

House Rules for Shadowdawn

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Winter 2003

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ShadowDawn runs under a drastically variant version of Exalted, though a great deal is derived from Shadowrun and Earthdawn. We used to use mechanics based on GURPS.

If you want to create a character, start with Section 10. It gives advice focussed on those who had characters before we switched to these mechanics, but should be readily understandable anyway. It wil likely point you at many of the following:

1 Abilities

Archery also covers Firearms.

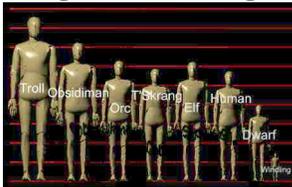
Craft pick one craft style per dot. For example: carpentry, blacksmithing, software.

Linguistics: Everybody starts with three languages; each dot of linguistics doubles the number of languages you know. Each written script counts as a language. Thus, you know 3×2^N languages with N dots of Linguistics.

2 Races

There are eight races in Camrish, five in Boston: Humans, Dwarves, Trolls, Orks, Windlings, T'Skrang, Elves, and Obsidimen. Only the five human-like races exist in Boston, so far. Look at the Shadowrun or Earthdawn books for details on races.

Some people have had trouble taking into account the sheer scale difference between, say, Trolls and Windlings. The following is provided as a reminder:



Stats should be bought as appropriate (low Strength and Stamina for Windlings, high for Goblins). Everybody gets a favored attribute, except Humans, who get two extra favored skills. Favored stuff is cheaper to advance and needs no training time.

The current system seems to give everyone a favored attribute (except for humans), plus require bonus points to be spent by some races:

- Humans get two extra favored skills, and require no background.
- Elves have Appearance, and spend two points on Low-Light Vision.
- Dwarves have Manipulation and spend three points on Thermal Vision.
- Orks have Stamina, and spend two points on Low-Light Vision. They get tusks for free: a Spd 0, Acc +1, Dam +2L, Def =0 Brawl weapon.
- Trolls have Strength, and spend three points on Thermal Vision. They get Horns for free: a Spd -3, Acc -1, Dam +5B Def =0 Brawl weapon.

- Windlings have Perception, and spend five points on Astral Vision. They can fly about as high as a normal man can jump.
- Tskrang get Wits as a favored attribute, and have a tail for free: a Spd -3, Acc -1, Dam +2B, Def -1 Brawl/MA weapon.
- Obsidimen are not a PC race. They have too much Plot.

3 Essence Pools

Everyone has an internal essence pool, that replenishes at a rate set by the mana level. Unless you are special (an Adept or a Born Mage), you can only use this essence for implanting or powering Cyberware or Artifacts which work through Blood Magic: you don't have the training to move your Essence around voluntarily, so have to do it by moving your blood, which symbolically contains your Essence.

Mundanes have a Personal Essence pool of $7 \times \text{Essence} + \text{Willpower}$. Their Essence is locked at 1. Born Mages have a mundane Personal Essence pool, and a Peripheral Essence pool of $2 \times \text{Essence} + 2 \times \text{Willpower} + 2 \times (\text{SumofVirtues})$. Their Essence is locked at 2. Adepts have Peripheral pools of $3 \times \text{Essence} + \text{Willpower}$ and Personal pools of $7 \times \text{Essence} + \text{Willpower} + \text{SumofVirtues}$. Their Essence starts at 2 and goes up.

Adepts who are also Born Mages have the personal pool of an Adept, but the peripheral pool of a Born Mage.

That gives the average mundane a pool of 10, though strong-willed people can get as high as 17. Born Mages start around $20 + 34$, and could in theory go as high as $24 + 62 = 86$. Apprentice Adepts start at $29 + 12$, full Adepts are about $48 + 20$, and in theory an Adept could get up to $72 + 28 = 100$.

3.1 Taint

In both settings, the Horrors have corrupted astral space, the source of magical power. The corruption is much more severe in Camrish than in Boston. Anybody who can access that power instinctively filters the pure Karma from the Taint: the result is the Personal Essence Pool. Most such characters also have a Peripheral Essence Pool: power they can draw on, but which isn't yet filtered and cleaned. Using that pool has serious negative side effects:

- You start to glow (same progression as in normal Exalted: see SystemReference for the table).
- You start to glow in astral space, potentially attracting the attention of a Horror. This is accompanied by bits of your body slipping into duality with Astral Space: Horrors and unmanifested spirits will be able to see and affect you. You can affect them too, but your dice pools are limited to the number of levels up the glowing chart you've gone.
- You take some damage: bashing in Open zones, Lethal in tainted, Aggravated in corrupted. There's no damage in Safe zones (Good Luck finding one in Camrish). This damage is equal to the total number of peripheral notes you've spent lately, soaked with Willpower. For the first few levels, then, you're risking 1B damage. As the amount of damage goes up, you risk rather more. You can deflect one instance of this damage by taking one point of Temporary Taint before rolling or one point of Permanent Taint after rolling.

3.1.1 As you pick up Taint...

You may forgo rolling your conviction to regain willpower to get rid of a point of temporary Taint, or spend a point of WP as the Taint comes in.

When you have 10 temporary Taint, you lose it all and, most of the time, *absolutely nothing happens* (Well, almost nothing. Most people blow off a little steam: see the Limit Break mechanic from Exalted). If you happen to be Horror Marked at the time, you gain a point of permanent Taint. Horrors can spend temporary taint (theirs or yours) to do bad things to you, like penalizing your dice pools by your permanent

taint, or adding it to your difficulty, or dealing it to you in damage, or use it to cancel your spending willpower, or other such nastiness. Getting rid of permanent taint is an endeavor worthy of a quest.

When you're Horror Marked, there's a chance that a Horror can take control of you: When your temporary Taint exceeds your permanent Willpower, it can spend a point of Taint to make you roll your Willpower vs. its Taint. If you lose, the horror takes control of you for a scene. Getting unMarked involves destroying the Horror or getting rid of all your Permanent Taint.

