

CALL of CTHULHU

CHARACTERS

Players create characters called Investigators.

Characteristics

Investigators have the following eight characteristics:

- 1. Strength (STR)** measures the raw physical power of your investigator.
- 2. Constitution (CON)** is a measure of the health and hardiness of your investigator.
- 3. Power (POW)** is a combination of force of will, spirit, and mental stability.
- 4. Dexterity (DEX)** is a measure of your investigator's physical agility and speed.
- 5. Appearance (APP)** measures the physical appeal of your character.
- 6. Size (SIZ)** reflects your investigator's combined height and weight.
- 7. Intelligence (INT)** is a rough measure of your investigator's cunning and ability to make leaps of logic and intuition.
- 8. Education (EDU)** is a measure of the knowledge that your investigator has accumulated through formal education, or the venerated "School of Hard Knocks."

Points Allocation

Allocate the following values where you like among your characteristics: 40, 50, 50, 50, 60, 60, 70, 80.

Half and Fifth Values

Take the value for each of your characteristics and halve it, rounding that value down to the nearest whole number if necessary. Then take the value for each characteristic and divide by 5 to give the "fifth" value, again rounding down as required. Record the full/half/fifth values (e.g. Brian's investigator's STR 60 would be written on the investigator sheet as 60 (30/12)).

Secondary Attributes

There are a number of attributes that are determined after you have worked out the characteristics above. These are Luck, Damage Bonus, Hit Points, and Sanity.

Luck: Luck begins at 3D6 multiplied by 5. Circle this value on the investigator sheet. A Luck roll is often used to determine whether external circumstances are in your favour or against you.

Magic Points (MP): This is equal to one-fifth POW, and are used when casting spells, powering arcane devices, and magical effects. Magic points that are spent regenerate naturally at a rate of 1 point per hour. Once an individual is out of magic points, any further expenditure is deducted directly from hit points—any such loss manifesting as physical damage in a form chosen by the Keeper.

Damage Bonus and Build: Damage Bonus is how much extra damage your investigator does with a successful close-combat (melee) attack. Build is a scale of combined size and strength. Add your STR and SIZ together and consult the following table.

Damage Bonus and Build

STR+SIZ	Damage Bonus	Build
2-64	-2	-2
65-84	-1	-1
85-124	None	0
125-164	+1D4	+1
165-204	+1D6	+2

Hit Points (HP) are figured by adding STR and CON together, then dividing the total by ten and rounding down to the nearest whole number.

Sanity (SAN) begins at a level equal to your POW score. Circle the value that corresponds to this number on the investigator sheet. This score is used as a percentile roll that presents your investigator's ability to remain stoic in the face of horrors. As you encounter the monstrosities of the Cthulhu Mythos your SAN score fluctuates.

Occupations & Skills

Either pick an occupation from the list following and use the specified list of skills provided, or tailor one to your requirements—to do this, decide upon an occupation and then look at the list of skills on the investigator sheet. Choose eight skills that are appropriate for your investigator's chosen occupation (e.g. what skills would a person doing this occupation require?). These are your "Occupation Skills." Sample occupations:

ANTIQUARIAN— Appraise, Art/Craft (any), History, Library Use, Other Language, one interpersonal skill (Charm, Fast Talk, Intimidate, or Persuade), Spot Hidden, any one other skill.

AUTHOR— Art (Literature), History, Library Use, Natural World or Occult, Other Language, Own Language, Psychology, any one other skill.

DILETTANTE— Art/ Craft (Any), Firearms, Other Languages, Ride, one interpersonal skill (Charm, Fast Talk, Intimidate, or Persuade), any three other skills.

DOCTOR OF MEDICINE— First Aid, Other Language (Latin), Medicine, Psychology, Science (Biology), Science (Pharmacy), any two other skills as academic or personal specialties (e.g. a psychiatrist might take Psychoanalysis).

JOURNALIST— Art/Craft (Photography), History, Library Use, Own Language, one interpersonal skill (Charm, Fast Talk, Intimidate, or Persuade), Psychology, any two other skills.

POLICE DETECTIVE— Art/Craft (Acting) or Disguise, Firearms, Law, Listen, one interpersonal skill (Charm, Fast Talk, Intimidate, or Persuade), Psychology, Spot Hidden, any one other skill.

