

CHAPTER 2: SKILLS

Above the shifting sands, a red sun burned. Six raw recruits stood in the afternoon heat, lined up like sheep to the slaughter. Their butcher was a soldier named Sergeant Black, who glared at them from behind mirrored sunglasses. "Some of you maggots won't survive this training!" he bellowed, shaking his fist in the air. "But those that do will become the very hammer of god! You will learn to kill without remorse, and wherever you go, death will follow!" He swore to make them killers, and he kept his promise.

Getting Skills

Starting with level one, characters are given skill points each new level that can be used to buy ranks. Ranks are the level of experience (or training) in a particular skill. Each rank equals a +1 modifier whenever the character needs to make a roll related to that particular skill.

At level one, each character gets 16 skill points, plus additional points based on his INT score. At level two and each level thereafter, a character gets another 4 skills points, plus the INT modifier. A character will always get at least one skill point each level.

When buying ranks in a particular skill, the player can get up to his character's current level plus 3. In other words, at level one, a character can buy up to a rank of 4 in any skill. At level 2, he can buy up to rank 5 and so forth.

Using Skills

Whenever a character is attempting an action that is related to a skill, he must make a skill roll to see if he's successful. The roll is **1d20 + skill rank ± attribute modifiers ± other modifiers**. The result of the roll is either compared to a set number called the **Difficulty Level (DL)** or an opposing skill roll.

Difficulty Level (DL)

Many of the actions in the game require a skill roll that's compared to a Difficulty Level. For example, an easy task would have a low DL, while a more difficult task would have a higher DL.

The GM can use the following chart as a guide if a task doesn't have a listed DL:

Table 2.1 Difficulty Levels

Difficulty	Example	DL
Nearly Impossible	Climbing a shear wall, without gear, during a rainstorm	30
Formidable	Track a fugitive through a large city	25
V. Hard	Bluff your way past security	20
Hard	Climb a rope	15
Average	Climb a ladder	10
Easy	Run across a roof	5
V. Easy	Walk across the street	2

If the skill roll is equal to or greater than the DL, then the attempt was a success. If the roll is lower than the DL, the attempt failed. Also, if the roll fails by 5 or more, it is a *critical failure*. The effect of a critical failure will depend on what skill is being used.

Opposed Skill Rolls

When a character is attempting a task that requires interaction with someone else (such as a non-player character), the character's skill roll is compared to the skill roll of the opposing individual.

For example, if the character was attempting to bluff a security guard, the character would make a skill roll based on his Bluff skill while the guard would make a skill roll based on his Sense Motive skill. If the character's roll is equal to or greater than the opposing roll, the character succeeds. Note, however, there are no critical failures when making opposing skill checks.

Retrying a Roll

If a character's skill roll is a failure, he can sometimes try again based on what skill is being used. See the skill descriptions later in the chapter to check if a particular skill can be retried or not.



Under certain circumstances, a character would be able to retry a roll over and over until it succeeds. For example, if a character possessed a locked box and wanted to pick the lock, but didn't have to worry about being caught during the attempt, he could effectively retry until the attempt succeeded. Instead of making roll after roll, the player could elect to skip the roll entirely and simply take a time penalty. The time penalty is based on the DL of the task and equals the estimated time it would take the character to eventually succeed.

The following chart serves as a guide for the time penalties for each difficulty level:

Table 2.2 Time Penalties per DL

Difficulty	Time Penalty
Nearly Impossible	1d6 days
Formidable	1d4 days
V. Hard	1d20 hrs
Hard	1d10 hrs
Average	1d8 hrs
Easy	1d6+10 min
V. Easy	1d4 min

Untrained Skill Rolls

Although most skills require at least one rank to be used, this is not always the case. For skills that a character can use without training, however, the roll receives a -4 modifier. Characters will also get any positive or negative attribute modifiers when applicable.

Attribute Modifiers

Each skill is associated to a specific attribute (STR, INT, etc.) that will help or hinder the character's skill roll. When making a skill check, refer to the skill's description to see which attribute is applicable.

Other Modifiers

Besides skill ranks and attribute values, other modifiers will affect the skill roll. GMs should calculate these other modifiers based on the conditions the character is under when making the skill attempt, and what tools and other gear he is using.