If your Permanent Taint exceeds your Willpower, a Horror can take control of you at the drop of a hat — this may be the sorry lot of Cadavermen.

See Thorns in Wraith: The Oblivion for examples of neat horror temptation powers. In addition to the possession mentioned above, be aware that other players may be drafted to play the Horror's voice in the back of your character's head. Also, they have the ability to offer you extra dice for an action; accepting causes you to accumulate a point of Taint for each 1 rolled. Don't get addicted. . .

The role of a Matrix would be to take the damage for you. If it collapses while damaged, the damage shifts to you ("collapse" is distinct from "takes too much damage and gets killed").

3.1.2 Other ways to acquire Taint

Expect NPCs in Camrish to know that brightly glowing people have been doing Dangerous Magic and should be avoided. Educated NPCs will know that glowing people are potentially Horror Marked.

What causes you to get temporary Taint points? Mostly stress: being a Hero is hard, and it's much easier to accumulate gobs of power and use it to be a jerk — just look at powerful people in real life. There are two ways for most people to get Taint points: if you have to fail a Virtue roll to avoid acting virtuously, and get successes on that roll, you can spend a point of Willpower and accept a point of Taint to ignore your Virtue for that situation. Second, pick a "Preferred Taint" for your character (a.k.a. a Virtue Flaw). It will have a condition attached, like "innocents suffering" or "publicly insulted." When that condition occurs, you must roll the Virtue associated with that condition and take that many Taint points.

4 Intuitive Magic

Intuitive mages are fairly wimpy in relation to Adepts.

They can take Dragon-Blooded charms and Spirit Charms. There are charms for healing, physical activity, combat (and being scene length, they compete well with guns), and divination. More can certainly be added. However, due to the general nature of the Spirit charms, it's very important to take the advice which comes with them: figure out what sort of spirit or magical creature might be in your character's ancestry, and flavor your charms appropriately.

Mages have an internal and an external essence pool (the external essence pool is what makes a mage stand out in astral space), access to Spirit Charms, and two favored skills, including access to charms in those skills. Mages have an Essence of 2, which can't be increased by normal means. The essence pool sizes are at Section 3. When an Intuitive Mage becomes an Adept, DB charms can be converted to the closest Adept equivalent.

Almost all mages take Occult as a favored skill, though Physads tend towards Athletics and some other physical skill, and many Shamans have Survival, Awareness or Socialize.

Most mages have the following charms:

Red Tide Fills the Inner Sea

Temperance 1, Essence 2, Simple, Instant

The mage specifies how many motes of Essence he wants, then soak that much bashing damage. Stamina helps, armor doesn't.

Gathering the Mantle of Essence

Temperance 2, Essence 2, Simple, Instant

The mage sacrifices a point of temporary willpower, and rolls Willpower + Occult. The number of successes is the number of motes added to the external essence pool.

Spirit-Detecting Glance

Temperance 1, Essence 1, Simple, Scene

For 3 motes, the character can perceive unmanifested spirits for the duration of the scene. This charm leads to many other astral-space charms.

Journey on the Sea of Wind

Temperance 3, Essence 2, Simple, Indefinite

The mage spends a willpower point, propelling himself out of his physical body and into the astral plane. When he leaves his body behind, his personal essence pool stays behind too: all he's got is his peripheral pool, which means he'll be taking damage every time he casts a spell while projecting. His personal essence pool decays by 3 points per hour while he's not paying attention to it; if it empties completely, the body dies.

In low mana zones, a mage's external pool may be stripped away, forcing him to expend a point of willpower to cast any spell. In addition, low mana zones may slow or stop the replenishing of the inner pool, forcing the mage to burn his own body to replenish them.

Spending motes from the Peripheral Essence pool used to be safe, before the Horrors came, but now causes problems from Taint: see Section 3.1 for rules.

Intuitive Mages' most significant ability is easily their relationship with the spirits of the world: Intuitive Conjury.

4.1 Intuitive Conjury

Calling Elementals

Occult 2, Essence 2

Costs ten motes, a Willpower, and a four hour ritual, contesting your Essence+Willpower against the spirit's. Each test after the first takes another hour. Expect the Spirit — being native to the astral — to beat you on Essence. So you'd better beat it on Willpower. The materials for this summoning are a Resources N expenditure, where N is the Essence of the spirit.

You can spend additional motes of Essence in five-mote chunks to reduce the size of its pool for by one die for one roll (so you could spend 50 motes to knock it down ten dice this roll, or five this and five next...). You may spend no more chunks than your Occult score.

If you get three successes more than it, it follows you around for up to a month, bound to perform a service for you (or goes off immediately to perform one task taking up to a year). If you want multiple services, or multiple years in a long term service, you need that many more successes.

If it gets a number of successes equal to your Charisma more than you, it goes free. If you're in a warded space (a circle), you get a reflexive chance to banish it (Wits+Occult, difficulty 3). Then it beats the tar out of you.

Elementals can perform physical services, use their various powers for you, or tutor you in sorcery.

Calling Nature Spirits

Occult 2, Essence 2

Costs ten motes, a WP, and a one-round ritual; each test after the first takes another round. Everything else works as above, except that the spirit will only follow you around waiting to perform a service for a number of *scenes*, not months, and will perform long-term services for *days*, not years. They will not leave their Domains under any circumstances. There is no resource expenditure. They don't stick around long enough to tutor you.

Calling Loa

Occult 2, Essence 2

Works a lot like calling Nature Spirits, except they don't have domains. An expenditure for sacrifices worth N dots gives you N bonus dice to use. Loa don't ever manifest, but all have possession charms instead. Most have charms to only possess you, giving you their skills and social attributes (sometimes more!), but leaving you in control.

Contesting control works the same way — ten motes and a WP to start the contest — but the contest is between the two mages, to a threshold of opponent's Charisma + spirit's remaining services. If you currently control the spirit, you can have it use a service to help you (adding its Willpower+Essence for a round)

Banishing also works the same way, except that it's a contest against both the spirit and it's summoner (if any), with a threshold of its Essence + his Charisma vs. your Charisma.

