

Homemade Skill List

Note: This list comes from a variety of sources, some being made by myself, some were found online, and some were found on the *Palladium Books forums* (the "[We Gots the Skills](#)" topic in the *Heroes Unlimited* forum gets special mention in this regard).

Communications

Lip Reading: Also known as *Speech Reading*, lip reading is the technique of understanding spoken language without hearing the words being spoken. Practitioners learn the phonemes associated with the shape and attitude of the mouth and infer words from what they view. It's often used by the deaf and hard of hearing, combining watching the movements of the lips, face and body language with information provided by the situation (context), language, and any residual hearing. Exaggerated mouthing of words is not helpful and may destroy useful clues. Although lip reading is commonly taught, it does not lead to perfect understanding. For instance, the phrases "*Isle of View*" or "*olive juice*" could be misread as "*I love you*" in some English dialects.

Requires: Knowing the language the person being lip read is speaking.

Base Skill: 35% +5% per level of experience.

Domestic/Cultural

Baking: Baking is a food preparation method that uses prolonged dry heat acting by convection, rather than by thermal radiation. Food is normally in an oven, but also in hot ashes, or on hot stones or plates. The art and skill of baking remains a fundamental one and important for nutrition, as baked goods, especially breads, are a common food, both economically and culturally important. Other baked goods could include casseroles, cakes, cupcakes, lasagna, pizza, pies, muffins, tarts, meatloaf, pretzels, crackers, pastries, baked hams, scones and more.

Taken as a secondary skill means the character has a good working knowledge of knowing what ingredients are needed for a given baked good (or understanding and properly using a cook book or recipe), the right way to prepare it, how to measure and substitute ingredients correctly, and what temperature and amount of time is needed to bake the dish correctly.

Taking this skill twice (or taken as an Occupation or Elective skill) means the character is knowledgeable and capable enough to be a professional baker and could find work in a bakery, a cake or pastry shop, a sandwich or pizza shop, or a variety of restaurants that require baked goods as part of their menu. A failed roll means the dish is ruined somehow (cake didn't rise, the rack of cookies are dry, hard and burnt, or it just tastes bad in general).

Base Skill: 30% +5%; +10% bonus if character also has *Cook* skill (adds +5% to *Cook* skill).

Professional Quality Bonus: Adds a one-time +10% bonus and grants a +1 to M.A. while baking and or sharing/offering/selling their baked goods in some way.

Hairdresser/Barber: This is the skill of properly cutting, trimming, grooming and styling hair to change or maintain a person's image. This skill requires an understanding of how various hair styles need to be cut and textured, the proper use of hair care products and equipment, hair coloring (which is surprisingly more difficult than non-professionals believe) and knowing the current trends in hair styles.

Taking this as a Secondary skill means the character knows enough to potentially maintain a friend's or a child's hair and using hair care products & equipment adequately. Taken as an Occupation or Elective skill means the skill is of *professional quality*, meaning the character learned this skill at a beauty school, obtained a license, and can make a good living; those who excel and build a reliable clientele can make a great living.

A successful skill roll (or two out of three successful skill rolls for multiple projects with one client) adds a +2 to the client's P.B. and M.A. for the next 24 hours, and +1 afterwards for a 1D6 days, while a botched haircut, coloring or styling can drastically reduce a person's P.B. and M.A. (-1D4 or more), and could cost the hairdresser a sale, hurt their reputation (getting negative reviews can really sink a character's career) and experience a reduced level of patronage.

Note that a “hairdresser” or “stylist” usually refers to someone who styles men, women and children’s hair, while a “barber” specializes in grooming boys to men’s hair, which oftentimes involves grooming beards and offer shaving services (some higher end barbershops even offer the dying art of shaving with a straight edge razor, which some men claim is the best service of all).

Also note that *Cosmetology* is a separate skill as it deals more with cosmetics and beauty care products (but can and does involve hairstyling).

Base Skill: 30%+5% per level of experience; gets +5% bonus for each of the following skills known: *Wardrobe & Grooming*, *Streetwise*, *Cosmetology*, and *Socialization*.

Bonus: Adds +5% to *Disguise*, *Impersonation*, *Seduction*, and *Cosmetology* skills (if known).

Professional Quality Bonus: Adds a one-time +10% bonus and adds +1 to M.A. when conversing while grooming/styling a client’s hair. Characters with an M.A. of 16 or higher usually see better tips and a more reliable clientele. **Note:** Pets can also be groomed with this skill (-10% penalty).

