Beyond The Glow

Role-Playing in a Glowing Future of Mutants & Mayhem

Preface

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Game Concept and Design: Thomas Biskup
Inspiration: Gamma World (1st through 6th Edition), Metamorphosis Alpha (1st Edition, Fast Forward Entertainment Edition), Metamorphosis Alpha to Omega, Age of Ruin, Endland, Degenesis, Aftermath, Mad Max I-III, Wasteland (the best computer rpg ever), D&D 3rd Edition (although some of D20s ideas were conceived in a similar manner so many years ago on the Gamma World mailing list)
Dedication: To Jim Ward for the original vision and the original games. To TSR, WotC and White Wolf for trying again and again. To the Gamma World Mailing list which I was blessed to host for a while for the first attempt so many years ago. To Melanie, my most wonderful girlfriend, who suffers through such weird ideas as trying to design a role-playing game within 24 hours…
"Beyond the Glow" was created with the following software: Microsoft Word, Adobe Indesign, RealDraw Pro, Microsoft Excel, Paintshop Pro, Java 2 Standard Edition, Eclipse.
Artwork: Some artwork in this book is ©2005 Team Frog Studios, used by permission.

Contents

Background

From the Diary of the Last Starfarer

"It's the 21st of June, 2983. My stasis chamber seems to have decided that it was time for me to wake up… time before the lights go out forever that is so that I at least will have a nice death if my life was not destined for greatness. Whoever you are who hears this last voice recording let me tell you my story shortly – because I only have little time left. My name is John Sykes and I was born in 2214 in the wonderful city of New York as the third child of Graham Sykes, police officer. My fascination has always been with the stars and I wanted to be among the first who went into Deep Space. After my studies I thus volunteered for the United Nations Space Agency (UNSA) Deep Freeze program. Going into hibernation for three centuries and testing the effects on humans – finally. Nothing should have gone wrong… or so we thought. And what a mess everything has become. And I don't even know why. I was awakened 7 hours ago… and about 440 years too late, even if you consider my 300 years as an iceblock in a hibernation chamber on the moon. <COUGHES> Now I wake up and find… nothing. Except for some garbled messages almost 680 years old. Something about a brutal war that ravages Earth. The guys here in Moon #3 seem to have gone crazy within days. Energy started to fail… and all they left for me is an ancient photo taken from the main deck of Moon #3… Earth seems to shine in a strange green light… some continents are altered… not much to recognize. Today <COUGHES> life systems failing… no cameras active anymore. <COUGHES BRUTALLY> no idea how Earth might look these days – but I will find out before my oxygen supplies run out – which should be in about five minutes. <COUGHES> …to open the exit to the moon surface to take a direct look at good old Earth. The mechanisms still seem to …<STATIC>… <COUGHING AND HEAVY BREATHING> … now I'm on top of the hill and should be able to see Earth… <WHEEZING> … oh my God! Oh God! This is impossible! … <COUGHING> … <STATIC> … they have… <COUGHING> … how could they…<WHEEZING>…<STATIC>…not now…<STATIC> … so close… <COUGHING> … maybe someone else can … <EXPLOSION> … <STATIC FOR SEVEN MORE MINUTES – THEN THE RECORDER SEEMS TO HAVE STOPPED>"

The Game

Beyond the Glow is my personal vision of post-apocalyptic role-playing fun (or at least what could be written down within 24 hours). The existing rules naturally are targeted at experienced Game Masters (GMs) which are confident in making consistent ad hoc decisions. Many parts of the rules are made up by GM decisions. Apply your sense of reason and drama and go with it. Just be as consistent as possible. These rules have been modelled after ye goode olde times – so there is a lot of room for interpretation and improvisation.

The Setting

Beyond the Glow (BtG from now on) is a game of post-apocalyptic adventure. A terrible war has permanently altered our world and reshaped it as the Glowing Earth. Players can be the descendents of the Ancients, mutated humans, uplifted animals, awakened plants or sentient robots. Technology mostly has been lost and only fables and legends remember the Age of Wonder. Occasional artefacts from the Age of Wonder hint at the glory of the Ancients but mostly the world has become a kind of Wild West Setting featuring lots of fantastic and mind-boggling mutations, medieval technology, occasional remnants from before the Final Wars and all kinds of weird civilizations. Try to carve out an edge of living on this new glowing frontier or perish to a multitude of dangers lurking around every corner!

This game has been designed for one Game Master (GM) and one or more players (preferably 3-6) controlling one player character (PC) each. All other beings (non player characters or NPCs for short) are controlled by the GM.

How Glowing Earth came to be…

Humankind had created paradise. Sickness was a memory almost lost, pain forgotten. Hardships no longer existed. Mechanical and biological servants provided all needs to the Ancients living in the Age of Wonder. Then something terrible happened… the reason forgotten… silent weapons suddenly erupted and the Final War begun… chemical, biological, atomic and nanotechnological weapons reshaped the face of Earth forever… civilizations ended within seconds… darkness descended upon the few survivors. Some believe that the machines rebelled against their creators… others point at the servitor races who no longer wanted to suffer from the whims of their masters. Yet others just believe everything was a stupid error. No matter what the explanation might be – the Age of Wonders ended a glowing new era begun for Earth. Mankind was mutated by radiation and biochemical weapons, machines continued to work according to rules long forgotten, nanotechnology reshaped the new world. Centuries of chaos, bloodshed, hunger and terror passed and the remnants of the Age of Wonder declined more and more. Now, more than six centuries after the Final War, most of the knowledge of the Ancients has been lost. New races inhabit Earth, side by side with surviving humans. Wilderness has conquered back what man once took. Treasure troves of the Ancients wait for rediscovery. Civilization was moved back into the Dark Ages. Only occasional technological artefacts from the Age of Wonders grant incredible and almost mystical
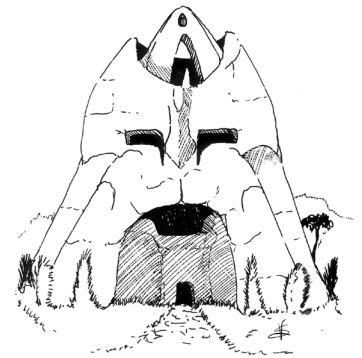
powers to their owners.

A Word about Science

Beyond the Glow is not about Science. Beyond the Glow is about weirdness, mutants, mayhem, secrets and unlikely events. Beyond the Glow is a mixture of old B movies and pulp stories. Whenever science gets into the way of fun, get rid of science!

A Word about Gender

Due to time constraints these rules usually use "he" (and sometimes "it") when referring to people. This always should be read as "he/she/it" as appropriate and preferred. My grasp of the English language is shaky enough to not bother with such finery.

Core Rules

Beyond the Glow uses only 20 sided dice (d20 for short) to determine the outcome of all tests where it is uncertain if and how well the acting party will fare.

Tests

Tests are rolled whenever the outcome of a situation is unclear, the conditions are stressful and something important is going on. In all other cases the GM should go with the story and decide the outcome of a situation based on the skill of beings involved and the circumstances. Roll only if this adds to the excitement of the game!

Die Rolls

Rolling high scores is good, rolling low scores is bad. All rolls in BtG are open-ended. Whenever you roll a 10 or 20 you roll your die again and add the new result to the previous sum. Example: Peter rolls a 6. His final roll is 6. Mary rolls a 10, re-rolls and gets a 12 and so her final roll is 22 (10+12). Finally Duke rolls a 20, re-rolls for a 20, re-rolls for a 10 and finally rolls a 19. His roll result is a whopping 69 (20+20+10+19)! Usually modifiers (due to inborn abilities, learned skills or situational factors) are added or subtracted from the result of your roll to determine the final result.

Difficulty numbers

The GM determines the difficulty level of all tests your character faces. Difficulty numbers (DN) can be anything from 2 to 100 (or more – although difficulty numbers higher than 30 are indeed very rare). Usually tests start with a difficulty of 10. Each minor positive effect yields a bonus of +2 to the die roll, each minor negative circumstance increases difficulty by +2. Major factors either increase the die roll or the difficulty by +4. To determine the final difficulty number the GM will take all influencing circumstances into account.
Example: Daruk, the Silent, is trying to move past a guard

on a watchtower without being seen. Daruk is a trained and experienced scout (Stealth skill +5, 14 Dexterity: +2), the night (+2) is moonless (+2) and he is clad in a dark hood (+2). In contrast the guard is very alert due to prior warnings (+4 DN), has a 17 Perception (+3 DN) and a guard dog sits at his side (+4 DN). This Daruks player has to roll 1d20 + 13 against a DN of 20 (open-ended).

Contested Tests

If two opponents try to achieve the same goal a resisted test is rolled. The GM determines the appropriate attributes, skills and other modifiers for each contestant and then both roll. In a contested roll all modifiers adding to the difficulty are added to the result of the opponent. Both results are compared. If the difference is not greater than a value set by the GM (typically 2), a tie results (as interpreted by the GM) and a re-roll might become possible after a certain amount of time (usually a very small time unit) has passed. Otherwise the contestant with the higher result wins the contest.
Typical contests are arm-wrestling, a race, or an attempt to disarm.

Prolonged Tests

In some situations it becomes necessary to determine the effect of long-term activities. Typical examples are attempts to build or repair items, prolonged races or climbing activities, attempts to gather information, etc. The GM determines the time unit after which a test is rolled as usual. Only if the test surpasses a difficulty number predetermined by the GM the roll counts – otherwise the time unit is wasted. All successful tests results are added together. If a goal value set by the GM is reached the goal is achieved. Failed rolls (again dependent on situation and GM decision)

* can either have no effect (e.g. when trying something not very difficult but time-consuming),
* are subtracted from the total so far (and fail miserably if the total falls below zero; optionally a multiple of the failed roll result can be subtracted; typical examples are repair activities, medical help or tracking activities)
* or cause immediate failure (e.g. when trying to defuse a bomb, etc.).

Margin of Success / Margin of Failure

If the quality of a result is of importance, the margin of success (MoS) must be determined. The MoS is equal to the result of the test minus the difficulty number (or opposing value). Usually the MoS is used in combat to influence damage. It also can be used to measure quality of work: per 5 points MoS the quality of the work results increases by one level on a scale of average – good work (double value) – excellent work (ten times usual value) – masterpiece (100 times usual value) – a piece of legend (1000 times value).
The margin of failure (MoF) works accordingly – per 5

points between required DN and actual roll the result is modified by one level on a scale of close failure – bad failure – miserable failure – catastrophic failure.

Character Generation

Character generation in BtG is pretty straightforward. Just execute the following six simple steps and refer to the next chapters in order to learn about the details. If you are unhappy with your character and your GM complies, just create another one or modify the current character together with the GM. For each of the steps below the GM has to decide before the start of the campaign, which options are to be used.

1. Pick a species (see chapter XXX).
2. Determine your attribute scores (see chapter XXX).
3. Determine your mutations (if any – see your species description and chapter XXX).
4. Determine your defects if you gained mutations by random roll (see chapter XXX).
5. Select your skills (see chapter XXX).
6. Equip your character (see chapter XXX).

At any time above you also should define the most important thing: your character concept. What kind of character do you envision? Male or female? Heroic, sinister or a survivor type? Pragmatic, afraid or hunted by a dark secret? What about family, friends, maybe even children? What did your character learn? Why has he become an adventurer?

Picking a Species

Read the descriptions for all species / genotypes in chapter XXX. Carefully weigh your options and make a decision. Once your species has been set, it can't change for the PC ever – so be careful!

Determining Attribute Scores

Attribute scores can be rolled for randomly or determined by distributing points. The GM has to decide whether random or point-based determination is used. Optionally he can let the player decide. The decision is final.