5 Disciplines

An Adept gets an internal and a peripheral essence pool, an essence of 2, and 8 favored skills: four predetermined by discipline, four tailored to your view of the discipline (get GM approval, back up with philosophy).

Essence is effectively a measure of circle — see Section 6. Charms in favored skills are cheaper, and don't require training, but mechanics-wise you can buy any charm which seems relevant to your Discipline; expect any charms with Essence requirements above 2 to be turned down, but go ahead and ask. At least half your charms must be in favored abilities. This means any adept can acquire the basic defensive charms should they choose.

Archer: Archery, Athletics, Awareness, Dodge

Warrior: Melee, Martial Arts, Athletics, Resistance

Swordmaster: Melee, Presence, Socialize, Dodge

Raider: Brawl, Sail, Presence, Larceny

Cavalry: Ride, Melee, Endurance, Performance

Seeker: Lore, Investigation, Presence, Larceny

Smith: Crafts, Resistance, Bureaucracy, Lore

Troubadour: Presence, Performance, Socialize, Linguistics

Thief: Larceny, Stealth, Dodge, Thrown

Beastmaster: Endurance, Resistance, Brawl, Survival

Wizard: Occult, Bureaucracy, Lore, Investigation

Elementalist: Occult, Crafts, Medicine, Survival

Illusionist: Occult, Larceny, Performance, Stealth

Nethermancer: Occult, Survival, Socialize, Medicine

5.1 Becoming an Adept

Becoming an Adept requires accumulating twenty points of Legend and tying a thread to the Name of your Discipline.

On becoming an Adept, a character's Essence is immediately set equal to two, he gains three Ability points, and five attribute points (two each into his Primary and Secondary groups, and one into his Tertiary group). All of his charm slots are immediately spent on Adept charms. His Essence pools switch to the Adept formulae and are filled.

In most cases, his anima banner flares to the Iconic level (without causing any damage; it's just an announcement that one of the pivots of reality is walking among you).

The character also gains a Virtue Flaw.

5.2 Discipline Magic

Disciplined Magicians have access to two different spell-casting mechanics. One is very flexible, but produces relatively weak spells; the other uses rigid, highly specialized spell lists, but the spells are extremely powerful (e.g. “Depose Ruler and Gain Loyalty of Populace”). We’ve been calling these “Low Sorcery” or “Sphere Magic” and “High Sorcery” or “Ritual Magic”. Low Sorcery uses Spheres of magic — broad fields like “Movement” or “Summoning.” Many of these Spheres are divided into several levels. Learning a level N sphere requires Essence N+1. For Example, Illusion is broken into Illusion I, Illusion II, and Illusion III. A character needs Essence 2 to learn the first, Essence 3 to learn the second, and Essence 4 to learn the third. High Rituals are bought just like charms, and are divided into three Circles (Terrestrial, Celestial, and Solar). In order to learn any spell of the Terrestrial Circle, you must have the charm Terrestrial Circle Sorcery, which requires Essence 3 and Occult 3. Similarly, there are prerequisite charms for Celestial Circle Sorcery and Solar Circle Sorcery, each of which require an additional point of Essence and Occult.

In addition to buying Spheres and High Rituals, a Disciplined Magician is expected to be able to use Charms relevant to his Discipline: usually Craft for Elementalists, Larceny for Illusionists, and so on.

5.2.1 Matrix casting

Using Sorcery of either form draws on great quantities of astral energy, attracting the attention of nearby Horrors and risking damage or corruption of the caster. The Ancients devised ways of mitigating this risk, called Spell Matrices. A Spell Matrix is an astral construct which filters pure mana from the tainted, corrupted cesspool of the Astral Plane.

The following Occult charms allow for matrix casting

Spell-holding Matrix Attitude

Takes 10 minutes (possibly in parallel with itself), costs 1 Willpower, 5 essence (committed).

Minimum Essence 2, Minimum Occult 1, 2, 3, 4, 5... (is its own tree, like Ox Body)

Creates a spell matrix.

A spell matrix is effectively a mook, with the three mookish health levels (-1, -3, Incap.). When it takes the incapacitated box in damage, a matrix collapses (regardless of the damage type).

Matrices cast using your actions, your essence pool, and your dice pools (so a damaged matrix casts at a penalty based on the damage). They take the bad effects of using your Peripheral Essence for you (see Section 3.1), and have a soak for that purpose equal to your Willpower. They can be hurt as spirits: for purposes other than absorbing damage from tainted astral space, they have a bashing soak equal to half your Willpower, and a lethal soak of half that again.

A matrix is created with a spell in it. The spell may be changed by meditating for ten minutes and making a Manipulation+Occult roll against a difficulty based on the type of spell (2 for basic, 3 for intermediate, 5 for advanced) with appropriate penalties for the local corruption of astral space. You will probably be burning Willpower for more dice in order to load larger spells. Trying to change spells in a single turn adds 2 to the difficulty and requires a point of Willpower. Failure collapses the Matrix.

Reweave the Fraying Matrix

(essence 2, occult 3, requires spell matrix) Simple, costs 1 Willpower.

The mage makes an Intelligence+Occult roll. He may remove a number of health bashing or lethal levels of damage from his matrices equal to the number of successes on this roll. Each lethal health level healed costs 1 mote of Essence. Reweaving clears all the threads woven to the matrix: that is, it empties the pool of power dice.

Woven Armor of Creative Thought

Essence 3, Occult 4, requires Reweave the Fraying Matrix

This adds your Essence to the bashing and lethal soak of a spell matrix. It is a Simple charm, costs 5 motes of Essence, and lasts for one scene.

Greater Efficiency of the Enhanced Matrix

essence 4, occult 5, requires Reweave the Fraying Matrix. Reflexive, Variable Cost.

Each mote of Essence spent on this charm reduces the cost of all spells cast by the character for the rest of the scene by one mote. No more than half the cost of a spell may be payed by this charm. For example, even if you've spent ten motes on Greater Efficiency, you still need to pay five motes to cast a ten-mote spell.