PRIVATE INVESTIGATOR— Art/Craft (photography), Disguise, Law, Library Use, one interpersonal skill (Charm, Fast Talk, Intimidate, or Persuade), Psychology, Spot Hidden and any one other skill (e.g. Locksmith, Firearms).

PROFESSOR— Library Use, Other Language, Own Language, Psychology, any four other skills as academic or personal specialties.

Assigning Skill Points

You now assign points to the skills on the investigator sheet. No player can add points to the Cthulhu Mythos skill during

character creation, as it is assumed that all beginning characters are ignorant of the threat of the Mythos.

Allocate the following values among the eight Occupation Skills and also the Credit Rating skill: one at 70%, two at 60%, three at 50% and three at 40% (set the skills directly to these values and ignore the skill base values written next to each skill on the investigator sheet).

After assigning points to the Occupation Skills, select your Personal Interest Skills. These are skills that your character has acquired outside of work. Pick four non-occupation skills and boost them by 20% (adding 20 to the skill base values listed on the investigator sheet). We recommend that you write your skill values down

Credit Rating

A character's Credit Rating is an indicator of his or her wealth and class. Depending on how many of your Occupation Skill points you allocated to this skill, your investigator is...

- **Credit Rating 0**
...Penniless, living on the streets.
- **Credit Rating 1-9**
...Poor, possessing the bare minimum.
- **Credit Rating 10-49**
...Average, a reasonable level of comfort.
- **Credit Rating 50-89**
...Wealthy, some degree of luxury.
- **Credit Rating 90-98**
...Rich, great wealth and luxury.
- **Credit Rating 99**
...Super rich, money is no object.

Final Touches

Write down any standard equipment the character might have associated with their occupation).

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GAME SYSTEM

Checking Off Used Skills: When you successfully roll a given skill, put a check mark in the box next to it on your investigator sheet. You can only get one check per skill at a time.

Rolling for Skill Increases: At the end of the scenario, your Keeper will tell you to “roll for skill increases.” At this time, roll percentage dice against any checked skills. If you roll over the value of the skill, you can then add 1D10 points to the skill’s value.

Characteristics Tests: On occasion, you may need to roll a test that is not covered by the skills on your sheet. If so, look at your characteristics and determine which one of them is best to use and treat it like a skill.

Skill Rolls & Difficulty Levels

Full Skill Value Tests: A regular task requires a roll of equal to or less than your skill value on 1D100 (a regular success).

One-Half Skill Value Tests: A difficult task requires a roll result equal to or less than half your skill value (a hard success).

One-Fifth Skill Value Tests: A task approaching the limits of human capability requires a roll equal to or less than one-fifth of your skill value (an extreme success).

“Pushing” Failed Skills: If you can justify it through your investigator’s actions, you can “Push” a failed skill roll. Pushing a roll allows you to roll the dice a second time. However, the stakes are raised. If you fail a second time the Keeper gets to inflict a dire consequence upon your character.

Opposed Skill Rolls

To resolve an opposed roll, **both sides make a skill roll and compare their level of success.** A Regular success beats a Fail, a Hard success beats a Regular success, an Extreme success beats a Hard success. In the case of a draw, the side with the higher skill value wins. If both skills are equal then have both sides roll 1D100, with the lower result winning.

Bonus and Penalty Dice

(primarily for use with opposed dice rolls)

Under certain conditions the Keeper may grant a “bonus die” or a “penalty die” to a roll. One bonus die and one penalty die cancel each other out.

For Each Bonus Die: Roll an additional “tens” percentage die alongside the usual pair of percentage dice when making a skill roll. You are now rolling 3 separate dice; one “units” die and two “tens” dice. To take benefit of the bonus, use the “tens” die that yields the better (lower) result.

Luck Rolls

Individual Luck Rolls: Luck rolls may be called for by the Keeper when circumstances external to an investigator are in question, and also when determining the fickle hand of fate.

Group Luck Rolls: For Group Luck roll, the player whose investigator has the lowest Luck score (among those present in the scene) should make the roll.

Sanity (SAN)

Making a Sanity Check: Whenever you encounter horrors, make a percentile roll against your current Sanity score.

If you roll over your current Sanity, you lose a greater amount of Sanity points. If you roll under, you will lose less or none.