No matter which method is being used attribute scores maybe need to be modified by species, genotype and mutations. Note that some skills also modify attributes. Note: Attributes modified due to skills during character generation do not yield any additional skill points!

Random Attribute Generation

The player rolls 1d20 seven times and looks up the resulting attribute value on the table below. Then the seven resulting values are then assigned to the attributes.
XXX random attribute generation table XXX

Point-based Attribute Generation

The player gets 80 attribute points which can be distributed among the seven attributes on a one-on-one basis. No attribute must be lower than 6 or higher than 15 after

distributing those points.

Determining Mutations

Mutations can be rolled for randomly or determined by paying the mutation costs with available mutation points (see chapter XXX for the number of mutation points per species / genotype).

Random Mutation Generation

Roll on the appropriate tables in chapter XXX as long as the number of mutations gained does not surpass the maximum number of mutations allowed by species / genotype (see chapter XXX). You can stop at any time before reaching the maximum number.

Point-based Mutation Generation

Determine the number of mutation points available to your species / genotype (see chapter XXX). Pay for mutations by giving up a number of mutation points equal to the mutation cost of the mutation in question. If mutation exists in several variations (e.g. Regeneration I / II / III) you only need to pay the cost of the level you want. You cannot by mutations if the mutation cost is higher than your remaining number of mutation points. Unspent mutation points are lost.

Determining Defects

Defects need only be selected if additional mutations have been gained by the player. Defects can be rolled for randomly or chosen by the player (as decided by the GM).

Random Defect Generation

Roll on the table in chapter XXX for your defects. No defect can be gained more than once. Stop rolling as soon as the number of defect points gained is equal or higher to the total mutation cost of all your mutations.

Point-based Defect Generation

Select defects from chapter XXX as long as the number of defect points gained is less than the cost of all your mutations. No defect can be selected more than once.

Selecting Skills

First choose one primary skill group and two secondary skill groups; all other skill groups are tertiary (see chapter XXX for details about skill groups). The player pays 50% the usual cost for skills in the primary group, 75% the usual cost for skills in the secondary group and 100% the skill point cost for skills in all other groups. See chapter XXX for more details on skill groups.

Then determine your available number of skill points as described in the species section for your species (see chapter XXX). Then buy at least 6 skills. Buying a skill costs its level squared in points (e.g. 1 skill point for level 1, 4 skill points for level 2, 9 skill points for level 3, 16 skill points for level 4), modified by primary and secondary skill groups. If any skill points remain after skill selection, these are

converted to experience points at the rate of 50 experience points per remaining skill point. If enough points remain you theoretically could spend them immediately to e.g. raise attributes (see chapter XXX).

If the player wants to increase a skill already granted by species he only has to pay the difference between the granted level and the aspired level.

The following table shows the costs for initial skill selection.

XXX Initial skill cost table XXX

Buying equipment

Each PC gets a number of Bucks (the common currency) as defined by species. Use these bucks to buy starting equipment. Unspent bucks are divided by 10 and can be kept.

Attributes

Each being in BtG is defined by its inborn abilities. These inborn abilities are called attributes in the context of BtG. The game has basic attributes and derived attributes. The latter attributes are calculated from the basic attributes. Whenever a basic attribute changes permanently, all derived attributes must be changed, too. The following sections explain the meaning of both attribute types and show how to determine them for new characters.

Basic Attributes

Attributes are defined by a score of 1 upwards. An attribute score of 1-4 is absolutely horrible, potentially life-threating or an indicator for some kind of impairment, a score of 5-6 is very weak, a score of 7-8 poor, 9-11 average, 12-13 good, 14-15 excellent, 16-17 absolutely exceptional talent and a score of 18 or more truly gifted. Scores above 20 generally are beyond the range of most humans and represent either supernatural talents due to mutations, genetically improved abilities or life-long training.

The following basic attributes are used in BtG (abbreviation provided in brackets and used through the rules):

Strength (ST): Strength measures the physical powers of the being. How much can it lift, how much damage can it deliver in melee combat and how much pain can it endure before succumbing to its wounds.

Dexterity (DX): How nimble and agile is the being? How fast is it? How well can it hit targets with missile weapons?

Constitution (CN): How resistant is the being to damage and fatigue? How healthy is the being?

Perception (PE): How aware is the being of its surroundings? How much intuition guides its actions?

Intelligence (IN): Represents the wits, intelligence and education of the being. Intelligence additionally helps to use mental mutations.

Willpower (WI): How stubborn is the being in question? What inner reserves can it bring into the game to overcome challenges? Additionally willpower helps to resist mental mutations.

Charisma (CH): Determines the social skills of the being. How well is it able to integrate in a civilized environment? How tactfully can it live through diplomatic crisis? How much is it liked by others?

All attributes are determined on a scale of 1 or greater. Values of 9 to 11 represent average attributes. Values below 9 indicate weaknesses, values above 11 represents extraordinary potential. Each attribute yields an attribute modifier. The attribute modifier can be determined by subtracting 10 from the attribute value, dividing by 2 and dropping all fractions or by looking it up in the following table:

XXX ATTRIBUTE-TABLE XXX

Derived Attributes

The following derived attributes are used in the game. They quantify more complex inborn abilities which are defined by several inborn quantities.

Defense Value (DV): Determines how hard it is to hit an opponent. The Defense Value is equal to 10 plus the Dexterity Modifier plus the Armor Defense Value.

Protection Value (PV): Describes the inherent toughness of the beings skin. PV is subtracted from any damage suffered in combat and might reduce damage to zero or below (in which case no damage is suffered at all). PV is zero for all species but can be modified by e.g. mutations.

Toughness (TO): Determines how hard it is to kill the PC (see chapter XXX). Toughness is equal to ST + CN + WI / 2.

Endurance (EN): Determines how much fatigue the PC can suffer before falling unconscious. Endurance is equal to CN + WI + ST / 2.

Harm Threshold (HT): Determines how hard it is to wound the PC. The wound threshold is made up by three numbers – one for light harm: (ST + TO) / 2, one for serious harm: (ST + TO) / 2 + 10 and one for fatal harm (ST + TO) / 2 + 20. See chapter XXX for more details.

Base Initiative Bonus (BIB): Determines how quickly the PC acts in combat. The base initiative bonus is equal to the DX modifier. The final initiative modifier in a combat round is equal to the BIB plus the relevant skill used in that round.

Base Speed (BS): Base speed is equal to 10 + DX modifiers meters per combat round.

Robot Recognition Score (RRS): The robot recognition value is the difficulty number used by non-sentient robots to determine whether they identify a being as a problem. The initial value of the RSS depends on the particular species (see chapter XXX). It is reduced by the robot recognition modifier of each mutation gained (see chapter XXX for those modifiers). Note that some robots will identify a being as a hazard although it has no mutations (e.g. due to faulty programming or disrepair).

Carrying Capacity: A being can carry a weight of (own body weight) x ST / 100 without being encumbered. If carrying more than one point of fatigue is accrued per hour. For each multiple the number of fatigue points gained per hour is doubled. The maximum carrying capacity is

equal to (own body weight) x ST / 20. When dragging or pushing weight, a maximum of (own body weight) x ST / 10 can be moved. If more than (own body weight) x ST / 20 is dragged or pushed, one fatigue point is gained per 10 seconds (otherwise scale down the fatigue points gained for carrying to the appropriate time scale). See chapter XXX for the fatigue rules.

Species

A multitude of species inhabits Glowing Earth. You can play a Human, Mutated Humans, Uplifted Animal or Awakened Plant. Choose wisely because your species never will change – even if it mutates.

All species descriptions contain the following sections:
* General Description
* Special Abilities
* Bonus Attribute Points
* Initial Skill Points
* Robot Recognition Score
* Tech Level (the initial range of tech levels; select one which also determines available equipment and skills; for each TL below III add +20 skill points)
* Starting Bucks

Humans ("Pures")

Description: Humans are the direct descendents of the Ancients. They are immune to mutations and their blood is still pure. Nonetheless they most have lost access to the knowledge and wonders of the Ancients. Many of them live in clans or tribes in or near the ruins of the huge settlements of the Ancients. They try to recover ancient artefacts from the ruins and there are many cults among them which worship their ancient forefathers (see chapter XXX). Humans are physically and mentally superior to mutants but they lack mutations, which can be a boon (when e.g. encountering robots) or a bane (when fighting hazards or other mutants).
Bonus Attribute Points: +3 to one of ST, DX, CN, PE, +2 to all others of ST, DX, CN, PE, +1 to IN, WI, CH, 2 more free points to distribute as chosen by the player
Special Abilities: Physical superiority and good training (figured into the values below); immunity to random mutation (see chapter XXX).
Initial Skill Points: (IN + DX) x 4
Robot Recognition Score: 20
Tech Level: I-V; subtract 5 skill points per TL above III; characters of TL IV receive XXX bucks in TL IV items, characters of TL V receive XXX bucks of TL V items but lose two points of every attribute (unless the GM decides that they have awakened from stasis; descendents of the Ancients have lost some of their excellent genetic heritage due to degeneration)
Starting Bucks: XXX

Mutated Humans ("Muties")

Description: Mutated humans are those descendents of the ancients who suffered from the effects of the Final War. Radiation and biochemical weapons made for a huge death toll during and after the Final War and many of the survivors didn't manage to get through unscathed. Their genes were altered forever and almost no two mutants are alike. Mutated humans still are humans but their offspring always will be a mutated human. Depending on the individual campaign type mutated humans can be an everyday sight, outcasts or mysterious clans living in the backwoods (which says a lot in an age where almost every area is "backwoods").
Bonus Attribute Points: +2 to CN
Special Abilities: Mutations (up to six random or 12 mutation points to choose from; see the character generation rules in chapter XXX and chapter XXX for specific mutations)
Initial Skill Points: (IN + DX) x 3
Robot Recognition Score: 20 minus mutation costs
Tech Level: I-III
Starting Bucks: XXX

Uplifted Animal ("Beasty")

Description: Before the final war the Ancients instilled the gift of reason into many animal races to create fascinating servitors and efficient workers. Those servitor races generally were gene-altered to be able to move upright, have hands and feet similar to humans and be able to speak (although gutturally in many cases). During and after the Final War the servitor races often separated from surviving humans in order to create their own communities and societies. Depending on the campaign type they can be highly alien societies, bitter enemies of all things human, the next major power or all of this. Uplifted animals are not fertile between animal genotypes or humans. Each player intending to play an uplifted animal must choose a specific animal genotype which determines the bonuses and special abilities as well as available mutations.
Bonus Attribute Points: see the uplifted animal genotype table
Special Abilities: see the uplifted animal genotype table; some uplifted animals possess inherent mutations
Initial Skill Points: (IN + DX) x 3
Robot Recognition Score: see the uplifted animal genotype table and modify that value for additional mutations beyond the given base mutations for the genotype
Tech Level: I-III
Starting Bucks: XXX

XXX uplifted animal genotype table XXX

Table explanation:
Genotype: The name of the genotype.
ST, DX, CN, PE, IN, WI, CH: Lists the modifier to the given attribute.
Special abilities: Lists abilities not covered by mutations, especially attacks inherent to the animal genotype. Attacks are described by name, attack modifier (+xA) and damage (+xD). Other modifiers to derived attributes are also listed

here.

Base Mutations: Lists the inherent base mutations of the species. Entries marked as (D) are defects and do not count as balancing defects if additional mutations are gained. All attribute bonuses due to mutations already are factored into the attribute modifiers. All other bonuses need to be applied.

Additional Mutations: Lists the options for taking additional mutations during character generation. The number before the slash is the number of mutation points (MP) available to pay for mutation costs if mutations can be selected, the number after the slash is the number of random rolls permitted.