Advanced Spell Pattern Combining Method

essence 5, occult 5, requires Woven Armor of Creative Thought. Simple charm, Costs 1 willpower and 10 essence, Duration Indefinite.

Changes a matrix into a share matrix, which has a number of "slots" equal to the mage's essence. Basic spells take 1, intermediate 2, and advanced 3. A matrix can cast any spell loaded into it at the direction of the mage. This charm lasts as long as the Essence is committed.

Petty Wizard's Way

essence 2, occult 1. Supplemental, 2 motes per success

After making your (whatever) + Occult roll, you may use this Charm to buy extra successes, up to (Essence) + (Successes rolled). This Charm can be used on any use of Occult that mortals can attempt: sensing magic, making talismans, reading omens, trying to contact spirits without Sorcery, and so forth.

5.2.2 Sphere Magic

Magician Characters buy Spheres of magic. Spheres cover relatively broad areas of competence: Earth Magic, Divination, Movement, Illusion, Summoning, Fire Magic, Weather, Metamagic. A Sphere of Level N costs N+1 times as much as a Charm.

The sphere templates are at <http://www.evenmere.org/~bts/Shadowdawn/>:

When a magician wants to cast a spell, he spends some number of turns weaving threads to a matrix: he rolls Wits+Occult (casting from a grimoire or other slow, ritual casting would be Int+Occult). Each success is a "power die" used for the actual casting. The difficulty of these weaving rolls is usually 0, but it is increased for lack of concentration, warding, and (important!) for difficult spells. I'm thinking that basic sensory effects are difficulty 1, but small changes and creations are 2-3, Big Effects are difficulty 4 or 5.

On a failure, the difficulty of future rolls goes up by one. On a botch, a WP point is spent and the difficulty goes up. On a second botch, the whole pool blows loose.

Thread-weaving costs you one mote per difficulty level per round spent casting. All such essence counts as if it were spent from your Peripheral pool for causing you to flare and take Taint, so you *really* want to use a matrix (which absorbs all the bad effects for you). It costs a Willpower point per scene to hold a spell ready to cast. Difficulties are:

1. Lesser Preservations
Making a blade shiny, holding a spirit astral, sharpening a sword.
2. Lesser Creations and Destructions
Creating fire, summoning a spirit, Blinding a man, destroying something with only a common noun for a name
3. Lesser Changes and Major Preservations
Illusion disguises, Sculpting a palace from a tree, Making a blade sharp forever, approximating eternal youth
4. Lesser Divinations
Can you tell I've been scarred by the Power of Divination? Yeek. Not that Preservation is necessarily less powerful. . .
5. Major Creations and Destructions
Creating new spirits, Closing off a metaplane

6. Major Changes

Renaming

7. Major Divinations

The Prophecy of the Dreamers

When the magician is satisfied with the threads he's woven, he rolls his power dice (there is a Dice-Adder charm for this, called Willforce). He then spends successes from this roll on range, duration, target, and effect:

- Target: 1 target base, 1 target per success
- Volume: 1 yard radius base, doubled per success (Barring tightly packed formations, this hits as many people as a Target result.)
- Mass: 50 lb base, doubled per success
- Duration: momentary base, ten minutes, 30 minutes, then one scene per further success.
- Range: Precise action: one meter per success; General action: base 10m, doubled per success. (This puts longbows as the premier ranged weapon, not fireballs.)
- Damage: 2 HL per success
- Bonus: +1/-1 die to another roll per success (For magic tools, for example. Also for buying yourself some Perception where your body isn't for scrying.)
- Control: resisted by WP, difficulty of Essence.
- Movement: base of average walking speed; doubled per success

5.2.3 Ritual Magic

Spells and inspiration for them should be taken from the Exalted Sorcery system — see the main book or the Book of Three Circles. Remember to stay in-genre for your Discipline when picking spells. Also, all Essence spent on such spells counts as if it came from your Peripheral pool: see Section 3.1 for details of why Matrices are a really good idea.

6 Advancement

At the end of a session, every player gets 7 XP to spend on his character. Favored entities can be increased without training time, but most other statistics take time and often a tutor to increase. Those who perform useful or particularly entertaining activities related to the game get an extra XP. Those who achieve some special success in-character receive an extra XP.

In addition, a character should track Legend Points. When a character performs a legendarily heroic (or heroically legendary) action, his player rolls the associated virtue and accumulates one Legend Point per success. Particularly anti-heroic actions can cause you to roll the relevant virtue and lose one LP per success. Legend Points are tracked on four scales: Glory (Valor), Mettle (Conviction), Succor (Compassion), and Wisdom (Temperance). In order to advance, a character needs to have a certain total number of LP; the distribution is not important for advancement.

Characters start with the minimum LP for their Essence, distributed at the whim of the player. You can buy the Legend background for your character to get more (see Section 7).

Getting to higher Circles requires more:

Old Circle	Circle Title	Essence	Min. LP
1-3	Apprentice	2	20
3-5	Journeyman	3	50
5-7	Master Journeyman	4	90
7-9	Journeyman Master	5	140
9-11	Master	6	200
12-14	Warden	7	270
15	Master Warden	8	350

If you fall below the minimum Legend requirement for your Essence, you lose access to that point of Essence until it's back up again. You can spend the XP or do the meditations without having the minimum Legend, but it doesn't do any good until you meet all three requirements.

I'd still like to implement a mechanic whereby you need to go tell stories about your Legendary Deeds; the Lunar mechanic of doing so at Face advancement (i.e. Circle advancement) time doesn't quite apply to us. I'm thinking about having LP accumulate "Unsung," and then you go have them Sung and they get moved to "real" LP where you can use them for advancement. Successes on your Performace roll to tell the stories shouldn't modify how many you get, but rather how long it takes to get your Legend spread around among enough people: normal people might need to spend months talking about those Kobolds they skewered, but a Troubadour can do it faster.

