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Tests and Spends

Test Difficulty Levels

Very easy 2.
Standard difficulty 4.
Extremely hard 8.

Investigators with zero rating in the tested General Ability (except the fighting abilities; Scuffling, Weapons and Firearms) will automatically fail rolling for a test.

Simple Test

For success Id6 + the number of pool points spent, must be equal to or greater than the test difficulty.

A failed test can only be repeated if the subsequent amount of pool points spent is greater than the previous attempt and the player can provide a valid reason.

Co-operative Test

This test applies where only two investigators co-operate in a goal.

One investigator adds pool points to the other’s test die roll.

Pool points are added at 1 less than they spend.

The investigator making the roll can spend their own pool points to add at the normal rate.

Piggyback Test

Applies to two or more investigators participating in a group activity that is not a Co-operative Test.

One investigator is the lead. All others must spend 1 pool point in the tested ability which are not added to the die roll.

Those that can’t (because of no pool points remaining or a zero rating) each add a -2 penalty to the die roll.

The lead can spend their own pool points to add to the die roll at the normal rate.

Contest

Used when one character tries to thwart the actions of another which pitches an ability of one against an ability of the other.

The Keeper decides which ability is tested for each character and the difficulty for each character.

The order of testing is:

- Fleers test before pursuers or, if not a contest of pursuit:
- Characters test in order of rating in their tested ability, lowest first to highest last.
- If tied, an NPC or creature tests before an investigator.
- If investigators tie, the player who arrived the latest to the game session goes first.

Each character in turn follows the Simple Test procedure.

The process is repeated until one character fails. The first to fail loses the overall contest.

General Spend

Some tasks have no chance of failure but require effort to achieve.

The task is assigned a General Ability pool point total that one or more players may spend pool points towards to complete.

Continuing Challenge

This requires the players to pass a series of tests successfully to complete the entire task.

The Keeper assigns a General Ability to the test series and an overall difficulty representing the cost of performing the entire task (typically 8).

Each individual test in the series has the standard difficulty of 4.

Players can test in turn (individually or simultaneously), or via a Co-operative Test (as appropriate to the task).

Each successful individual test roll reduces the overall task difficulty by the die points and pool point spend.

Failed test roll die points and pool point spends are disregarded, but still add to the time required to complete the task.

The task is complete when the overall difficulty is reduced to zero.

Pool Point Refresh

Non-Player Characters

NPCs and creatures refresh Health pool points at Id6 per day if not receiving special treatment.

Their other ability pool points refresh completely if they are not encountered again for 24 hours. If they are encountered again within 24 hours then they will refresh their pool points to half their ability rating but refresh no Health pool points that day.

Investigative Ability pool points refresh fully 24 hours after their last use.

Three other General Ability pools, except Health, Stability and Sanity, can be refreshed fully once per session if the character is in a safe haven for at least one hour.

Investigators recover 2 Health pool points per day as long as they are not seriously wounded.

Serious wounds characters must be hospitalised to recoup Health pool points (see the Health rules).

During an adventure Stability pool points can be recovered by Psychological Triage, by following Drives or with a Confidence Roll (see the Stability rules).

Between adventures a character’s Stability pool points recover to their rating. In a Pulp campaign investigators are assumed to be reconnecting with their Sources of Stability.

Investigative Ability pool points only refresh between adventures or campaign break points.

Ability List By Families

Investigative Abilities

- comprised of Academic, Interpersonal, and Technical abilities.

Academic

- Accounting
- Anthropology
- Archaeology
- Architecture
- Art History
- Biology
- Cthulhu Mythos
- Cryptography
- Geology
- History
- Languages
- Law
- Library Use
- Medicine
- Occult
- Physics
- Theology

Interpersonal

- Assess Honesty
- Bargain
- Cop Talk
- Credit Rating
- Flattery
- Interrogation
- Intimidation
- Oral History
- Reassurance
- Streetwise

Technical

- Art
- Astronomy
- Chemistry
- Craft
- Evidence Collection
- Forensics
- Locksmith
- Outdoorsman
- Pharmacy
- Photography

General Abilities

- Athletics
- Conceal
- Disguise†
- Driving
- Electrical Repair†
- Explosives†
- Filch
- Firearms
- First Aid
- Fleeing
- Health
- Hypnosis
- Magic
- Mechanical Repair†
- Piloting
- Preparedness
- Psychoanalysis
- Riding
- Sanity
- Scuffling
- Sense Trouble
- Shadowing
- Stability
- Stealth
- Weapons

† Some General Abilities can be used as Investigative Abilities in some circumstances. They are always bought and built as General Abilities.
**Surprise**

Investigators surprise adversaries by passing a difficulty 4 Stealth test (apply any Alertness Modifier the adversary possesses).

