

CALL OF CTHULHU

QUICK-START RULES
(7TH EDITION)

“The oldest and strongest emotion of mankind is fear.”

—H. P. Lovecraft



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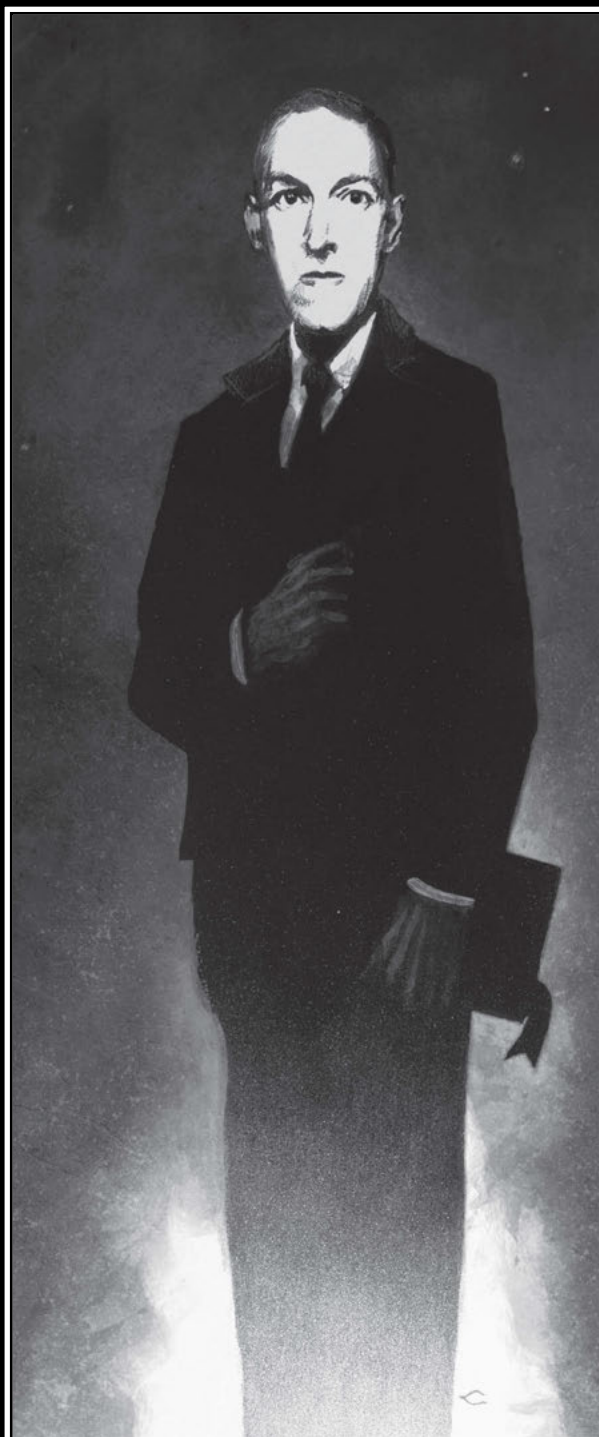
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WELCOME TO CALL OF CTHULHU

Interested in Chaosium's *Call of Cthulhu*? You are not alone!

Call of Cthulhu is Chaosium's classic roleplaying game of Lovecraftian horror in which ordinary people are confronted by the terrifying and alien forces of the Cthulhu Mythos.

Call of Cthulhu is published by Chaosium Inc.—one of the original publishers of paper roleplaying games and has been in business for over 30 years. Chaosium is famous for the excellence of its game designs, and has won many Adventure Gaming Industry awards.

All you need to play *Call of Cthulhu* for the first time is this Quick-Start guide, some polyhedral dice, plenty of imagination and your friends.

Welcome to the worlds of *Call of Cthulhu*!



INTRODUCTION

"The oldest and strongest emotion of mankind is fear."

—H. P. Lovecraft

Welcome to the Call of Cthulhu, a game full of secrets, mysteries and horror. Playing the role of a steadfast investigator, you travel to strange and dangerous places, uncover foul plots, and stand against the terrors of the night. You will encounter sanity-blasting entities, monsters, and insane cultists. Within strange and forgotten tomes of lore you discover secrets that man was not meant to know. You and your companions may well decide the fate of the world.

Call of Cthulhu is a horror-themed roleplaying game based on the writings of Howard Phillips Lovecraft. Lovecraft penned a tremendous body of work during the 1920s and 1930s, concerning both horrors from beyond and from within. Lovecraft's most famous invention has become known as the Cthulhu Mythos, a series of stories sharing common plot elements such as certain mythical books of arcane lore and alien god-like entities. If you have not read any of his stories we strongly recommend you do so.

