wealth as an abstraction without getting into minutiae or bookkeeping. Some people might consider it odd to give a static skill rating for something that we're used to seeing as a finite resource. If that bothers you, see the Limiting Resources sidebar below for ways to limit Resources.

Overcome: You can use Resources to get yourself out of or past any situation where throwing money at the problem will help, such as committing bribery or acquiring rare and expensive things. Challenges or contests might involve auctions or bidding wars.

Attack: Resources isn't used for attacks.

Defend: Resources isn't used to defend.

Resources Stunts

- ♦ **Money Talks.** You can use Resources instead of Rapport in any situation where ostentatious displays of material wealth might aid your cause.
- ♦ **Savvy Investor.** You get an additional free invoke when you create advantages with Resources, provided that they describe a monetary return on an investment you made in a previous session. (In other words, you can't retroactively declare that you did it, but if it happened in the course of play, you get higher returns.)
- ♦ **Trust Fund Baby.** Twice per session, you may take a boost representing a windfall or influx of cash.

Limiting Resources: If someone is using the Resources skill a bit too often, or you just want to represent how continually tapping into your source of wealth provides diminishing returns, you can try one of the following ideas: every time the character succeeds at a Resources roll, decrease the skill by one level for the remainder of that session. If they succeed at a Resources roll at Mediocre (+0), they can no longer make any Resources rolls that session. If you really want to get crazy, you can make finances a category of conflict and give each character a wealth stress track, giving them extra stress boxes for having a high Resources, but we don't recommend going that far unless you plan on making material wealth a major part of your game.

SHOOT

The counterpart to Fight, Shoot is the skill of using ranged weaponry, either in a conflict or on targets that don't actively resist your attempts to shoot them (like a bull's-eye or the broad side of a barn).

Again, as with Fight, if it's important to your setting to make a distinction between different types of ranged weaponry, you might separate this out into skills like Bows, Guns, Energy Weapons, etc. Don't go nuts with this unless it's key to your game.

Overcome: Unless, for some reason, you need to demonstrate your Shoot ability in a non-conflict situation, you probably won't be using this skill for normal obstacles much. Obviously, contests involving Shoot are a popular staple of adventure fiction, and we recommend you look for the opportunity to have them if you have a character who specializes in this.

Attack: This skill makes physical attacks. You can make them from up to two zones away, unlike with Fight. (Sometimes the range will change with the weapon.)

Shoot Stunts

- ♦ **Called Shot.** During a Shoot attack, spend a fate point and declare a specific condition you want to inflict on a target, like *Shot in the Hand*. If you succeed, you place that as a situation aspect on them in addition to hitting them for stress.
- ♦ **Quick on the Draw.** You can use Shoot instead of Notice to determine turn order in any physical conflict where shooting quickly would be useful.
- ♦ **Uncanny Accuracy.** Once per conflict, stack an additional free invoke on an advantage you've created to represent the time you take to aim or line up a shot (like *In My Sights*).

STEALTH

The Stealth skill allows you to avoid detection, both when hiding in place and trying to move about unseen. It pairs well with the Burglary skill.

Overcome: You can use Stealth to get past any situation that primarily depends on you not being seen. Sneaking past sentries and security, hiding from a pursuer, avoiding leaving evidence as you pass through a place, and any other such uses all fall under the purview of Stealth.

Attack: Stealth isn't used to make attacks.

Defend: You can use this to foil Notice attempts to pinpoint you or seek you out, as well as to try to throw off the scent of an Investigate attempt from someone trying to track you.

Stealth Stunts

- ♦ **Face in the Crowd.** +2 to any Stealth roll to blend into a crowd. What a “crowd” means will depend on the environment —a subway station requires more people to be crowded than a small bar.
-
- ♦ **Slippery Target.** Provided you’re in darkness or shadow, you can use Stealth to defend against Shoot attacks from enemies that are at least one zone away.

WILL

The Will skill represents your character’s general level of mental fortitude, the same way that Physique represents your physical fortitude.

Create an Advantage: You can use Will to place aspects on yourself, representing a state of deep concentration or focus.

Defend: Will is the main skill you use to defend against mental attacks from Provoke, representing your control over your reactions.

Will Stunts

- ♦ **Strength From Determination.** Use Will instead of Physique on any overcome rolls representing feats of strength.
-
- ♦ **Hard Boiled.** You can choose to ignore a mild or moderate consequence for the duration of the scene. It can’t be compelled against you or invoked by your enemies. At the end of the scene it comes back worse, though; if it was a mild consequence it becomes a moderate consequence, and if it was already moderate, it becomes severe.
-
- ♦ **Indomitable.** +2 to defend against Provoke attacks specifically related to intimidation and fear.