Awakened Plant ("Cabbage")

Awakened plants are the pinnacle of the skills of the Ancients as far as nanotechnology, gene-engineering and biochemistry are concerned. Created as the last of the new races awakened plants were pretty new when the Final War erupted. Capable of speech and normal movements awakened trees seem like Ents from Tolkiens Books. But more wondrous genotypes exist – bushes, fungi, succulents all were awakened. Awakened plants are very alien compared to all other races. They share great sympathies with their non-awakened cousins but nonetheless are driven by astonishing curiosity. They don't eat or sleep but simply "take root" in fertile soil for four hours per day to replenish their resources. If deprived of its nourishment an awakened plant suffers like any other living being.

A player must choose the base stock of plant he is going to play. The differences are described in the table below.

- Brush: Brushes, weeds and grasses are collected under this genotype.
- Flower: Flowers are truly beautiful. Often their beauty is enhanced by olfactory glands able to influence sentient beings.
- Fungi aren't true plants but they are fun and thus included here.
- Succulents encompass all cacti and various types of desert plants.
- Trees are sturdy and long-lived.
- Vines are among the most disturbing of the awakened plants due to their slithering nature.

Bonus Attribute Points: see the awakened plant genotype table

Special Abilities: see the awakened plant genotype table; all awakened plants possess inherent mutations

Initial Skill Points: (IN + DX) x 3

Robot Recognition Score: see the awakened plant genotype table and modify that value for additional mutations beyond the given base mutations for the genotype

Tech Level: I-II

Starting Bucks: XXX

XXX awakened plant genotype table XXX

Table explanation:

Genotype: The name of the genotype.

ST, DX, CN, PE, IN, WI, CH: Lists the modifier to the given attribute.

Special abilities: Lists abilities not covered by mutations, especially attacks inherent to the animal genotype. Attacks are described by name, attack modifier (+xA) and damage (+xD). Other modifiers to derived attributes are also listed here.

Base Mutations: Lists the inherent base mutations of the species. Entries marked as (D) are defects and do not count as balancing defects if additional mutations are gained. All attribute bonuses due to mutations already are factored into the attribute modifiers. All other bonuses need to be applied.

Additional Mutations: Lists the options for taking additional mutations during character generation. The number before the slash is the number of mutation points (MP) available to pay for mutation costs if mutations can be selected, the number after the slash is the number of random rolls permitted.

Skills

Skills represent the learned abilities of a being. The higher a skill level the more competent the skill user is. Additionally each skill is governed by an attribute. The attribute modifier of the governing attribute is added to all tests concerning this skill. In some cases the GM may decide to use another attribute to modify the skill test (e.g. Blade Weapon tests usually are modified by DX, but to detect a flaw in an offered sword a test modified by PE might be applicable and to determine the value of said sword a test modified by IN would be appropriate).

Skills are grouped together in logical groups. Players can choose primary, secondary and tertiary skill groups which in turn influence the cost of learning and raising skills from those skill groups.

Skill Levels

Skill levels represent the mastery in a given skill. The following table provides a rough scale in order to relate skill levels to real world terms.

XXX Skill levels XXX

Skill Groups

Skills are collected in thematically close groups. BtG differentiates between primary, secondary and tertiary skill groups. Primary skills are those that one tries to study most intensely due to interest, need or profession. They usually mirror closely the way of life of the being in question. Secondary skills are important to the character – but they are not the mainstay of daily work but rather supporting skills. Everything else is a tertiary skill.

Every character has one primary and two secondary skill groups. All other skills are tertiary. The player pays 50% the usual cost to learn / improve skills in the primary group, 75% the usual cost for skills in the secondary group and

100% cost for skills in all other groups.

Thus the selection of skill groups models the characters outlook on life and his means to earn a living. The following skill groups are available:

- Athletic (A)
- Combat (C)
- Interaction (I)
- Knowledge (K)
- Professional (P)
- Secrecy (S)
- Technology (T)
- Wilderness (W)

The following table shows the skill groups, the skills, the governing attribute for each skill and the minimum tech level at which the skill can be learned. If a skill is available for separate tech levels it must be learned for each tech level separately (such skills are marked with closed tech level ranges of type x-y). Skills with an open tech level range (x+) require the minimum tech level given to be available but must not be relearned for other tech levels. If trying to learn a skill limited to tech levels below ones own, one must pay +25% costs. If trying to learn a skill limited to tech levels above ones own, one must pay +100% cost and can never rise above +3 without direct instruction from a being of the tech level at which the skill is learned. When trying to use a skill with tools of a different tech level the DN is increased by +3 per tech level difference.

XXX skill overview XXX

Skill Descriptions

All skills are briefly described. Be flexible in the interpretation and don't try to muck up the game with too many skills of too similar nature. Nonetheless if something important seems to be missing for your campaign style then go ahead and add it.

Acrobatics: Governs tumbling, falling, gymnastics, etc. Per 3 skill levels the character gains +1 DX.

Animal Handling: Governs the care for and the training of animals. If the character doesn't select a specific animal genotype he is able to care for all types of animals and influence their reactions. If one genotype is selected, the character also is able to train animals of this type. It is possible to take this skill more than once.
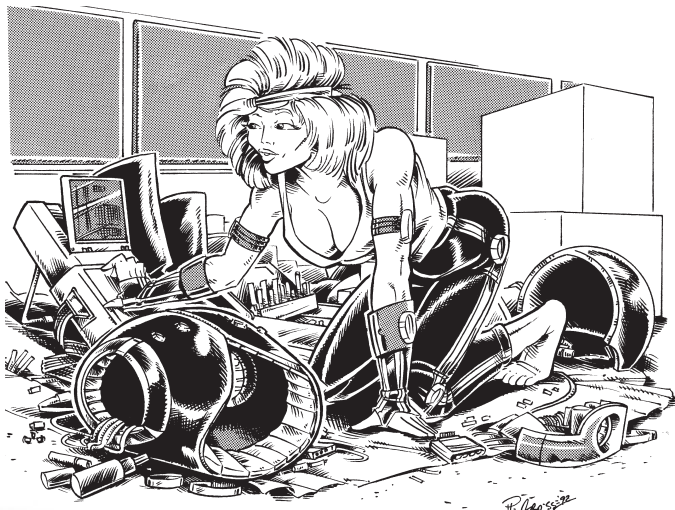
Appraise: The ability to estimate the value of given items. Appraise tests are made secretly by the GM against the rarity value of items – if the test succeeds the player estimates the correct value within 10% of the list price. If he fails he errs and assumes a value of +/-20% of the correct value per 5 points MoF.

Automatic Weapons: Governs the use of all (semi-)automatic weapons.

Blade Weapons: Governs the use of all one-handed blade weapons.

Bluff: Helps to trick others into doing things they initially did not intend to do. Using bluff is a contest roll against WI +5 of the target (at best, other modifiers apply). Outrageous bluffs should add huge modifiers to the DN while great role-playing should provide good bonuses to the test.

Blunt Weapons: Governs the use of all blunt one-handed weapons.

Bows & Crossbows: Governs the use of all bows and crossbows.

Brawling: The art of street fighting without weapons.

Computer Use: A rare technological skill that permits to activate, infiltrate and generally force computer systems to do ones bidding. For complex tasks huge DN modifiers apply due to the enormous amount of lost knowledge since the Final War.

Climb: The ability to scale cliffs, walls and trees. Generally characters can climb comfortably at one-quarter BS or with a +5 DN at one-half BS.

Demolitions: The ability to use and set explosives without blowing up oneself. Setting timers is included. The more complex demolition traps require larger DN modifiers or prolonged tests. Disarming explosives is included in this skill.

Diplomacy: The mastery of goal-driven communication. Helps convincing others from your point of view – as long as you have decent arguments. Otherwise try bluff. Diplomacy tests usually are contested by the targets diplomacy skill.

Disguise: The ability to disguise once appearance. Changing species is difficult at best (+5 to +10 DN). The difficulty of impersonating beings of ones own species depends on circumstances, length of disguise, persons that need to be convinced and disguise materials at hand – the GM is the final arbiter.

Diving: The art of holding your breath and swimming underwater. Each level of diving adds a round of time to the number of rounds a character can hold his breath (see chapter XXX).

Drive (Type): The ability to drive either cars (TL III+), tanks (TL III+) or carts (TL II/III).

Energy Weapons: Governs the use and maintenance of all energy weapons (TL V+).

Entertainer (Type): Each type of entertainment (playing a specific instrument, story telling, acting, dancing, singing, etc.) has to be learned separately.

Escape Artist: The ability to escape ropes, handcuffs (+10 DN) and other methods of bonding people.

Fitness: The character is particularly enduring. Each level in this skill permanently increases his endurance by +5.

Forgery: Provides the ability to fake signatures, treaties and documents. Usually examples of the type of document to be faked must be at hand to have any decent chance of success. Reading & Writing in at least one language is required as a prerequisite.

Gunpowder Weapons: Governs the use of all gun-powder driven non-automatic weapons (TL III/IV).

Hardiness: The character is particularly tough. Each level in this skill permanently increases his toughness by +4.

Intimidate: The ability to intimidate others and force ones will upon them through either brute force (ST-based tests) or malice and intrigue (CH-based tests).

Jump: The ability to jump high or wide. Standard DN is 10. The MoS multiplied by 50 centimetres yields the actual wide jump distance. The MoS times 15 centimetres is the high jump distance. Without mutations nobody is able to jump wider than five times his body length and higher than 1.3 times his body height.

Knowledge (Topic): Select one topic like e.g. Biology, Chemistry, Alchemy, Etiquette, Heraldry, Weather, Plants, Herbs, Animals, Heroes, the Final War, the Ancients, Mechanics, etc. The GM will decide to what extent you are knowledgeable in the respective field.

Listen: The ability to eavesdrop on conversations and explicit training to notice unusual sounds.

Medicine: The art of healing (or whatever was assumed to be curative at the various tech levels). The following modifiers apply to all tests according to the worst of known tech level medicine and equipment at hand: I: +10 DN, II: +5 DN, III: +0 DN, IV: -5 DN, V: -10 DN, VI: -20 DN.

Open Locks: Governs opening locks. Depending on tech level the tools can vary greatly.

Orienteering: Finding your way through uncharted terrain and without tools. This skill has to be learned separately for land and sea.

Pilot (Type): Choose the type of vehicle you can pilot: planes, helicopters, river boats, ocean liners, jets, anti-G gliders, spaceships. Each type is an individual skill.

Pole arms: Governs fighting with all types of pole arms.

Profession (Type): Each profession requires a separate skill. Any craft or trade is possible, e.g. hunter, farmer, doctor, lawyer, judge, merchant, barkeeper, dancer, bard, juggler, fortune teller and so on.

Read & Write: The ability to read and write one specific language. The GM has to decide for his campaign about the available languages. In most campaigns there will be a common trade language sufficiently complex to write down basic documentation and trade agreements. Nonetheless the need to understand other languages will arise.

Ride: Governs riding animals trained for just that purpose.

Search: Aids in searching for loot, secret entries and hidden weapons or artefacts.

Shield Training: You are trained in defending with a shield. Shields provide substantial DV bonuses as a defensive weapon and can be used in the secondary hand without suffering any penalties for attacking with the other hand.

Sleight of Hand: The ability to show small tricks and pick the pockets of others without them noticing this despicable act.

Speak Language: The ability to speak one specific language. The GM has to decide for his campaign about the available languages. In most campaigns there will be a common trade language sufficiently complex to discuss everyday needs. Nonetheless the need to understand other languages will arise.

Stealth: The art of hiding and moving silently. Usually one test is enough to govern both aspects of stealth.