The booklet you now hold gives you all the information you will need to create a character for the *Call of Cthulhu* roleplaying game, as well as a brief overview of how to play the game. Many rules contained in the complete *Call of Cthulhu Keeper Rulebook* have been omitted from these *Cthulhu Quick-Start Rules* for the sake of brevity.

Once you've played a game or two, you will probably want to take a look at the full rules for *Call of Cthulhu*, which are available from any good game and hobby store, most large bookstores, or directly from us at www.chaosium.com.

NEVER PLAYED A

ROLEPLAYING GAME BEFORE?

If you've never played a roleplaying game before, you may be wondering what this is all about. To dispel some misconceptions and set you on the right track, it may be useful to describe an average session of play.

John, his partner and two friends meet up John's house on Friday evening at around seven o'clock. After catching up on the week's news and organizing some drinks and nibbles, they sit down in John's lounge and John hands out some paper and pencils, then talks everyone through creating their investigators. People compare ideas for characters as they roll dice and fill out their investigator sheets. It's now about eight o'clock.

John kicks off the game by describing the opening scene, telling how the investigators find themselves talking with a man who wants them to check out an old property that he owns; rumor has it that it might be haunted! One of the players immediately responds to this, putting on the voice of her investigator to say that such things are, "Complete hokum". As the story unfolds, everyone becomes involved, describing what their characters are doing or saying. Dramatic conflicts arise and dice are rolled to determine the outcome. Sometimes the players get their way; other times events appear to conspire against them. It is all played out simply by talking and rolling some dice to determine the outcome of certain situations; people aren't getting out of their chairs to act it out, neither are they donning costumes or using props.

John and his players cease play at around ten-thirty, then chat for a while before calling it a night at around eleven o'clock. Everyone is looking forward to meeting up again next week to find out how the story develops.

Of course that's just an example. The number of players and the duration of a session of play will vary from group to group.

AN OVERVIEW OF THE GAME

The aim of playing *Call of Cthulhu* is to have fun with your friends as you explore and create a Lovecraftian story. One player takes the role of game moderator, known as the *Keeper of Arcane Lore* ('Keeper' for short). His or her role within the rules is to run the game for the rest of the players. The rest of the players take the parts of intrepid *Investigators of the Unknown* ('investigators')—the heroes of the story—attempting to seek out, understand and eventually confront the horrors, mysteries and secrets of the Cthulhu Mythos.

The Keeper picks a story to run. These stories are known as 'scenarios'. You will find one at the back of this booklet. A scenario provides the Keeper with the structure of a story to present to the players. The Keeper's role is a little like that of a director making a film in which the actors don't know how the story will develop. To extend that analogy, the players are like actors who have the freedom to improvise their own scripts.

Investigators need not be anything at all like the people who play them. Indeed, it is often more rewarding and enjoyable for players to create characters entirely unlike themselves—tough private eyes, rude taxi drivers, or sinisterly-genteel occultists.

Most of the play is a verbal exchange. The Keeper sets the scene, describing the environment, the individuals, and encounters to the players. The players tell the Keeper what they intend their investigators to do. The Keeper then tells them whether they can do it and, if not, what happens instead. In play the game takes the form of a group conversation with many twists and turns and fun on the way.

The game rules use dice to determine if an action succeeds or fails when a dramatic 'conflict' presents itself—for example, whether your investigators are able to leap out of the way of giant statue that is about to crash down upon their heads! The rules describe how to decide the outcome of such conflicts.

Winners and Losers

In *Call of Cthulhu* there are no winners and losers in the standard competitive sense. Play is usually

WHAT YOU NEED TO PLAY CALL OF CTHULHU

When you are ready to begin playing *Call of Cthulhu*, you only need a few things to start:

- This Quick-Start rule book.
- Roleplaying dice.
- Paper.
- Pencils and an eraser.
- Two or more people to game with.
- A quiet place (the kitchen table is a good place to start).
- Three or four hours in which to play the game.

cooperative. The participants work together to attain a common goal—usually to discover and foil a nefarious plot being perpetrated by the minions of some dark cult or secret society. The opposition that the investigators face will often be an alien or hostile situation controlled by an impartial Keeper, not another player.

