

RULES OF THE GAME

The rules for 1890 are deliberately simple. They are intended to offer the players and the Chronicler a flexible and fluid system, thus focusing the game on good storytelling and on providing a wide range of play.

This chapter will present all of the rules necessary to play an Episode of Uchronia 1890. The Chronicler's Handbook contains some additional rules that relate to certain particular aspects of the game. It is there that you'll find information on the advancement of Heroes, the management of the Supporting Cast and the treatment of injuries.

-Dice and Their Use-

When playing Uchronia 1890 dice should only be used to resolve particularly difficult, risky or decisive situations. A Check should not be required to resolve typical or mundane issues. In most circumstances a Hero's Assets will provide a sufficient estimate of their capacities and capabilities. For instance the Chronicler is free decide that a Hero who has Powers of Observation will automatically notice any incongruous details that would likely escape the attention of an ordinary individual or that an Accomplished Athlete can climb a typical rope without any difficulty.

This game only uses one kind of die: the typical six-sided die (abbreviated as d6), All the dangerous or uncertain circumstances faced by any Heroes will be resolved by rolling several d6's and adding the results together. The total of the roll will make it possible to evaluate the Hero's performance and decide the outcome of the Check.

Typically the player will roll the dice for their Hero. Occasionally the Chronicler will choose to roll the dice himself, generally when the Heroes cannot know the exact results of their actions

A Gentle Reminder on Terminology:

Check: Use of the dice to resolve the outcome of disputed, difficult or dangerous situations.

Conflict: A **Check** used to resolve situations involving two or more people when they are in direct contact. ie: Hand-to-hand combat, debates, games of chance.

Test: A **Check** used when a Hero faces a challenge that does not pit him against a living opponent that he is in direct contact with. ie: Gun fights, jumping, lock-picking.

-Guiding Principals-

When dealing with those remarkable situations where the outcome is in question and the dice are being used to resolve a **Test** or **Conflict** the first step is to determine the *number* of dice the player will roll. The more talented, skilled or favored the Hero is, the more dice will be applied.

A Hero normally starts with 3 dice, this represents the basic level of their capability.

This base of 3 dice can be modified by adding **Bonuses** (giving the Player more dice to roll) or subtracting **Penalties** (removing some of the Player's dice).

-Bonuses and Penalties-

Bonuses are dice awarded to the Hero to increase his chance of success. In Uchronia 1890 most Bonuses will come from a Hero's **Assets**. Each Asset that may be applied to the situation at hand will give a Bonus of one die.

For example: In a fencing Conflict a Hero with Exceptional Agility would roll 4 dice (base of 3 plus 1 Asset). If the same Hero was also an Excellent Fencer he would roll 5 dice (base of 3 plus 2 Assets).

There is no theoretical limit to the number of Assets which can influence one roll of the dice. The descriptions of the various Assets give a fairly precise summation of the situations where they may be applied. As always the Chronicler is the judge of how many dice may be applied based on the Assets the Hero has available (and may apply a standard upper limit on Bonuses if he wishes).

In certain circumstances a Hero may also be favored by external help, environmental conditions or an item beneficial to the challenge. For instance, a Hero armed with a sword-cane may receive a Bonus if they are fighting an unarmed adversary.

Penalties are those issues that result in the Hero losing dice from his attempt to succeed at a Test. If the Hero is Wounded, Stunned, tired, shocked, taken off guard or otherwise weakened he will be Penalized one die. When a situation involves a field of knowledge that the Hero is unfamiliar with the Hero will likewise lose one die. Environmental factors (like uncertain footing) may also hamper a Hero. As with Bonuses, Penalties are cumulative.

Rules Example 1

During one of their adventures in the Amazonian jungle Paul Lombard, Adrien Forestal and Jane Huntington must use an old bridge made of worm-eaten planking and held together with frayed rope to cross a vertiginous chasm. The Chronicler decides that this risky situation must be resolved by using the dice. He examines the Assets of each Hero and judges that Lombard will receive Bonuses from Accomplished Athlete, Constant Vigilance and Veteran Outdoorsman (thus rolling a total of 6 dice). On his part Forestal is definitely less experienced in this type of action, but his Nerves of Steel will help him keep his head during the crossing (he will roll 4 dice). As for Jane Huntington, she does not have any Assets likely to help her in this situation and she will have to be satisfied with the 3 basic dice.

-Successes and Failures-

To succeed in their attempt to pass a **Test** the total of a Hero's roll must meet or surpass a certain level of difficulty set by the Chronicler. This is called a **Threshold of Success**.

The Threshold of Success obviously reflects how challenging an action is: the more demanding the situation the higher the Threshold of Success. There are 3 Threshold of Success levels:

Challenging represents *relatively difficult* Tests.

To pass a Challenging Test successfully the Hero must obtain **a result of at least 10**.

Impressive represents *very difficult* Tests.

To pass an Impressive Test successfully the Hero must obtain **a result of at least 15**.

Formidable represents *incredibly difficult* Tests.

To pass a Formidable Test successfully the Hero must obtain **a result of at least 20**.

Rules Example 2

Let us return to our three Heroes and see whether or not they managed to cross the bedeviled bridge. The Chronicler evaluates the situation as a Challenging Test, each Hero will have to obtain a result of 10 or more to succeed in crossing without any complications. Paul Lombard goes first. With his 6 dice, he obtains a total of 24 and crosses the bridge with no problems. When it comes to Adrien Forestal's turn he rolls his 4 dice (which makes success likely). The result is a 14 and Adrien also makes it across safely. Finally we arrive at Jane Huntington, who only has 3 dice. She rolls them... an 8! Failure! The bridge starts to roll and pitch dangerously and soon boards start breaking off to fall into the abyss. The Chronicler decides that Jane is trapped in the middle of the bridge, petrified and incapable of advancing! On the far side Lombard and Forestal know that they must act very quickly if they want to save Miss Huntington.

-Degrees of Performance-

At times it will be useful to evaluate the Hero's performance in more detailed terms than "success" or "failure".

When the Chronicler wishes to judge how well a Hero succeeded he will review the variation between the result rolled and the Threshold of Success. The higher the variance the more spectacular, brilliant or inspired the Hero's performance was. Thus a **variation of 10 points could be interpreted as an Exceptional Success**, while a result exactly equal to the Threshold of Success will indicate the barest minimum of efficacy.

Rules Example 3

At the crevasse Paul Lombard listens to his courage heart and decides to run back, grab Jane and carry her over to safety. (All before the bridge collapses!) The Chronicler estimates that for Paul to succeed he will have to pass a Formidable Test (a result of 20 or more). He will receive the same Bonuses that he used to cross the first time. The Player takes his 6 dice and rolls a 20. A success, but barely! The bridge literally collapses under Paul and Jane but they manage to regain firm ground at the very last second. Taking into account the circumstances and the degree of performance, the Chronicler judges that (in the confusion) Jane dropped some of the objects she carried: a rifle and the invaluable emergency medical kit. Forestal sighs with relief: his companions are healthy and safe, that is all that matters for now.

-Unexpected Successes-

In critical situations a Hero can sometimes surpass their own expectations. This may be because of a burst of energy, providential inspiration or even plain-old Good Luck. Whatever the reason, the Hero has pushed beyond their limits.

