

CORE MECHANIC

Roll 1d20 + Rank/Modifiers vs. Difficulty Class

Equal or exceed the DC = success. Every trait — ability, skill, power, defense — has a **rank**, from –5 to 20+, which is also the modifier added to its checks.

Critical Success: a natural 20 scores a critical success — figure the degree of success normally, then bump it up one more degree.

Routine Check: outside pressure, just use a flat result of 10 instead of rolling.

DIFFICULTY CLASS BENCHMARKS

DIFFICULTY	DC	EXAMPLE
Very Easy	0	Automatic
Easy	5	Climb a knotted rope
Average	10	Hear an approaching guard
Tough	15	Disarm an explosive
Challenging	20	Walk a tightrope
Formidable	25	Crack a secure computer
Heroic	30	Beat sophisticated security
Super-Heroic	35	Bluff past wary, alert guards
Nearly Impossible	40	Impossibly complex lock, 1 round

55% Rule: a +0 modifier succeeds at DC 10 about 55% of the time. Bonus needed for 55% at any DC = DC – 10.

DEGREES OF SUCCESS & FAILURE

DC + 15	4th degree success
DC + 10	3rd degree success
DC + 5	2nd degree success
DC	1st degree success
DC – 5	1st degree failure
DC – 10	2nd degree failure
DC – 15	3rd degree failure
DC – 20	4th degree failure

Every full 5 points over/under the DC adds a degree (fractions ignored); no upper limit, though 2+ degrees of failure rarely matters further.

OPPOSED, COMPARISON & TEAM CHECKS

Opposed: higher result wins; tie → higher bonus wins; still tied → d20 coin-flip (1–10 / 11–20).

Routine opposition: DC = passive side's modifier + 10 — this is exactly how attacks work (DC = 10 + defense).

Comparison: no luck involved (e.g. arm wrestling) — higher rank just wins; ties are a coin-flip.

Team Check: a leader rolls; each helper rolls the same check vs. DC 10. 1 total degree of success = leader +2; 3+ = +5. 2+ degrees of failure among helpers = leader –2.

Circumstance Modifiers: minor ±2, major ±5.

THE EIGHT ABILITIES

2 pts/rank, –5 to 20

Strength	damage, lifting/throwing, Athletics
Stamina	Toughness, Fortitude, health recovery
Agility	Dodge, Initiative, Acrobatics, Stealth
Dexterity	ranged attacks, Sleight of Hand, Vehicles
Fighting	close attacks, Parry
Intellect	Expertise, Investigation, Technology, Treatment
Awareness	Will, Insight, Perception
Presence	Deception, Intimidation, Persuasion

0 = average adult. 8–10 = low/moderate superhuman. 20 = cosmic. Below 0 refunds 2 PP/rank down to –5.

THE FIVE DEFENSES

Defense Class = Defense + 10

Dodge (Agility)	ranged attacks/hazards; <i>active</i>
Parry (Fighting)	close attacks; <i>active</i>
Toughness (Stamina)	direct damage/harm; cannot be bought above Stamina without an effect/advantage
Fortitude (Stamina)	poison, disease, health threats
Will (Awareness)	mental/spiritual attacks

1 PP/rank to buy above the base ability. Vulnerable: active defenses halved (round up). Defenseless: active defenses = 0.

ATTACK OPTIONS

Accurate Attack	trade up to –2 effect for +2 attack
Power Attack	trade up to –2 attack for +2 effect
All-Out Attack	trade up to –2 active defense for +2 attack
Defensive Attack	trade up to –2 attack for +2 active defense
Demoralize	Intimidation vs. Insight/Will; success = impaired
Feint	Deception vs. Deception/Insight; success = target vulnerable
Team Attack	combine same-effect attacks within 5 ranks; +2/+5 bonus

Attack bonus can never more than double; effect rank can't drop below 0.

ACTION TYPES round = 6 seconds	
Standard	attack, use a power/skill/advantage — one per turn
Move	move your speed, draw/stow an item, stand up — may trade your Standard for a 2nd Move
Free	talk, drop an item, drop prone, stop sustaining a power
Reaction	reflexive response, even off your own turn; doesn't use your action allotment
No Action	resistance checks and the like — not an action at all
Actions can't normally be split (move → attack → move); a DC 15 free Athletics check adds +1 Speed rank for the round.	