Investigators are surprised when failing a difficulty 4 Sense Trouble test (apply any Stealth Modifier the adversary possesses).

Surprise forces a -2 difficulty penalty to any subsequent test, or -2 to a target’s Hit Threshold for the following combat round only.

**Combat Round Order**

For 2 combatants the individual that initiated the combat acts first, the defender acts second.

If unclear on who acted first, or for more than 2 combatants:

- Non-surprised characters act in order of highest rating in their tested fighting ability to lowest.
- If a tie for rating, the character with the highest tested ability pool points acts first.
- If tied, a player character acts before an opponent (earlier arriving players to the game session act before later players).

Any surprised characters act last.

Once set, the combat round order remains the same, except:

- Anyone who performs a non-attack action moves to last place.
- Anyone who joins after the fight begins, joins in last place.

**Target Choice**

Characters with zero rating in their tested fighting ability must state their target at the start of each combat round and can not alter this choice when it is their turn to attack.

All other characters can choose any target in range when it is their turn.

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**Blackjacks**

Blackjacks, brass knuckles, saps, coshes, rolls of quarters or shillings tucked up in the fist and similar gear do -1 damage, rather than -2 as for a normal fist attack.

Using them is a test of Scuffling, not Weapons.

In a purely Scuffling combat the blackjack user goes last.

**Hit Threshold Modifiers**

Target’s cover against firearms:

- Open Terrain: -1
- Partial or Soft Cover: 0
- Hard Cover: -1

**Attack Test**

Attacks against downed or helpless opponents, or those already held at gunpoint are automatic successes.

The difficulty of each attack test is the target’s Hit Threshold plus the following modifiers:

- **Attacker Surprised:** +2
- **Attacker Hurt:** +1
- **Attacker Shaken:** +1
- **Attacker Mind Blasted:** +1

**Damage Calculation**

Successful attacks cause:

Id6 damage - any relevant Armour Point value of the target + weapon damage modifier.

Attackers with zero rating in the tested fighting ability suffer a -2 damage penalty.

**“Non-Lethal Damage” Attack**

An attacker can declare a Scuffling attack a “non-lethal damage” attack.

If the target’s Health pool points fall within the range +1 to -11 they must pass a Consciousness Test or faint.

The target’s Health pool points can not fall below -11 with this attack.

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**Fleeting from Ongoing Combat**

Fleeting requires an Athletics or Fleeing test of difficulty 3 plus the number of enemies being fleed from.

Success means the character flees. Remaining enemies can choose to pursue but must roll first in the ensuing chase contest.

Failure means opponents have the choice to either:

- Prevent the character fleeing by spending 3 Athletics pool points, or
- Allow flight, but take 1d6 damage as per Fleeing from Ongoing Combat.

**Weapon Damage Modifiers**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Weapon Type</th>
<th>Damage Modifier</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unarmed</td>
<td>-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blackjack</td>
<td>-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nightstick</td>
<td>-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fireplace poker</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heavy club</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bullwhip</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knife</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Machete</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sword</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small improvised weapon</td>
<td>-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large improvised weapon</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Generic Firearm Damage Modifiers**

- Light firearm: 0
- Heavy firewall: +1
- Any firearm at point-blank range: -2
- Firing both barrels of a shotgun simultaneously: -1 at close range or nearer

*All shotguns are considered heavy firearms at point-blank range irrespective of calibre

**Health**

**Consciousness Test**

When an investigator’s Health pool points cross from -1 to 0 or -5 to -6 they must pass a Consciousness Test or faint.

The difficulty is the positive value of the amount of Health pool points they are below zero.

Players can spend Health pool points (thus lowering their Health pool further) to add to the test die roll (this does not make this test difficult worse, but would make subsequent tests more difficult).

**Hurt (0 to -5 Health)**

A hurt character’s tests suffer a -1 difficulty penalty or -1 to their target’s Hit Threshold and they can not spend Investigative Ability pool points.

Optional rule: hurt characters can spend Investigative Ability pool points but must first pass a Consciousness Test (failure of this test will not result in the character fainting).

**Seriously Wounded (-6 to -11 Health)**

A seriously wounded character can take no further action whatsoever, even if conscious.

Seriously wounded characters will continue to lose 1 Health pool point every half hour until stabilised.

Stabilisation is by another character passing a difficulty 3 First Aid test (difficulty 2 if a Doctor or Nurse) but they can not restore any Health pool points to the seriously wounded character.

To recover Health, seriously wounded characters must be hospitalised for a number of days equal to the negative value of their Health pool points.

On discharge from hospital Health pool points recover to half Health rating. Next day they recover fully.

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**Recovering Health via rest**

Investigators recover 2 Health pool points per day of rest as long as they are not seriously wounded.

NPCs and creatures usually recover 1d6 Health points per day.