Bartending/Barista: The skill of mixing alcoholic or nonalcoholic drinks with various juices, soft drinks, spices, beer, coffee and the like. This includes what and how much to mix, what ingredients belong in a particular concoction, if they use accessories (olives, lemons, orange peels, little umbrellas, etc.) and even substitutions if necessary. A failed skill roll indicates a bad mix (too much or not enough) or wrong ingredients were used (“why does this bloody Mary taste like a rum and 7-up?”)

Taken as an Elective or Secondary skill means knowing enough about mixing drinks to be competent (and popular) at social gatherings and parties, where taking it twice (or taken as an Occupational skill) represents a *Professional Quality*, meaning they’ve attending a school or had professional training and have spent extensive time learning the methods and styles of various beverages. Professionals can make good to great money at a bar, saloon, tavern, restaurant, coffee shop, etc. and can impress people with their extensive mixed drink knowledge. Bartending competitions have become popular in recent years and the top prizes usually include trophy, accolades, and large cash winnings.

It’s also easy for this character to find work virtually anywhere as most small towns have at least a bar or two and always seems to be in need of a competent bartender or barista.

Barista Note: Those who go the barista route are also experienced at making foam art in their coffees, which can lead to impressed patrons leaving better tips than usual.

Base Skill: 20% +5%.

Professional Quality Bonus: Adds a one-time +10% bonus and grants +1 to M.A. while working.

Disk Jockey: Commonly known as a *DJ*, this character has experience in setting up a “chain” of music while using the sound equipment to do so. This also includes using lighting effects (disco, Automated & spinning lights), and sound equipment (Karaoke, dubbing, track mixing). On the personal side of this job, observing the audience and deducing what the crowd is enjoying, the general vibe of the given crowd, and providing and maintaining playlists of music available for the crowd to select from.

Taking this skill once means the character is more of a dabbler and is familiar with the equipment and the concepts of DJ work, and can assist a professional DJ set up, tear down and maintain their gear.

Taking this skill twice (or taken as an Occupational skill) means a *Professional Quality* and the character can make money on the side by hiring themselves out as a local DJ (weddings, business meetings, family reunions, etc.) or can make a good to an even lucrative living by becoming in high demand at dance clubs. Many professional DJ’s own and maintain their own equipment. Some DJ’s go so far as to learn *Musical Composition* (see skill below) to mix music more seamlessly into their playlists or even make their own music tracks to use and sell. This skill is also a good way to make local contacts, friends, colleagues and pick up on the local gossip.

A failed skill roll means the equipment was set up wrong, or is hitting the wrong buttons, has set the tremble or the base all wrong, or is playing the wrong kind of music and has annoyed or even upset the crowd, etc.

Base Skill: 35% +5% per level of experience; adds +5% to *Basic Radio* and *Sensory Equipment*.

Professional Quality Bonus: Adds a one-time +10% bonus and +1 to M.A. while performing.

Feng Shui: The ancient Chinese practice of placement and arrangement of space and inanimate objects within that space to achieve “Qi”, or positive energy & harmony within the environment. The practice is estimated to be more than three thousand years old. Feng Shui literally means “wind and water” in Chinese. Not only can this practice be aesthetically pleasing, but it also helps to reduce the stress and anxiety of a given space, as well as remove “bad energy” or “negative vibes” from it.

Taken as a Secondary skill, the character understands the concepts and recognizes spaces that are properly using Feng Shui aesthetics. Taking the skill twice (or as an Occupational skill) means a *Professional Quality*, to where not only can they successfully arrange a space to attune to a person’s Qi, but they can teach the practice to others.

A feng shui professional will explain feng shui to others by saying some like: “*Qi (or chi) simply put, is energy. It is an unseen force that flows all around us. Everything in feng shui is infused with Qi: You, me, a rock, a tree. The concept of Qi goes back to the earliest examples of Taoist texts about how to cultivate Qi (your personal energy) for better health and longevity. While there is not a clear and direct translation into English, the closest words to describe it would be: breath, life force, vital energy, and even cosmic breath. That is the foundation of feng shui. Practitioners like myself focus on improving the quality and flow of this energy through our built environments so that we can all thrive and prosper.*”

While psychics and magic users are known to use feng shui in their home and offices to improve their I.S.P./P.P.E., even ordinary people can feel the positive energy of an arranged feng shui space.

Base Skill: 15% +5% per level of experience.

Professional Quality Bonuses: Add +5% to *Lore: Geomancy, Housekeeping, Holistic Medicine, Philosophy, Meditation and Gardening* skills (if taken).