If using appropriate tools or if under favorable conditions (weather, etc.), the GM should add a +2 to the skill roll. If using poor quality tools or if the conditions are otherwise unfavorable (raining, etc.), a -2 modifier is appropriate. Also, if a task requires a tool, but none are available or if the conditions are critically poor, apply a -4 to the roll.

Note that modifiers of the same type (i.e.: from equipment) do not stack. In other words, they are not cumulative. For example, if a character was using a tool that gave a +1 modifier and another tool that gave a +2 modifier, the character would not get a total of +3. Instead, he would only get the one from the best tool (i.e.: +2).

Table 2.3 Skills List

Skill	Ability	Trained Only?
Animal Handling	CHA	Yes
Bluff	CHA	No
Bribe	CHA	No
Climbing	STA	No
Commerce	CHA	No
Computer Operation	INT	Yes
Concentration	INT	No
Consider	INT	No
Crafting		
Chemistry	INT	Yes
Construction	STR	Yes
Cybernetics	INT	Yes
Electronics	INT	Yes
Forgery	DEX	Yes
Mechanics	DEX	Yes
Nano Tech.	INT	Yes
Pharmaceuticals	INT	Yes
Starship Eng.	INT	Yes
Traps	DEX	Yes
Diplomacy	CHA	No
Disguise	CHA	Yes
Drone Operation	INT	Yes
Gamble	INT	No
Hide	DEX	No
Intimidate	CHA	No
Jump	STR	No
Knowledge		
Applied Sciences	INT	Yes
Humanities	INT	Yes
Formal Sciences	INT	Yes
Natural Sciences	INT	Yes



Skill	Ability	Trained Only?
Social Sciences	INT	Yes
Language	INT	Yes
Listen	INT	No
Lockpicking	DEX	Yes
Medical Science	INT	Yes
Pickpocket	DEX	Yes
Ride	DEX	No
Safe Fall	DEX	No
Search	DEX	No
Sense Motive	INT	No
Smuggling	INT	No
Sneak	DEX	No
Spot	INT	No
Starship Comm	INT	Yes
Starship Navigation	INT	Yes
Starship Piloting	DEX	Yes
Starship Sensors	INT	Yes
Starship Shields	INT	Yes
Starship Stealth	INT	Yes
Streetwise	INT	Yes
Survival	STA	Yes
Swimming	STR	No
Tracking	INT	Yes
Transmat Operation	INT	Yes
Vehicle Operation	DEX	Yes

Skill Descriptions

Animal Handling

Trained Only

This skill allows the character to control animals.

Check: Characters must make a check whenever giving the animal a command of some kind, whether that means guarding a location or attacking an opponent.

Each command must be trained individually before the character can use the command. In other words, before he can tell the animal to attack, he must first train the animal the attack command.

If the character is using the animal as a beast of burden (pack animal), he merely needs to train the animal; he doesn't need to give a command.

Action	DL
Train a domesticated animal a command	20
Train a wild animal a command	25
Heel (stops what he's doing and comes to the character's side)	5
Stay (remains in his current spot)	5
Fetch (goes and retrieves an item within 50 meters)	10
Guard (like Defend, except protects a location or object instead of a person)*	15
Defend (protects character or designated person; attacking anyone who attempts to cause that person harm)*	15
Attack (attacks target designated by the character)	20

* The Attack command does not need to be trained for the Guard or Defend command to be used.

Retry: Yes, once per 1d4 days to train a domesticated animal a command or once per 1d8 days to train a wild animal; once per round to retry giving a command. A critical failure during training means the animal will never accept training for that particular command. A critical failure while giving a command means the animal will ignore all commands for 1d6 rounds.

Bluff

Bluffing is the art of lying convincingly. In other words, it's the ability to trick someone into believing something that isn't true.

Check: An opposed check is made against the other person's Sense Motive skill whenever the character tries to deceive someone. The deception doesn't always have to be by talking, however. The character can also mislead another by using body language or behavior.

Modifiers: A +5 modifier is added to the roll if the target has no reason to distrust the character and/or the lie is fairly innocuous. A -5 modifier is applied if the target views the character with distrust (i.e.: a negative faction reputation) and/or the lie is potentially harmful to the target. A -10 modifier is applied if the lie is clearly hazardous to the target or if it's simply very hard to believe.