In regards to play this kind of situation may occur when the roll of the dice includes **one or more Sixes**. In this case the Player will roll **one additional dice** (total). The outcome of this die is added to the total result which may make it possible for the Hero to achieve an unhopd-for performance.

This rule reflects **the mettle of the Heroes**: that mixture of courage, intuition and luck that distinguish them as truly exceptional individuals . As such it applies *only* to the Heroes and the Principal Supporting Cast.

Rules Example 4

Lord Maybury is aboard a ship which is threatening to wreck because of a particularly violent storm. An enormous wave has just crashed over the deck and washed the captain away. The crew is panicking! Despite the pleading of Williams, his Trusty Servant, Maybury plunges out into the unchecked maelstrom intent on saving the battered vessel and her hands. The Chronicler estimates that this action constitutes a Formidable Test and that, if he fails, Lord Maybury is extremely likely to drown himself. Thanks to his Robust Constitution Maybury will roll 4 dice. He results are: 6, 6, 1 and 5, a total of 18. Normally this would be a failure, but as his roll contains two Sixes Lord Maybury will benefit from an additional die. This time he rolls a 4 which brings the total to 22, success! Instead of being carried away by the tempest Lord Maybury and the ship emerge suddenly from the waves and he brings the remaining crew out hale and healthy.

-Catastrophic Failures-

Just as a Hero may receive an unexpected benefit in a Check he may also suffer a crushing failure. Bad luck, poor timing or extreme danger can transform a simple misstep into a complete fiasco. In game terms a **Catastrophic Failure results from a roll composed entirely of Ones**. This indicates the *worst result possible* based on the given situation. The exact nature of this calamity is left to the fiat of the Chronicler.

Rules Example 5

The Heroic police inspector Jules Lefranc is trying to defuse a delayed-action bomb hidden by anarchists in a Parisian department store. Even though Lefranc has no technical skill appropriate to the emergency, the Chronicler decides to authorize his attempt to disarm the explosive. But, due to his lack of training, Lefranc will suffer one die of Penalty. The only Bonus Jules has is from his Nerves of Steel, even with that applied he will only be rolling three dice. The result is... THREE ONES! Catastrophe! The Chronicler adjudges that not only does Lefranc fail to disarm the bomb but he causes the *premature explosion* of the device!

-Desperate Attempts-

In the majority of cases failing an attempted Check exposes the Hero to annoying consequences whose exact nature varies according to the specific circumstances. However, in certain situations a failure may not be inevitably crippling and may not prevent the Hero from making another attempt. **If a Hero chooses to make a Desperate Attempt they will suffer a Penalty of one die**. In most circumstances this Penalty may be ignored if the Hero has Iron Will. In certain cases this Penalty may also be avoided by application of the Extreme Patience of Nerves of Steel Assets. If the Desperate Attempt results in failure no further attempts may be tried.

Rules Example 6

During an investigation into the mysterious disappearances of various scientists and engineers Jane Huntington takes advantage of a boisterous party to clandestinely make her way into the offices of a rich industrialist (a suspect in the kidnappings). The door into the office is locked and Jane has not been able to obtain the key. As such she decides to pick the lock using one of her hairpins. Since she doesn't have any suitable Assets Ms. Huntington will only be rolling 3 dice. To succeed in picking the lock she will have to pass an Impressive Test (Threshold of Success 15). Sadly, she rolls poorly, only a 7! Jane chooses to make a Desperate Attempt, suffering a Penalty of 1 die while doing so. She rolls the 2 dice and comes up with a superb result of double Sixes! This allows her (according to the rule of Unexpected Success) to roll 1 additional die. This time she rolls a 4, for a final total of 16. Victory! Choking back an exclamation of triumph, Jane pushes the door gently open and stealthily moves into the forbidden office...

-Conflicts-

The rules governing **Conflicts** constitute the framework for Combat resolution. But Conflict Checks are used to solve any type of direct confrontation: be it arm wrestling, chess playing or debate. Remember: trying to shoot someone with a missile weapon is handled as a *Test* not as a Conflict.

In a Conflict the total rolled by a Hero is not compared to a Threshold of Success but is instead compared to the result obtained by his adversary. Whoever has the highest total wins the turn or has the advantage over his adversary (depending on the situation). In the event of a tie the Heroes are evenly matched and another Conflict roll is made.

The difference between the results makes it possible to evaluate the degree of success the winner has achieved. If the variation between the results reaches 5 points it is a **Significant Success**, a variation that exceeds 10 points is an **Exceptional Success**.

Depending on the situation the confrontation may be resolved with a single successful Conflict or until one side has reached a number of Significant or Exceptional Successes.

Rules Example 7

Let us suppose that we wish to simulate a game of chess between James Neville and Lord Clarence Maybury. Thanks to his Asset of Keen Strategist, James will roll 4 dice. Lord Maybury is familiar with the game but has no applicable Asset, so he will have to be satisfied with the 3 basic dice. Now we move on to resolving the Conflict: James rolls and obtains a result of 15. Clarence defends himself honorably with a total of 12. Things seem to have gone in Neville's favor but the variation is only a 3 and the Chronicler decides they must continue until a Significant Success is reached. On the next round James obtains a 20 and Lord Maybury only a 10, an Exceptional Success for James! Checkmate! The Chronicler decides that the level of success indicates that Lord Maybury concedes openly that Neville is the superior chess player,

-Action Scenes-

As with any novel or film focusing on adventure, an Episode of Uchronia 1890 will generally feature one or more Action Scenes: duels, gunfights, chases or any other situation with strong dramatic intensity. There are two notable types of Action Scenes: Pursuit and Combat.

Measuring Time

Unlike other Scenes of an Episode, Action Scenes will be broken up into several Turns, as Heroes and Supporting Cast each

take their action. This makes it possible to better represent the pacing and rhythm of this type of Scene, which has critical moments of high tension and the constant possibility for reversals of fortune. A Turn does not have a precise duration, instead it represents a few seconds during which each Cast Member has the opportunity of acting in a decisive way.

Measuring Distance

It is often useful to know the approximate distance separating the protagonists in an Action Scene, especially when guns or pursuits are involved. Rather than measuring to the exact centimeter that separates each Cast member, Uchronia 1890 uses a simple system of **Dramatic Distances**. This makes it possible for the Chronicler to manage Action Scenes in a way that is quick, fluid and dynamic. **These Dramatic Distances are: Very Near, Near, Median, Far and Very Far.** The Chronicler will act as judge of any distance in question, the "default" distance in most situations is assumed to be Median.

The rough estimation of the Dramatic Distances is as follows:

- Very Near- 3 meters or less
- Near- up to 10 meters
- Median- up to 30 meters
- Far- up to 100 Meters
- Very Far- anything beyond 100 meters.

-Pursuits (or Giving Chase)-

There's nothing like a good chase to bring more excitement to an Episode! In Uchronia 1890, Pursuits are resolved in a very simple fashion: by comparing the Dramatic Distances between the Cast members involved and rolling dice to try to decrease or increase those distances.

- A Pursuit may only take place if the pursuer and the fugitive are at least Near to each other.

- Within the framework of a Pursuit the distance separating the pursuer and the fugitive will be expressed in **lengths** (based on Dramatic Distance). Very Near= zero lengths, Near= one length, Median= 2 lengths, Far=3 Lengths, Very Far=4 Lengths

- If the fugitive is more than 3 lengths away from the pursuer he has managed to evade the Pursuit and has escaped, thus ending the Pursuit.