I.S.P. & P.P.E. Bonus: This skill increases the Base I.S.P. of psychics by 1 point and the Base P.P.E. of both magic users and ordinary people by 1D4 while in a space the character recognizes as being professionally designed/arranged using feng shui aesthetics (requires a successful skill roll).

Musical Composition: The skill of writing up “organized sounds”, starting with the most historically primitive musical notions, moving through increasing complex sounds, to the complexities of modern atonal music. This can range all music styles the character would want (including waltz, polka, sarabande, tango, passacaglia, rock, country, western, R & B, techno and others), and how to measure and print them accordingly onto sheet music.

The modern western composers commonly use the “*musical pitch*” system most often found on the piano, and therefore composer must know how to play the piano. Taken as a Secondary skill means the character is a talented amateur, while taking the skill twice, or taken as an Occupational or Elective skill, is considered to a professional music composer and could make music and/or could teach the skill to others professionally.

Requires: Play Musical Instrument: Piano. Knowing how to play other instruments is also helpful.

Base Skill: 30% +5% per level of experience.

Professional Quality Bonus: Adds a one-time +10% bonus.

Teppanyaki: In the United States *teppanyaki cooking* is also known as “Hibachi Grilling”. In Japan, the preparation of food is an art form and teppanyaki is no exception. During its 200-year history this form of tabletop cooking has developed into a highly refined and beautiful form of expression, characterized by an intricate combination of presentation and knife and utensil skills. In 1964 when “Benihana” opened its first restaurant in New York, the elegant art of teppanyaki cooking was introduced to America and quickly spread across the country.

Learning this skill includes how to prepare and cook various food on a menu, how to perform tricks with their utensils (like tossing, flipping and catching bowls of rice on a spatula), spouting jokes and funny one-liners at the customers/onlookers, and practice being an entertainer and “attention getter”.

Taken as a Secondary skill, the character knows the concepts and practices well enough to be a competent cook on a real or portable hibachi grill table at home. Taken as an Occupational or Elective skill however means the character has attended a school, has considerable training and has reached a *professional quality* and can find work at restaurants that offer Teppanyaki grilling, as well as similar

styles like Mongolian grilled food. This skill is always in demand at Teppanyaki restaurants and professionals usually make good to great money doing so.

Base Skill: 30% +5% per level and grants a +2 to M.A. while working.

Professional Quality Bonuses: Adds a one-time bonus of +10% and adds +5% to *Juggling* and *Cook* skill, a +1 to *Strike*, *Parry* and *Throw with knives* (if *W.P. Knife* is taken) and a +1 to *Throw with the W.P. Targeting* skill (if taken).

Waiter/ Waitress/ Serving tables: Like most professions there's a great deal more to waiting tables than most people realize. Most people seem to think that anyone can waltz into a restaurant or diner and can get a job as a waitress or waiter. While that may be a true statement, they don't realize that being successful at it or KEEPING that job is the hard part. This job includes many aspects such as needing good memory retention, working at a fast pace, practicing good etiquette and having lots of patience. Those who seriously lack any of these skills usually make lousy tips and/or are fired quickly.

This profession might be considered a low class or an uneducated one to some, but these critics don't realize that one can make just as good of a living as most educated laborers. In fact, it's estimated that over 60% of uneducated single mothers make their living in this manner, doing well enough to make ends meet (some do even better). Note that this skill is not available as Secondary skill as the housekeeping skill covers it.

This skill is most often taken as an Elective skill as it's often used as an entry level job that leads towards restaurant management, or a step towards cooking or baking professionally, or is used as job to make money while attending college or learning a trade or another profession in the meantime.

Those who take this skill at a Occupational (professional) level are most often for those who find work in diners and restaurants where ordering and serving food and drink, using cash registers, keeping the customers engaged, and remembering the details of regular customers for conversational purposes is a large part of what they do. Regardless of Occupational or Elective, those who have this skill are good at it and make fair to excellent money doing it.

Characters with this skill can get a job at virtually any place that serves food and can potentially earn even better money at higher-end restaurants or catering services and similar food establishments. Those who take this skill along with the *Etiquette* skill can find work in ritzier, high-end establishments and can make especially good money (some make thousands a night!) This skill encompasses all aspects like order taking, bringing out food, cleaning up and busing tables as needed, handling cashier work, and greeting & talking with guests and customers constantly.