INITIATIVE & SURPRISE	
Initiative = 1d20 + Agility (+ modifiers)	
Ties: highest Dodge, then Agility, then Awareness, then a die roll.	
Surprise round: everyone rolls initiative; surprised characters take no action and are stunned & vulnerable until the next round. Non-surprised characters get only a standard action (or move) + free actions.	

ATTACK CHECKS & CRITS
Attack Check = 1d20 + attack bonus vs. Defense Class
Close attacks target Parry ; ranged target Dodge . Natural 20 always hits (threat); natural 1 always misses — regardless of totals.
Critical hit (nat. 20 that also meets/beats DC): pick one — Increased Effect (+5 to the resistance DC), Added Effect (second effect at rank 0), or Alternate Effect (free power stunt, no fatigue).

DAMAGE RESISTANCE CHECK

Toughness vs. (Damage rank + 15)	
Success	no effect
Fail 1 degree	−1 penalty to further Damage resistance checks
Fail 2 degrees	Dazed (+ −1 penalty)
Fail 3 degrees	Staggered (+ −1 penalty)
Fail 4 degrees	Incapacitated

Penalties are cumulative. Failing again while Incapacitated = Dying; failing again = Dead.

RANGE, COVER & MINIONS
Ranged bands: short = rank×25ft (no penalty), medium = rank×50ft (–2), long = rank×100ft (–5); beyond long = out of range.
Cover/Concealment: partial –2, total –5 (total cover blocks a direct attack outright); cover gives the same bonus to Dodge vs. area effects.
Minions: non-minions hit them with routine checks (guaranteed if attack bonus ≥ 0); minions can't crit non-minions; a minion failing a resistance check takes the worst result automatically.

COMMON MANEUVERS	
Grab (Std)	attack, then opposed Str/grab vs. target's Str/Dodge; 1 degree=restrained, 2+=bound
Trip (Std)	close attack at –2, then opposed Acrobatics/Athletics; loser prone
Disarm (Std)	attack (–2 unarmed vs armed, –5 ranged) then opposed vs. Strength
Charge (Std)	move speed rank, then close attack at –2
Defend (Std)	opposed active defense vs. attacker (min. 10 on your roll)
Aid (Std)	team-check vs. DC 10; success grants ally +2 (3+ deg: +5)
Aim (Std)	+5 next attack (close/short) or +2 (longer); you're vulnerable meanwhile
Recover (Std)	remove worst damage/fatigue condition; once per conflict; +2 defenses till your next turn
Smash (Std)	attack an object instead of its holder (–5 if held)
Stand (Move)	stand from prone (or DC 20 Acrobatics as free)

MUTANTS & MASTERMINDS 3E — RULES REFERENCE

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CONDITIONS		basic building blocks	
Compelled only free actions + 1 GM-chosen standard/turn	Hindered half speed (–1 speed rank)		
Controlled no free will; another character dictates every action	Immobile no movement speed at all		
Dazed only free actions + 1 standard (may move) per turn	Impaired –2 circumstance penalty on that trait		
Debilitated an ability lowered below –5 — severe per-ability effect	Stunned no actions at all, not even free ones		
Defenseless active defenses = 0; attacks vs. you are routine or auto-crit	Transformed traits altered by an outside agency		
Disabled –5 circumstance penalty on that trait	Unaware can't perceive/act on surroundings at all		
Fatigued hindered; recovers after 1 hour's rest	Vulnerable active defenses halved (round up)		
	Weakened temporary power-point loss in a trait		

COMBINED CONDITIONS		bundles of the above	
Asleep defenseless, stunned, unaware	Exhausted impaired and hindered		
Blind hindered, visually unaware, vulnerable	Incapacitated defenseless, stunned, unaware, usually prone		
Bound defenseless, immobile, impaired	Paralyzed defenseless, immobile, stunned, but aware		
Deaf total auditory concealment, sign/lip-read only	Prone –5 close atk taken/+5 given, –5 vs. ranged given		
Dying incapacitated + Fortitude DC 15 each round or die	Restrained hindered and vulnerable (or immobile if anchored)		
Entranced stunned, attending the effect; a threat breaks it	Staggered dazed and hindered		
	Surprised stunned and vulnerable		

EXTRA EFFORT		free action, once/turn	
Action	+1 extra standard action this turn		
Bonus	+2 circumstance (or push +2 → +5); negate –2 or reduce –5 to –2		
Power	+1 rank to one effect until your next turn		
Power Stunt	temporary Alternate Effect for the scene		
Resistance	an extra resistance check right now		
Retry	retry certain failed effects		
Speed / Strength	+1 rank until your next turn		
Cost: Fatigued after use; using it again while Fatigued → Exhausted; again → Incapacitated. A Hero Point spent next turn removes the Fatigue entirely.			