Streetwise: Your ability to find a way through cities and villages, especially as far the seedier sides are concerned. You know where to find fences, informants and are able to pick up the latest gossip quickly – or disappear within the bowels of the under city without trace should the need arise.

Survival: Helps to find food and water in the wilderness. The target DN depends on the fertility of the environment (from 5 for very fertile over 10 for standard to 20 for barren). For every full 3 points MoS another person can be kept alive and well-fed. Note that foodstuff and water not necessarily are well-tasting when the survival skill comes into play. On the other hand few people on Glowing Earth are accustomed to luxury. When using survival while travelling, it is not possible to travel at more than one half normal speed (sometimes slower).

Swim: The ability to keep yourself and maybe one other person from drowning (see chapter XXX).

Track: The ability to track others. The difficulty number of tracking tests usually is governed by so many factors (underground, time passed, weather, light conditions, size of tracked group, attempts to divert trackers, etc.) that the GM should make up a reasonable DN for individual situations.

Thrown Weapons: The ability to attack others with thrown weapons (from knives to grenades).

Two-handed Weapons: Governs the use of all two-handed weapons excluding pole arms.

Wrestling: The art of overbearing.

Mutations

Mutations are the result of the mind-boggling weapons and chemicals used in the Final War. Huge numbers of survivors have been altered forever. Mutations are balanced by defects. If a PC gains additional mutations during character generation, the player has to pick or roll for defects until the defect points gained equal or surpass the cost of its mutations (see chapter XXX for details on defects).

Each mutation is described in the following format:
- Name followed by a letter in brackets to indicate the mutation type (P = Physical, M = mental, V = Vegetational / Plant)
- Description
- Robot Recognition Modifier (RRM)
- Mutation Cost (MC)
- Range (R)

- Damage (D)
- Fatigue Cost per Use (FC). An entry of "permanent" means that the mutation is always active (even if unconscious / sleeping) and no fatigue costs accrue. An entry of "automatic" means that the mutation can be used as a free action if the character wants to do this (as long as he is conscious).
- Skill: The initial skill value if the mutation requires skill rolls to activate / use it.

Mutation Overview

If a table entry for one of the mutation tables contains more than one mutation name separated by slashes from each other the player gets the first mutation listed on the first roll and shifts one position to the right for each additional roll yielding the same result. If no right-shifts are possible the roll has to be repeated.

To randomly determine what kind of mutation is gained roll on the following table for the species in question:
- Mutated Human: 1-9 – Physical Mutation, 11-19: Mental Mutation, 21+ Free Choice of table
- Uplifted Animal: 1-11 – Physical Mutation, 12-19: Mental Mutation, 21+ Free Choice of table
- Awakened Plant: 1-14: Plant Mutation, 15-19: Mental Mutation, 21+: Free choice of table

Physical Mutations

XXX Physical Mutation table XXX

Mental Mutations

XXX Mental Mutation table XXX

Plant Mutations

XXX Plant Mutation table XXX

Mutation List

Adrenaline Boost (P)

The mutant can boost his reflexes round by round, increasing his initiative modifier substantially. During each round where he activates this mutation, his BIB is increased by +8. RRM: 1. MC: 4. R: -. D: -. FC: 6 / round.

Allurement (V)

The plant gives off a special fragrance that influences the feelings of all sentient non-plants and providers her with a +3 bonus to all CH tests. RRM: 4. MC: 3. R: 10m. D: -. FC: automatic.

Anti-Life Leech (P, V)

The mutant is immune to the Life Leech mutation and can mirror it back to the originator if he succeeds in a parry using this mutation skill. For this special reverse attack the mutant enjoys all the benefits if successful. RRM: 1. MC: 1. R: -. D: special. FC: 4. Skill: Mutation/Anti-Life Leech (CN) +3.

Beguiling (M)

The mutant is able to mentally charm sentient beings to feel more friendly towards him. He can enforce an immediate reaction test with a bonus equal to his skill total for this mutation. RRM: 1. MC: 4. R: 20m. D: special. FC: 3. Skill: Mutation/Beguiling (CH) +1.

Body Control (P, V)

The mutant can enhance one of his physical attributes (ST, DX, CN, PE) for (skill) rounds by a bonus equal to his skill. RRM: 1. MC: 2. R: self. D: -. FC: 2 / round. Skill: Mutation/Body Control (CN) +2.

Brachiation (P, V)

The mutant has enlonged arms that allow for brachiation in overgrown terrain. Brachiation speed equals BS. RRM: 1. MC: 2. R: -. D:-. FC: automatic. Skill: Mutation/Brachiation (DX) +3.

Carnivorous Jaws (V)

The plant is a man-eater and has hidden jaws with vile teeth. It can sustain itself on sunlight and soil but does not enjoy this. Raw meat if preferable to train its teeth which cause +4 damage. RRM: 2. MC: 3. R: -. D: +4. FC: permanent. Skill: Mutation/Bite (DX) +2.

Chameleon Power (P, V)

The mutant can automatically blend into any background. But beware: His equipment does not change its color. This mutation grants a +5 bonus to all stealth tests. RRM: 1. MC: 3. R: -. D:-. FC: 1 / minute.

Confusion (M)

The mutant can try to confuse an opponent. If the mental attack is successful the opponent is confused for (MoS) rounds and acts with a +6 DN to all tests. RRM: 1. MC: 5. R: 10m. D: confusion. FC: 4. Skill: Mutation/Confusion (WI) + 1.

Contact Poison Sap (V)

The plant is able to bleed a nasty contact poison whenever injured for 4 or more points. The contact poison has a +2 damage value, an effectiveness of up to 5 rounds, an effect interval of 1 round and resistance DN of 13. One point of damage bleeds enough poison for a knife or arrow, two enough for a short sword, three enough for a spear, four for a long sword and 5 for a battle axe or two-handed sword. The contact poison looses its power if in contact with air for more than two hours. RRM: 2. MC: 2. R: -. D: poison. FC: permanent.

Death Field Generation (M)

The mutant can mentally assault all living beings within 10 meters. Any being successfully attacked is reduced to (CN) toughness. If the victim looses less than 10 toughness points it is reduced to zero toughness immediately. The mutant is attacked by his own death field and suffers the same consequences as all other victims. RRM: 1. MC: 5. R: 10m radius. FC: 10. Skill: Mutation/Death Field Generation

(WI) +1.

Density Control, Other (P, V)

The mutant can change the density of others with a successful attack, as described for Density Control, Self. RRM: 1. MC: 3. R: 20m. FC: 2. Skill: Mutation/Density Control, Other (WI) +1.

Density Control, Self (P, V)

The mutant can change his own density. If he increases his density, he grows smaller since his mass remains unchanged. If he decreases his density, he consequently grows larger. A DN 10 test is required. Per point (MoS) he can grow or shrink by 10%. It is impossible to shrink below 5% of the original height or more than 100%. Shrinking by 10% yields a +1 DV modifier, growing by 20% yields a -1 DV modifier. RRM: 1. MC: 3. R: self. FC: 1 + 1 / Minute. Skill: Mutation/Density Control, Self (WI) +1.

Devolution (M)

The mutant can reverse the evolutionary process of his victim by successfully attacking. Beings with mutations loose one randomly chosen mutation, unmutated beings loose one point echt of WI, IN and CH. Lost mutations / points are regained at the rate of one per week. RRM: 1. MC: 5. R: 20m. D: special. FC: 7. Skill: Mutation/Devolution (WI) +1.

Directional Sense (M)

The mutant never looses his orientation and always knows where he is. RRM: 1. MC: 1. R: -. D: -. FC: automatic.

Displacement (M)

The mutant is able to physically appear displaced by one meter increasing his DV by +6. RRM: 1. MC: 4. R: self. D: -. FC: automatic, 2 / round.

Dual Brain (P, V)

The mutant has a second brain that can be located anywhere in the body. Maybe he even sports a second head or an immensely enlarged head to hold two brains. The mutant receives a permanent bonus of +2 to IN. Additionally he gains two more mental mutations. Finally mental attacks always can influence but one brain at a time. RRM: 4. MC: 5. R: -. D: -. FC: permanent.

Duality (M)

The character can more than one thing at a time. In combat he gains an extra action provided he wields a second weapon. Since he is ambidextrous both attacks suffer but a +3 DN instead of the normal DN adjustment (see chapter XXX). Out of combat the character can do two things at once, e.g. holding a scientific talk while writing a poem or repairing a walkie talkie with one hand while driving with the other. RRM: 1. MC: 4. R: -. D: -. FC: permanent.

Electrical Generation (P, M)

The mutant is a living battery. Each round he accumulates a +2 damage reserve up to a maximum of +6. He can discharge an electrical attack each round as long as he at least one point in his internal battery. The damage bonus (minimum +1) is subtracted from the internal reserve. Electrical damage can be added to touch attacks or melee attacks with metal weapons. Additionally the character suffers himself but half damage from electrical attacks. RRM: 3. MC: 4. R: touch. D: +1 to +6. FC: 1 to 6 (equal to the damage bonus).

Emergency Escape (M)

Whenever the mutant loses consciousness or believes himself to be in mortal danger, he automatically is teleported up to 100 metres away to the safest possible location the mutant previously has seen. If he doesn't know his environment for some reason, he is unable to teleport. To willingly suppress teleportation, the mutant must succeed at a DN 15 WI test. The fatigue cost accrues nonetheless. RRM: 1. MC 3. R: self / 100m. D: -. FC: 3.

Empathy (M)

On a successful test the mutant can sense the emotions of the examined being. He gets a clear picture of the emotional intentions of the being. Note that this is not telepathy and thus actual thought reading is impossible. RRM: 0. MC: 2. R: 20m. D: -. FC: 2. Skill: Mutation/Empathy (WI) +1.

Empathy Control (M)

The mutant is able to alter the emotions of the target. If the mental attack is successful roll a reaction test based on (MoS) and the mutants WI modifier and adjust the reaction of the target accordingly. If the intended change is highly unliked the GM should impose corresponding DN modifiers to the mutation attack. RRM: 0. MC: 4. R: 10m. D: special. FC: 3. Skill: Mutation/Empathy Control (WI) +1.

Energy Absorption (P, V)

The mutant is able to absorb energy of one specific type (choose from radiation, electricity, lasers, plasma, cold). The first 10 points of an attack of that energy are absorbed and can be ignored. It is possible to gain this mutation as often as wanted (either for new combinations or for additional absorption points). RRM: 1. MC: 3. R: -. D: -. FC: permanent.

Energy Metamorphosis (P, V)

The mutant is able to absorb energy of one specific type (choose from radiation, electricity, lasers, plasma, cold). The first 10 points of an attack of that energy are absorbed and converted into either endurance or toughness (chosen when the mutation is gained). It is possible to gain this mutation as often as wanted (either for new combinations or for additional absorption points). Damage can only be converted up to maximum toughness or endurance respectively. If it is not possible to convert all points to toughness / endurance without surpassing this limit, an overload reaction causes the mutant to immediately suffer from an attack with a damage bonus of two times the excessive points. RRM: 1. MC: 2. R: -. D: -. FC: permanent.

Enlarged Lungs (P)

The mutant has oversized lungs which allow him to hold his

breath three times as long as normal (see chapter XXX). RRM: 1. MC: 1. R: -. D: -. FC: permanent.

Fear Generation (M)

The mutant is able to create panic in a target. The target will flee at maximum speed for a number of rounds equal to the mutation skill level of the mutant. RRM: 1. MC: 2. R: 10m. D: fear. FC: 3. Skill: Mutation/Fear Generation (WI) +1.

Fire Lungs (P)

The mutant can breathe fire at his enemies. He can attack one enemy at once and causes +8 damage with a range increment of 3 metres. RRM: 3. MC: 4. R: 3m increment. D: +8. FC: 6. Skill: Mutation/Fire Lungs (CN) +1.