Base Skill: 25% +5% per level of experience,

Bonuses: Add +1 to M.A. and P.E. attribute (it's constant and demanding work). Taking any of the following skills adds a one-time bonus of +5% for each skill taken: *Etiquette*, *Seduction*, *Cook*, *Socialization* and *Manual Labor*. They may also add a +3% bonus for each P.B. attribute point above 17 as those who find their servers attractive often tips better (along with their phone number) to look impressive.

Wine Tasting (Sommelier), Beer Tasting (Cicerone) and Whisky Master:

Note: While these professions are similar in practice, they're all vastly different enough in tastes and textures to where they are considered three separate skills and professions. Also note that it's rare for a person to practice two or all three of these skills professionally. Sommeliers have different taste buds than Cicerone's and Whisky Masters, and most people prefer one drink over another.

As the editor, I can confirm this by example as my wife is a wine aficionado. She loves visiting wineries when we travel, she knows what type of glass to use for various wines and can note the various flavors and textures in whatever wine she's tasting. I, on the other hand, don't care for wine beyond sangria and similar fruity dessert wines. In fact, most wines give me heartburn and thus I avoid them. I do however enjoy a variety of beers, ciders, whiskeys and bourbons, but NOT to the level of being an aficionado. I know a Cicerone who works for a local brewery however, and he does not like wine, at all. In fact, he swears that wine tasting is FAR less interesting than beer tasting and finds beer flavors to be far superior. My wife disagrees with him entirely as she's not a beer fan. In short: to each their own.

Do you simply drink alcohol, or do you *taste* it? Anyone can drink wine/beer/whiskey, etc., but it takes practice (and frankly a hefty amount of discipline) to be able to recognize and distinguish the individual characteristics of a particular beverage. There is an art involved in professionally tasting alcohol, which includes proper pouring techniques, knowing the types of glass to use for various drinks, knowing a glossary of terms and descriptions involved in describing a beverage's characteristics, and a certain etiquette is required to properly host, serve and taste a drink.

Taken as a *Secondary* skill means the character is something of an aficionado who has a practiced knowledge of tasting a particular type of beverage. These characters have likely sampled various "beverage of the month" or seasons, knows the basic etiquette of their favored beverages (for instance, did you know that mulled spice wine and "Gluhwein" should be served hot (usually from a crockpot) and only during winter holidays?) and is able to enjoy their favored beverage with more passion and flair than one who simply 'drinks it'.

Taken as an *Occupational* or *Elective* skill (or taken as a Secondary skill twice) is considered to be a professional, or qualified, or even certified taster (depending on the beverage). This includes being knowledgeable enough to compete in tasting competitions, hosting their own tasting parties, knowing what condiments and foods accompany the beverage, and can potentially find work in fine dining restaurants or breweries, wineries and/or distilleries (a competitive, but potentially lucrative profession).

A professional will be incredibly knowledgeable about their chosen beverage, understand the salesmanship involved in selling their favored drink(s) (will need to take the *Business & Finance* skill to run the business side of things), and knows the approximate financial value of rare and expensive bottles. This also includes acknowledging the fundamental importance of their drink to the culinary experience and characters often have the *Cook* skill to accompany this skill (see bonuses below).

A failed roll in tasting means they are off in describing the taste to others, they served the wrong kind of flavor with the food, they've improperly described the taste to another taster or aficionado, or something else seriously *faux pas* (which could cost them their credibility, even their job). For example, a failed roll as a "Sommelier" means that they poured the wine incorrectly, or used the wrong type of wine glass, or described the wine incorrectly or recommended the wrong kind of wine with a particular meal, or their etiquette was off, or they have even "tainted" the wine (the antichrist of wine tasting).

Note: When it comes to hard liquor, the *Council of Whiskey Masters* offer certification in several different types, like scotch, bourbon, whiskey and others. I leave it to the individual GM and players to determine if each certification requires its own skill selection. As these certifications often require going to Scotland or specialty schools in different parts of the world, I don't see that out of the question.

Base skill: 20% +5% per level of experience.

Profession Quality Bonus: Gets a +5% to *Socialization*, *Etiquette* and *Cook* (+10% if also a professional cook/chef), *Brewing* (with the proper tools and resources, the character could make simple wines) and *Bartending* (required for the classy/expensive mixed drinks that aren't commonly asked for). They also acquire a +10% bonus to their M.A. attribute rolls around the Elite social circles as beverage-based professionals are considered to be "high-class individuals".

Bonuses: Taking the *Etiquette*, *Socialization* and the *Wardrobe & Grooming* skills adds a one-time bonus of +10% to this skill.

