

here – pulp heroes are frequently Gadgeteers, Weapon Masters, and so on. *Physical* supernatural and exotic traits can represent secret martial-arts techniques.

Modifiers: The most common power modifier is Chi, but Biological works for mad science. Based on Will and Requires Will Roll are commonly added to otherwise physical abilities to represent the triumph of discipline over raw, animal power. The modifiers under *Horror Abilities* fit the bizarre rituals of forgotten civilizations, evil ninja cults, etc.

Mythic Abilities

Advantages: Heroes and demigods of myth generally have a mixture of supernatural advantages and extreme levels of mundane ones – the more cinematic, the better. For actual deities, Control, Create, and Cosmic Power (see *Modular Abilities*, p. B71) are *de rigueur*. Mythic monsters have many exotic advantages.

Modifiers: Peculiar usage limits – e.g., “Three times while the sun is in

the sky” – call for creative interpretations of Accessibility, Limited Use, Maximum Duration, Minimum Duration, and Terminal Condition. Heroic gifts often come with a Pact requiring total devotion to a patron deity. Divine beings rarely have severe limitations; often, their abilities are Cosmic, and have powerful enhancements such as Malediction 3, World-Spanning, and Extended Duration, Permanent.

Space-Opera Abilities

Advantages: Almost anyone worthy of being called a hero has cinematic advantages. Space-opera psis have access to most mental advantages, regardless of type. Cinematic aliens and mutants might have almost *any* exotic trait.

Modifiers: The Biological and Psionic power modifiers are common. The Unreliable limitation is traditional for experimental rubber-science abilities. Apply the guidelines under “Hard” *Science-Fiction Abilities* if they would be *dramatic* . . . but don’t

bother with limitations that merely serve to keep abilities *realistic*.

Supers Abilities

Advantages: Nearly every advantage shows up in *some* comic book. Traits that let the hero adjust his capabilities to suit the situation – e.g., Modular Abilities and Morph – are especially popular. Be sure to use *Alternative Abilities* (p. 11), too.

Modifiers: Any power modifier is possible; Elemental, Psionic, and Super are just the most common. Abilities are often Visible, even if traditionally invisible in other genres. Switchable appears on almost any advantage that permits it, Force Field and Reflexive are popular for defenses, and an attack is likely to have Selectivity, Variable, and *many* enhancements so that the hero can tune it from a 1d-2 jet to a 10d explosion. A handful of special enhancements are *meant* for supers, notably Super-Speed for Altered Time Rate (p. 42) and Super-Effort for Lifting ST (p. 58).

ABSOLUTES

A few classic abilities are *absolute*: invulnerability, death rays, wishes, etc. They’re rarely a problem when a skilled author creates all the heroes, and guides them through a plot that conveniently takes their gifts into account . . . but matters are rarely so simple in a roleplaying game. The GM never knows what the players will try, while the players are never sure exactly what will work. This uncertainty is part of the fun, and the finality of “irresistible forces” and “immoveable objects” can diminish that. This makes allowing them a risky proposition – but some important genres simply won’t work without them.

Unerring Attacks

Attacks that can’t miss – divine thunderbolts, spears of vengeance, etc. – have one of the new forms of Cosmic described on p. 101: “no die roll required” or “no active defense allowed.” Heroes on a budget can obtain *near-absolute* reliability by taking some combination of Accurate, Guided, Homing, and Surprise Attack (p. 104).

Benchmarking Attacks and Defenses

Below are guidelines on how large an attack must be to simulate a weapon or hazard. Except where noted, damage is per second – the duration of one attack. To *resist* average damage, take DR 3.5 per die; to be *immune*, buy DR 6 per die.

Acid (p. B428): Immersion causes 1d-1 corrosion. This can degrade DR.

Electricity (p. B432): Household current inflicts 3d burning damage, at worst. Industrial accidents and lightning bolts *start* at 6d and range up to 6d×3.

Fire (p. B433): Ordinary fire rarely exceeds 1d burning. To rate other fires, use *Making Things Burn*. For instance, magma should ignite even “highly resistant” items instantly, which takes 30 points of damage – average damage for 8d+2.

Poison (p. B437): Most poisons inflict 1d or 2d toxic damage per cycle, and rarely exceed 12d total. The deadliest poisons inflict up to 6d *immediately*.

Radiation (p. B435): The most lethal radiation accidents actually inflict less than 1 rad/second. Attacks should rarely exceed 1d rads.

Weapons (pp. B267-281): The strongest man is unlikely to inflict more than 4d with a muscle-powered weapon. Pistols range up to 3d; submachine guns, to 4d; rifles, to 9d; grenades, to 10d; and machine guns, to 13d. Rocket launchers and cannon *start* at 6d×2. The heaviest portable weapons (missiles, mortars, etc.) go to 6d×10. Most anti-tank and ultra-tech weapons have armor divisors, too.