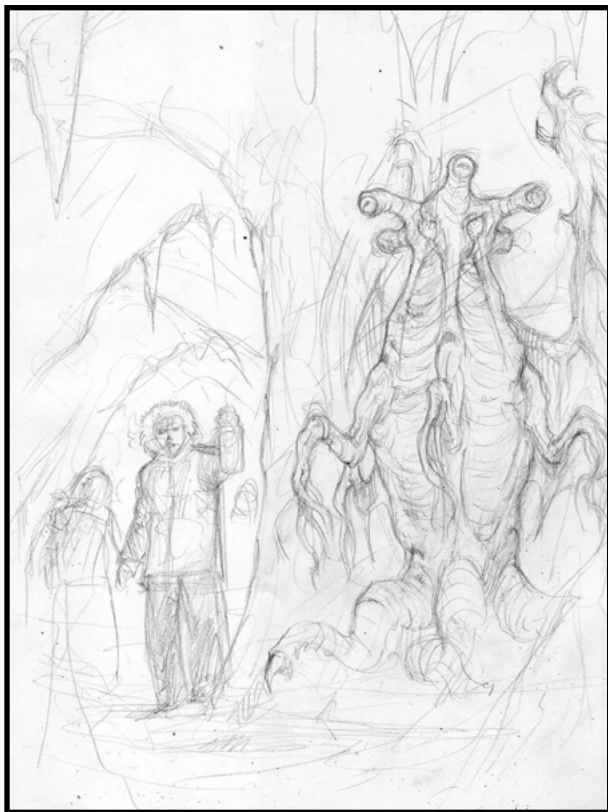
Winning in such a situation depends on whether the investigators succeed in their goal, and losing is what happens if they fail to achieve it (and they may be able to try again later). During the game investigators may become injured, suffer sanity-shattering experiences, or even die! However, someone has to make a stand against the cosmic horrors of the universe, and the death of a single investigator matters little if it means repulsing Cthulhu's master plan to enslave the Earth!

Investigators who survive will gain power from arcane volumes of forgotten lore, knowledge of horrendous monsters and advancement in their skills as they become more experienced. Thus the players' investigators will continue to progress, until their demise or retirement—whichever comes first.

CREATING AN INVESTIGATOR

To play *Call of Cthulhu* you need to create a character. Characters in the game are called 'investigators', as they primarily spend their time investigating the horrors of the Cthulhu Mythos. Creating your investigator is simple and outlined below.

Players record the details of their investigators on a *Call of Cthulhu* Investigator Sheet. The investigator sheet holds all the information needed to play the



At first you sketch your investigator, as an artist sketches an illustration...

game. There is a blank investigator sheet included at the end of this booklet, and you can download one at www.chaosium.com.

The Characteristics

To begin, a *Call of Cthulhu* character has eight characteristics:

1. **Strength (STR)** measures the raw physical power your investigator can bring to bear.
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 charm and 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.

ROLEPLAYING DICE

The Keeper and players will need a set of roleplaying dice, including percentage dice (D100), a four-sided die (D4), a six-sided die (D6), an eight-sided die (D8), and a twenty-sided die (D20). Roleplaying dice sets can be purchased at most hobby game stores and online.

The letter D stands for 'dice'. The number after the D is the range of numbers sought: 1D8 generates the random numbers 1 through 8, for instance, while 1D100 generates the numbers 1–100.

READING D100 (PERCENTAGE DICE)

Percentage dice usually consist of two 10-sided dice rolled at the same time. One die (units) is numbered 1 to 0, the other (tens) being numbered 10 to 00. Both dice are rolled and should be read together (e.g. '30' and '05' is read as 35%). A roll of '00' (tens die) combined with a '0' (units die) indicates a result of 100%. A roll of '00' on the tens die combined with any other roll on the units die indicates a roll of under 10%; for example, a roll of 00 on the tens die and 3 on the units die being read as 3%.

DICE ROLL VARIATIONS

Sometimes a dice notation is preceded by a number other than '1': it means that more than one such die should be rolled and that their results should be added together. For instance, 2D6 means that two 6-sided dice are rolled and totalled (or roll a D6 twice and add the scores together).

You might see 1D6+1, for instance. This means that the number following the plus sign should be added to the result of the D6 roll. For 1D6+1, the result must be 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, or 7.

If a monster claws for 1D6+1+2D4 damage, find the power of the actual attack by rolling the three requested dice, totalling the results, and adding one (rolling 1D6 and 2D4 and adding 1 to the total rolled).

8. **Education (EDU)** is a measure of the knowledge that your investigator has accumulated through formal education, or the venerated "School of Hard Knocks."

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** begins at 3D6 (see Roleplaying dice, page 6) multiplied by 5. A Luck roll is often used to determine whether external circumstances are in your favour or against you.

***Example:** Brian is fleeing a hoard of zombies and jumps into a nearby car. The Keeper asks for a Luck roll to determine whether the keys are in the ignition. Brian makes a percentage roll, rolling 28, which is lower than his Luck score; he turns the keys and the engine roars in to action!*

■ **Magic Points (MP)** are 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 TABLE

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

***Example:** Brian set his STR to 60 and his SIZ to 70, totaling 130. When he makes a successful physical attack, he will deal an extra 1D4 points of damage (Damage Bonus). His Build is +1.*

■ **Hit Points (HP)** are figured by adding SIZ and CON together, then dividing the total by ten and rounding down to the nearest whole number. As your investigator takes damage from combat or other events, your HPs will drop.