Electrical

Hotwiring: Hotwiring is the process of bypassing an automobile's ignition interlock and thus starting it without the key. This usually involves tearing out the ignition wires and connecting them to their own ignition or crossing the wires to get an electrical charge to start the ignition without the key. Later model vehicles are designed to overcome the relative ease with which classical ignition systems can be hotwired, by the use of engine immobiliser devices which require a *code key* to provide a coded pulse to the immobiliser device. Characters with this skill and the proper equipment can overcome these modern defenses as well. Car alarms, keypad lock entry and other security challenges can make cars more difficult to hotwire (especially when trying to hotwire without tools, if they even can), but not impossible.

All penalties below are accumulative

- 0% Cars built before 1985; a snap; time required, 1-2 melees actions
- 5% Cars built after 1985, a little more sophisticated; time required, 1D4 melee actions (usually 30-60 seconds)
- 5% not using any tools to help hotwire vehicles made before 1985
- 10% not using any tools to help hotwire vehicles made than 1985
- 5% Auto Alarm, should be disconnected first; time required, 1D6 melee rounds
- 5% Foreign cars can be tricky; time required, 1D4+2 melee rounds
- 10% Auto Electric Lock or entry keypad, this can be a toughy; time required, 1D4+3 rounds
- 15% Hidden cut-off switch; time required, 1D4+5 melee rounds
- 30% High-tech or military anti-theft/protection system (state of the art); time required, 1D6+4 minutes

Base Skill: 20% +5% per level (+20% if taken as an Occupation or Elective skill)

Professional Quality Bonuses: Adds a one-time bonus of +5% to *Electronic Engineering*, *Locksmith* and *Streetwise*.

Physical

Wrestling (reprinted from **The Rifter #3**, page 41 for convenience)

+1 to P.S. and P.P.

+2D6 to S.D.C.

+2 Roll with Punch/Fall/Impact

+2 to Maintain Balance

+2 to Grappling Attacks

Includes Arm, Body, Leg, and Neck Holds, Body Block/Tackle, and Body Flip/Throw techniques

Science

Architecture: The art and science of designing buildings and structures. A wider definition would include within its scope the design of the total built environment, from the macrolevel of town planning, urban design, and landscape architecture to the microlevel of creating furniture. Architectural design usually must address both feasibility and costs for the builder as well as function and aesthetics for the owner. Includes knowledge of blueprints, drafting, construction materials & equipment, style, decoration and planning. Note: Not available as a Secondary Skill.

Base Skill: 40% +5% per level of experience. Adds +10% to *Find Contraband*, *Basic Electronics*, *General Repair/Maintenance*, *Masonry & Carpentry*. Gets a +2 Perception (or +10% if skill related) bonus while attempting to look for secret doors, panic rooms, speakeasy rooms, and similarly hidden away spaces.

Cartography: Cartography (mapmaking) is the study and practice of making maps. Combining science, aesthetics, and technique, cartography builds on the premise that reality can be modeled in ways that communicate spatial information effectively. This skill has found use with paranormal investigators to map out caves, parks, forests, underground dwellings, detail the different rooms of a house (including hidden rooms and secret entrances) on a grided map, and other locations they visit due to paranormal / supernatural involvement.

This skill has been used by characters to mark game trails and short cuts to various places, to pinpoint locations on a topography map of noted places of past paranormal activity, spots where cryptozoological creatures have reportedly been seen, and even to point out illegal “pot camps” to the local authorities (running into illegal activities in the forest while paranormal investigation and/or sasquatch hunting happens more than you’d think).

Requires: *Art: Drawing* and *Physical Geography*.

Base Skill: 40% +5% per level of experience. Adds +5% to *Navigation* and *Land Navigation*.

Chemistry: Alchemical: The defining objectives of alchemy are varied and includes the creation of the fabled *philosopher's stone*, acquiring and possessing magical powers, turning base metals into noble metals like silver and gold (known as *chrysopoeia*), as well as conjuring the fabled elixir of life to instill youth and longevity in a person. Western alchemy is recognized as a *protoscience* that contributed to the development of modern chemistry and medicine. Alchemists of yore developed a framework of theory, terminology, experimental process and basic laboratory techniques that are still recognizable today. However, alchemy differs from modern science in the inclusion of Hermetic principles and practices that are related to mythology, religion, and spirituality.