**First Aid**

First Aid can only restore Health pool points to hurt characters.

Each First Aid pool point spent by another character restores 2 Health pool points to the hurt character (3 if treated by a Doctor or Nurse).

Each First Aid point spent by the hurt character themselves restores 1 Health pool point (2 if a Doctor or Nurse).

Characters with no First Aid pool points left, can still restore 1 Health pool point to themselves or someone else once per scene.

**Purist** First Aid can not restore Health pool points to a level higher than before the latest damage occurred.

**Defeating Adversaries**

“Defeat” can be anything the Keeper wishes it to mean: killed, subdued, knocked unconscious, dissipated or some other result.

Non-human adversaries are “defeated” when their Health pool points reach zero.

Pulp: human adversaries are “defeated” when their Health pool points reach zero.

Purist: human adversaries become hurt and seriously wounded and are susceptible to Consciousness Tests.

**Human Death**

Investigators (and human opponents under Purist rules) die at -12 Health pool points.

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**Firearms**

**Hit Threshold Modifiers**
Amend by type of cover of target:
- Open Terrain: -1
- Partial or Soft Cover: 0
- Hard Cover: -4

If target is charging from less than five feet away, in the open, then *Hit Threshold* is reduced to 1 (or 2 if the target has an *Athletics* rating of 8+).

**Long Range**
*Purist* only rifles can be used for long range shots.

*Pulp* pistols can be used at long range or a rifle beyond long range, up to 500 yards, by spending 2 extra *Firearms* pool points (which are not added to the test die roll).

**Incompetence**
Attackers with zero *Firearms* rating suffer a -2 damage penalty.

If they roll a natural 1 for their *Firearms* test they have shot an ally or themselves.

**Heavy Damage**
Firearm damage is tripled for targets who are:
- Helpless at point-blank range
- Charging towards the attacker in the open, from less than five feet away

**Running Out of Ammunition**
*Purist* keep track of how many shots have been fired per clip, or optional rule that a natural 1 on a *Firearms* test means that the gun ran out and did not fire.

*Pulp* should only run out if dramatically appropriate.

**Reloading**
Takes one combat round.

Optional rule > reloading under stress requires a successful difficulty 3 *Firearms* test.

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**Disarming Opponents**
Both protagonists engage in a *Scaffling* contest; the winner takes the firearm.

If a pistol, the winner can apply one shot of damage to the loser including the heavy damage modifier for point-blank range.

If not a pistol, the winner can strike the loser with the firearm as if it were a club (damage modifier 0).

**Multiple Handguns (Pulp Only)**
*Pulp* characters with a *Firearms* rating of 5+ can use a pistol in each hand by spending 1 *Firearms* pool point each combat round (which is not added to the test die roll).

If firing on multiple targets the second target’s *Hit Threshold* increases by +2.

**Automatic Firearms**
Attacker can claim 2 free *Firearms* pool points once only per combat encounter (3 free pool points for 50-bullet capacity drums).

If the free *Firearms* pool points are claimed the automatic weapon must be reloaded after firing.

If the free *Firearms* pool points are claimed a natural 1 on any *Firearms* test die means the weapon has jammed after firing. Fixing requires a combat round and a successful difficulty 4 *Mechanical Repair* test.

*Pulp* if the free *Firearms* pool points are claimed multiple targets can be fired on in the same combat round but must be at close range or nearer. Each target requires a separate *Firearms* test.

Each target after the first gets a *Hit Threshold* bonus of ⌊ Total Targets Fired Upon − 1 ⌋. The same target cannot be fired on multiple times in the same combat round.

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### Firearm Damage Modifier by Range