- If the distance is reduced to zero lengths the pursuer has caught up to the fugitive and the Pursuit is at an end.

The Chronicler will have to judge the initial variation existing at the start of a Pursuit. In general, the fugitive will have a one length head-start on the pursuer. In some cases a Pursuit may begin at zero lengths, provided the Cast members are close enough to each other. In this case the fugitive will have to gain a lead of one or more lengths *on his very first turn*.

On each turn a Conflict must be resolved between the fugitive and the pursuer. As long as none of the participants obtain a Significant (5-9 points) or Exceptional (10 points or more) Success the Pursuit continues.

If the fugitive obtains a Significant Success he increases the distance by one length, if he's lucky enough to have an Exceptional Success the distance is increased by two lengths. Conversely, the distance is reduced by one length if the pursuer rolls the Significant Success, and by two if his Success is Exceptional.

Let us examine some specific cases and special circumstances:

- **On Foot:** If all of the Cast members are on foot the only Asset applied is Accomplished Athlete.

- **Ladies in Pursuits:** A female member of the Cast will usually suffer a Penalty of 1 die during Pursuits thanks to her cumbersome skirts, precarious heels, and restrictive corset.

- **Several Against One:** If a fugitive is being chased by several people his will compare his one roll against the roll of each pursuer. Thus some pursuers may catch the fugitive before others.

- **Accidents:** If one of the Cast obtains a result composed of only ones on their Pursuit roll they have stumbled or had some other sort of accident and are forced to give up the Pursuit.

- **Endurance:** At the end of *three* turns of Pursuit each Cast Member must pass a Challenging Test using these Assets: Accomplished Athlete, Robust Constitution and Iron Will. In the event of a failure the Cast Member will suffer a Penalty of 1 die until he has a chance to rest and catch his breath. This Penalty will apply to all Pursuit Conflicts, Tests of Endurance and any other Checks relying on physicality (including Combat if there's no time to rest after the chase). *This Endurance Test will be rolled after every three rounds of a Pursuit and any Penalties are cumulative.* In general, any Penalties will dissipate at the end of the current Scene.

- **On Horse Back:** If the Pursuit involves participants riding horses the chase is resolved in the typical fashion but the Asset being applied is Skilled Equestrian and no Endurance Tests are required. A rider may also be favored or hindered by the quality of his mount (as judged by the Chronicler). In the event of an accident (see above) the rider may be able to mitigate the catastrophe with a successful Test using Skilled Equestrian. If he succeeds he will be able to reduce a Serious Wound to a Light Wound, but he will still have to give up the Pursuit.

If there is an obvious inequity between modes of transportation common sense will override the rules. A rider on horseback will always outdistance (or catch) a man on foot, don't bother with rolling the dice.

- **Vehicles:** In the era of Uchronia 1890 pursuits involving "vehicles" are normally limited to hackney cabs, barouches and other carriages. In terms of play these are treated similarly to Pursuits on horse back (see above). A carriage or wagon is inevitably harder to handle and drivers will suffer a Penalty of 1 die (or more if the coach is of particularly poor quality or is burdened with a heavy load). The accident rule applies to Pursuits with vehicles. These accidents not only end the Pursuit but may have a variety of other complications (judged, as always, by the Chronicler). If an inventive Cast Member creates a novel form of transport the Chronicler is free to apply Bonuses and Penalties as befits the situation.

- **Treacherous Terrain:** In certain situations the setting of the Pursuit may be risky or have uncertain footing, in these cases those involved will suffer a Penalty of 1 die. (This Penalty may be ignored if the Cast member possesses the Acrobat Asset.) The most common treacherous terrain involves elevated positions (like rooftops, cliff edges or theatre balconies). Remember: accidents involving elevated positions will result in much more punishing falls.

Pursuit Example

While strolling along a street in London's East London James Neville has his pocket picked! The scoundrel has made off with Neville's cherished watch. James manages to spy the thief and the chase is on! James is not an Accomplished Athlete so he will only be rolling the basic 3 dice. Luckily for him the robber only has 3 dice as well. The Chronicler reviews the situation and judges that the thief has a one length advance on Neville. On the first turn of the Pursuit James rolls a 12 and the robber a 9. As the variation is not Significant or Exceptional James neither loses nor gains any ground. With the second roll of the dice... James obtains an 8 and the pickpocket a 6. Still no change. During the third turn James ends up with a 13 and the thief with an 11. The thief remains one length ahead of Neville. As the Pursuit has lasted three turns the Chronicler calls for an Endurance Test. Neither James nor the thief have any applicable Assets so they will be rolling 3 dice. Neville rolls a 14 and passes the Test with no problem. The robber, on the other hand, misses his Test when he rolls an 8. He starts to get tired and will be Penalized 1 die. The Pursuit continues into the fourth turn, this time James rolls a 12 but the pickpocket only gets a 6! This is a Significant Success in favor of James. Exhausted by the chase the robber begins to falter, loses his length of advance and soon the furious James Neville catches up to him...

-Combat (or Resorting to Violence)-

The rules of Uchronia 1890 distinguish two general types of combat: **Hand-to-Hand Combat** (fighting with bare hands, knives or other "melee" weapons) and **Ranged Combat** (a fight involving "missile" weapons like guns or bows and arrows). In terms of play, these two forms of confrontation have the same basic guiding principals but they also have various distinct characteristics (which will be examined in detail below).

Remember: Hand-to-Hand Combat is resolved as a **Conflict** and **Ranged Combat** is resolved as a **Test**.

Like all Action Scenes, a Combat scene will generally be broken down into several Turns, each Turn representing the number of seconds necessary to give each protagonist the opportunity to perform and reasonable and appropriate action. During a Turn each participant tries to take an action against an adversary: for instance he may try to wound, immobilize or disarm him. As long as all of the Cast are in the condition to fight (and willing to go on) the Combat continues in the form of successive Turns.

Hand-to-Hand Combat

To take advantage of his adversary a combatant must be fast, strong and extremely skillful. As such the Assets most likely applied to Hand-to-Hand Combat are **Accomplished Athlete**, **Colossus** and **Exceptional Agility**. A Hero may apply **Pugilist** when fighting with bare hands or **Excellent Fencer** when using certain types of Blades. A Big Game Hunter may be familiar with exotic or archaic weapons (like spears). The quality and type of weapon used may give the Hero a Bonus while any wounds taken may give the combatant Penalties. For instance a Hero armed with a knife or club will profit from one Bonus die when facing an unarmed opponent and a seriously wounded Cast Member will suffer a Penalty of one die.

To resolve an incident of Hand-to-Hand Combat the adversaries will engage in a Conflict each Combat Turn.

If the results are equal neither side gains an advantage. Each of the combatants has either avoided or countered the attack against them with no real consequences. If the results are not equal the variation obtained by the winner directly determines the gravity of damage he inflicts on his adversary:

- **Minor Variation** (less than 5 points): The injured suffers only *Light Damage*: scratches, contusions, etc. In terms of play this petty damage has no effect on the general condition of the Cast Member. Therefore the Combat may continue...