■ **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.

Occupation and Skills

At this point, you should form an idea of what your investigator does for a living. The term 'investigator' does not restrict you to being a cop or private eye. This choice of occupation will influence the selection of skills for your investigator. To begin with, choose an occupation. Anything you think would be interesting to play is valid, but you should agree this with your Keeper. Some favourite occupations in *Call of Cthulhu* are Professor, Journalist, Occultist and Archeologist. However, the occupations are only limited by your imagination.

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



Dilettante

(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



Police Detective

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. Computer Use, Locksmith, Firearms*).

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

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 in the same format as your Characteristics—full/half/fifth values—as you'll need to refer to

these during the game. Of course if you prefer, you can just write the full value of each skill and do the math in your head during the course of the game.

Example: Brian chooses ‘soldier’ as an occupation. The eight skills that seem most appropriate are Climb, Dodge, Fighting, Firearms, Stealth, First Aid, Survival and Other Language. Brian sets the skill values as follows: Climb 60%, Credit Rating 40%, Dodge 60%, Fighting 70%, Firearms 50%, First Aid 40%, Other Language 50% (picking Spanish as a second language), Stealth 50%, Survival 40%.

Brian picks four hobby skills, raising each one by 20%; Drive Auto 40%, Jump 40%, Mechanical Repair 30% and Spot Hidden 45%. Each is then written on the sheet next to the skill as full, half and fifth values, such as “Spot Hidden: 45 (22/9)”.

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.



A wise investigator keeps her eyes open and a pistol ready.

Example: Brian chose a Credit Rating of 40% for his soldier, meaning that he has an average income.

Backstory

Take one last look at the skills and characteristics that you selected. With a dash of imagination you begin to get an idea of who this new character is. You might want to add notes on your investigator’s background and personality as you decide them. *Who is she really? Where did he grow up? What is her family like?* The more time you

spend thinking about your character, the more developed his or her personality becomes, then the more fun you will have when playing *Call of Cthulhu*.

Each backstory entry (on the reverse of the Investigator Sheet) should be a short, pithy statement. Don’t worry about filling every entry on the back of the investigator sheet—just two or three entries will be enough to get you going. A couple of examples: “Born and raised in Arkham”, “Never without my trusty pistol”, or “Science can explain everything”.

Final Touches

You now have something that looks like a finished character. Go back to the top of the investigator sheet to make sure you have written down your character’s name, sex and age, and have all the other information filled in.

GAME SYSTEM

Skill rolls may be called for during dramatic situations in the game. Walking down a well-lit hallway is not a dramatic situation, whereas running down a rubble-strewn corridor while being chased by monsters most definitely is!

When attempting a skill roll you should agree a goal with the Keeper. If your skill roll is successful, you achieve your goal.

Additionally, 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. 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. In other words, the more you know about something, the harder it is to learn anything new or get any better.

Example: Brian makes successful use of his **Spot Hidden** skill during play and so ticks the box next to that skill on his investigator sheet. After the scenario is completed, the Keeper asks Brian to roll for skill increases. Brian’s **Spot Hidden** skill is 45%. He rolls 43 on the percentage dice. No improvement is made. If he had rolled 73 he would be gaining 1D10 **Spot Hidden** skill points.

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 and Difficulty Levels

Your Keeper will tell you when you should attempt a skill roll and how difficult the task is. A regular task requires a roll of equal to or less than your skill value on 1D100 (a *regular success*). A difficult task requires a roll result equal to or less than half

that a ‘hard success’ is required. You roll the dice but the result shows that you have failed, as you rolled above half your investigator’s STR. You ask if you can push the roll, stating that your character is using a spade to lever the door. The Keeper permits a second roll, but warns you that if you fail this roll not only will the door still be closed but ‘something’ may hear you and could be coming for your blood!

Opposed Skill Rolls

If two investigators are opposing one another, or if an investigator is in a conflict with a significant non-player character (i.e. one for whom statistics are listed in the scenario), the Keeper may require an opposed roll. 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)

Sometimes, the prevailing conditions for the investigators, their environment, and/or the time available to them can hinder or benefit a skill or characteristic roll. Under certain conditions the Keeper may grant a ‘bonus die’ or a ‘penalty die’

(worst) FAIL — REGULAR SUCCESS — HARD SUCCESS — EXTREME SUCCESS (best)

your skill value (a *hard success*). 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*).

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.