Sanity Loss Stats: The Sanity loss is generally described for an event as something like “0/1D6” or “2/1D10.” The number before the slash mark tells you how much Sanity your character loses if the roll is equal to or under his or her current Sanity score; the number after the slash is how much your investigator loses if you roll over his or her current Sanity score.

If You Lose 5+ Sanity: If an investigator loses 5 or more Sanity points as the consequence of a single Sanity roll, he or she has suffered major emotional trauma. The player must roll 1D100. If the result is equal to or less than their intelligence (INT), the investigator fully understands what has been seen and goes temporarily insane (for 1D10 hours).

Failing a Sanity Roll: When you fail a Sanity roll the Keeper gets to momentarily control your next action as the fear takes hold of you; perhaps you unwittingly scream or squeeze the trigger of your gun.

Temporary Insanity: If your investigator is temporarily insane, the Keeper gets to add a phobia or mania to your sheet (such as “fear of the dark,” “fear of confined spaces,” or “kleptomania, an irrational compulsion to steal things”), or amends one of your existing backstory entries.

While temporarily insane, the Keeper may present your investigator with hallucinations—is that a ghoul creeping up on you or is it just a homeless man asking for spare change? You can only be certain by asking to make a “Reality Check”: electing to make a Sanity roll—if you’re successful, you see through the hallucination, but if you fail you fall deeper in to the madness!

Regaining Sanity: Unfortunately, regaining lost Sanity is a long, arduous process. You may have to check your character into an asylum or seek other forms of psychotherapy to get those points back. Generally, at the successful end of each scenario you should get a few points back as a reward.

Full Rules for Sanity: As your Sanity score slips lower, your character becomes less and less stable and his or her ability to function decreases. Full rules for Sanity are not included here, but your Keeper will let you know the effects of this degradation when you play the game.

COMBAT

Act by Order of DEX Score: When a combat occurs, all investigators, as well as characters and monsters controlled by the Keeper, act in order of their DEX scores.

Combat Skills: Investigators have three combat skills: *Fighting*, *Dodge*, and *Firearms*. Two of these skills are made up of multiple specializations, such as *Fighting (Brawl)* or *Firearms*

(*Rifle/Shotgun*)—you will have decided which specializations your investigator has (if any) during character creation, when you allocated your Occupation and Hobby skill points. The *Fighting (Brawl)* skill includes unarmed combat and use of simple weapons like pocket knives and clubs.

You don’t get to “push” combat rolls—you simply make another attack next round.

Close-Quarters Combat

Reacting to Melee Attacks: Every time you are attacked you may choose to:

■ **Fight back** (attempt to avoid, block, or parry an attack while making one of your own) or

■ **Dodge** (attempt to avoid the attack completely).

Comparing Results: Both attacker and defender roll percentage dice and compare their levels of success:

■ **If you are fighting back use your Fighting skill.** You need to achieve a higher level of success than your attacker.

■ **If you are dodging use your Dodge skill.** Your attacker needs to achieve a higher level of success than you. It’s a simple matter: the winning side avoids receiving any damage and will inflict damage (unless dodging) on their opponent.

Weapons and Damage

■ **Unarmed attacks (human):** 1D3 Weapons and Damage

■ **Unarmed attacks (human):** 1D3 + Damage Bonus

■ **Small knife:** 1D4 + Damage Bonus

■ **Machete:** 1D8 + Damage Bonus

■ **Small club:** 1D6 + Damage Bonus

■ **Baseball bat:** 1D8 + Damage Bonus

■ **Handgun:** 1D10

■ **Shotgun:** 4D6 (at close range, otherwise 2D6; does not impale)

■ **Rifle:** 2D6+4, Attacks that achieve an extreme level of success deliver increased damage: blunt weapons deal maximum damage and maximum damage bonus (if any); impaling weapons (blades and bullets) deal maximum weapon damage plus damage bonus (if any) plus an additional dice roll for the weapon’s damage (1D10 + 10 points of damage in the case of a handgun, for example).

■ **Fighting back:** the best a person who is fighting back can achieve is “regular” damage.

Firearms Rules

The person firing the gun makes a percentile roll and compares the result with their Firearms skill.

■ **Readied firearms** act at DEX +50 for the purpose of determining the DEX turn order.

■ **If firing 2 or 3 shots from a handgun** in one round, apply one penalty die to each shot.