- **Significant Variation** (at least 5 points): The loser suffers *Serious Damage*: if struck with fists or a Blunt object (a club, cane or the like) he is Battered. If he were stabbed by a Blade (knife, sword etc) he is Wounded. In either case he must pass a Challenging Damage Resistance Test. If he succeeds he manages to pull through and may continue the Combat, but if he fails he is *immediately Out of Combat*. If the victim does pass the Test he's not getting off scott-free: he will be Penalized one die for the rest of the Combat. *This Penalty is cumulative!*

- **Exceptional Variation** (at least 10 points): The defeated suffers *Critical Damage!* He must pass an Impressive Damage Resistance Test or be *immediately OUT of COMBAT*. Furthermore, if the damage were inflicted with a Blade the victim is not only Wounded, but Grievously Injured. The damage may, in fact, be life threatening and the Cast Member will have to perform a Survival Test at the end of the scene or when they are Out of Combat. As with Serious Damage, passing this Test will result in the injured party suffering a Penalty for the rest of Combat.

In any case if the injured party passes his Damage Resistance Test with a truly remarkable Variation (a Threshold of Success of 20 if suffering Serious Damage or a Threshold of Success of at least 30 if suffering Critical Damage) he has made a Heroic effort and can (at least temporarily) shrug off the effects of the damage he has suffered.

For more details on Damage, Wounds and Damage Resistance Tests see the *Damages and Wounds* section below.

HAND-TO-HAND COMBAT TABLE

| Variation | Damage | Victim's Condition | Damage Resistance Test Threshold of Success | Remarkable Variation to Ignore Damage | Survival Test Required? |
|--|----------|-------------------------------|---|---------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Minor (less than 5) | Light | Stable: scratches, contusions | - | - | No |
| Significant (5-9): Blunt Weapon | Serious | Battered | Challenging (10) | 20+ | No |
| Significant (5-9): Bladed Weapon | Serious | Wounded | Challenging (10) | 20+ | No |
| Exceptional (at least 10): Blunt Weapon | Critical | Wounded | Impressive (15) | 25 + | No |
| Exceptional (at least 10): Bladed Weapon | Critical | Grievously Injured | Impressive (15) | 25 + | Yes |

Hand-to-Hand Combat Example

During a brawl in a sleazy water-front tavern Paul Lombard is in Hand-to-Hand Combat with a sinister looking sailor. The seadog is intent on making this Lombard's last fight. The brute doesn't have any particularly appropriate Assets but he is armed with a knife so he will receive one Bonus (thus he will roll 4 dice). Paul is unarmed and must rely on his fists, luckily he is an Accomplished Athlete and so he will also roll 4 dice. On the first Turn of Combat the results are 17 for the sailor and 16 for Paul. Paul managed to roll two sixes so he benefits from another die, for a grand total of 20. The variance between the rolls is 3, not enough to go decisively in either man's favor. As part of his narration the Chronicler explains that Paul managed to stay of his enemy's reach, but could not counter-attack in any meaningful way. During the second Turn Paul obtains a total of 10 and the sailor a 15! This is a Significant variation and Paul is unable to avoid the attack. He suffers a knife wound that results in Serious Damage...

HAND-TO-HAND WEAPONS

| WEAPON | TYPE | BONUS | SPECIAL CHARACTERISTICS |
|--------|--------|---------|-------------------------------------|
| Club | Blunt | +1 Die | |
| Cane | Blunt | +1 Die | Fencing |
| Knife | Bladed | +1 Die | May be Thrown |
| Sword | Bladed | +1 Die | Fencing |
| Axe | Bladed | +2 Dice | Requires Two Hands |
| Spear | Bladed | +2 Dice | Requires Two Hands May be Thrown |

- **Weapon:** These represent broad *categories* of weapons. Thus, Knife would cover everything from a stiletto to a large dagger. Sword would apply to an epee, a rapier, a cane-sword or any other fencing weapon. These categories should act as a solid guideline for most Hand-to-Hand weapons.

- **Type:** Bladed weapons are intended to wound or kill while Blunt weapons are often used to Stun an opponent. As such they have different effects on Damage and Wounds.

- **Bonus:** Most weapons grant a Bonus of 1 die. Only heavy weapons that require two hands to wield confer a Bonus of 2 dice.

- Special Characteristics:

- Fencing: When using a fencing weapon the Cast Member may apply the Excellent Fencer Asset.

- May be Thrown: Certain varieties of these weapons may be used as a Ranged weapon. As always the Chronicler will judge if the knife in hand is balanced for throwing.

- Requires Two Hands: These weapons are large and require the Hero to use both hands when striking with them. If the weapon is a smaller version of a large weapon that requires only one hand to wield (like a hatchet) then the Bonus should only be 1 die.

As with Pursuits, there are special cases and specific circumstances that may affect Hand-to-Hand Combat:

- **Disarming an Adversary:** In the event of an Exceptional variation the attacker may choose to disarm his opponent, rather than wound or kill him.

- **Restraining an Adversary:** An unarmed combatant may try to use a lock or hold on his rival in order to restrain him. In the event of an Exceptional variation the adversary is completely immobilized. If only a Significant variation has been obtained then the victim suffers a Penalty of -1 die, but he can still fight! Penalties from Significant variations are cumulative, adding up until the adversary is

unable to act. The reverse is also true: if the adversary manages to secure a Significant variation he will remove one Penalty, if he receives an Exceptional variation he can break free entirely!

- **Defenseless:** If a Cast Member is attacked while he is completely defenseless (unconscious, tied up) he does not get to roll during the Conflict. The roll of the attacker is simply compared to a theoretical result of zero, drastically increasing the chances that the victim will be Stunned, Wounded, put Out of Combat or even killed!

- **Surprised or Ambushed:** In most cases a Cast Member taken by surprise will only suffer a single Penalty during the first Turn of Combat. In extreme circumstances where the victim is utterly ambushed (for instance when an unseen assassin clubs someone from behind) the effect is the same as being *Defenseless* (see above).

- **Multiple Attackers:** When two, three or four people all attack the same adversary at the same time the victim has the right to roll separately against each aggressor and to resolve each Conflict separately. The sequence of attack will be determined by the Heroes (if they are the ones attacking) or by the Chronicler (if non-player Cast Members are the initiators).
For each additional adversary after the first the solo combatant will suffer a die of Penalty.
For instance, Paul Lombard typically benefits from 4 dice in Hand-to-Hand combat. If attacked by three villains he would roll 4 dice against the first attacker, 3 dice against the second, 2 dice against the third and on 1 die against the final blackguard.

- **Treacherous Terrain:** In certain situations the setting of the Combat may be risky or have uncertain footing, in these cases those involved will suffer a Penalty of 1 die. (This Penalty may be ignored if the Cast member possesses the Acrobat Asset.) The most common treacherous terrain involves elevated positions (like rooftops, cliff edges or theatre balconies). Remember: accidents involving elevated positions will result in much more punishing falls. In rare circumstance the Chronicler may judge that the terrain is particularly good, for instance if the Hero has the high ground, and might choose to give out a Bonus of one die.

- **Fumble!** If a combatant's roll is made up of only ones he is a victim of an accident: he may lose his balance (suffering a Penalty on the next turn), suffer a bout of cowardice (see Retreating below), perhaps he may drop or break his weapon... The exact nature of the accident is left to the imagination of the Chronicler, who will take the specific circumstances of the Combat into consideration. Remember: in particularly dangerous situations the fumble may have dire consequences (like falling if fighting on a moving train).