Alchemy is performed via a combination of modern chemistry (organic and analytical), botany (a lot of elixirs require different herbs, flowers and roots), and philosophy, with a little cryptography thrown into the mix. The character can interpret ancient alchemical texts, formulas and directions (it's worth noting here that Alchemy covers several philosophical traditions spanning some four millennia and three continents, and these traditions' general penchant for cryptic and symbolic language makes it hard to follow their various practices, methods and formulas), knows how to substitute modern ingredients for their ancient counterparts, and use high-tech versions of the primitive equipment.

A successful roll means the character succeeds in interpreting an alchemist's formula (even if written in code). Depending on the complexity of the procedure, it can take 1D6 additional rolls to accurately reproduce an actual elixir or alchemical object. The timing involved in creating Alchemical concoctions could take anywhere from minutes to hours to days, to weeks or longer. Some alchemical concoctions and potions require constant simmering and stewing (and thus constant vigilance) and adding more ingredients as samples are collected from the cauldron (or whatever object you're using to simmer the potion).

Requires: *Chemistry, Chemistry: Analytical* and *Botany*.

Base Skill: 25% + 5% per level of experience.

Bonuses: Adds +5% to *Brewing, Identify Plants and Herbs, Chemistry, Chemistry: Analytical, Cryptography, Philosophy, Lore: Religion* and +10% to *Holistic Medicine*.

Entomology: Entomology is the scientific study of insects and is considered to be categorized within the field of zoology while being a specialty within the field of Biology. As insects account for more than two-thirds of all known natural organisms, it's virtually impossible to know everything about every type of insect, but the character will have a good knowledge of general insect behavior, biomechanics, biochemistry, physiology, ecology, and anthropology. This skill also includes knowledge about the insects that exist in their region (down to their seasons), and knows which ones are edible (and have nutritional value) or may offer useful dyes, ingredients or chemicals in their geographical region.

This skill may be specialized by taking the skill twice. When specialized, the character receives a one-time bonus of +20% to the skill when dealing with that one specific type of insect group (e.g. flies, bees, beetles, arachnids, earthworms, slugs, snails, moths, butterflies, ants, etc.)

Requires: *Biology* and *Zoology*.

Base Skill: 30% + 5% per level of experience

Bonuses: +5% to *Zoology, Forensics, Anthropology* and *Wilderness Survival*.

Geography (human or physical): This is the study of the Earth and its features, inhabitants and phenomena. This includes man's relationship to the earth, global changes, and natural disasters. There are two types, *human geography* and *physical geography*, so the exact type must be selected when the skill is taken, though it can be taken again to get a full education in the wonders of geography.

Human Geography: This focuses on geographical impacts on populations.

Base Skill: 30% + 5% per level of experience, +10% if *Anthropology* and *Math: Advanced* is taken.

Physical Geography: This is a study of natural disasters and effects on climate and nature. Character is also familiar with the terrain in his general region.

Base Skill: 30% + 5% per level; add +5% to *Astronomy & Navigation* skills (if known).

Bonuses: If character takes both *Human* and *Physical Geography*, add +10% to *Cartography* and another +5% to *Navigation* and *Land Navigation* skills (if known).

Technical

Art: Drafting/Blueprints: Blueprinting is the reproduction of a technical drawing, documenting an architecture or an engineering design, using a contact print process on light-sensitive sheets. This process allows rapid and accurate reproduction of documents used in construction and industry. The blue-print process is characterized by light colored lines on a blue background, a negative of the original. A character with this skill can draw out plans for builders to use when constructing a house or building or reproduce blueprints of an existing structure. This skill is also useful for noticing oddities, alterations and changes in a given structure.

Requires: *Computer Operation, Basic Mathematics, and Literacy.*

Base Skill: 40% +5% per level of experience. Add +5% if *Technical Writing* is taken.

Bonus: Adds +10% to the *Find Contraband* skill (if known).

Graphics Design: This skill involves using computer graphics programs and apps to create commercial artwork, layouts and designs. Characters with this skill could make use of it in a variety of ways, such as creating logos and branding for companies, publications (websites, magazines, newspapers, manuals and books), advertisements, product packaging (like car and sign decals), create fancy and eye-catching business cards, design pictographs and more. This skill can be deceptively useful to clever paranormal investigators (such as creating decals to make a case of weapons being described as "Sensitive and Fragile equipment. Handle with Care." to throw off suspicion of its true contents.)

Requires: *Computer Operation* and *Art: Illustration/Drawing.*

Base Skill: 30% +5% per level of experience. Add +5% to *Forgery* skill (if known).

Philosophy: Note: This isn't a homemade skill per se, but this list feels like the best place to note this version of the skill.