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Firearm</th>
<th>Ammo</th>
<th>Point Blank</th>
<th>Close &lt; 30 feet</th>
<th>Near &lt; 120 feet</th>
<th>Long &lt; 300 feet</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Remington .41 short double derringer (1866)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>+2</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>⑤</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Webley &amp; Scott Police Model .32 ACP automatic pistol</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>+2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>⑥</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TT-33 Tokarev 7.62mm automatic pistol (1933)</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>+2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>⑤</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nambu Type 14 8mm automatic pistol</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>+2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>⑥</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mauser “Broomhandle” 7.62 mm automatic pistol (1896)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>+2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>⑥</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colt Police Positive .32 revolver (1907)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>+2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>⑥</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walther PPK .32 automatic pistol (1931)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>+2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>⑥</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very 12-gauge flare pistol (1882)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>+1</td>
<td>+2</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>④</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colt M1911A1 .45 ACP automatic pistol (1926)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>+3</td>
<td>+1</td>
<td>+1</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>⑦</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luger P08 9mm automatic pistol (1908)</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>+3</td>
<td>+1</td>
<td>+1</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>⑥</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walther P38 9mm automatic pistol (1938)</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>+3</td>
<td>+1</td>
<td>+1</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>⑥</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FN Browning High-Power 9mm semiautomatic pistol (1935)</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>+3</td>
<td>+1</td>
<td>+1</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>⑥</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Webley No. 1 Mk IV .455 SAA revolver (1915)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>+3</td>
<td>+1</td>
<td>+1</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>⑥</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smith &amp; Wesson .38 Special revolver (1902)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>+3</td>
<td>+1</td>
<td>+1</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>⑥</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smith &amp; Wesson Model 27 .357 Magnum revolver (1927)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>+3</td>
<td>+1</td>
<td>+1</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>⑥</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winchester M1912 20-gauge pump shotgun (1912)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>+3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>⑥</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remington M19 20-gauge shotgun (1912)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>+1/+6</td>
<td>0/+1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>②</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winchester M1912 12-gauge pump shotgun (1912)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>+3</td>
<td>+1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>②</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remington M12 12-gauge shotgun (1932)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>+1/+6</td>
<td>+1/+2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>②</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remington M14 .22LR sporting rifle (1932)</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>+2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>⑥</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mannlicher-Carcano M1891 6.5mm bolt-action carbine (1892)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>+2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>⑥</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mauser 98K 7.92mm rifle (1935)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>+3</td>
<td>+1</td>
<td>+1</td>
<td>+1</td>
<td>⑥</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M1 Garand .30-06 rifle (1936)</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>+3</td>
<td>+1</td>
<td>+1</td>
<td>+1</td>
<td>⑥</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lee-Enfield MKIII .303 rifle (1907)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>+3</td>
<td>+1</td>
<td>+1</td>
<td>+1</td>
<td>⑥</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holland &amp; Holland Double Express .600 elephant rifle (1903)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>+4</td>
<td>+2</td>
<td>+2</td>
<td>+2</td>
<td>⑥</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thompson M1921 submachine gun (1921)</td>
<td>20, 30, 50</td>
<td>+3</td>
<td>+1</td>
<td>+1</td>
<td>+1</td>
<td>③ ④</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Schmeisser” MP28 submachine gun (1928)</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>+3</td>
<td>+1</td>
<td>+1</td>
<td>+1</td>
<td>③ ④</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Browning Automatic Rifle (BAR) .303 machine gun (1918)</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>+4</td>
<td>+2</td>
<td>+2</td>
<td>+2</td>
<td>③ ④</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

① **bipod/prone**: requires a bipod to fire (or the user to be prone with the weapon)

② **double-barreled**: when firing both shells simultaneously use parenthetical damage bonus at point-blank or close range

③ **full-auto**: may add 2 bonus points to your *Firearms* pool, or 3 bonus points with a 50-100 round drum, but if you do you must reload after firing; full-auto bonus only once per encounter

④ **incendiary**: can ignite flammable materials at up to long range

⑤ **jams**: when used on full-auto, if you roll a natural 1 your gun jams, even if you hit your target

⑥ **kickback**: must pass a difficulty 3 *Athletics* test to remain upright after firing

⑦ **reliable**: +1 bonus to difficulty level for tests to repair or un-jam

⑧ **small**: +1 penalty to difficulty level for tests to search person for a concealed weapon
Explosives
Explosives do d6d damage plus the modifier for range as listed in the Explosive Device Table below.

Note firing a rifle-grenade requires a Firearms test. Firing mortars, rockets or artillery requires a Mechanical Repair test.

Investigators about to be the victim of an explosive booby-trap should be allowed a difficulty 4 Sense Trouble test.

Success means they managed to throw themselves and their companions from point-blank range to close range when calculating damage from the explosion.

Throwing Objects
Throwing rocks, grenades, dynamite, Molotovs or similar requires an Athletics test. The difficulty depends on the distance to the target:
- Point Blank: +2
- Close (same room): +3
- Near (across the street): +5

Trying to hit an exact spot on the target adds the following penalties to the difficulty:
- Point Blank: +1
- Close (same room): +1
- Near (across the street): +2

If the thrown item is not designed to be thrown or is un aerodynamic e.g. dynamite or Molotovs, then the difficulty is increased further by +1.

Vehicles
Top Speed Modifiers
Motorcycles with added sidecar:
- ½ top speed.

Non-off-road vehicle goes off-road:
- ½ top speed.

Off-road vehicle goes off-road:
- ¾ top speed.

Driving Contests
A difference of 10 mph or more in the effective top speeds of chase vehicles forces a -1 difficulty penalty on the driver of the slower vehicle for their Driving tests.

A difference of 30 mph or more forces a -2 difficulty penalty.

The Keeper may rule that local traffic conditions, twisty narrow streets, or other considerations obviate these penalties.