HERO POINTS		1 to start each session	
Edit Scene	add/change a detail in your favor (can't undo resolved events)		
Heroic Feat	borrow one rank of an advantage you lack, until end of next turn		
Improve Roll	reroll any of your die rolls, take the better (before outcome is announced)		
Inspiration	a hint/clue from the GM		
Instant Counter	attempt to counter an effect as a reaction		
Recover	instantly remove Dazed/Fatigued/Stunned; Exhausted → Fatigued		
Spending is normally a reaction (no time cost). Earned via Complications, heroics, and roleplaying; unspent points don't carry over between adventures.			

RECOVERY	
Living targets remove one damage condition per minute of rest, working back from their worst condition (Incapacitated → Staggered → Dazed), then shed accumulated –1 penalties one at a time per minute.	
Objects don't recover naturally — they must be repaired (Technology). Lasting injury is typically handled as a GM-imposed Complication (grants a Hero Point).	

POWER POINTS & BASIC COSTS

Starting PP = Power Level × 15 (PL 10 default «Super Heroes» = 150 PP).

Ability	2 PP / rank
Defense (above ability)	1 PP / rank
Skill	1 PP / 2 ranks
Advantage	1 PP / advantage or rank
Power	((base cost + extras – flaws) × rank) + flat mods

POWER LEVEL CAPS

Skill total (any one skill)	≤ PL + 10
Attack bonus + effect rank	≤ 2 × PL
Dodge + Toughness	≤ 2 × PL
Parry + Toughness	≤ 2 × PL
Fortitude + Will	≤ 2 × PL

Each cap is a *pair* — lean toward one side of the pair as long as the sum stays within it. PL is set by the GM for the whole series.

EFFECT TYPES

Attack	offensive, needs an attack check, usually Instant, always resisted
Control	influence over something; Standard to start, often Sustained
Defense	protective; typically Personal & Permanent
Movement	getting around; Free to activate, still needs a Move to move
Sensory	alters/enhances senses; Free or Permanent
General	doesn't fit elsewhere — governed by its own write-up

EFFECT PARAMETERS

Range: Close	touch; unarmed attack vs. Parry if unwilling
Range: Ranged	attack vs. Dodge (see bands, p. 2)
Range: Perception	no attack check, just needs to be perceived
Duration: Instant	occurs and ends the same turn
Duration: Sustained	free action each round to maintain
Duration: Continuous	stays on until deactivated (free action)
Duration: Permanent	always on; can't deactivate or extra-effort boost

Resistance DC = Effect Rank + 10

EXTRAS & FLAWS

An **Extra** adds to an effect's per-rank cost (usually +1); a **Flaw** subtracts from it (usually –1). Some modifiers are **flat** instead — applied once to the final total, after rank multiplication, not per rank.

If flaws drop the per-rank cost below 1 PP, express it as ranks-per-point (e.g. 1 PP per 3 ranks); GM sets a floor (suggested default: 1 PP per 5 ranks). A flat flaw can never reduce a power below 1 PP total.

SELECTED POWER EFFECTS

	type / range / duration / resist / cost
Damage	Atk, Close, Instant, Toughness — 1/rank
Blast	Atk, Ranged, Instant, Toughness — 2/rank
Strike	Atk, Close, Instant, Toughness — 1/rank
Affliction	Atk, Close, Instant, Fort/Will — 1/rank
Protection	Def, Personal, Permanent — 1/rank
Force Field	Def, Personal, Sustained — 1/rank
Flight	Move, Personal, Sustained — 2/rank
Speed	Move, Personal, Sustained — 1/rank
Teleport	Move, Rank, Instant — 2/rank
Healing	Gen, Close, Instant — 2/rank
Immunity	Def, Personal, Permanent — 1/rank
Mind Control	Atk, Perception, Instant, Will — 4/rank
Illusion	Ctrl, Perception, Sustained, Awareness — 1–5/rank
Move Object	Ctrl, Ranged, Sustained, Strength — 2/rank