6.1 Experience Costs

Attributes cost four times their current value to increase, and require one month of training time per current dot. Favored attributes require no training time, and have a discount of 2 XP at each level (so $4x-2$). Strength 2 to Strength 3 costs 8 XP and takes two months.

Abilities cost two times their current value to increase, and require one week of training per current dot. Favored abilities require no training time, and have a discount of 1 XP at each level (so $2x-1$). Melee 2 to Melee 3 costs 4 XP and takes two weeks. Buying a new ability costs 3 XP, even if it's favored, and takes 3 weeks of training if it's not favored. Buying a dot of specialty costs 3 XP and takes three weeks of training time.

Adept Charms cost 10 XP each, but only 8 XP if they're in a Favored Ability. It takes one day of practice per dot of minimum ability if they're favored; one day of training per dot of minimum Essence + one day per dot of minimum Ability if they are not favored.

High Rituals (Exalted Sorcery) have the same cost as Charms, but require one week of study per Circle (there are three circles of spells). Low Rituals (Spheres) cost several times as much as Charms (twice as much at the low levels, up to four times as much for level 3 spheres) and require one month of study per Circle.

Spirit Charms and Intuitive Sorcery Spells cost 15 XP if they're not in a favored Virtue, 12 XP if they are favored.

Essence costs 8 times its current rating to increase. One month per current dot of Essence is required.

Virtues and backgrounds cost 3 times their current rating to increase. Backgrounds cannot normally be increased, and require a special exception from the GM. Get it in writing, because he probably won't believe you when you mention it later. No training time is needed for Virtues.

Willpower costs 2 times its current rating to increase. No training time is needed for Willpower.

To reprise charm costs:

Solar: 5 BP, 4 if favored, 10 XP, 8 if favored. Used for Adept abilities only.

Spirit: 7 BP, 5 if favored, 15 XP, 12 if favored. Used for Born Mage / Physad abilities.

DB Charms: 7 BP, 5 if favored, 12 XP, 10 if favored. Used for Born Mages and Physads.

7 Backgrounds

We've changed several backgrounds

7.1 Artifact

The native type for Adepts is Orichalcum. Orichalcum is unfortunately quite rare; what you get for your Artifact background is usually Living Crystal, which uses the Jade mechanics. You can get better materials by paying more artifact dots — ask.

7.2 Resources

We're experimenting with a new mechanic at ExaltedHackingResources, but it's not official yet. At character creation, you can have gear with prices up to your Resources background: if you have Resources 3, you can have as many Rsrc 3 items as your character can use himself.

Extra/Fake identities are bought with Resources: a more expensive ID is usually better.

7.3 Karma Ritual

You are connected to the Name of a Discipline, and draw mystic power from it. You receive the following benefits on any day in which you do your Karma Ritual (a half-hour rite symbolizing your Discipline):

1. 1 WP when you do your Ritual.
2. 1 WP every morning and 2m/hour.
3. A point of WP once during the day as a Reflexive action, 3m/hour.
4. 1 WP every twelve hours as a reflexive action, 4m/hour.
5. Every six hours, reflexively gain 1 WP. 6m/hour.

7.4 Legend

This is taken pretty directly from the Renown background in Lunars: everybody starts with 20, and background dots (or increased Essence) give you more. You should detail what events gave you such great renown. Also, divide your Renown between Glory (Valor), Succor (Compassion), Wisdom (Temperance), and Mettle (Conviction). You can start with more Legend to mechanic a character who has achieved more before the game starts:

1. +5 Legend
2. +10 Legend
3. +15 Legend
4. +25 Legend
5. +40 Legend

Legend is directly tied to Circle. The requirements for various Circles are discussed in Section 6

7.5 Equipment

7.5.1 Cyberware

Go see Section 7.6: it's bought as a separate background, not with Resources.

7.5.2 Modern Melee Weapons

Trinity's vibroblades are somewhat anemic, with their only effect being an extra level of Lethal damage. I'm inclined to say that a more appropriate mechanic is being able to use them as normal knives, or to turn up the juice and trade Acc for damage (1 points of Acc for 1 level of damage). Monoswords should get the "target arrow" effect: they ignore half of armor. Monowhips ignore all mundane armor.

7.5.3 Firearms

We can raid Trinity for much of this. Use the numbers as written, which will make them marginally cooler than equivalent Trinity weapons due to some changes in how extra successes work between Trinity and Exalted. Expect pistols to do 5L, rifles to do 7L. Tanglers work just fine as written, and their lasers and other scifi guns are also fine. Their normal grenades are fine. We do need a mechanic for stunners, and I think for breaking out of Tangler Goo. I suggest “Strength+Athletics check, Diff=the current tangler penalty” for the latter. There are two choices for stunners: weapons that do bashing damage (already in Trinity, and they ignore armor, too!), or “all-or-nothing” weapons like we’ve been using, which roll their “damage” + Extra Successes with a difficulty of your Stamina+Resistance; if it succeeds, you pass out for 10-Stamina minutes. Average humans have Stamina 2, Resistance 0. Particularly cool normals may get as high as Sta+Res 5. PCs can be assumed to go as high as 10. Stunners should be pretty guaranteed against normals, failing or requiring multiple shots on Ork Alcoholic Monks. Stunners are armor-penetrating, so half your Bashing soak gets subtracted from their dicepool.

A Stunner, then, might do a base damage of 5. A Stun Rifle might do 7, with a longer range. They both have a Rate of 2, the same as handguns.

A smartlink, as defined over in Section 7.6, gives you +2 Acc and “acts as a scope”. Well, what’s a scope do? It gives you virtual Perception with which to aim. A laser sight or other electronic sighting aid lets you “aim faster” — getting as much as +2/round from aiming instead of +1. A normal Resources 2 laser sight gives you a +2 instead of a +1 on your first round of aiming. Each extra dot of resources lets you do that for another round: a Resources 5 laser sight custom-made for your hand-to-eye distance and your gun would let you accumulate 2 dice/round for four turns of aiming, assuming you had a Perception of 8. A magnifying scope gives you an effectively larger perception: a normal resources 3 scope gives you +2 Perception, and each resources dot after that gives you another +2. A resources 5 scope would thus grant +6 perception while aiming through it (or looking through it, using it as a telescope). Smart-goggles, a way for non-cybered people to gain some benefit from a smartgun, act as a basic scope and a basic laser sight (+2 perception, +2 bonus on first round of aiming).