Or, if more dramatically appropriate, they may rule that a much faster vehicle speeds away ending the scene rather than performing the Driving contest.

A Keeper may ask passengers riding on the running boards of a vehicle to pass an Athletics test to remain clinging on if their driver spends any Driving pool points.

Damage From Impact
Characters hit by a vehicle sustain damage equal to the difficulty of the Athletics or Sense Trouble test that was failed resulting in the impact:
- +2 if the vehicle was travelling at normal city speeds
- +4 at higher speed
- +1 if the vehicle was larger than a car
- +2 if larger than a van
- +3 for a motorcycle

Damage From Crashes
Characters inside a crashed vehicle sustain damage equal to the difficulty of the failed Driving test resulting in the crash, plus the modifiers below:
- -1 travelling at normal city speeds
- -2 travelling at higher speed
- -2 if seatbelts were worn
- -1 or -2 if hit by a larger vehicle
- -1 or -2 if hit by a smaller vehicle
- -3 if hit by a motorcycle
- -1 if crashed into a building

Lethal Firearms (Optional Rule)
Used to increase the danger of firearms. Any successful Firearms damage on a human, causing the victim’s Health pool points to fall to zero or less, immediately causes 6 extra Health pool points to be lost.

Creatures
Alertness and Stealth Modifiers
A creature’s Alertness Modifier is added to the difficulty level of any test that involves perceptive abilities directed against the creature e.g. Filch, Stealth, Shadowing.

Its Stealth Modifier is added to the difficulty level of any test that involves trying to detect the creature e.g. Sense Trouble.

Inventigator Improvement
Pulp at the end of each adventure the Keeper may award 2 build points to an investigator for each session they participated in.

Players can use these to improve the investigator’s existing ability ratings or buy rating points in new abilities on a 1 to 1 exchange rate. Up to 2 rating points can also be reassigned between existing ratings.

Credit Rating, Cthulhu Myths and Sanity rating can not be bought or reassigned.

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**Hazards**

**Falling**
Climbing characters must pass an Athletics test, the difficulty of which is a measure of how onerous the surface being scaled is. Failure results in a fall and damage equal to the difficulty of the test, plus the following modifiers:

- through branches, awnings or slowing obstacles: -2
- onto soil: -0
- into water (poor entry): -4
- each additional [3m of height or 25kph of speed] after the first: -1
- onto concrete or equivalent: +2
- onto spikes or jagged rocks: +3

**Electric Shock**
Damage varies according to voltage:
- **Mild** (e.g. brief contact with an ungrounded wire or unsafe electrical appliance) victim loses 1 Health pool point and is blown backward a short distance.
- **Moderate** (e.g. a jolt from a cattle prod) victim loses 2 Health pool points.
- If in combat, the victim can not act for up to the next 4 rounds due to being stunned.
- At least one round is always lost but the other 3 may be recovered by paying 3 Athletics pool points per round.
- If not in combat, the victim is stunned for roughly 2 minutes.
- **Extreme** (e.g. lightning strike) victim loses 1d6-4 Health pool points.

The Keeper should give the victim a chance to avoid accidental exposure (e.g. an Athletics or Sense Trouble test) or spot the danger beforehand (e.g. an Electrical Repair test to notice a high tension wire).

**Corrosive Substances**
Once applied, acid or alkali does the same damage depending on the level of exposure for the listed number of rounds (or roughly every 30 seconds outside of combat).

Roll damage for the first application and use that same result for further damage increments.

For strong acids (e.g. sulfuric, nitric):
- **Minor exposure** (an extremity, a quick splash) l'd-2 per round for 2 rounds. If the damage is less than 1 point then only the victim’s clothing is smouldering.
- **Partial exposure** (the face or up to half the victim’s body) l'd-1 per round for 4 rounds.
- **Extensive exposure** (over half the victim’s body, or swallowed) 1d6-1 per round for 6 rounds.

Swallowed acid damages every 3 rounds for 18 rounds.

Weaker corrosives do less damage; subtract 1 or -2 from the damage roll for such substances.

Counteract caustics with the proper materials and a pool point spend of Chemistry or Medicine. First Aid does not prepare for chemical burns. At the Keeper’s discretion, an acid attack might instead blind an investigator until counteracted.

**Asphyxiation or Drowning**
Characters with advance warning of immersion in water or an unbreathable atmosphere can hold their breath for two minutes (or 5 rounds of combat). After that, they lose 1 Athletics pool point per round. At zero Athletics pool points they lose 1 Health pool point per round.

If rescued before they die, up to half this Health loss can be restored (minimum 2 pool points) with a pool point First Aid spend by someone other than themselves.

**Fire**
The character suffers variable damage every round based on the amount of exposure to flame:
- **Minor** (an extremity, a hand or foot) l'd-2 per round of exposure.
- **Partial** (the face or up to half of body) l'd-1 per round of exposure.
- **Extensive** (more than half of body) l'd-6 per round of exposure.