■ **If you are at point-blank range** (within one-fifth of your DEX in feet), you gain one bonus die on the skill roll.

Reacting to Shooting Attacks: Whenever you are shot at you may **dive for cover**, rolling against your Dodge skill. If your Dodge is successful, the attacker’s rolls to hit you are made with one penalty die. A character that opts to dive for cover

forfeits their next attack (regardless of whether they were successful or not). If they have already used their attack this round, they forfeit their attack in the following round.

Fighting Maneuvers

If a player describes a goal that is something other than simply inflicting physical harm then it can be resolved with a “fighting maneuver.”

A successful maneuver allows the character to achieve one thing, such as:

- **Disarm an opponent.**
- **Knock an opponent to the floor**
- **Seize and hold an opponent,** whereupon the opponent must apply one penalty die to his or her actions until he or she breaks free.

A maneuver is treated the same way as a regular Fighting attack, using the Fighting (Brawl) skill.

Outnumbered

When a character is outnumbered by the opposition, the character is at a disadvantage. **Once a character has either fought back or dodged** in the present combat round, all **subsequent melee attacks on them are made with one bonus die**. This does not apply to attacks made using firearms.

HP, Wounds, and Death

Points of damage are deducted from a character’s hit points. Hit points cannot fall below zero, so do not record a negative value. When a character’s hit points reach zero, he or she falls unconscious and in some situations may die.

Major Wounds: When a character takes damage of greater than or equal to half their full hit points in a single blow, they have received a major wound; they must make a CON roll or fall unconscious.

Zero Hit Points & Dying: If a character with a major wound falls to zero hit points they are close to death (Dying). He or she must make a successful CON roll at the end of the following round and every round thereafter or die. Only successful use of the First Aid skill can alleviate the Dying condition.

Instant Death: If a character suffers points of damage greater than or equal to their maximum hit points in a single blow, they die instantly.

Healing

- **Characters without a major wound** heal 1 hit point per day.
- **Characters with a major wound** make a healing roll (using CON) at the end of each week—if successful, they regain 1D3 hit points, or 2D3 for an extreme success. The major wound condition is removed if either an extreme success is rolled or current hit points are healed to half their maximum value or greater. First Aid can heal 1 hit point. If First Aid is used on a dying character it does not confer any immediate gain in hit points, but extends the character’s life so that the Medicine skill can be used.

Medicine: Medicine can heal 1D3 hit points, but takes at least one hour and appropriate equipment and supplies. If Medicine is used on a dying character it does not confer any immediate gain in hit points, but allows a healing roll at the end of one week.

Other Forms of Damage

Often the Keeper will be forced to judge the amount of damage caused by some random event. Whatever the cause, consider the likely injury and rate it against the left-hand column on the **Other Forms of Damage table (p. 32)**. Each injury type is for one incident or one combat round; one round of being punched by one attacker, one bullet, one round of drowning, one round of being burned. The character will take further damage on each successive round that they are exposed to the source of the harm.

Injury Damage Examples

Minor (1D3 damage): a person could survive numerous occurrences of this level of damage. *Examples: Punch / kick / headbutt / mild acid / breathing smoky atmosphere / a thrown fist-size rock / falling (per 10 feet) onto soft ground.*

Moderate (1D6 damage): might cause a major wound; it would take a few such attacks to kill. *Examples: Falling (per 10 feet) onto grass / club / strong acid / breathing water / exposure to vacuum / small-caliber bullet / arrow / fire (burning torch).*

Severe (1D10 damage): likely to cause a major wound. One or two occurrences would render a person unconscious or dead. *Examples: .38 calibre bullet / falling (per 10 feet) on to concrete / axe / fire (flamethrower, running through a burning room) / being 6 to 10 yards from an exploding hand grenade or stick of dynamite / mild poison.*

Deadly (2D10 damage): the average person has a 50% chance of dying. *Examples: Hit by a car at 30 mph / being 3 to 6 yards from an exploding hand grenade or stick of dynamite / strong poison.*

Terminal (4D10 damage): outright death is likely. *Examples: Hit by a speeding car / being within 3 yards of an exploding hand grenade or stick of dynamite / lethal poison.*

Splat (8D10 damage): outright death is almost certain. *Examples: Being involved in a high-speed head-on collision, being hit by a train.*