Flexible Bones (P)

The bones of the mutant are so flexible that he (a) gains a +2 dexterity bonus, (b) a +2 PV bonus against blunt attacks and (c) a +8 bonus to Escape Artist checks.

Force Field Generation (M)

The mutant is able to create a force field that provides a +6 + WI modifier DV bonus. RRM: 1. MC: 3. R: 1m radius. D: -. FC: 2 / round.

Fruits (V)

The plant can grow up to 4 + CN modifier fruits at a time (minimum 2). A fruit is grown within one week and can have any shape from strawberry to melon. A fruit must be used within six weeks after being grown since it otherwise withers and dies. The fruits can have any one of the following effects (chosen at the time the mutation is gained) when eaten:
- Heals 1d20 toughness points upon ingestion.
- Regenerates 1d20 endurance points upon ingestion.
- Neutralizes currently active poison.
- Neutralizes up to +8 DN modifiers accumulated due to harm for the next two hours.

Due to its special digestion system the plant cannot benefit form its own fruits. RRM: 2. MC: 3. R: -. D: -. FC: -.

Gas Ball (P, V)

The body of the mutant contains a gas-filled ball that allows him to glide downwards instead of falling. He can glide downwards with a speed of 1 meter per second. RRM: 2. MC: 2. R: -. D: -. FC: permanent.

Gas Generation (P, V)

The mutant is able to produce gas clouds from a specific body part chosen by the player. The gas works as a +4 non-lethal poison with a one round-interval and a maximum effectiveness of 4 rounds, which effects everyone in 4m radius. RRM: 3. MC: 4. R: 3m radius. D: poison. FC: 5.

Giant (P, V)

The mutant is a true giant of his species at almost twice the normal size. He gets a +6 permanent bonus to ST and CN and a permanent -4 to DX. His weight quadruples, his height doubles. RRM: 8. MC: 4. R: -. D: -. FC: permanent.

Gills (P)

The mutant has gills and thus can breathe in water for unlimited time. RRM: 1. MC: 2. R: -. D: -. FC: automatic.

Heightened Hearing I / II / III (P)

The mutant gains a +2 (I) / +4 (II) / +6 (III) bonus on all PE tests involving sounds. His ears might be larger than normal or some other minor visual clue should be defined. RRM: 1. MC: 2/3/4. R: -. D:-. FC: permanent.

Heightened Strength (P)

The mutant gains +4 strength points permanently. His muscles become extraordinarily large. RRM: 1. MC: 3. R: -. D: -. FC: permanent.

Heightened Dexterity (P)

The mutant gains +4 dexterity points permanently. His body appears extraordinarily graceful. RRM: 1. MC: 3. R: -. D: -. FC: permanent.

Heightened Consitution (P)

The mutant gains +4 constitution points permanently. His body becomes barrel-like and his features get more angular. RRM: 1. MC: 3. R: -. D: -. FC: permanent.

Heightened Perception (P)

The mutant gains +4 perception points permanently. His sensory organs become much more pronounced. RRM: 1. MC: 2. R: -. D: -. FC: permanent.

Heightened Intelligence (M)

The mutant gains +4 intelligence points permanently. His body and brain case grow much more pronounced. RRM: 1. MC: 3. R: -. D: -. FC: permanent.

Heightened Willpower (M)

The mutant gains +4 willpower points permanently. His temples bulge. RRM: 1. MC: 3. R: -. D: -. FC: permanent.

Heightened Charisma (M)

The mutant gains +4 charisma points permanently. His appearance becomes almost angelic. RRM: 1. MC: 2. R: -. D: -. FC: permanent.

Heightened Precision (P)

The mutant never again suffers range penalties for missile attacks. Additionally he gains a +2 modifier to all missile attack tests. RRM: 1. MC: 4. R: -. D: -. FC: permanent.

Heightened Speed (P)

The mutant gains a permanent bonus of +4 to his BS. He moves with grace and quickness. RRM: 1. MC: 2. R: -. D: -. FC: permanent.

Infravision (P)

The mutant can see heat patterns up to a distance of 20 metres. Heat patterns do not allow for detail or color sight but can be helpful to detect ambushes and track recent encounters. Infravision works both at day and night and can be consciously turned on and off by the mutant. RRM: 1. MC: 2. R: 20 metres. D: -. FC: automatic.

Jumper I / II / III (P)

The mutant has extraordinary leg muscles that allow for huge jumps. The result range of jump tests is multiplied by (3 x mutation level). RRM: 1/2/3. MC: 2/3/4. R: -. D: -. FC: Jump

Kinetic Absorption (P, V)

The mutant can generate a field around him that absorbs kinetic energy. His skill with the mutation determines the strength of the kinetic absorption field. The field has a radius of one metre. The mutant and anyone else within the field gets the following PV bonuses against attacks from the outside: (10 + skill level) against blunt attacks, (5 + skill level) against piercing attacks and (skill level) against blade attacks. RRM: 2. MC: 4. R: 1m radius. D: -. FC: 4 / round.

Levitation (M)

The mutant can lift inanimate, willing or successfully attacked beings up and down in a straight line at a speed of one metre per second (10 metres per round). The mutant can lift up to 50 kilograms plus 20 kilograms per skill level. He has no control over side movements due to kinetic effects or winds. RRM: 1. MC: 3. R: 30 metres. D: -. FC: 2 / round and per attack. Skill: Mutation/Levitation (WI) +1.

Life Leech (M)

This horrible power enables the mutant to drain toughness from all living and sentient beings of at least 50 pound weight and one metre size within 10 metres of him. Each being is attacked individually and if successful looses 5 toughness points during that round. The toughness points are transferred to the mutant, initially to heal existing damage and then to build up a temporary toughness pool, which is again lost at the speed of one point per round until the correct maximum toughness of the mutant is reached. Attacks have to be repeated each round. RRM: 2. MC: 6. R: 10m radius. D: 5 toughness / round. FC: 5 / round. Skill: Mutation/Life Leech (WI) +1.

Mental Blast (M)

The mutant can mentally wound other sentient beings. He can attack individuals in 20 metre maxium range with a +6 damage bonus non-lethal attack. RRM: 1. MC: 4. R: 20 metres. D: +8 non-lethal. FC: 6. Skill: Mutation/Mental Blast (WI) +1.

Mental Invisibility (M)

The mutant can convince others that he is not really there. Anyone wanting to notice him must roll against a DN equal to 1d20 + (Mutation/Mental Invisibility) + WI modifier + (Stealth Skill) to notice him. Remaining invisible requires concentration. While invisible the mutant can move at only half speed and his dexterity bonus does not factor into his DV. Additionally he has to make a DN 10 WI test if injured while invisible. RRM: 1. MC: 4. R: -. D: -. FC: 2 / round. Skill: Mutation/Mental Invisibility (WI) +1.

Mental Paralysis (M)

The mutant can completely paralyze another sentient being. This requires a successful attack with a +5 DN for the mutant. The victim can't move for one round (although all vital systems work normally). The attack must be successful in each round to keep up paralysis. RRM: 1. MC: 4. R: 20m. D: paralysis. FC: 3 / round. Skill: Mutation/Mental Paralysis (WI) +1.

Multiple Limbs (P, V)

The mutant has up to eight extra limbs (either arms or legs). Extra legs add +2 to BS. Extra arms add +2 to DX. Extra arms allow two-handed fighting with but a -3 penalty to the secondary attack. The number of arms has no effect on the number of attacks. RRM: 4. MC: 2 (legs) / 4 (arms). R: -. D: -. FC: permanent.

Natural Attack (P)

The mutant has some natural feature (yet unnatural for his species) that allows him to attack with natural weapons. The natural attack has a damage bonus of +4. If horns or antlers are chosen and the character is charging both attack and damage test are awarded a bonus of +2. If any other feature is chosen the mutant gets an extra +1 attack test bonus. The natural attack methd (horns, jaws, claws, whip-like tail, etc.) must be clearly visible and cannot be hidden by natural means. RRM: 3. MC: 3. R: -. D: +4 or more. FC: permanent.

Night Vision (P, V)

The mutant can see 20 meters in total darkness and 40 meters in partial darkness. Colors are discernible only as shades of gray. RRM: 1. MC: 2. R: 20/40m. D:-. FC: permanent.

Partial Carapace (P)

The mutant is covered completely in a protective carapace (scales, exoskeleton, etc.). He is granted a +2 PV. RRM: 1. MC: 2. R: -. D: -. FC: permanent.

Quantum Architect (M)

The mutant is able to fiddle with the flow of time itself – at least on a very minor level. With one expenditure of this power he can repeat one die roll made in the last round from someone within 5 metres radius including himself. Unwilling targets must be attacked successfully. He can repeat this as long as he has the energy to do so. RRM: 2. MC: 5. R: 5 metres radius. D: -. FC: 15. Skill: Mutation/Quantum Architect (WI) +1.

Quills I / II (P, V)

The mutant is covered with quills. Touch attacks suffer an automatic response attack with a +5 bonus to attack and +3 to damage. The second level allows to fire quills at a range of 20 meters up to three times per day. RRM: 4. MC: 2 (I) / 4 (II). R: 20m. D: +3. FC: Quills +1 (II).

Regeneration I / II / III (P, V)

The mutants daily healing rate (see chapter XXX) is multiplied by three (I), six (II) or nine (III). If lost body parts must be regenerated, he only regenerates at his base healing rate but is able to restore a lost body part within

four weeks (I), two weeks (II) or one week (I). RRM: 0. MC: 3/5/7. R: -. FC: permanent.

Sonar (P)

The mutant can automatically emit high-pitched screams (inaudible for others without sonar) that allow him to get a vague impression about people, objects and places within 100 meters. When emitting such sounds no speech is possible. RRM: 1. MC: 4. R: 100m. D: -. FC: automatic.

Total Carapace (P)

The mutant is covered completely in a heavy protective carapace (scales, exoskeleton, etc.). He is granted a +5 PV. RRM: 2. MC: 4. R: -. D: -. FC: permanent.

Water Reservoir (P, V)

The mutant has a special internal water reservoir in his body. He can survive for about two weeks without any water after getting 6 liters of drink. RRM: 2. MC: 2. R: -. D:-. FC: permanent.

Wings I / II / III (P)

The mutant has wings that allow flight. Level I allows two 45 degree turn during movement, level II allows two 90 degree and level III allows arbitrary turns. Flight speed is equal to BS times the mutation level. RRM: 6. MC: 3 / 6 / 9. R: -. D: -. FC: automatic.

Defects

Defects are a balancing factor to mutations. Each defect has a point value. The number of defect points a character possesses must equal or surpass the mutation cost of his initial mutations. Each defect below is presented in the following format:
- Name
- Description
- Defect Points (DP)

Defect Overview

Roll for defects on the following table or select them individually (as decided by the GM). No defect can be selected more than once.
XXX Defect Table XXX

Defect List

The following defects are available to balance mutations.

Achilles Heel

The mutant has a particularly vulnerable spot on his body (players choice). When hit with a natural 20 any ensuing damage will be doubled. DP: 5.