If only the character’s clothes are on fire, the flames can be put out with a “drop and roll” action i.e. a successful difficulty 3 Athletics test.

Characters in a burning building or surrounded by fire may suffer from smoke inhalation which uses the asphyxiation and drowning rules.

**Toxins and Disease**
Keepers may allow a successful First Aid test (or Outdoorsman test for natural poisons) to remove the poison at the moment it is ingested/injected/applied/breathed in.

Poisons and diseases result in various effects to the victim at the discretion of the Keeper.

Some examples follow; each has a listed difficulty number in parentheses. If the victim fails a Health test of this difficulty the severe effect occurs otherwise the minor effect occurs.

- **Snake Venom (4)**
  - onset: 15 mins (or 5 combat rounds).
  - minor: l’d-2 damage and victim is hurt until treated.
  - severe: initially -2 Athletics pool points and l’d-10 damage (cobra) or l’d-6 damage (rattlesnake) or l’d-5 damage (mamba), then -2 Health pool points and -1 Athletics pool point every hour until treated.

- **Spider Venom (4)**
  - onset: 1 hour.
  - minor: l’d-1 damage.
  - severe: l’d-6 damage and victim is hurt until treated.

- **Plague (4)**
  - onset: 1-6 days.
  - minor: victim is hurt and feverish for 3 days.
  - severe: initially victim is hurt, then l’d-6 damage and -2 Athletics every 3 days unless cured.

- **Heroin (7)**
  - onset: 1 min (or 2 combat rounds).
  - minor: victim is shaken for 1-6 hours.
  - severe: victim is incapacitated by ecstasy for 1-6 hours.

- **Radiation 100-800 rads (4)**
  - onset: 1 hour.
  - minor: l’d-2 damage.
  - severe: initially l’d-4 damage, then -2 Athletics pool points and l’d-6 damage every 3 days with the damage modifier increasing by -2 every interval.

**Exhaustion**
A character who exerts themselves without resting becomes exhausted.

The Keeper determines when this happens, but missing a night’s sleep or continuing strenuous activity after losing Stability or Health pool points, likely leads to exhaustion.

An exhausted character suffers the effects of being hurt and can not refresh their General Abilities that automatically refresh after 24 hours (Athletics, Fleeing, Driving, Piloting, Riding, Firearms, Scuffling and Weapons).

A full night’s sleep cures exhaustion. Stimulants such as pep pills, continuous caffeine intake, or chain-smoking stave off the exhaustion penalty for l’d6 hours. Amphetamines, cocaine and other harder drugs offset it for 2d6 hours.

A character can take more stimulants to keep going, but every dose after the first costs l’d6-2 pool points (minimum 1) of either Health or Stability.

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**STABILITY**

**Stability Test Difficulty**

Standard difficulty is 4.

If known to involve the Mythos then 5.

Previous experience relevant to a non-Mythos/non-supernatural incident gives a -1 difficulty bonus.

Susceptible investigators suffer a -1 difficulty penalty.

Investigators with no remaining **Pillars of Sanity** suffer a -1 difficulty penalty.

**Pulp** for encounters involving supernatural or lesser Mythos creatures only; after passing a number of Stability tests equal to that creature's test difficulty, a player can claim a -1 difficulty bonus to future Stability tests against the same type of creature (to a minimum difficulty of 2).

**Stability Loss**

Failing multiple Stability tests within the same scene only results in the single, worst case Stability loss.

Mythos creatures or Mythos Entities at a destabilising event can cause extra Stability pool point loss for a failed test. The amount is specific for each (refer to creature or Entity write-up).

**Drives**

Acting against a Hard Driver causes the loss of 4 Stability pool points or one third of current pool points (whichever is greater).

Acting against a Soft Driver results in a 2 pool Stability loss.

Acting within the nature of a Hard Driver gains 2 Stability pool points.

Acting within the nature of a Soft Driver gains 1 Stability pool point.

A Mythos revelation can cause a Drive to become meaningless. A character can no longer gain Stability pool points by acting within a meaningless Drive but will still lose pool points if they act against it.

---

**Shaken (0 to -5 Stability)**

If shaken, investigators' ability tests suffer a -1 difficulty penalty or -1 to their target's Hit Threshold.

Shaken investigators can not spend Investigative Ability pool points.

Optional rule: shaken investigators can spend Investigative Ability pool points if they first pass a Stability test of difficulty equal to the positive value of Stability pool points they are below 0.

If shaken by a Stability loss involving the Mythos (or spellcasting) then Sanity rating and pool points reduce by I.

**Mind Blasted (-6 to -11 Stability)**

Mind Blasted investigators lose I point from their Stability rating and may suffer from Shell Shock after recovery.