Example: You are trying to lever open the heavy stone door of a crypt. The Keeper decides this is very difficult and asks for a STR roll, specifying

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.

Example: Two rival investigators, Malcolm and Hugh, are vying for the affection of Lady Greene. Only one can gain her hand in marriage, so the Keeper determines that an opposed roll is needed to determine the outcome of their wooing.



Bonus Dice illustration



Penalty Dice illustration

It is decided that each should make an opposed Charm roll. The Keeper reviews the events of the scenario so far: Malcolm has visited Lady Greene twice, each time lavishing expensive gifts upon her, whilst Hugh has only visited once and brought no gifts at all. The Keeper states that Malcolm has an advantage and will get a bonus die in the opposed roll.

Hugh's player rolls first against his Charm skill of 55, getting 45—a Regular success.

Malcolm's player rolls against his Charm skill with one bonus die, rolling one units die and two tens dice (see fig 1.) The units die reads 4 and can be paired with either of the two tens dice to give scores of 44 or 24. Malcolm's player takes the lower result 24—a Hard success.

Malcolm wins the opposed roll, and his proposal of marriage to Lady Greene is accepted.

FOR EACH PENALTY DIE: roll an additional 'tens' percentage die alongside the usual pair of percentage dice. You're now rolling 3 separate dice; one 'units' die and two 'tens' dice. For a penalty, use the 'tens' die that yields the worse (higher) result.

Example: In a dire turn of events two investigators, Felix and Harrison, have been captured by the insane cultists of the Scarlet Smile. The cultists decide to have some 'fun' at the investigators' expense, decreeing that both must undertake the Ordeal of Pain, from which only one

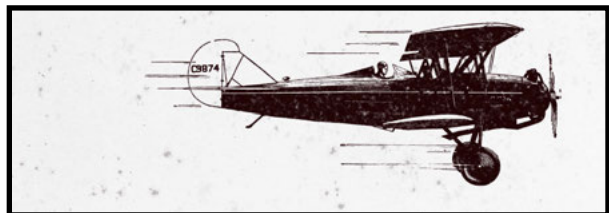
can survive. The loser will be sacrificed to the cultists' foul god.

The Ordeal of Pain involves lifting a huge rock and holding it aloft. Whoever holds the rock up the longest will win. This requires an opposed Strength roll from each of the investigators, however the Keeper rules that Harrison must take a penalty die, as he recently suffered a major wound (he received an injury when he was captured by the cultists) and is still recovering.

Felix's player rolls 51 against STR 65—a regular success.

Harrison's STR is 55. His player rolls 20 and 40 on two tens dice and 1 on the units die (see fig 2.), which can be combined to read 21 or 41. The extra die was a penalty die so Harrison must take the higher result—a regular success

Both players have achieved a regular success;



Felix wins because he has the higher STR.

Felix is able to hold the rock above his head for longer than Harrison. The cultists jeer and lead Harrison off towards their altar...

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. If, for example, an investigator wants to know if there is an item lying nearby that they could use as weapon, or if the flashlight they have found has any juice left in it, then call for a Luck roll. Note that if a skill or characteristic is more appropriate to a situation then it should be used rather than Luck. To succeed in a Luck roll, the investigator must roll equal to or under their current Luck value.

If the Keeper calls for a Group Luck roll, the player whose investigator has the lowest Luck score (among those present in the scene) should make the roll.

Example: *Finding a cab doesn't require a dice roll, but getting one before the investigators lose sight of the car that they wish to pursue could. Credit Rating could be a factor in attracting the attention of a cabdriver on the lookout for a well-dressed fare who may tip generously. However, quickly getting a ride at two o'clock in the morning on the undesirable side of town might not be so easy. Would there even be a cab to hail? No skill is going to make a cab appear at that moment. It is a matter of chance whether a cab may be driving down that road, hence a Luck roll is required.*

SANITY (SAN)

Whenever you encounter the horrors of the Mythos or come across something mundane yet horrific (such as stumbling across your best friend's mutilated corpse) you 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. 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 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 D100. If the result is equal to or less than their intelligence (INT), the investigator fully understands what has been seen and goes temporarily insane (1D10 hours).

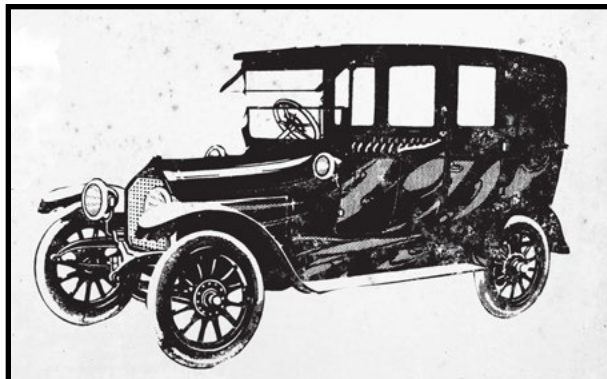
When you fail a Sanity roll the Keeper gets to momentarily control your next action as the fear takes hold of you; perhaps you unwittingly scream or squeeze the trigger of your gun.