Allergy

The mutant is allergic to one substance or energy. If he comes into contact with the substance and fails a DN 15 CN test he loses all actions for one round and suffers from allergic reactions of the players choice. Roll randomly for the type of allergy or choose it and accumulate the number of defect points listed in brackets: 1 – Pollen (2), 2 – Clay (2), 3 – Oil (2), 4 – Plastic (4), 5 – Iron (3), 6 – Bucks (5), 7 – Steel (4), 8 – Leather & Hide (5), 9 – Wood & Paper (3), 11 – Specific awakened plant genotype (2), 12 – Specific uplifted animal genotype (2), 13 – Paint (2), 14 – Wood (7), 15 – Bone (2), 16 – Soap (2), 17 – Raw Meat (4), 18 – Blood (5), 19+ - Radiation (7)

Body Change

Choose two body parts (skin, eyes, ears, hair, head, antennae, wings, nails, tail, facial features). These body arts are somehow different from the norm so that you are easy to identify if those body parts are visible. The changes grant no advantages or special abilities. DP: 2.

Bloodlust

The mutant must pass a DN 10 WI test each round he is facing blood in combat. Otherwise he attacks everything around him until he succeeds in another DN 15 WI test. DP: 5.

Chemical Susceptibility

The mutant receives a +4 DN whenever trying to resist alcohol, poisons, chemicals or acid. Additionally he gets drunk almost immediately when imbibing alcohol and then suffers a +3 DN to all DX-, PE- and IN-tests for 1-5 hours. DP: 5.

Cold Vulnerability

The mutant suffers 25% extra damage from cold. DP: 2.

Diminished Hearing

The mutant suffers a -3 to all sound-based PE tests and is unable to listen to conversations beyond the range of 3 meters. Loud noises beyond 10 meters cannot be heard either. DP: 2.

Diminished Sight

The mutant suffers a -3 to all sight-based PE tests and is unable to visually discern any details beyond the range of 18 meters. DP: 2.

Diminished Smell / Taste

The mutant is unable to smell or taste anything. Any taste/smell-based PE tests automatically fail. DP: 2.

Double Pain

The mutant suffers double penalties from all lethal harm (see chapter XXX). DP: 5.

Energy Sensitivity

The mutant suffers a +4 DN to all tests whenever he is within 2 metres of large energy sources (e.g. generators, fully charged mutants with the electrical generator mutation, robots, cars, artifical force fields). DP: 5.

Fadeout

The mutant must succeed at a DN 10 WI test in the first round of any combat. If this test fails he falls unconscious for 1-2 rounds because his body chemistry fails to work correctly. DP: 6.

Fire Vulnerability

The mutant suffers 25% extra damage from fire. DP: 3.

Greedy Metabolism

The mutant requires twice the normal amount of water and food to survive. DP: 5.

Hostility Field

The mutant subconsciously projects a mental field that irritates everyone around him and causes them to become quarrelsome and bad-tempered. Only those who know about this and have been in the field of effect for a week or more are immune to this effect. All others get a +4 DN to all reaction tests.

Malformed Mouth

The mutant has malformed speech organs which hinder his communicative abilities. He gets a +4 DN to all tests involving speech and active discussions. DP: 3.

Equipment

In this section a (non-exhaustive) list of items is presented. Each item is characterized by the following base data:
- Number (for random rolls)
- Name
- Minimum Tech Level (MTL)
- Value (in WB)
- Rarity (basically the DN for streetwise and other attempts to find such items).

Currencies

The Glowing Earth knows but one currency (besides direct exchange of goods): Bucks. Bucks are strange plastic cards of small size left over by the Final War. Their use in the Age of Wonder is a mystery, but the Ancients left ample supplies. Bucks come in several colours which determine their value. Most are additionally covered with strange and ancient runes and numerals but the meaning of these runes is lost. The following denominations exist:
- The base unit is one white buck (WB).
- Silver bucks (SB) are worth 10 white bucks.
- Gold bucks (GB) are worth 10 silver bucks or 100 white bugs.
- Platinum bucks (exceedingly rare to get by, PB) are worth 10 gold bucks, 100 silver bucks or 1000 white bucks.

An average craftsman earns about 5 white bucks per day of work.

Finding items

To find an item in a settlement to options are available: if the item has a minimum tech level that is no higher than the TL of the settlement, it usually will be available. If the item is of a higher tech level than the settlement the character has to make an appropriate skill roll to locate the item. There is a +4 DN modifier to this roll (against a DN equal to the rarity value of the item) for each TL difference between item and settlement after the first level (e.g. base DN + 4 for a TL IV item in a TL settlement). Furthermore the DN to find an item is modified by settlement size: small - +4 DN, medium: +0 DN, large: -4 DN. One attempt per week is permissible. Generally the base value of the item is multiplied by the final DN to locate the item divided by 10 (as a guideline for the GM). E.g. a DN 17 item with a base value of 100 bucks will cost about 170 bucks if located. Haggling is always an option.

Melee Weapons

Melee weapons add a few columns:
- Weapon Type (WT)
- Weapon Damage Modifier (WDM); If the term "Re" (for recharge) is added in brackets an unmodified roll in the given range means that the weapon ran out of fuel. Vibro weapons require a new energy cell, energy weapons will recharge within 1d20+10 hours and a Black Hole mace requires 1d20+40 hours to recharge.

XXX melee weapon table XXX

Vibro blades vibrate the weapon heads / blades at ultra-high speed so that each wound is pretty grievous. Energy weapons are combinations for high-profile blades / heads with energy fields of tremendous power. Energy melee weapons no longer have a blade but are made from pure energy. The most devastating melee weapon of all is the Black Hole Mace – a weapon able to create a mini black hole that either kills an opponent when hitting him or doesn't work at all.

Missile Weapons

Missile weapons add a few columns:
- Weapon Type (WT); SA stands for semi-automatic (and uses the automatic weapon skill) and A for automatic
- Weapon Damage Modifier (WDM)
- Range Increment (RI)
- Ammunition; for non-energy weapons two numbers, the first being the number of shots in a magazine and the second being the price for a loaded magazine; magazine rarity usually is 2-3 below weapon rarity. If the term "Re" (for recharge) is added in brackets an unmodified roll in the given range means that the weapon ran out of fuel. Vibro weapons require a new energy cell, energy weapons will recharge within 1d20+10 hours and a Black Hole mace requires 1d20+40 hours to recharge.

XXX missile weapon table XXX

Gauss weapons fire miniature rockets. Energy rifles fire laser beams. Plasma weapons fire super-heated plasma. Black Hole Weapons fire artificial black holes that exist for a split second in a confined fore field.

Automatic Weapons can fire 25% of their magazine and grant a +4 to the attack and cause 25% more damage. Semi-automatic weapons permit a second shot at +4 DN.

Armor

Armors add a few columns:
- Protection Value (PV)
- Protection Against (PA): before the slash: B – Blunt, S – Slashing / Bladed Weapons, P – Polearms, T – Twohanded; after the slash: T (Thrown), B (Bows & Crowssbows), G (Gunpowder), A (Automatic), E (Energy) / ; If the term "Re" (for recharge) is added in brackets an unmodified damage roll in the given range means that the weapon ran out of fuel and a new energy cell is required to reactivate the protective device.

XXX armor table XXX

Shields

Shields adds a Shield Defense Bonus (SDB) column. This bonus is added to parry rolls with a shield (see chapter XXX).

XXX shield table XXX

Other Stuff

This section collects other helpful items that characters might find useful. The description column provides additional information.

XXX other stuff table XXX

Loot

Loot can't be gained on the market – it is found by exploring ruins and defeating the hidden dangers of the places of the Ancients. Some loot is worth a fortune, other loot just a curiosity or plain junk. Although all tables in these rules list items by name the GM is well advised to just describe items in more or less general terms. It is much more exciting to find a "strange metal box with two openings on the top, a slider and a button and weird runes in the corner of one side" than just a "toaster". The loot table adds a description column with hints and comments.

XXX Loot table XXX

Combat

Combat is a central event of many campaigns and thus some basic rules are provided here to resolve conflicts. Since combat can be extremely variable you should be prepared to make up rules for new situations as they arise, by extrapolating from the rules defined in this chapter.

Combat Rounds

Combat is structured into rounds which are approximately 10 seconds long. Before each combat round, initiative is determined for each individual combatant. It is recommended to determine initiative for each PC individually. For larger groups of NPC opponents only one initiative result should be determined per group to speed up combat. In each round every combatant can act once or more (depending on initiative, see below). Combat ends when either all opponents of one side are dead, have surrendered or fled.

Initiative & Actions

Initiative is determined by rolling 1d20, adding the BIB of the combatant and the skill intended for use in the current round (whether weapon, mutation or other skill). Actions are announced dependent on the initiative results rolled in ascending order. Actions are resolved according to the result rolled in descending order. For each 10 points (or fraction thereof) of initiative result, the acting combatant immediately gets one action (e.g. one action for results of 1-10, two actions for 11-20, three actions for 21-30). Using non-combat skills might prevent more than one action (GM decision). If a combatant uses more than one skill in a round, only the first skill determines initiative. If no skill is used only the BIB applies.
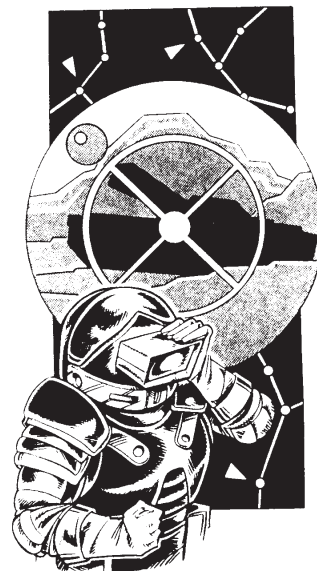
Movement

Everyone can move his BS per round without any negative effects. Attacks can be executed before or after moving but not during the move. It is possible to move twice the BS, but suffer a +5 DN to all tests and a -5 to DV. It is possible to move thrice the BS but tests become impossible and there is a -10 to DV.

Melee Attacks

Melee attacks are made by rolling a test against the appropriate combat skill. The DN is equal to the DV of the target. The target may decide to defend actively (see "Defense"). The following table lists common modifiers for attacks.
XXX attack modifiers XXX

Missile Attacks

Missile attacks are made by rolling a test against the appropriate combat skill. The DN is equal to the DV of the target plus 2 per range increment distance between attacker and victim (see chapter XXX for the range increment of weapons).

Defense

Each combatant can execute a number of defense actions per round equal to his active actions plus one. Additional defense action can be taken if the combatant has attack actions left over and is willing to give them up (one a one-on-one basis). Defense actions can either be parries or dodges. To be able to defend actively the combatant must be aware of the attack (e.g. see it coming or sense it in some other way).

Parries

Parries can only be used against melee attacks. To successfully parry an attack the defender needs to succeed on a test modified by PE and appropriate combat skill against a difficulty number equal to the attack result of the opponent. If defending against an armed attack, the defender must be armed, too. Otherwise he can only dodge. Only one parry attempt is possible against an attack. If the parry test is successful, no damage is taken. It is up to the GM to decide if the parrying weapon takes any damage while parrying.

Note that shields provide a significant parry bonus. Some mutations also might prove beneficial.

Dodges

Dodges can be used against both melee and missile attacks. To successfully dodge an attack the defender needs to succeed on a test modified by PE and DX against a difficulty number equal to the attack result of the opponent. Only one dodge attempt is possible against an attack. Some mutations also might prove beneficial.

Damage & Healing

If an attack hits and is not parried or dodged it causes fatigue or lethal damage and wounds. Determine the MoS of the attack test and roll for damage with 1d20 + ST modifier (melee) / PE modifier (missile) + weapon damage modifier + MoS of the attack – (PV of the target). Compare this to the wound threshold of the victim. If damage is less than the light wound threshold level, the attack caused but a scratch. If it is at least equal to the light HT but less than the serious HT, light harm was caused. If damage is equal to or greater than the serious HT but less than the deadly HT, serious harm was caused. If damage is at least equal to the fatal HT, fatal harm was caused.