- **Retreating:** Even a Hero may have good reasons to break off Combat. If this is the case the Chronicler will call for the Hero to pass an Impressive Test. Appropriate Assets, as always, will apply (Accomplished Athlete being the most likely). In terms of play if the Cast Member succeeds he is now at Very Near distance to his adversary, as such this may be a good time to engage in a Pursuit!

- **Endurance:** At the end of six turns of Combat each Cast Member must pass a Challenging Test using these Assets: Accomplished Athlete, Robust Constitution and Iron Will. In the event of a failure the Cast Member will suffer a Penalty of 1 die until he has a chance to rest and catch his breath. This Penalty will apply to all Combat rolls, Tests of Endurance and any other Checks relying on physicality. *This Endurance Test will be rolled after every six rounds of a Combat and any Penalties are cumulative.* In general, any Penalties will dissipate at the end of the current Scene.

Note: A Matter for Men

In the era of Uchronia 1890 partaking in physical exertion is considered unladylike. Not surprisingly a woman is expected never to fight, even if she is threatened. A man who attacks a "defenseless female" expects no resistance, perhaps she might call for help or try to run away, but she'd never fight back. This can work to a Heroine's advantage, as she's free to exercise her will and defend herself. As such the Chronicler may award her a Bonus based on Surprise (at least for the first Turn). On the downside, the typical woman's costume of the time (heavy dress, underskirts, heels and corset) will act as a considerable obstacle to her movements during Combat, imposing a Penalty of one die. At the Chronicler's discretion this Penalty may be applied to any Heroine's situation involving the Accomplished Athlete Asset.

Ranged Combat

When it come to combat involving "missile" weapons each Turn represents the number seconds needed for an exchange of shots between the adversaries. Fire-arms are extremely fatal so it is rare that a shoot-out lasts beyond a few Turns. Unlike a target shooting contest a gun-fight takes place in the heat of the moment: the situation is frantic and confused. It is an instance when presence of mind and speed of action count at least as much as pure precision.

Contrary to Hand-to-Hand Combat, Ranged Combat does not constitute direct confrontation between adversaries, and is thus handled as a **Test**. Each shooter takes their shots against a Threshold of Success, if they pass their adversary is bound to be Wounded. The only effective "defense" against a missile weapon is to get behind something that provides the Hero cover, though this isn't always a possibility (see Cover below).

The principal Assets implemented during Ranged Combat are **Exceptional Agility**, **Marksman** and **Nerves of Steel**. Those with the Big Game Hunter Asset may have a familiarity with unusual or archaic weapons like bows, javelins or bolos.

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Note: Ranged Combat deals with archaic projectile weapons like the bow and thrown weapons like knives and spears as well as fire-arms. Since most Ranged Combat in Uchronia 1890 will involve guns we use terms like "gun-fight" "shoot-out" and "gunner" in our rules discussion.

Speed and Initiative

Keep in mind that a **Cast Member may fire their weapon no more than once per Turn.**

During a shoot-out it is often crucial to know who fires first. In most cases the answer is in the situation: Who initiated the hostilities? Who was on their guard? Who was taken by Surprise? Its obvious that the alert person with gun in hand will have the drop on someone who's surprised, doesn't have their gun out or is focused on another issue.

In Ranged Combat the effect of being Surprised can be even more potent then in Hand-to-Hand Combat. A Cast Member taken completely by Surprise at the beginning of a gun-fight will be completely unable to act during the first Turn. He will be too busy gathering his wits, readying his weapon... or dealing with his Wounds!

When two gun-fighters face off and there's no situational clue that the Chronicler can use to judge who gets the first shot off the initiative goes to the best gunner, ie: the one with the most relevant Assets. If both of marksman have the same number of Assets the Chronicler will give the initiative to the Hero.

Threshold of Success and Resolution

In general **Ranged Combat is handled as a Challenging Test** (Threshold of Success 10).

If the gunner wishes to pull off a particularly difficult, spectacular or "trick" shot (disarming an opponent without Wounding him, shooting off someone's hat, splitting a playing card) then the attempt may be regarded as an Impressive, or even Formidable, Test (see Trick Shot below).

All Tests, regardless of Threshold, may have Bonuses or Penalties applied as befits the situation. The Chronicler will review the circumstances of the Combat and have the player add or subtract dice based on distance, visibility, cover, quality of weapons etc.

The Damage inflicted on a target directly correlates to the degree of success of the shooting.

Fire-arms are much deadlier than a melee weapons:

- **Minor Variation** (less than 5 points): The target suffers *Serious Damage*: He is Wounded and must pass an Impressive Damage Resistance Test. If he succeeds he manages to pull through and may continue, but if he fails he is *immediately Out of Combat*. Passing the Test results in the typical one die Penalty for being injured.

- **Significant Variation** (at least 5 points): The victim suffers *Critical Damage*! The Hero is Grievously Injured, he must succeed at a Formidable Damage Resistance Test or be *immediately OUT of COMBAT*. In addition the hit may be life threatening and the Cast Member will have to perform a Survival Test at the end of the scene or when they are Out of Combat. As before, passing the Damage Resistance Test still equals one Penalty for the victim.

- **Exceptional Variation** (at least 10 points): A *Mortal Blow* is inflicted! **The Cast Member is killed outright**. A character struck by a Mortal Blow is shot right between the eyes, in the heart or another vital area and dies *immediately*. He may make no Damage Resistance or Survival Tests. A Mortal Blow is (fortunately) a rare occurrence since it requires a very high level of Variation. In practice only a gifted sharpshooter (who profits from several Bonuses) can obtain this grim result.

If the Cast Member fails the Test he has missed his target and may make another attempt during the next Turn, as long as he hasn't run out of ammunition (see below). A roll of all ones is still a Catastrophic Failure, which (with fire-arms involved) may have drastic consequences (see Catastrophic Failure below).

| Variation | Damage | Victim's Condition | Damage Resistance Test Threshold of Success | Survival Test |
|---------------------------|-------------|--------------------|--|---------------|
| Minor (less than 5) | Serious | Wounded | Impressive (15) | No |
| Significant (5-9) | Critical | Grievously Injured | Formidable (20) | Yes |
| Exceptional (at least 10) | Mortal Blow | Shot dead! | Not allowed | Not allowed |

Now let's take a look at some special cases and specific circumstances that may affect Ranged Combat:

- **Weapon Range:**

Each Ranged weapon has an **Optimal Range**, measured in Dramatic Distance. If the distance between the shooter and his target exceeds the Optimal Range the shooter will be Penalized one die. If the distance of the target exceeds the Optimal Range by two or more Dramatic Distances the prospective victim will be considered Out of Range, and no shot will hit.

Most Ranged weapons also have an **Advantageous Range**. If the distance between the gunner and the quarry does not exceed this range the shooter will receive a Bonus of one die.

- **Shooter's Circumstances:** It is possible to shoot while running, but a one die Penalty will apply. A Battered or Wounded gunman will also suffer a single Penalty.

If the shooter is motionless and takes an entire turn to carefully aim his weapon he will receive a one die Bonus (provided nothing disturbs his concentration).