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!

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.

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

When you are confronted with the horror of the Mythos, it is generally a better idea to run away, or avoid confrontation altogether. However, there is often no other choice than to go in, guns blazing, and make the best of it.

When a combat occurs, all investigators, as well as characters and monsters controlled by the Keeper, act in order of their DEX scores. The highest DEX acts first and then the others go in descending order from there.

The duration of a combat round in *Call of Cthulhu* is best described as “long enough for everyone to take one significant action.” The flow of the round is controlled by the Keeper, and hard-and-fast rules for movement and actions are not part of the game. The Keeper should simply give everyone a chance to do something quickly while being aware of the narrative flow.

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. Note that the Fighting (Brawl) skill includes un-



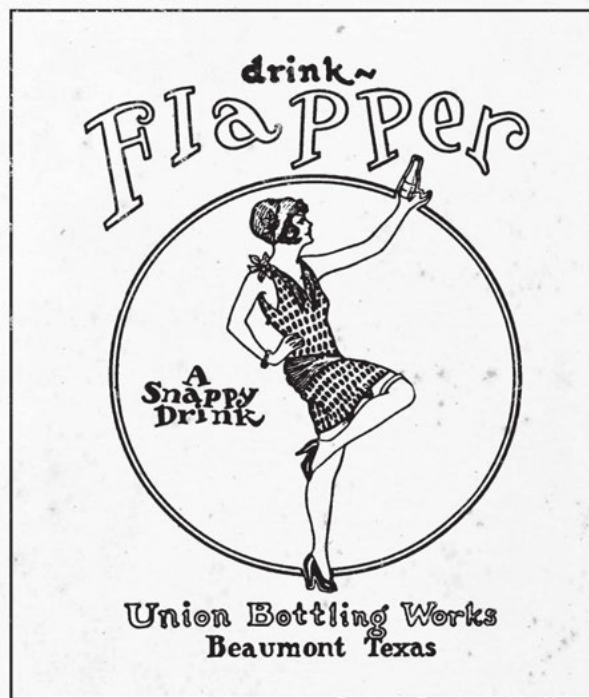
*Ametralladora ligera
Browning M1919*

armed combat and the use of simple weapons like pocket knives and clubs.

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

FIGHTING RULES FOR CLOSE-QUARTERS COMBAT

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).



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 + 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.

Example: A ghoul swings a clawed hand at Brian, who elects to dodge. The Keeper rolls 03—an extreme success (below one-fifth of the ghoul’s skill). 20 is rolled for Brian’s Dodge roll—a hard success. The attacker has achieved a better level of success than the dodger and so Brian is hit, automatically taking the maximum of 10 damage (1D6+1D4) because the attack was an extreme success.

The ghoul is a monster with 3 attacks per round. On its second attack it tries to bite Brian, who fights back. Brian achieves a hard success; the ghoul achieves a regular success. Brian has a better level of success than the ghoul and so he successfully fights back—not only does he avoid injury, but he also inflicts 1D3 points of damage on the ghoul.

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.

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

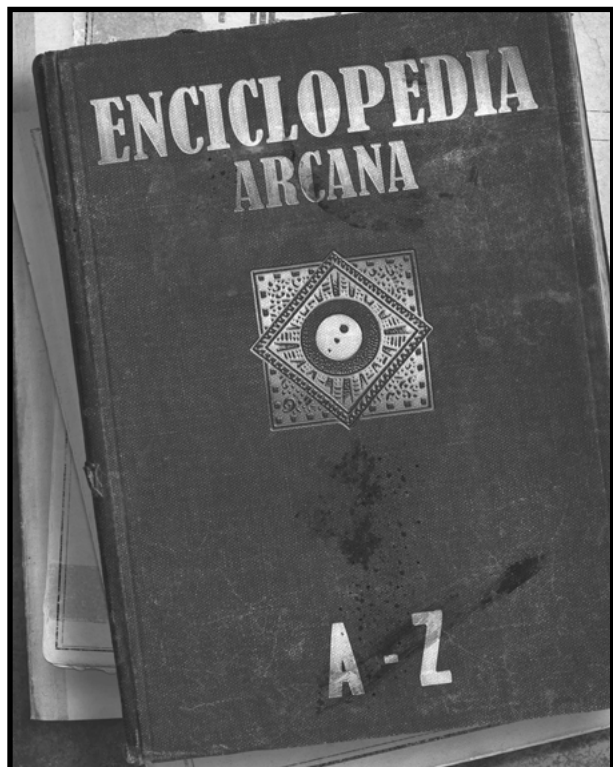
A successful maneuver allows the character to achieve one thing, such as:

- 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. The opponent may dodge or fight back as usual. Compare the Build of the two combatants. If the character performing the maneuver has a smaller Build than their opponent then he or she takes a penalty die for each point of difference (to a maximum of two penalty dice). If an opponent exceeds the attacker’s build by three or more, any fighting maneuvers are ineffective; the attacker may be able to lay hands on their opponent, but lacks the strength and size required to take advantage of their grip.