The Resources 4 ECS from the Trinity Tech Manual should thus be looked at as a Resources 4 Scope (+4 perception) and a Resources 4 Laser Sight (fast aiming for the first three rounds of combat).

7.5.4 Armor

Don’t use armor out of Trinity: it’s calibrated for a very different sort of game.

Armored clothing grants 2L/0B, 3L/0B for heavy clothing like trenchcoats, both with no mobility penalty. It’s Resources 2.

Monocrys comes in Light, Medium, and Heavy versions. Medium and Heavy versions can be fitted with Cerametal plates. Light Monocrys is skintight and commonly worn under heavier suits like CID and ICA. Light Monocrys gives 3L/0B soak, with no mobility penalty. Medium gives 4L/0B with no mobility penalty, Heavy gives 5L/1B with a mobility penalty of 1. Cerametal gives +2B, +1 penalty. Resources 3, and the plates are Resources 3.

Combat Infantry Dress (CID): 6L/5B, penalty 2. It is assumed you will have Light Monocrys under your CID, raising it to 9L/5B. Resources 4.

Infantry Combat Armor: powered suits worn on the 2060 battlefield. 6L/6B, penalty of 1, +3 to Strength while it’s powered. Penalty of 5 when unpowered. It is assumed you will have Light Monocrys under your ICA, raising its stats to 9L/6B. Resources 6.

7.5.5 Still Needed

Blood Charms. Cool Medical Drugs and their effects, if any. A boat for the good Captain.

7.5.6 Healing Potions

There are three kinds of common healing potion in Camrish: “heal your next HL as if it were one level less severe” for Boosters, “heal at 10x for the day” for healing potions, and “Make a Stamina+Endurance roll at

a difficulty equal to the number of overkill HLLs? you've taken. If it succeeds, you are alive at Incapacitated" for LCS and Death Cheat charms.

7.6 Cyberware

Cyberware N buys you an N-dot piece of cyberware and a collection of smaller pieces adding up to size N.

Take the max rating R of your cyberware (It will likely be equal to the background level). Your personal essence pool is now $(7-R)E+F(\text{stuff})$ instead of $7E+F(\text{stuff})$. All points lost from the Personal pool are moved to the peripheral pool — even for mundanes. Don't forget Taint effects.

Example: You, a mundane with Willpower 3, buy Cyberware 5. Your 5-dot item is Wired Reflexes 4. You also take a Skillwire Processor (3 dot), Cybereyes (1 dot) and a Smartgun Link (1 dot). Your personal Essence pool is now $2x\text{Essence}+\text{Willpower} = 5$, and your peripheral pool is $5x\text{Essence} = 5$.

7.6.1 Headware

Datajack (1 dot)

Activation cost 1, duration scene, type simple

This gives you the minimum necessary to get into the Matrix. Without a cyberdeck you have a performance rating of 0.

Chipjack (2 dot)

Activation cost Special, duration scene, type simple.

May use one datachips, simsense, or skillchip at a time. Activation cost is 1 for data or sim, and is the level of the Skillchip for skillchips. Skillchips skills can only add to social and mental stats without skillwires. Chipped skills replace innate skills, they do not add. Includes a Datajack.

Enhanced Chipjack (3 dot)

As Chipjack

As Chipjack, but may access up to 4 chips at one time.

Skillwires (N dots)

Activation cost None, but requires chipjack activation to do anything useful.

Lets you use up to $2(N-1)$ levels of chipped skills, no skill can be higher than N.

Cybereye (1 dot)

None

This gives you a cybernetic eye neither better nor worse than a normal human eye. Any other eye enhancements have their activation costs reduced to 0. Also, all flare attacks against eye have +1 difficulty, and it comes with an optional clock. It is not cool to have a blinking 12:00 in the corner of your vision.

Thermographic Vision (1 dot)

Activation cost 1, duration scene, type simple.

When activated, the character can see into the infrared. This halves low-light penalties. (Round to the greater penalty)

Low-Light Vision (1 dot)

Activation cost 1, duration scene, type simple

When activated, the character can see better in dim light. This halves low-light penalties (Round to the lesser penalty)

Magnification(1 dot)

Activation cost 1/, duration scene, type simple

When activated, the character can see better at long range. Each mote spent reduces range and distance penalties to combat or perception rolls, up to a maximum of removing half the penalty.

Eye Camera(1 dot)

Activation cost 0, duration momentary, type reflexive, requires cybereye.

May take pictures or video at will, needs cyber memory, a datachip in a chipjack with space, or a datajack connected to a computer to save pictures.

Deluxe Cybereye(3 dot)

As Cybereye

A cybereye with Thermographic vision, low light vision, magnification, and an eye camera.

Cyberears(1 dot)

Activation cost 1, duration scene, type simple

Add +2 dice to all Perception rolls involving hearing.

Crainial Cyberdeck (N dot)

duration scene, type simple

A Performance N-1 cyberdeck. Datajack included, but memory highly recommended.

Headware Memory (N dot)

Always On

Stores N^2 units of info.

Phone (1 dot)

Activation cost 1, duration scene, type simple

A cellphone, and related peripherals (normal and subvocal mikes, etc.).

Radio(2 Dot)

Activation cost 2, duration scene, type simple

A multi-frequency radio. Stores one set of encryption keys (changable via induction). Can use a chipjack to hold more encryption info.

Comm system (3 dot)

Activation cost 3, duration scene, type simple

A cell phone, a radio, a full crypto system and multiplexor.

7.6.2 Bodyware**Smartlink (1 dot)**

Installation cost 1, activation cost 1, duration scene, type reflexive

When activated, one smartlink-enabled gun in your hands can be used with +2 Acc, also counts as a scope. This charm is cheaper than it should be to mimic the ridiculous proliferation of smartlinks in Shadowrun.