- **Visibility:** If visibility conditions are particularly bad (dim light, thick fog, dense vegetation etc) the gunman will suffer a one die Penalty. This Penalty will be *doubled* in extreme circumstances: total darkness, blind (or blind-folded) shooter etc

- **Cover:** The only way to "defend" against a Ranged Attack is for the target to put something, some kind of "cover", between them and the shooter. Cover includes things like hiding around the corner of a wall, crouching behind overturned furniture, being on the other side of a large tree... villains might even use other people as cover! If most of the target's body is behind Cover the gunman will be Penalized one die, the Chronicler judges the adequacy of Cover. If only a small amount of the target's body is visible (an arm, the top of head) the Chronicler may decide that it qualifies as a Trick Shot.

- **Trick Shot:** A particularly difficult or spectacular shot (disarming an opponent without Wounding him, shooting off someone's hat, splitting a playing card) may be judged as an Impressive, or even Formidable, Test.

- **Surprised or Ambushed:** A Cast Member taken completely by Surprise at the beginning of a gun-fight will be completely unable to act during the first Turn. He will be too busy gathering his wits, readying his weapon, looking for Cover... or dealing with his Wounds!

- **Catastrophic Failure:** If the result of the shot is composed of nothing but ones than the shooter has suffered a brutal setback. His weapon may jam or misfire (perhaps injuring the gunman) or the missile may have hit the wrong victim, like one of the shooter's allies!

These various circumstantial adjustments obviously can combine in a variety of ways (a gunman may be running in the fog or a victim may be surprised while crouching behind a stone wall). As such the shooter may have both Bonuses and Penalties applied to his shot. Taking a Turn to aim allows the gunman to compensate for poor visibility or excessive distance (but he will sacrifice speed). As always use your own good judgement: nobody can aim while taking part in strenuous physical activity (like running or climbing) or if the circumstances are particularly chaotic (fleeing bystanders, explosions, being swarmed by a dozen evil henchmen...).

Remember: The Chronicler remains the final word on what Bonuses and Penalties apply and the goal of Uchronia 1890 is not to present a tactical simulation but to make Combat more exciting and dangerous.

FIRE-ARMS

The age of Uchronia 1890 features a large variety in makes and models of fire-arms, each with their own characteristics and quirks. Obviously we don't have the room to give you details on all of those weapons so, in the spirit of the rules, we present a collection of "generic" fire-arms corresponding to the most commonly encountered types.

| Weapon | Advantageous Range | Optimal Range | Out of Range | Rounds |
|----------------------------|--------------------|---------------|-----------------|--------|
| Pocket Pistol, "Derringer" | None | Near | Far | 2 |
| Revolver | Very Near | Median | Very Far | 6 |
| Rifle, Lever Action Rifle | Near | Far | beyond eye shot | 5 |
| Traditional Army Rifle | Median | Far | beyond eye shot | 6 |
| Modern Army Rifle | Median | Far | beyond eye shot | 12 |
| Shotgun (solid slug) | Median | Far | beyond eye shot | 2 |
| Shotgun (buckshot) | Near | Median | Very Far | 2 |

Advantageous Range: If the distance between the shooter and the target does not exceed this range the gunman receives one Bonus die.

Optimal Range: If the target is beyond this range the gunman will be Penalized one die.

Out of Range: The distance at which the target is too far for the shooter to hope to hit. For rifles (and shotguns with slugs) this range is "beyond" Very Far. The rule of thumb then for rifles that if a target can not be clearly seen they are Out of Range.

Rounds: The number for shots (shells, cartridges) that a weapon may fire before having to be reloaded. 2 Rounds may be reloaded per Turn (ie to fully reload a revolver would take 3 Turns).

Notes on Specific Weapons:

Revolver: The 1853 introduction of the Colt six-shooter popularized the revolver. But single shot pistols are still reasonably common. Perhaps the most likely single shot pistol for a Hero to encounter is the Dueling Pistol. Ranges for a dueling pistol (or any other single shot handgun) are the same as a revolver, but this type of weapon only holds one round and still takes a Turn to reload.

Rifle: Single shot rifles are at least as frequently encountered as multiple round models (single shot rifles are standard military issue up to WWII). The only difference, in game terms, between them and the weapons listed is the number of rounds. When it comes to long distance shooting sniper rifles are rare, but the Russians had them by 1891!

Shotgun: These weapons may be loaded with either a solid bullet-like slug or with buckshot. Buckshot is more likely to hit at a short range, but is also less deadly than a slug. In game terms if using a buckshot loaded shotgun at Very Near range the shooter will receive an additional Bonus of 1 die (plus the 1 die bonus for Advantageous Range), but the damage will be reduced:

| Variation | 10 or less | at least 15 | at least 20 | at least 25 |
|-----------|------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Damage | Light | Serious | Critical | Mortal Blow |

Victim's condition and the necessity for Damage Resistance and Survival Tests remain the same for the damage levels as noted previously.

"Sawn-Off" Shotgun: A sawn-off shotgun can only be loaded with buckshot (see above). Compared to a normal shotgun, this weapon offers some advantages; it is much more concealable, requires only one hand to fire and has a greater dispersal of the shot.

The range for a sawn-off shotgun is reduced by one Dramatic Distance:

| Weapon | Advantageous Range | Optimal Range | Out of Range |
|----------------------------------|--------------------|---------------|--------------|
| Sawn-off shotgun (buckshot only) | Very Near | Near | Far |

When used at Very Near distance a sawn-off shot gun gains another Bonus, for a total of 3! (One for Advantageous Range, one for

buckshot and one for sawn-off shotgun).

Musket: Antique and black-powder weapons are treated similarly to rifles, but with a reduced range and longer loading time.

| Weapon | Advantageous Range | Optimal Range | Out of Range |
|----------------------------------|--------------------|---------------|--------------|
| Sawn-off shotgun (buckshot only) | Very Near | Median | Very Far |

Loading a musket requires using both hands *and* the mouth and involves tearing open a packet of gunpowder, putting a bullet into the weapon, tamping it down and lighting the fuse! This complex reloading takes **two** rounds. In other words a musket can be fire, at maximum, once every three Turns.

Elephant Gun: Only a Big Game Hunter is likely to have access to this type of weapon or to have the experience to shot one. In game terms an elephant gun is treated as a shotgun loaded with a slug, but with a much larger gauge. As such the force of impact is huge and the shooter receives a Bonus of one die, regardless of the distance. The downside is that the recoil is also quite powerful, anyone trying to shoot this large of a weapon without training will be stunned (suffering a Penalty of one die) on the Turn following firing an Elephant Gun. A Big Game Hunter is trained and will avoid being stunned, a Colossus is sturdy enough to resist this Penalty.

Machine-Gun: "Machine-Guns" of the era are multiple-barrel artillery pieces, most models requiring two men to operate (one to aim and fire, one to keep the weapon operating and to help in reloading). As with any other fire-arms there are many technical differences between the various machine-guns based on make (Gatling, Hotchkiss etc) and country of origin, but we will only look at a "generic" machine-gun.