Example: Brian attempts to push a ghoul out of a nearby window (a fighting maneuver). Brian’s Build is zero and the ghoul’s Build is 1, so Brian takes 1 penalty die on his attack roll. Brian rolls 02 and 22; he had a penalty die so must use the higher roll—a hard success (under half Brian’s Fighting skill). The ghoul is fighting back, and it rolls a regular success on its Fighting skill. Brian has achieved a better level of success and so his maneuver is successful—he shoves the ghoul through the window.



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.

HIT POINTS, WOUNDS, AND HEALING

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.

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. 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.

■ 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 can heal 1D3 hit points, but takes at least one hour and appropriate equipment and sup-

OTHER FORMS OF DAMAGE TABLE

INJURY	DAMAGE	EXAMPLES
Minor: a person could survive numerous occurrences of this level of damage.	1D3	Punch / kick / head-butt / mild acid / breathing smoky atmosphere / a thrown fist-size rock / falling (per 10 feet) onto soft ground.
Moderate: might cause a major wound; it would take a few such attacks to kill.	1D6	Falling (per 10 feet) onto grass / club / strong acid / breathing water / exposure to vacuum / small-caliber bullet / arrow / fire (burning torch).
Severe: likely to cause a major wound. One or two occurrences would render a person unconscious or dead.	1D10	.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: the average person has a 50% chance of dying.	2D10	Hit by a car at 30 mph / being 3 to 6 yards from an exploding hand grenade or stick of dynamite / strong poison.
Terminal: outright death is likely.	4D10	Hit by a speeding car / being within 3 yards of an exploding hand grenade or stick of dynamite / lethal poison.
Splat: outright death is almost certain.	8D10	Being involved in a high-speed head-on collision, being hit by a train.

plies. 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.

Example: *Brian starts with 12 hit points. On Monday he gets in a barroom brawl, taking damage from 3 separate slugs to his jaw of 4, 2, and 4 points. This is a total of 10 damage, reducing his hit points to 2. He has not taken a major wound, and will recover at the rate of 1 hit point per day. On Thursday Brian (now at 5 hit points) clumsily falls out of a window, suffering 7 hit points of damage. This is a major wound. A friend administers First Aid and rushes him to hospital. After 7 days have passed, a successful CON roll is made for Brian and he regains 2 hit points on a 1D3 die roll. At the end of the second week Brian's player rolls an extreme success and regains 3 hit points on a 2D3 roll of the dice, and his current hit points now stand at 5. This erases his major wound marker, after which he heals at 1 hit point per day.*

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

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 Types of Damage** table (p. 16). 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.

THE HAUNTING SCENARIO

This scenario is designed for new Keepers and players. Advice for the Keeper is included within the text (**Keeper's Notes**) on how and when to use dice and rules, as well as guidance on how to run the scenario. Once you have read through

this scenario and your players have each created an investigator character, you are ready to begin.

The boxed text within the scenario is meant to be read aloud to the players—paraphrase these lines in your own words or just read out what is written.

Player handouts are marked in the text and have been collected at the end of the scenario to allow Keepers to copy them for presentation to the players when directed.

The year is 1920 and the location is Boston, Massachusetts, although this scenario could be transported to a modern setting if desired.

THE KEEPER'S SECRET

The body of Walter Corbitt is buried in the basement of the Corbitt house. The mind of Walter Corbitt still lives, aware of events within the house. He haunts the place. Corbitt knows Mythos magic that preserves his identity and enables him to animate his body after death. He sometimes vampirically preys upon residents of the house, driving away or slaying those who learn his secret.

To solve the mystery posed to them, the investigators must learn about Corbitt. While they do this, Corbitt will be aware of the investigators and will try to mislead them and scare them away. Failing that, he will try to murder them.

PREPARING FOR PLAY

Lead the players through the creation of investigators for this scenario. Starting players will gain a better understanding of both the rules and who their characters are if they go through this process.

Tell the players the premise of the scenario.

You are going to be hired to investigate an old house in 1920s Boston—rumor has it that it may be haunted!