There are two versions of *Philosophy* available to choose from. The original version is found on page 212 of BTS-2 while a 2nd version of it's found in the *Go Mental!* Article on page 38 of The Rifter #19. Both versions offer different benefits, which has caused confusion concerning which one to take. I personally feel that it's a skill that can offer the benefits of both the versions when taken as an Occupational or Elective skill. So, what I've added below is a mash up of both versions together:

Philosophy (which means 'love of wisdom' in Ancient Greek), is a systematic study of general and fundamental question concerning topics like existence, reason, knowledge, value, beauty, mind and language. It is a rational and critical inquiry that reflects on its methods and assumptions. This skill represents a working knowledge and interest in the philosophies and metaphysics of many cultures, as well as the ability to argue and/or find logical flaws in arguments.

Characters who take this as a *Secondary* skill learn to understand the principles of philosophy, ethics and morals. Those who take it as an *Occupational* or *Elective* skill learn methods for effective debating and examining a subject from a wide perspective, and touch upon aspects of sociology and social consciousness. The end result is an enhanced sense of logic and insight into the world.

Base Skill: 40% +5% per level of experience.

Occupational and Elective skill Bonuses: Add +1 to both I.Q. and M.E. attributes.

Welding & Iron Working: Gas and arc welding, cutting, brazing, spot welding, forging, heat treatment, electroplating, forming and casting techniques. Useful for making various tools and equipment, and can alter, adjust and modify an item as needed. Note that some supernatural beings and creatures of magic have vulnerabilities to iron, thus making weapons made of iron a useful pursuit.

Base Skill: 35% +5% per level of experience.

Bonuses: Adds +5% to *Aircraft Mechanics, Robot Mechanics, Auto Mechanics, Mechanical Engineer, Vehicle Armorer, Weapons Systems, Armorer/Field Armorer, Jury Rig, and Salvage* skills (if known).

Ancient Weapon Proficiencies

W.P. Bola: The bola is the time-honored weapon of South American Indians who taught its construction and use to the Gaucho's. This classic weapon uses three rawhide thongs joined at one end, and at the other, three cords tipped with metal or leather covered stones. The length of the cords typically varies between three to ten feet long. When thrown accurately, a bola can entangle the legs of both running animals and humans. Smaller bolas with only one or two weighted balls are used for hunting small prey like rabbits and birds.

In the modern day world of BTS, those who know how to use bola's have found useful applications against the supernatural, like temporarily tripping them up, using easily ignitable flammable bolas (doing fire damage), designing & crafting unique bolas with materials supernatural beings are vulnerable to (such as weighing a bola with the knee bones of a cow to affect *Grave Ghouls*, or wrapping a stone with copper wiring to affect *Gremlins*), or even using grenades or explosives instead of stones for weighting (which can be dangerous as the throwing range is only roughly 30 feet/9 meters). Custom-made bola's can be designed & crafted using both *Leather Working* and *Munitions Expert* skills.

Damage: 1D4 S.D.C. for small, one or two weighted bolas and 2D4 S.D.C. for larger, three weighted bolas. Against small animals, a successful strike with a bola can ensnare it, trap it, or possibly even kill it on contact. Against larger animals, a successful called shot to the legs causes the target to become entangled and fall down unless a successful *Sense of Balance* roll is made. People & animals with normal strength needs 1D4 melee actions to free themselves, while people or beings with supernatural strength can snap or break the bola apart in one melee action.

W.P. Bonuses: +1 to Strike, Disarm, and Entangle at level 2, 4, 8, 12 and 15. Note that strike bonuses from *W.P. Targeting* are included (if taken).

W.P. Improvised Weapons: This skill is a mixture of intuition and opportunity as characters who take this skill are adept at finding common items in their area/location, and using them as weapons.

Damage from small objects: For small objects (pencils, pens, credit cards, pots, jars, vases, keys, cups, bowls, plates, silverware, corkscrew, shards of glass, desk lamps, busts, knick knacks, hardbound books, bolts, nails, and screws) does 1D4 damage, whether striking or throwing them at his opponent.

G.M. Note: Use common sense with the items being used. Most small items break after being used only once as a weapon, like pots, jars, vases, cups, plates, shards of glass, and so on. But some items like nuts and bolts, nails, screws could be used several times before breaking (1+1D6 times).