In game terms a "standard" machine-gun will have the following characteristics:

- It can shoot a goodly distance, it's Optimal Range is Far.
- It fires *burst* of bullets, not a single projectile. It can fire three bursts before having to be reloaded. Reloading takes at least two Turns (three if the gun is manned by only one person).
- It is not a weapon of precision. The Test roll to use a machine-gun is based on fixed number of dice, not on the shooter's skill (as represented by his Assets). 6 dice are rolled if the weapon's burst is directed against only one target, 5 dice are rolled against each target if there are two targets and 4 each against three targets.
- The machine-gun is a capricious as it is deadly, if used for an extended period they tend to jam quite easily. After firing bursts for two consecutive Turns a Challenging Test must be rolled using 3 dice (if the gunnery assistant has the Mechanic Asset the dice rolled will be 4). If this "confidence" Test succeeds the weapon continues to function with no problems. If the Test fails the weapon has jammed and cannot be fired again until the problem is cleared (continuing to fire a jammed weapon can lead to explosive results!). It takes at least three Turns to unjam a machine-gun and the process also requires a Challenging Test (using the basic three dice and adding the Mechanic Bonus if the assistant has this Asset). If the machine-gun is of a very recent and modern type the confidence Test may be made by rolling 4 dice, but if the weapon is old or in poor operating condition only 2 dice may be used.

Ranged Combat Example

At the end of chase through the foggy streets of London James Neville finally closes on the filcher that ran off with his precious pocket-watch. Suddenly a shot rings out and takes off James' opera hat! Neville realizes that he's been drawn into an ambush! Cursing himself for a fool, he un-holsters his trusty revolver (something he would never leave behind when venturing into the rookeries of the Empire's Capital). Crouching behind a carriage door he surveys his surroundings searching for his assailant. Finally, he spots the gunman. This villain is dressed in a long black cloak with a shoulder cape and a bowler hat... but more importantly he is barely ten meters away. The would-be killer brings up his gun and prepares to fire.

The Chronicer compares the shooting skills of both men: thanks to his Exceptional Agility and Nerves of Steel James will roll 5 dice. As for his attacker the Chronicer allots him 4 dice. James has a higher skill and will fire first. The two men are within ten meters of each other, in other words they are at Near Distance and this distance will not modify their shots in anyway. On the other hand the fog is terribly thick so the Chronicer assigns 1 Penalty to each shooter. So James will roll a total of 4 dice, which results in an 18, a hit! His adversary collapses, Seriously Wounded.

THROWN WEAPONS and PRIMITIVE MISSILE WEAPONS

These types of missile weapons follow the same basic rules for fire-arms, there are some differences of course.

- Their use requires more dexterity to handle than a gun, as such **to hit with a primitive or thrown weapon the combatant must pass an Impressive Test (Threshold of Success 15)**.
- Secondly, these weapons do not have an Advantageous Range, only an Optimal one.
- Finally, they are also slower than a fire-arm. A gun-man will be faster on the draw than an archer... except in the case of an ambush.

There are two broad categories of these weapons: **Thrown/Slung Weapons** and **Bows**.

Thrown/Slung Weapons:

This category covers any weapon that may be thrown or which fires a stone (even a specialized "bullet" stone) from any type of sling.

The Assets applied to attacking with these weapons are **Accomplished Athlete** and **Exceptional Agility**.

A Thrown/Slung Weapon **may NOT be aimed** as a fire-arm is.

Damage Resistance Tests for Thrown/Slung Weapons are Challenging (Threshold of Success 10).

| Weapon | Optimal Range | Notes |
|----------------|---------------|----------|
| Knife, thrown | Near | (1) |
| Spear, Javelin | Median | |
| Sling-Shot | Near | (2), (3) |
| Sling | Median | (2), (3) |
| Boomerang | Median | (3), (4) |

Notes:

- (1)- If a knife is not balanced for throwing the Chronicler will assign one die of Penalty on the throw.
- (2)- Re-reading (including reloading) a sling or sling-shot takes two Turns.
- (3)- The successful handling of these weapons requires particular knowledge and prior experience. Only a Hero equipped with Assets like Big Game Hunter or World Traveller (or one who was raised in a "primitive" culture) would be able to use them without suffering a Penalty of one die. This rule may apply to other "exotic" weapons like bolas or blowpipes.
- (4)- The boomerang does not inflict any real bodily harm. On a successful hit the target will be Battered and will have to pass a Challenging Resistance Test or be immediately knocked unconscious. If the target is missed the boomerang will return to the hand of the one who threw it.

Bows:

This category covers weapons that fire an arrow from any type of bow. There are a wide variety of bows (and arrows) but for the sake of brevity we will only cover the most likely encountered one: the hunting bow. If the Cast Member happens upon a different type of bow the Chronicler will adjudge any increase or decrease in Range or any possible Penalties or Bonuses.

To fire a bow the same Assets that apply to fire-arms are used: **Exceptional Agility, Marksman** and **Nerves of Steel**.

All bows are considered primitive or exotic weapons. The successful handling of these weapons requires particular knowledge and prior experience. Only a Hero equipped with Assets like Big Game Hunter or World Traveller (or one who was raised in a "primitive" culture) would be able to use them without suffering a Penalty of one die.

It is possible to hold and aim a bow for one Turn and receive 1 Bonus, just like a fire-arm. As with a gun the archer must be motionless and retain their focus during that Turn.

If injured by an arrow the victim must pass an Impressive Damage Resistance Test.

| Weapon | Optimal Range | Notes |
|--------------|---------------|--------------------------------|
| Bow, Hunting | Far | Two Turns to Reload & Re-Ready |

Crossbows: These weapons are rare during the time of Uchronia 1890. Tribal peoples are most likely to use spears and bows while civilized folk have guns to kill each other with. If a crossbow is encountered it's main advantage is that its "bolt" may be readied and held for much longer than a bow's arrow. Some require quite a bit of strength to draw (the Colossus Asset may be called for) while others are quite complex. Very heavy crossbows may receive a Bonus to reflect their extra damage. Anyone who finds a crossbow hanging on the wall of museum or personal collection and attempts to shoot it expecting the ease of a fire-arm will be sorely surprised.

-Damage and Wounds-

In Uchronia 1890 any physical damage suffered by a Cast Member is only taken into account if the *specific injury* is potent enough to weaken the victim to the point of distinct disability or raise the possibility of taking him out of combat.

Contusions and Wounds

Uchronia 1890 distinguishes between two broad types of physical damage: Contusions and true Wounds. Contusion are caused by attacks with bare hands and blunt or battering objects (clubs, canes etc). Wounds are caused by bladed weapons and by bullets and arrows. Contusions are generally less likely to kill than Wounds.

Damage Level

There are four levels of Damage that may be inflicted on a victim:

- *Light Damage*: scratches, bruises, etc. In terms of play this petty damage has no affect on the general condition of the Cast Member.
- *Serious Damage*: if struck with fists or a Blunt object (a club, cane or the like) he is Battered. If he were stabbed by a Blade (knife, sword etc) or shot with a fire-arm (or arrow) he is Wounded.
- *Critical Damage*: if struck with fists or a Blunt object he is Wounded, if stabbed by a Blade or hit by a bullet he is Seriously Injured.
- *Mortal Blow*: **The Cast Member is killed outright.** (Fire-arms and Explosions only)

For EACH injury that inflicts Serious or Critical Damage the victim will be Penalized one die for the rest of the Combat on all physical actions (including Damage Resistance Tests).

(For instance, if the target receives a Battering by a club and is then Wounded by a dagger he would be Penalized 2 dice.)