If mind blasted by a Stability loss involving the Mythos (or spellcasting) then Sanity rating and pool points reduce by 2 (or a further 1 if previously shaken by the Mythos during this investigation). A Mythos Madness may also be induced instead of Shell Shock.

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**Psychological Triage**

Characters with the Psychoanalysis ability can treat other characters by spending Psychoanalysis pool points.

The patient regains 2 Stability pool points for every 1 Psychoanalysis pool point spent.

Aliens can treat themselves but only regain 1 Stability pool point for every Psychoanalysis pool point spent.

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**Confidence Roll (Pulp Only)**

Pulp: an investigator gains k6 Stability pool points if the Keeper deems their roleplaying of a pool point spend particularly impressive.

Usually only one Confidence Roll is allowed per session per player.

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**Example Situations Requiring Stability Tests**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Situation</th>
<th>Stability Loss</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>You see a fresh corpse; you witness a killing</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A human opponent attacks you with evident intent to do serious harm</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You are in a car or other vehicle accident serious enough to pose a risk of injury</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You experience a strong unnatural sensation such as intense déjà vu, missing time, or hallucinations</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You witness acts of torture</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A human opponent attacks you with evident intent to kill</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You kill someone in a fight</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You see a particularly grisly murder or accident scene</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You see a supernatural creature from a distance</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You witness an obviously unnatural, but not necessarily threatening, omen or magical effect e.g. a wall covered in horrible insects, a talking cat, or a bleeding window</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You see hundreds of corpses; you witness a large battle</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You see a supernatural creature up close</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You spend a week in solitary confinement</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You learn that a friend, loved one, or Source of Stability has been violently killed</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You discover the corpse of a friend, loved one, or Source of Stability</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You are attacked by a supernatural creature, or by a friend, loved one, or Source of Stability</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You witness a clearly supernatural or impossible killing</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You witness or experience an obviously unnatural, and threatening omen or magical effect e.g. a cold hand clutches your heart, a swarm of bees pours out of your mouth</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You kill someone in cold blood; you torture someone</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You see a friend, loved one, or Source of Stability killed</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You are tortured for an hour or longer</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You discover that you have committed cannibalism</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You are possessed by some outside force, but remain conscious while it operates your body unspeakably</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You speak with someone you know well who you know to be dead</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You are attacked by a single gigantic supernatural creature or by a horde of supernatural creatures</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You see a friend, loved one, or Source of Stability killed in a particularly gruesome manner or in a way you are helpless to avert</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You kill a friend, loved one, or Source of Stability</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Sanity

Maximum Rating

A character’s Sanity rating must immediately be reduced down to [10 minus their Cthulhu Mythos rating] if it ever exceeds that value. Excess Sanity pool points will be lost if they exceed the new rating.

Ways of Losing Sanity

If a character is shaken by failing a Stability test involving the Mythos (or spellcasting) then Sanity rating and pool points reduce by 1.

If a character is mind blasted by failing a Stability test involving the Mythos (or spellcasting) then Sanity rating and pool points reduce by 2 (or a further 1 if previously shaken by the Mythos during this investigation).

Using the Cthulhu Mythos ability may cause Sanity and Stability pool point loss. The amount depends on the Mythos revelation gained (refer to the table above right for guidance).

Encountering a major Mythos Entity causes Sanity and Stability pool point loss. Refer to the Trail of Cthulhu Rulebook pg. 86 for the exact amount for each Entity.

Mitigating Loss (Purist Only)

Purist characters can choose to faint rather than suffer the full Sanity pool point loss of a Mythos horror. Fainting reduces the Sanity pool point loss to 1.

A player can choose not to have their investigator faint to avoid Sanity loss brought on during spellcasting.

Permanence Insanity

Investigators who reach 0 Sanity pool points or -12 Stability pool points become permanently insane.

Losing Pillars of Sanity

If a Mythos revelation specifically targets one of an investigator’s Pillars of Sanity it will “shatter” costing 6 Stability pool points and 2 Sanity pool points.

For every three pool points of Sanity investigators lose they may choose to have one of their Pillars of Sanity “crumble from within.” It is too late for a player to declare a Pillar “crumble from within” if it is “shattered.”

Investigators with no remaining Pillars of Sanity suffer a -1 difficulty penalty to Stability tests.

A meaningless Drive or a lost Pillar of Sanity can be replaced with a new one using the Ongoing Psychoanalysis procedure.

Regaining Sanity by Denial

If no physical proof remains of contact with the Mythos at the end of an adventure wherein a investigator’s Sanity rating was damaged, then rating and pool points recover by 1.

This is the investigator “denying” to themselves that the event ever occurred. The player has to invent a “false memory” to explain the missing time and the Keeper may force a mental illness on the investigator.