Unarmed attacks cause fatigue damage. Fatal fatigue harm means that the victim drops unconscious and remains so for 1d20 minutes. All other attacks (except subdual attacks, see below) cause lethal damage. Lethal damage is subtracted from both Toughness and Endurance.

Additive Damage

If more than one damage type is inflicted with one attack (e.g. sword damage with a sword melee hit and electrical damage because the attacker has the Electrical Generator mutation), each damage is rolled separately. Effects are handled as if two attacks had hit the victim. The MoS of the main attack is being used if there is but one attack roll to resolve extra damage.

Harm

Inflicted harm hinders the victim when trying to succeed at tests (due to pain, impairment, etc.). Light harm inflicts a penalty of -1 to all tests. Serious harm inflicts a penalty of -4 to all tests. All harm penalties (non-lethal and lethal) are cumulative.

Fatigue

If fatigue damage causes the Endurance (EN) score to drop to zero, all further fatigue damage counts as lethal damage. Additionally the victim drops unconscious for 1d20 minutes. After this period the fatal harm is removed.

Wounds

Lethal damage reduces both Toughness (TO) and Endurance (EN). If TO drops to zero, the victim drops unconscious and is dying until stabilized. If fatal harm of lethal nature is inflicted, the victim also immediately drops to zero Toughness (or below if enough damage was inflicted by itself).

Dying

If a character is at "Dying" wound level, he loses one point of toughness per round until stabilized (see below) or dead. Death results from accumulating a negative number of TO equal to CN (e.g. -17 TO for a being with 17 CN).

Stabilizing Lethal Wounds

Lethal wounds can be stabilized by either a CN test against a DN of 10 plus the absolute number of current toughness (e.g. DN 17 if TO is at -7) or by a successful Healing test against a DN of 10 plus one half the absolute number of roughness (e.g. DN 13 if TO is at -7). If sudden movements become necessary to the target, the target has to pass a DN 10 CN test to avoid the descend towards death as described under "Dying".

Recovering Endurance

One point of EN is recovered per 10 minutes of rest. A night of sleep yields another (CN + CN modifier, minimum one) endurance points. These amounts are halved under stressful conditions. If marching or exerting oneself no endurance is recovered.

Recovering Non-Lethal harm

One level of non-lethal harm is recovered after 1d20

minutes of rest. The worst harm levels are recovered first.

Recovering Toughness

One point of TO is recovered per day. A night of sleep yields another (1 + CN modifier, minimum one) toughness points. Take the regeneration mutation into account if applicable.

Recovering Lethal Harm

Light lethal harm levels recover after three days. Serious lethal harm levels recover after two weeks. Fatal lethal harm levels recover after one month. Regeneration speeds this process up. Only one harm level is recovered at once (starting with the most severe level).

Physical Mutations in Combat

Using a skill-based physical mutation is a standard action. If the mutation attacks another being, a contested test of the attackers mutation skill + attribute modifier is rolled against the defenders CN modifier + WI modifier. Physical mutations without an assorted skill usually work automatically, don't require a roll or are dependent on the success of another test (e.g. Electrical Generator).

Mental Mutations in Combat

Using a skill-based mental mutation is a standard action. If the mutation attacks another being, a contested test of athe attackers mutation skill + attribute modifier is rolled against the defenders WI modifier times 2. Mental mutations without an assorted skill usually work automatically, don't require a roll or are dependent on the success of another test.

Special Manoeuvres

In the next sections a few special manoeuvres for use in combat are explained. Take these examples to make up creative manoeuvres of your own.

Attacking to Subdue

Sometimes opponents must be taken prisoner, even if only lethal weapons are at hand. To cause non-lethal damage with lethal weapons, the attacker must willingly take a +4 DN modifier for his attacks. If the attack succeeds nonetheless, the damage caused is pure fatigue loss.

Charging

The attacker must be able to move 1.5 times his base movement in a straight line towards the target. The attacker suffers a -2 to DV but gains a +1 to attack and melee damage is increased by one-third. Only one attack action is possible during a charge.

Disarming

The attacker must win a context of weapon skills. The defender gains a +4 bonus. If the defender is using a two-handed weapon he gains another +4. If the defender is using a heavier weapon than the attacker (GM decision) then he gains another +4 (not cumulative with the two-handed weapon bonus). If the attacker succeeds the weapon of the defender flies up to two meters into a direction determined by the attacker (but it must be in his view).

Fighting with Two Weapons

The attacker wields one weapon in each hand. The attack with the primary hand suffers a -3 attack penalty. The secondary hand suffers a -6 penalty. DX modifiers reduce these penalties (but not above zero). The weapon in the secondary hand must be smaller than the one in the primary hand (GM decision whether a weapon applies as a valid secondary weapon).

Wrestling

Wrestling is a contested test of wrestling versus the highest applicable weapon skill of the defender. If the attacker tries to wrestle an armed defender, the attacker gets a +4 DN modifier. If the attacker wins, he has gotten a hold on the defender. The defender suffers damage equal to 1d20 + (MoS of the wrestling attempt) if the attacker wants to damage him. The test is repeated each round. If the defender wins he is free again. Once a defender has been taken into a hold, the attacker no longer gains a DN modifier even if the defender was armed.

Encumbrance

BtG does not care for encumbrance. If you feel the need to add detailed logistics to your game use the rules for carrying capacity in chapter XXX and extrapolate item weights from real world items.

Hazards

Adventurers can encounter many hazards. A few of the most important are described below. Extrapolate others from these rules.

Heat

Fire causes damage according to its heat and size. A small torch simply causes 1d20 damage while a large bonfire might inflict 1d20+10 damage (plus suffocation damage due to smoke and lack of breathable air). Heat damage can go as high as 1d20+40 for being in touch with magma!

Cold

Cold causes fatigue damage. The GM must decide for which temperature range the clothing of the characters is appropriate. Per hour a 1d20 damage test is made (with +5 for every full 10 degrees centigrade below the minimum appropriate temperate for the characters) to determine the amount of fatigue points and non-lethal harm suffered.

Climbing & Falling

The GM has to determine the intervals at which climbing checks are appropriate. For trees and walls this usually

is once every BS meters, for mountains usually every BS x 100 meters or whenever the difficulty of the route changes.

Falling causes 1d20 (+3 per full two meters height) of lethal damage (to a maximum of 1d20+60). A successful acrobatics test with a DN of (fallen height in meters) will halve the damage suffered. Armor below TL V does not protect from falling damage.

Poison

Poison comes in lethal and non-lethal variants. Poison strength is measured as a damage modifier. Additionally poison is rated for its effect interval and its resistance DN plus its ingestion method. After ingesting a poison (either through digestion or the blood-stream) most poisons take effect until defeated by the immune system or the victim is dead. Once per interval the victim must pass a CN test to avoid taking damage. After succeeding at three tests or after a predefined maximum effectiveness duration has gone by the poison is defeated and no more checks are necessary. Weak poisons have a damage modifier of -4 to +4. Strong poisons have a damage modifier of +5 to +10. Near-fatal poisons have a damage modifier of +11 or more.

Swimming & Drowning

Swimming is very difficult while encumbered (+4 DN per (body weight / 20) carried). Additional strong currents also make it very hard to stay afloat (+2 DN to +8 DN). When swimming checks fail the character starts to drown. See the suffocation rules for details.

Suffocation

A character can hold his breath for a number of rounds equal to CN / 2 (modifiers due to mutation and skill apply). After this time the character suffers 8 fatigue per round until air is once more available or he dies. If the character is exerting himself this doubles to 16 fatigue points per round.

Radiation

Radiation still is omni-present in many areas. Depending on the level of radiation different effect occurs. Each radiated area is rated for the amount of time in which radiation damage occurs.
- Background radiation areas cause 1d20 burn damage (usually per day).
- Low-level radiation areas cause 1d20 burn damage (usually per hour or more).
- High-level radiation areas cause 1d20 burn damage (usually per minute).

Whenever a re-reroll occurs on a radiation damage roll or the character loses consciousness due to radiation damage and has suffered severe harm from radiation, he must pass a CN test against a DN of 10. If the MoS is five or less, the character has gained a defect if he survives the situation. If the MoS is six or more and the character

is able to mutate, a new mutation is gained (without the next to gain a corresponding defect). Such is the bliss of the Glow!

Radiation damage takes twice as long to heal as normal manage and regeneration doesn't help.

Campaigns

Tech Levels

The following tech levels (TLs) are used in BtG to categorize skills and items:
- TL I: The Age of Rock – People live in caves, don't know anything about mechanics and are farmers at best or hunters and gatherers at worst. Weapons is usually made from stone or wood, some bronze is in use. Money is almost unknown. Sophisticated languages exist but written forms are constrained by pictorial displays. Domesticated animals are the main labor force available besides Man (or whatever) itself.
- TL II: The Age of Metal – Craftsmen have become important. They know how to work metals and primitive mechanics are taking a more and more central part in societies. Wheeled carts are commonplace and weapons and armours have become much more sophisticated. People live in wooden or stone buildings (if rich) and seafaring is starting to become a science of its own. Written language is available to the rich or educated, common people are controlled with feudal systems.
- TL III: The Age of the Mind – This is the most common technology level on BtG campaigns. Gunpower weapons are starting to evolve, mechanics have become more refined and although the crafts still dominate everyday life, social aspects are becoming more and more important. Lively trade routes exist between major settlements although there are still huge swaths of backwoods almost unmapped. Reading and writing is becoming more coming although it is still an art for the rich or highly educated. Cannons are becoming a major influence in warfare and armor is on the decline. Steam power is used in various experimental stages.
- TL IV: The Age of Light – Electricity is commonplace. Chemistry, physics and biology are the foundations of this new era. Usually no societies have achieved this level of sophistication on their own after the Final War. But pockets of the Ancients and societies guided by machine brains and sentient robots comfortably manage to hold this technology level. Usually societies at this level are secretive or hide behind mystical facades to prevent jealousy and aggression from their retarded neigbours.
- TL V: The Age of the Bloodless – Robots are taking a major role in life. Living conditions are luxurious for almost everyone, computers commonplace and medicine is so effective that most diseases are on

the verge of destruction. Gene-engineering is on the rise and nanotechnology is starting to take an active role. Very few settlements will exist at this level – usually surviving ancients manage to keep this level of sophistication, although in very low numbers. Open displays of such wondrous societies are unknown and usually they use mystical or religious images to guard their achievements.

- TL VI: The Age of the Ancients – From modern Earths point of view this is an age of wonder. Nothing seems impossible and technology has solved most problems. Weapons are incredibly powerful, medicine can heal everything but final death, uplifted and awakened species exist side by side with humanity and education and finery is omnipresent. No societies of this technology level are known to have survived the Final War although some sentient machines must possess the resources to hold this level. Rumours abound among the knowledgeable yet nobody has managed to find any proof and return…

The Glowing Earth

Settlements

Pockets of civilization are few in the Glowing Earth setting. Many lives were lost and dangers still abound so many centuries after the Final war. Travel still is rather limited and always dangerous for small groups. The following typical settlements can be found:

- Small settlements: The most common form of settlement. Contains between 20 and 200 inhabitants and probably is surrounded by ditches or wooden stockades if it is at least a TL II community. Typical tech levels for small communities will be I-III.
- Medium settlements: Between 200-2000 inhabitants. Rather rare and famous in the surrounding villages. Usually tech level II-III. Often build atop the ruins of cities of the Ancients. Usually surrounded by wooden or stone walls and ditches. Contains a small militia to protect the inhabitants. Several guard towers will be available. If tech level and wealth permit, cannons guard the walls.
- Large settlements: Between 2000-5000 inhabitants. Extremely rare and usually only found in areas where the Ancients lived and damage from the Final War was rather minor. In even rarer cases located near sites of the Ancients that are particularly rich in spoils. In the latter case these settlements are highly comparable to boomtowns in the Old West on a weirder scale due to the many mutants and cults. In the former case probably the seat of a mighty empire. Standing army, stone wall, ditches, cavalry and heavy artillery included. Typical tech level will be III and pockets of tech level IV civilizations are known to exist in such cities. Sometimes rumors can be heard that secret TL V societies bide their time beneath the city and follow their own sinister plots.