The players should create a team of private detectives, amateur sleuths, journalists, or friends of the landlord who have volunteered for the task.

Hand out the investigator sheets and talk the players through the process step by step. Encourage them to chat with each other about their characters and have fun creating backstories and relationships. Keep it all reasonably brisk; avoid getting bogged down with unnecessary details.

1920S ERA INVESTIGATOR

Name _____
 Player _____
 Occupation _____
 Age _____ Sex _____
 Residence _____
 Birthplace _____

CHARACTERISTICS

STR

--	--

 DEX

--	--

 POW

--	--

 CON

--	--

 APP

--	--

 EDU

--	--

 SIZ

--	--

 INT

--	--

 Move Rate

	+1
	-1

Major Wound		Max HP			
HIT POINTS	Dying	00	01	02	
	Unconscious	03	04	05	
	06	07	08	09	10
	11	12	13	14	15
	16	17	18	19	20

Temp. Insane		Start	Max	Insane	01 02 03 04 05 06 07	
Def. Insane					08 09 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30	SANITY
					31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53	
					54 55 56 57 58 59 60 61 62 63 64 65 66 67 68 69 70 71 72 73 74 75 76	
					77 78 79 80 81 82 83 84 85 86 87 88 89 90 91 92 93 94 95 96 97 98 99	

CALL of CTHULHU

LUCK	Out of Luck	01 02 03 04 05 06 07
	08 09 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30	
	31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53	
	54 55 56 57 58 59 60 61 62 63 64 65 66 67 68 69 70 71 72 73 74 75 76	
	77 78 79 80 81 82 83 84 85 86 87 88 89 90 91 92 93 94 95 96 97 98 99	

Max MP	
MAGIC POINTS	00 01 02 03 04
	05 06 07 08 09
	10 11 12 13 14
	15 16 17 18 19
	20 21 22 23 24

INVESTIGATOR SKILLS

<input type="checkbox"/> Accounting (05%)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Fast Talk (05%)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Law (05%)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Science (01%)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Anthropology (01%)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Fighting (Brawl) (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Library Use (20%)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Appraise (05%)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Listen (20%)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Archaeology (01%)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Locksmith (01%)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Sleight of Hand (10%)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Art / Craft (05%)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Firearms (Handgun) (20%)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Mech. Repair (10%)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Spot Hidden (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Firearms (Rifle/Shotgun) (25%)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Medicine (01%)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Stealth (20%)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Natural World (10%)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Survival (10%)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Charm (15%)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> First Aid (30%)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Navigate (10%)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Swim (20%)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Climb (20%)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> History (05%)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Occult (05%)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Throw (20%)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Credit Rating (00%)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Intimidate (15%)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Op. Hv. Machine (01%)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Track (10%)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cthulhu Mythos (00%)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Jump (20%)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Persuade (10%)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Disguise (05%)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Language (Other) (01%)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Pilot (01%)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Dodge (half DEX)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Psychology (10%)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Drive Auto (20%)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Psychoanalysis (01%)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Elec Repair (10%)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Language (Own) (EDU)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Ride (05%)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

WEAPONS

Weapon	Regular	Hard	Extreme	Damage	Range	Attacks	Ammo	Malf.
Unarmed				1d3 + db	-	1	-	-

COMBAT

Damage Bonus	<table border="1"><tr><td></td><td></td></tr></table>		
Build	<table border="1"><tr><td></td><td></td></tr></table>		
Dodge	<table border="1"><tr><td></td><td></td></tr></table>		

BACKSTORY



Personal Description _____

Traits _____

Ideology/Beliefs _____

Injuries & Scars _____

Significant People _____

Phobias & Manias _____

Meaningful Locations _____

Arcane Tomes, Spells & Artifacts _____

Treasured Possessions _____

Encounters with Strange Entities _____

GEAR & POSSESSIONS

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

CASH & ASSETS

Spending Level _____

Cash _____

Assets _____

QUICK REFERENCE RULES

Skill & Characteristic Rolls

Levels of Success:	Fumble	Fail	Regular	Hard	Extreme	Critical
	100/96+	> skill	≤ skill	½ skill	⅓ skill	01

Pushing Rolls: Must justify reroll; Cannot Push Combat or Sanity Rolls

Wounds & Healing

First Aid heals 1HP; Medicine heals +1d3 HP

Major Wound = loss of $\geq \frac{1}{2}$ max HP in one attack

Reach 0 HP without Major Wound = **Unconscious**

Reach 0 HP with Major Wound = **Dying**

Dying: First Aid = temp. stabilized; then require Medicine

Natural Heal rate (non Major Wound): recover 1HP per day

Natural Heal rate (Major Wound): weekly healing roll

FELLOW INVESTIGATORS