If the investigator subsequently uses their Cthulhu Mythos ability to recall information about the specific horror they have previously “denied” then their Sanity rating and pool points are reduced back down by 1.

Sanity Rewards (Pulp Only)

Pulp characters can be awarded by the Keeper at the end of a successful adventure wherein the players “defeated the Mythos.”

1 or 2 pool points are recommended but no more than the single largest Sanity loss encountered.

Ongoing Psychoanalysis

Lost Sanity can be restored by undergoing 3 contiguous, successful Psychoanalysis sessions. Each session happens as a precursor to starting a new adventure.

During this entire process the patient’s Stability pool points must remain above zero and they must refrain from using their Cthulhu Mythos ability.

At each session the person treating the patient must pass a Psychoanalysis test of difficulty:

Pulp > 4

Purist > the greater of 4 or 2 x patient’s Cthulhu Mythos rating.

After the third successful session the patient’s Sanity rating and pool points increase by half the amount needed to reach the lesser of either the patient’s original, undamaged Sanity rating or [10 minus current Cthulhu Mythos rating]. This is called a False Sanity bonus.

Any subsequent Sanity pool point or rating loss of 2 or more, from a single incident, immediately causes the loss of all False Sanity bonuses.

Tomes

Skimming

Tomes can provide investigators with clues or Special Benefits.

To get the clue or Special Benefit the investigator must skim the tome.

To skim the tome the investigator must be able to read the language in which it is written.

Skimming takes one hour per 100 printed pages or per 10 handwritten pages in the tome.

A 1 pool point spend in Library Use will half this time.

A 2 pool point spend in Library Use reduces this time to a few minutes.

Poring

Tomes can also provide investigators with resources such as spells or Cthulhu Mythos rating points.

To get the resource the investigator must pore over the tome.

To pore over the tome the investigator must be able to read the language in which it is written.

Poring over a tome takes as long as the Keeper deems necessary in order to obtain the resource.

See the Trail of Cthulhu Rulebook pg. 105-109 for specific details of major Mythos tomes.

Anagnorisis

(Optional Rule)

Purist Keepers can determine that a particular plot point of an adventure is the Big Reveal (something “Earth Shattering” about the Mythos). Any Stability pool point loss resulting from a failed Stability test brought on by the Big Reveal is triple the normal amount with a minimum of 8 pool points.

Any Sanity pool point loss from encountering a Mythos Entity as part of the Big Reveal is doubled.

Any character that does not go insane must end up retiring from active duty.

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Mental Illness

Shell Shock
If a character with Shell Shock has an encounter that reminds them of the original event that brought about their Shell Shock they must make a difficulty 4 Stability test. Failure does not result in a loss of Stability pool points but the character will freeze up and be helpless for 15 minutes and for a further 24 hours will suffer the effects of being shaken.

Mythos Madness
The Keeper chooses a relevant madness from the list below:
- Delusion
- Homicidal Mania
- Megalomania
- Multiple Personality Disorder
- Obsession
- Paranoia
- Phobia
- Selective Amnesia

See the Trail of Cthulhu Rulebook pg. 77-79 for roleplaying madnesses as a communal effort with all present players or use the following rules:

Delusion
The character is plagued by hallucinations and may also suffer delusions of identity or mind control.

Multiple Personality Disorder
When stressed the character must pass a difficulty 5 Stability test, otherwise an alternate identity (with its own personality, memories, subset of their primary identity's abilities and possible ability test bonuses or penalties) takes control. The alternate identity may well have a different Drive than the primary.

Homicidal Mania
The character reacts impulsively, usually angrily, to any sign of disrespect, neglect or crowding. They experience sudden mood swings, ranging from fear of being left alone to chronic boredom to rage against themselves or their so-called friends.

Megalomania
What does it mean to pass through the very mirror of reality? Are you chosen by the hidden gods, or are you humanity's last best hope against them? Either way the character's exalted viewpoint exempts them from mere human concerns. They, of all people, should be in the spotlight.

Obsession
The character fixates on an object or concept associated with their trauma. The player and Keeper should decide on the character's obsession based on the trigger event. If the character is obsessed with an object they cannot be without it.

Paranoia
The character's fear of unseen enemies, looming danger and betrayal by their companions has surpassed all normal levels.

Selective Amnesia

Temporary Psychological Triage
Characters acting erratically due to mental illness can be temporarily snapped back to lucidity when another character treats them by spending 2 Psychoanalysis pool points (I for an Alienist).

The patient will then act lucidly for the remainder of the scene or until their next Stability pool point loss (whichever occurs first).

Curing Mental Illness
The Ongoing Psychoanalysis procedure can be used to cure a patient of a mental illness once.

If the mental illness returns due to subsequent Stability pool point loss, it can never be cured again.