If the victim receives Penalties equal to the amount of dice they were rolling in the Combat **they are Out of Combat**

Types of Injury

- **Battered:** The Cast Member has been hit with a Blunt object and has suffered contusions and may be stunned or even knocked unconscious. If he fails his Damage Resistance Test he is Out of Combat, if he passes he will be Penalized one die on all physical actions (including any future Damage Resistance Tests) until the end of the scene.

- **Wounded:** The victim has been hit by a Bladed weapon or a bullet or suffered a severe Contusion (perhaps even breaking a bone). A Damage Resistance Test is required to keep him from being put Out of Combat. If this Test is passed he will suffer a Penalty on any physical actions (including Damage Resistance Tests) *until the damage is completely healed*. Furthermore, the casualty requires medical care or risks seeing his trauma getting worse.

- **Grievously Injured:** The Hero has been severely hurt by a Blade or a fire-arm. He must make a Damage Resistance Test and his chances of passing this Test are reduced. Passing the Test still results in a Penalty until the Injury is healed. Regardless of whether or not the Damage Resistance Test has been passed the character must also pass a Survival Test (see below). If the victim has been put Out of Combat they will make the Survival Test immediately, if they succeed at their Damage Resistance Test they will have to carry out the Survival Test at the end of the Scene. If they do survive they will require immediate medical assistance.

- **Mortal Blow: The Cast Member is killed outright.** A character struck by a Mortal Blow is shot by a fire-arm right between the eyes, in the heart or another vital area and dies *immediately*. He may make no Damage Resistance or Survival Tests.

- **Out of Combat:**

If the combatant is put Out of Combat by Contusions he is merely knocked unconscious, and remains so until the end of the scene in progress... or until he is revived by smelling salts, a couple of good slaps to the face or (preferably) a shot of cognac. If revived he is still Battered for the remainder of the Scene.

On the other hand if the Cast Member is taken Out of Combat by a Wound he is still unconscious (or delirious from shock and blood loss), but may not be revived until the end of the Scene (even then getting the victim up and on his feet may require medical help).

Remember: anyone taken Out of Combat will be unable to defend themselves. Their allies had best rescue him quickly because the victim will be at the mercy of his enemies until they do. His enemies may leave him for dead, kill him with one simple stroke or even beat him to death... in the last two cases the Cast Member wouldn't even get to make a Survival Check! Hopefully the Chronicler will find it better for the story to have a Hero captured than killed.

To keep track of the Cast Member's injuries the player may simply note them on the Hero Archive by listing "B" for Battered, "W" for Wounded and "G" for Grievously Injured. This will help the player remember how many Penalties they're suffering (the number of letters equals the number of Penalties) and remind them if they'll be required to make a Survival Check.

Damage Resistance Tests

Each time a Cast Member suffers significant physical damage (Serious Damage or greater) he must carry out a Damage Resistance Test. Like other Tests, to pass a Damage Resistance Test the injured party will roll 3 dice plus Bonuses if he has any of these relevant Assets: Colossus, Iron Will or Robust Constitution.

If an injured Cast Member does not pass their Damage Resistance Test they are immediately Out of Combat

The Threshold of Success for a Damage Resistance Test depends directly on the damage suffered and on the weapon that inflicts it:

| Weapon | Damage | Damage Resistance Test Threshold of Success |
|---|----------|---|
| Bare Hands, Blunt Objects, Blades, Thrown/Slung Weapons | Serious | Challenging (10) |
| Bare Hands, Blunt Objects, Blades, Thrown/Slung Weapons | Critical | Impressive (15) |
| Fire-Arms, Arrows | Serious | Impressive (15) |
| Fire-Arms, Arrows, Explosions | Critical | Formidable (20) |

If the victim passes their Damage Resistance Test by a variation of 10 or more points the character has made a heroic effort and may ignore the Penalties from the Damage: if he were Battered he shrugs off the blows without stumbling, if he were Wounded the effects of the injury will not appear before the end of the Scene in progress.

Let us suppose that Paul Lombard is wounded by a gun shot. The first thing he will have to do is carry out a Damage Resistance Test against a Threshold of 15. Thanks to his Robust Constitution and his Iron Will, Paul will be rolling a total of 5 dice to pass this test. He rolls the dice, for a total of 18: he successfully passes his Damage Resistance Test. Paul is not put Out of Combat but he is still Wounded and will suffer a Penalty of one die on all his physical actions and on his future Damage Resistance Tests. If he had obtained a total of 25 or more (that is to say 10 points above the Threshold of Success) Paul would have shown heroic effort: although Wounded the effects of the Damage would have been ignored until the end of the Scene in progress.

Now let's say that the gun-man had a Major Variation on his hit against Paul. This would have caused Critical Damage, making Paul Grievously Injured. His Damage Resistance Test would then have to be carried out against a Threshold of 20... if Paul had only rolled an 18 this time he would have found himself Out of Combat.

Survival Tests

Whenever a Cast Member is Grievously Injured he risks expiring due to his Damage.

If the victim has suffered one or more Grievous Injuries he must carry out a Survival Test at the end of the Scene. Anyone so injured must make this Test, regardless of their success on any Damage Resistance Tests. It's a sad fact that a hardy Hero may fight on despite receiving several Grievously Injuries only to collapse and die at the end of the Combat.

A Survival Test is carried out by rolling 3 dice and comparing the result to a Threshold of Success based on the number of Grievous Injuries that were inflicted on the victim.

| Number of Grievous Injuries | Survival Test Threshold of Success |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1 | Challenging (10) |
| 2 | Impressive (15) |
| 3 | Formidable (20) |
| 4 or more | No Survival Test Allowed |

It is not possible to survive four or more Grievous Injuries.

Note that Survival Tests only take into account the number of times a Cast Member was Grievously Injured during a Scene. The number of Wounds suffered in this Scene or any Grievous Injuries taken in previous Scenes do not effect the current Survival Test.

Unlike a Damage Resistance Test a Survival Test takes no Assets into account, nor any Penalty. The only Bonus **ever** given to a Survival Test is if the victim is quickly provided with effective first aid. In this case 1 Bonus will be applied and the victim will be rolling 4 dice on their Survival Test.

If the victim FAILS his Survival Test he will die immediately. If the Test is successful he will survive but will need considerable medical attention as soon as possible, or risk complications that result in more Damage.

Keep in mind that the Survival Test rule is only applicable to Damage inflicted during Combat.

A restrained or unconscious Cast Member may be killed effortlessly by being decapitated or being shot in the head, as such the Hero would get no Survival Test (see Out of Combat).

First Aid

Performing first aid makes it possible to treat Damage taken by a victim. A successful application of first aid will prevent Wounds and Grievous Injuries from getting worse and (in the case of Grievous Injuries) give the injured party a Bonus die on his Survival Test. Typically only a Cast Member with the Medical Training Asset may perform first aid, with the Chronicler's consent it may be possible that a Big Game Hunter or World Traveller has learned some first aid in his adventures (but this should be decided when the Hero is created, not when the first aid is suddenly called for).

As for long term medical treatment and recovery they are handled by the Chronicler and discussed in his Handbook.

Wounds from weapons are not the only forms of Damage likely to threaten the survival of your Hero. The Chronicler's Handbook examines in detail the effects of various hazards (tragic falls, grim drownings, savage fires, unexpected explosions etc) as well as discussing the healing of injuries and their possible long-term ramifications.