Wired Reflexes(N)

activation cost 4m, duration scene, type reflexive

Bonus of +2(N-1) initiative, May ignore (N-1) in multiple action penalties, Persistent Reflexive dodge (N-1). Roll wits-(N-1)(min 1) to not react (fight/flight) when startled or surprised. Soak (N-1)B each combat round after the first Stamina+resistance rounds.

Boosted Reflexes(N)

activation cost 3m, duration scene, type reflexive

Bonus of +N initiative, May ignore N in multiple action penalties N times per round, One extra dodge at N per round. Roll wits-N(min 1) to not react (fight/flight) when startled or surprised. Always on.

Muscle Replacemnt (N)

Always on

Bonus of +N to all Strength and stamina rolls(not soak). +N to all perception rolls to notice Muscle replacement. Max bonus is unaugmented strength.

Muscle Augmentation(N)

always on

Bonus of +(N-1) to all Strength rolls, +(N-1) to athletics rolls, +(N-1) to Dex for purposes of derived movement values. max bonus = unaugmented strength

Dermal armour (N)

always on

Bonus +NB/+NL soak. +N to all perception rolls to notice Dermal Armour. Max N=min (unaugmented strength, unaugmented stamina)

Orthoskin (N)

always on

May roll N dice when taking lethal damage. Each success changes one lethal level to a bashing level. Max N = unaugmented stamina

Claws(2 dot)

Activation cost 2, duration scene, type reflexive

Str+1L damage, retractable

Bone Lacing (N)

Always On

Bonus +N stamina, adds to soak totals, leathal soak is min(N, (Natural Stamina+N)/2). Max N = unaugmented stamina

Vehicle control Rig. (N)

As Wired Reflexes

As wired reflexes, only when driving rigged vehicles, excpet no bad side effects (not twitchy, no damage)

8 Questors

Being a questor gives you an extra virtue at 0 (named after your Passion). You have to buy it up with XP (or bonus points, if creating a Questor). Whenever you exemplify your Passion, roll your Passion Virtue and add the number of successes to your “Questor Pool”. When you attempt to instill that Passion in others, you have to make a perfectly ordinary Charisma+Passion roll; for each success, you can spend a point from your Questor Pool to give the target a bonus die.

Such exhortation is usually an important enough event to qualify for Unsung Legend Points, though not usually more than once/session.

9 Decking

The current mechanic is “there is only one party decker, who is defined to be Damned Good at what he does. Anything more complicated than a data gathering run will get played out; data gathering runs will be reduced to a single Int+Lore roll. Craft (Hardware) and Craft (Software) are useful for building decks, writing programs, and deconstructing or analyzing either. When in the Matrix, it’s VR: use your appropriate stealth/larceny/investigation skills, capped by Craft (Software). Your attributes are replaced by the Performance number of your deck, unless you’re an Otaku, in which case you use your normal attributes (yes, punching a computer program does do (Str)B damage to it for Otaku, but emptying a gun into it is Dex+Archery...). A computer with a Performance number of N is a Resources 2+(N/2) expenditure, with

whether you round up or down dependent on other features like satellite uplinks, hardened cases, and cool styling.

Non-Deckers use Trinity's method, which is to give a computer a general Performance stat, and then a number of Applications, each about as broad as a normal character's skill *specialty*. A rating N program is a rating N expenditure. That covers non-deckers pretty well: you have an avatar/agent, it talks to you, and that's it.

10 Conversion and Character Creation

10.1 Abstraction

The first step is to figure out what character you want to convert. This doesn't just mean finding your GURPSdawn character sheets and picking one (though I'd recommend starting with your Boston character). Figure out what role your character plays in the party. Then make a short list of scenes in which your character plays a large role, and maybe signature "tricks": supernatural abilities and skills. If you're an intuitive mage, figure out what sort of spirit or magical creature is in your ancestry, and what sort of supernatural tricks fit in with its powers.

I'm going to use Thwak as an example throughout here because I don't think he'll mind, and if he does he's five miles up and can't hurt me anyway. Thwak's role in the party is Direct Activity: he's the one always pushing to go out and do something, not wait around improving the plan. His trademarks are his strength and physical acuity of vision; he excels in scenes of mass battles, or where forceful, rapid responses are necessary.

Schtick-wise, he's Really Strong, even for a Troll. He's frighteningly accurate with his bow, with several supernatural abilities relating to it: great accuracy, the ability to ignore distance and environmental modifiers, the ability to light his arrows on fire, soak unbelievable amounts of damage, and dodge attacks. He's very in-tune with his Discipline, pulling great power from the Name of Archer (Karma Ritual 11).

Mundanely, he's a great brawler, acceptable with a sword, and a Questor of Thystonius.

If you don't collect all of the above information (and see, it's pretty short) beforehand, you're not going to be able to do the conversion very well. If you have done this ahead of time, I think you'll find it pretty easy.

10.2 Stats

Print out a character sheet for yourself from CharacterSheet. Write in your character's Name, Concept, and Nature. If he's an Adept, write his Discipline in where it says Caste. Don't worry about fields you don't understand yet.

10.3 Attributes

Pick a category of attributes (Physical, Mental, Social) to be each of Primary, Secondary, and Tertiary. Each of your attributes starts at 1; normal humans have a 2 in each stat. Adepts have 8 points to spend in their primary category, 6 in their secondary, 4 in their tertiary (8/6/4). Non-Adepts only get (6/4/3). Attributes are much closer to linear than in GURPS, so bear in mind that a 3 is half again as good as a 2, and a 5 almost twice as good as that. You'll get a chance to buy more Attribute Points later.

If you are non-human, underline the obvious favored attribute (or check Section 2 for help if it's not obvious). Nobody favors Intelligence, Dexterity, or Charisma. This favored attribute doesn't matter much now, but it does when you spend bonus points or XP later in character creation.