Stunning opponents via Pain: Characters with this proficiency understand that using these items as weapons do minimal damage and won't last long as weapons. However, shots called at major pain points (eyes, throat, groin, knees, feet, etc.) can stun an opponent, costing them their next action (or worse) if they fail to make a successful save vs. Pain (16 or higher before P.E. bonuses). This could enable the PC's to run away, keep their opponent off balance, or attack them in some other method.

Damage with flexible objects: Flexible objects (like belts, nets, straps, bags, wire hangers, t-shirts, coats, plastic bags, power cords, extension cords, cables, piano wire, etc.) does 1D4 choking damage (usually Hit Point damage) per action. Some of these items can be used to inflict pain rather than choking (like lashing an opponent with a belt or a strap). GM's: again note that certain items break quickly and/or become unusable after being used as weapons. Use common sense with these items.

Bonuses: +1 to strike at levels 2, 5, 8, 11, and 14. Add +1 to damage at levels 3, 7, 11 and 15.

Increase the difficulty to Save vs. Pain by 1 at levels 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, 13, and 15.

Note: Include *W.P. Targeting* bonuses when throwing objects (if known).

W.P. Net: Training in the use of both ancient (string, wool, silk, rope) and modern (nylon, carbon fibers, metal alloys) nets. Nets are not used so much offensively (besides possible choking attacks), as they are used to ensnare an opponent's weapon or used to ensnare, slow down, confuse, or even render the opponent immobile. The favored methods of using a net were holding one end of the net while either lashing it like a whip (to catch onto someone or something) or throwing the net at, or over your opponent entirely to hopefully ensnare or trap them entirely.

There are two types of ensnaring:

Snaring an opponent's weapon: The weapon becomes entangled, rendering it ineffective; this can even include a supernatural creature's natural weapon (hands, claws, horns, etc.). Once ensnared, the character could potentially pull the weapon from an opponent's hand entirely! Disarming with a net requires a natural, unmodified roll of 17+ unless the opponent rolls equal to or above the roll to Disarm (no bonuses). Small weapons (like knives & handguns) stay caught in the net, while larger, heavier weapons (like swords, spears, rifles, shotguns, etc.) will drop to the ground nearby.

Snaring an opponent: By throwing a large net completely over an opponent (which requires both hands), the character can potentially snare him. The intended victim must dodge or is considered netted. If caught in the net, the victim is -8 to strike, -10 to dodge, and -6 to parry. It will require 1+1D6 melee actions to free themselves from the net (getting help from others cuts this time in half), although opponents with supernatural strength can simply rip and shred the net to pieces to escape in half the time rolled. Note that though quite helpless while in the net, those who attack the ensnared opponent will also damage the net, reducing the time it takes for the opponent to escape by one melee action per each successful hit. Also note that if the target dodges the net throwing attack, the character is without a weapon in their hand(s) and requires an action to draw or equip another one.

Bonuses: +1 to throwing a net at levels 2, 5, 8, 11, and 14. Note that bonuses from *W.P. Targeting* bonuses are included (if known).

W.P. Scissors: While scissors in theory belong in the *W.P. Improvise Weapons* category, they're unique in that scissors are a very capable weapon in the hands of those who know how to handle them effectively. Tailors, craftsman, barbers, hairdressers, and others who use scissors regularly or as part of their profession understands how they work, are experienced with their weight and balance and keeping them sharp, and if needed they can use them proficiently as a weapon.

+1 to strike at levels 1, 3, 7, 10 and 13; +1 to parry at levels 3, 9 and 15 (doesn't parry very well) and +1 to throw scissors at levels 4, 8 and 12 (scissors are not designed to be thrown).

Damage: A typical pair of children's scissors inflicts 1 point of damage (and breaks after one attack), a small pair of professional barber scissors does 1D4 damage, medium to large sized scissors (like most common household scissors and garden shears) inflict 1D6 damage, and large fabric shears do 2D4 damage.

Modern Weapon Proficiencies

Clay Shooting: Not so much a weapon proficiency as it a form of *Trick Shooting*, but anyone with either a clay launcher and the space to practice (at least 160 feet of clear space), or those who frequent a shooting range that offers them can attain this W.P. For those characters who take this weapon proficiency, the normal penalty for small targets (-4) no longer applies to them when using an "*Aimed*" *Called Shot* (see BTS-2, page 167).

This benefit applies to most modern weapons (does not include bows or pistol crossbows), and while the target is less than 160ft away. Also note that this W.P. does not add any bonuses when aiming at larger objects as the targeting method is completely different.

Note: An "*Aimed*" *Called Shot* takes three actions.

Requires: Weapon proficiency with the gun being used.

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