Wilderness

The wilderness dominates the countryside between settlements. Nature surprisingly has thrived after the Final War, partially due to gardening nanotechnology running amok, partially due to unexpected effects from combined radiation and bio-weaponry.

Huge forests cover the landscape, interrupted by occasional death zones where weapons of the Final War ruined all life for eras to come. In those forests ruins wait for curious adventurers. Old military bases (or the ruins thereof) promise incredible wealth, only equalled by the amount of danger waiting for the inattentive.

Starting your own Campaign

Take your own neighbourhood, reshape the landscape somewhat, change names, erase major cities, move minor ones, add some death zones and build some new terrain types (a forest here, a crater there, maybe an active volcano and a death zone surrounded by a strange glass-like desert). Then define the new power structures, add some secret hoods (see next section) and alter the names to make them sound strange but nonetheless familiar (e.g. "Nuu Oooork" instead of "New York" or "Lonnen" instead of "London").

Finally determine the campaign plot (e.g. "machine brain tries to eradicate all flesh from the surface" or "secret mutant cult wants to conquer the ruins of a nearby site of the Ancients in order to usurp the peaceful uplifted animal leader of the region").

The themes for a campaign are endless – ranging from mercenary campaigns to exploration, from espionage to civilization building, from "stasis survivors" to "prophets of the green folk". Be creative and mix the well-known with the surprising, the accustomed with the alien and build a campaign with unique characters.

'Hoods

Hoods (derived from brotherhoods) are secret or overt organizations that follow specific goals and organized around their goals. They try to win converts and supplant their members and followers with knowledge and equipment if this furthers their goals.

The GM is encouraged to invent as many such hoods as necessary to provide plot hooks for his campaign. Below a number of example hoods are shown.

The Church of the Mushroom Cloud

XXX

The Pure
XXX

The Brotherhood of Darwin
XXX

Setting the Tone of the Campaign
The campaign is yours, Make sure that you and your players have the same expectations about how the campaign will work: Is the campaign very realistic and deadly or is it a wild and wahoo romp through cliches from the 30s.

Experience
Player characters have a current and a total experience score which reflects the knowledge they gained during their ventures. The total experience score is the sum of all experience points ever gained. The current experience score is the number of experience points not yet spent on improvements (see chapter XXX). Experience points can be gained in a variety of ways as explained below. Whenever experience is gained (usually at the end of a gaming session but also at other points as determined by the GM) it is added to both the current and the total experience point score.

Combat
The experience value of a defeated opponent is determined as DV + (average attack bonus) * 3 + (average damage bonus) * 5 + TO + EN / 3. Double this for particularly dangerous circumstances (ambushes, well prepared enemies, etc.).

Role-Playing
Award 20-200 experience points for great role-playing (for each encounter). The average should be around 30-50 points. Role-playing should be really exceptional to be eligible for an award.

Ideas
Whenever a PC has a particularly good idea, award him a mark. All experience points by the group should be summed up when rewards are due. Halve that amount and divide it by all idea marks gathered in the group – this is the basic idea award for each mark. Multiply the basic idea award by the number of marks for each PC to get the final idea experience award for the PC in question.
Playtime
Award each PC 10 experience points per hour real time played when the session ends.

Advancement
A player can increase the attributes and skills of his character by paying with experience points. The sections below explain how much individual improvements cost.

Players can never spend more experience points than the current experience score of their PC. Points spent are immediately subtracted from the current experience score – the total experience score is unaffected.

Increasing Attributes
To increase an attribute by +1 the PC must pay a number of experience points equal to the new attribute score times 200.

Learning New Skills
Learning a new skill always costs 100 experience points. The player pays 50% the usual cost for skills in his primary group, 75% the usual cost for skills in his secondary group and 100% the skill point cost for skills in all other groups.

Improving Skills
To increase a skill by +1 the PC must pay a number of experience points equal to (new skill squared) x 30 (e.g. 120 experience points for +2 skill, 270 experience points for +3 skill). Learning a new skill always costs 100 experience points. The player pays 50% the usual cost for skills in his primary group, 75% the usual cost for skills in his secondary group and 100% the skill point cost for skills in all other groups. Table XXX shows the experience costs to increase a skill by +1.

Foes

Reaction Tests
Glowing Earth is a hostile place and many enemies lurk around every corner. To determine initial reactions in an encounter, the GM should define the base attitude of the NPCs (or roll for it randomly: 1-5: hostile, 6-11: aggressive, 12-16: neutral, 17+: friendly). When the PCs first engage the NPCs, a reaction test (diplomacy test) should be rolled against a DN of 10. All modifiers from mutations, etc. apply. For each full five points MoS the reaction can be shifted by one step into the direction intended by the PCs. For each 5 points MoF the reaction is shifted into the opposite direction.

Robots
Robots are one of the most uncontrollable dangers of Glowing Earth. Some still follow ancient programming (long obsolete) and thus react in a weird manner towards the changed environment. Some seem to have managed to achieve sentience or almost-sentient states and some seem to have gone crazy over the centuries. Imagine a huge incredible high-tech-, well-guarded and over-armed machine brain with a legion of mechanical servants at its disposal – what could be more frightening? A dark legacy is lurking in the dark recesses and ruins of Glowing Earth – and PCs will have to cope with these dangers.
Below a short selection of typical robots is presented.

All robots are immune to mind-affecting mutations and they are neither influenced by effects directly targeted at life force. They have no endurance score (because they never tire) and are usually well-protected by layer of ultra-modern nanosteel. Some even sport horrific regenerating capabilities due to incorporated nanotech repair swarms.

Household Robot

Description: Household robots have been built to execute commodity functions and make life comfortable for their masters. Now most masters are dead for centuries and this does not bode well for the programming of such bots. Many in these days execute their previously reasonable tasks with a kind of manic depression (e.g. a house cleaning robot that regards all mutants as pests and starts its own pest control). Nonetheless there is certain chance that some robots even might be helpful if not at least neutral.
Statistics: DV: 12, PV: 10, TO: 40, HT: 20/30/40, Claws / Cleaning utensils +8A, +6D. BIB: +6. BS: 12m.

Guardian Robot

Description: Guardian robots are tasked with intruder detection and neutralization, property protection and similar semi-martial tasks. They fulfill these tasks with ruthless efficiency.
Statistics: DV: 16, PV: 16, TO: 60, HT: 30/40/50, Bladed claws +12A, +10D. Inbuilt laser rifles: +12 A, +14D. BIB: +10. BS: 18m. Hovering at BS.

Warrior Robot

Description: Warrior robots are efficient killers. Heavily armed and armoured, built from incredible tough materials and highly efficient they are near unstoppable forces that alone can obliterate whole villages.
Statistics: DV: 20, PV: 24, TO: 100, HT: 50/75/100, Warblades +18A, +14D. Inbuilt plasma rifles: +20A, +30D. BIB: +16. BS: 24m. Hovering at BS.

Warmachine

Description: Warmachines are the ultimate terror of the Final Wars. Each individually build is a nightmare of weapons array, ultra-heavy armor and lightning fast efficiency. The smallest warmachines are the size of an ultra-heavy tank while the largest tower over ten-level buildings. The statistics below are for a small warmachine. Usually warmachine are semi-sentient and possess excellent battle programs enabling them to devise sophisticated strategies and great schemes. Tremble before the wrath of a crazed-out warmachine!
Statistics: DV: 14, PV: 40, TO: 600, HT: 100/150/200, can execute a total of 3 attack types per round chosen from (a) 12 Plasma Rifles per round with +30A, +30D; (b) Mega-Flamethrower for +24A, +40D, range increment 30 meters; (c) 10 rocket throwers with a total of 100 rockets and +30A, +90D, explosion radius 20 meters and range increment 100 meters (d) Ultra-heavy plasma gatling gun for +40A, +70D and range increment 30 meters; and (e) melee ram

and crush for +20A and +100D (it's heavy!). BIB: +30. BS: 40m. Hovering at BS. Flying at one-quarter BS with one 90 degree turn per round.

Designer Notes

My name is Thomas Biskup. It's 4:43pm, on the 9th of July, 2005. I have decided to try my hand in the 24 hour RPG competition (see http://www.24hourrpg.com for details). The basic idea is to design, write and layout a complete role-playing game within 24 hours. The conditions are less than perfect – I have already been on my feet for more than eight hours after a week of very hard work, lots of reference stuff from my RPG collection is still buried in boxes from our recent move and our internet access doesn't work (so no inspiration and stuff from the 'net, *sigh*). Oh well… we grow with our challenges, don't we? And I'm a native German with very little English practice in recent months…

So what am I going to do? I have been a fan of Metamorphosis Alpha and Gamma World (originally from TSR, later from Wizards of the Coast / White Wolf / Fast Forward Entertainment) for ages. I always loved the setting but never managed to settle on one of the rule sets because they always seemed to be lacking in some respect. So now I'm going to build my game of post-apocalyptic mayhem, mutants and wackiness (yes, I also like the wacky parts). Not terribly original for a 24 hour RPG, but that should be a lot of fun for me which is what counts. I'll use this section to monitor my progress…

4:50pm – Gathering the reference material from all previous editions of the games mentioned. Then I'll start with the core rules.

6:10pm – The basic ideas for the rules are there. Now I am fleshing out character generation and the details of the rules.

8:48pm – Took a short break, wrote more stuff about the rules, worked on the layout for page headers and footers and now have about 50% of the front page design. If I just had Internet access… damn. A huge amount of work is left… 24 hours now seem very little time.

11:23pm – Slugging away at animal genotypes and initial mutations. Lots of work remains. More rules have been added everywhere. Anxious to get everything completed. Layout must be nice or I'm disappointed.

0:38am – just so the largest ever firework in Europe that was synchronized with music – which happened in a city nearby. Damn, that would have been an alternative to this marathon. I'm searching for a way to get through the mutations at greater speed because they slow me down immensely.

3:15am- I'm done with the animal genotypes. More mutations and more minor rules added. But I doubt I'm going to make it because the mutation list still is extremely short. Sentient robots by now have been removed as a character species because there is not enough time.

6:03am – Skills are done. Still almost no mutations and no equipment laid down in the rules. And at about 12:00am I should start to layout the final rules to prevent an utter

failure in the last minutes. Sleep deprivation is taking its toll – typos accumulate. What an experience…

9:20am – Equipment section mostly done. Tired. I need to work hard on the mutations now. Otherwise the central part of Beyond the Glow will be missing and everything a failure.

12:20am – Character sheet dropped. Mutations are about 40% done but I should already be working on the layout – which I am not. I'm really starting to fight so that all this gets together.

1:05pm – Less than four hours to go and the mutations mostly are only done until M. Oh well. I'll now work on the layout see to get as many holes as possible fixed till time is over. See ya.

2:28pm - Layout takes much longer than I had hoped for. Right now it seems thaz I am going to fail and 24 hours of continuous work won't yield a complete result. But I'm fighting...

3:22pm - Okay, it's a bit too late to learn the intricates of Adobe Indesign but that's what I am doing these minutes. Sigh...

4:45pm - And so it ends... phone calls not expected, Indesign too unwieldy (or me too minexperienced), problems converting Word data to Indesign, incomplete texts and nothing finished as intende... what a depressing disaster after 24 hours of non-stop work without sleep... good bye.