We give Thwak a Strength of 5, a Dexterity of 4, a Stamina of 4, Intelligence 2, Perception 4, Wits 3, Charisma 3, Manipulation 1, Appearance 3. Note the changes in social stats: he's not good at leadership or trickery, but is innately likable and even kinda cute.

10.4 Abilities

If you are an Adept, check the little boxes next to your favored skills (check Section 5 for which skills are favored). You have four favored skills defined by your Discipline, and get to pick four more. Humans get to pick two more (for ten total). Non-Adepts get one favored skill (usually Occult for Intuitive Mages). Humans get their extra two favored skills even if non-Adepts.

Now spend 22 points on Abilities (25 if you're an Adept, but at least 10 must be Discipline or Favored abilities). At least one must be in every Favored (not Discipline) ability, and you may not buy Abilities higher than 3 at this time.

We note Thwak's Discipline Abilities (Archery, Athletics, Dodge, Awareness) and pick four more (Endurance, Resistance, Brawl, Melee). Then we give Thwak Archery 3, Brawl 3, Melee 2, Endurance 3, Resistance 3, Lore 1 (for literacy), Linguistics 1, Dodge 3, Athletics 3, Awareness 3.

10.5 Advantages

Pick 7 backgrounds from the list (Allies, Artifacts, Backing, Contacts, Cyberware, Karma Ritual (aka Cult), Familiar, Followers, Influence, Legend, Manse, Mentor, Resources). None may be ranked higher than 3 at this point. We give Thwak Karma Ritual 3, Artifact 2 (a Short Powerbow), Mentor 1, and Resources 1: he's poor, but there's a master willing to train him back in New Town, he has a threaded bow for cool archery stunts, and he gets 1 WP/day and 3 motes/hour from worldwide faith in Archers on any day in which he's done his Karma Ritual. Non-Adepts may not buy Artifacts, Karma Ritual, or Manse. Check Section 7 for notes on changes.

Pick 10 Charms: if you're not an Adept, you can use these for intuitive magic spells, but it's suggested you leave most of them open for Adept Charms later. Thwak gets Wise Arrow, Sight Without Eyes, There Is No Wind, Fiery Arrow Attack, Trance of Unhesitating Speed, two levels of Ox-Body Technique (-2 version), Increasing Strength Exercise, Sensory Acuity Prana, Keen Sight Technique. Several of those require more Archery than he's got, so we spend two bonus points to take him from Archery 3 to Archery 5. This didn't cover his Avoid Blow ability, so we spend eight more bonus points to get him Reed in the Wind and Shadow Over Water. Check Sections 5 and 4 for details. Intuitive Mages really should look at the charms at Section 4; it's much harder to be a competent mage without any of them. Disciplined Mages spend two charms for each of their starting spheres, and are expected to have 2-4 from the list mentioned in Section 5.2.2.

Pick 5 Virtues: these start at 1 and may be bought no higher than 3 without bonus points. Intuitive Mages favor one virtue, dependent on their ancestry. If you are a questor, you have a fifth Virtue, bought up from zero with XP/Bonus Points: Thwak writes in "Thystonius" under his Virtues, but doesn't put any points in it now. Thystonius and Valor are different Virtues. Adepts must also pick a Virtue Flaw. Thwak buys Valor 3, Conviction 3, Temperance 2, Compassion 1, and picks Deliberate Cruelty as a Virtue Flaw.

10.6 Finishing Touches

Record Essence (1 for mortals, 2 for Adepts and Intuitive Mages), Willpower (Highest Virtue for mortals and intuitive mages, sum of two highest virtues for Adepts, may not start at 8 or higher unless two Virtues are 4 or higher), Personal and Peripheral Essence (look at Section 3), and Health Levels (one -0, two -1, two -2, one -4, one Incapacitated, plus any from Charms). Thwak has Essence 2, Willpower 6, Essence Pools of 29+12, and Health Levels -0/-1/-1/-1/-1/-2/-2/-2/-2/-2/-2/-4/Incap.

Make sure you write in your character's Anima Banner (what he looks like in the astral, more or less: an idealized Hero, an animal, a big glowy rune, something like that) and the condition which triggers his Virtue Flaw.

Now spend 20 bonus points (26 for non-Adepts, 16 for Intuitive Mages). Attribute points cost 4 (3 if favored), Abilities cost 2 (1 if favored or Discipline), backgrounds cost 1 (2 if being raised above 3), virtues cost 3 (1.5 if favored, as with Intuitive Mages), Willpower costs 2 (but remember about raising it over 8), Essence costs 7 if you're an Adept and can't be bought by mundanes, and Charms cost 5 (4 if favored/Discipline). You can buy specialities in your abilities for 1 bonus point per level (0.5 per level if the ability is favored). Record what ability it's in and when the specialty applies. You can never receive more than a +3 bonus to a roll from specialties, so don't bother buying them above 3. Non-humans should buy

their extra vision: low-light vision costs 2 points, thermovision costs 3, and astral sight costs 5. To forestall the inevitable questions: no, you can't choose one out-of-style for your race.

Spirit Charms, for Intuitive Mages, cost 7 bonus points each (5 if favored).

Jesse and Justin, apparently without coordinating, have convinced me that while the above works fine for Camrish characters, Boston characters need to be built as what's up there, then get some amount of XP. Those who are adepts get the Adept Package, Essence=2, 5 stat points split 2/2/1 along your original 6/4/3 distribution, 3 skill points, a virtue flaw, and the opportunity to spend any charm slots still sitting around (and those not adepts yet will also get that for free when they become such). Now I just need to figure out *how much*. My current intent is to ask everybody to build a character, then provide their log of XP spent to get the character to where it should be, and draw a line across all of them at the same place. This nicely avoids the "I know I'll be getting N XP, so I'll put this off until later..." problem. Check Section 6.1 for improvement costs.

Thwak has already spent 10 bonus points, and spends another 3 for thermovision. His remaining seven go into one more point of Dodge and a point of Thystonius, then a fourth point of Valor.