

Common Bonuses and Penalties

Sometimes your position on the Battle Board can give you various advantages or disadvantages. No standard roll can be reduced to less than one die by any penalty listed here (or anywhere else for that matter; see **Mathematical Conventions** starting on page 77).

Target Has Its Back To You

- ▶ The target gets -2 Defence against your **strikes**, and on any Perception rolls to oppose your Stealth rolls.
- ▶ The target gets -1 on its Defence, Ward, or other opposed rolls against any other action of yours (e.g. spells, techniques).

Target Out Of Range

- ▶ A target that is beyond the range of a **strike** gets +2 Defence if it's one row out of range, +3 if it's two rows out of range, and so on.
- ▶ Abilities other than strikes (spells, techniques etc.) **cannot** be used on targets beyond their range.
 - No strike can hit a target further away than *twice* its range.
 - Some weapons have a *minimum* range. Rows below the minimum range grant Defence bonuses just like rows beyond the maximum range.

Reactions

Sometimes you can do something when it isn't your turn to take an action. This is called a **reaction**.

Nearly always, a reaction will be worded like this: "When [trigger], you may [action] as a reaction." For example, spear cores grant this ability:

When **an enemy two or more rows in front of you moves to range 1 or 0**, you may **make a basic spear strike against that enemy at -1 Attack** as a reaction.

The blue part is the trigger, and the red part is the action.

When the trigger occurs, you have the option of taking the action. If you do, this postpones your next action by two ticks. In other words, any time you take a reaction, move your initiative token two spaces clockwise.

A reaction happens *just before* resolving the event that triggered it. For example, if an ability lets you make a strike as a reaction when an enemy casts a spell, and that strike defeats the enemy, the spell is never cast – you responded in time to prevent them from finishing the spell.

You can only use a reaction once for each time its triggering event occurs. However, if the same event triggers two or more *different* reactions, you can take them all, delaying your next action by two ticks for each such reaction.

Some reactions let you make a **counterattack**. This is always a basic melee strike. Counterattacks can't trigger counterattacks. If the same event triggers two or more abilities that give you a counterattack, you make only *one* strike, but at +1 Attack for every such ability beyond the first. When this happens, you're only taking one reaction, so it only delays your next action by two ticks.

A counterattack can't trigger from another counterattack.

Optional Rule: Assist and Hamper

This optional rule creates more options in combat by giving all PCs the two command abilities described below at no cost.

Both of these are fairly low-powered, but extremely flexible. In a straight fight against enemies of your level, you're probably better off with basic strikes. Yet in clever hands these can make what would otherwise be tricky battles much easier.

These abilities are described using stat blocks in the same format as any other command ability. This format is explained in Chapter 2 of the **Character Reference**.

Assist

Universal Technique

Targets/Range: One ally within 1

Duration: 5 + S

Roll: Simple Attack

You decide you're better off helping an ally be more effective than making your own contribution.

1 success: Choose Attack, Defence, Magic, Ward, or any skill. The target gets +1 on that stat the next time it makes a roll using that stat.

Per 3 additional successes: Additional +1.

Recovery 4

Hamper

Modified Strike (any weapon)

Targets/Range: One within 1

You decide to grab or trip an enemy, run interference, or otherwise make a pest of yourself.

This strike deals no damage.

2 successes: Choose one:

- ▶ Delay (S-1).
- ▶ Choose Attack, Defence, Magic, Ward, or any skill. The target gets a penalty to the chosen stat equal to half your net successes (rounded down) for the next 5 + S ticks.

Recovery 5

An Alternate Take

Even if your GM doesn't give you these abilities *per se*, their stat blocks make good guidelines for handling improvised actions (i.e. times when you want to do something not explicitly covered in this chapter). When in doubt, she can probably do a lot worse than make such actions about as effective as these abilities.

What the hell do these abilities do?

The above descriptions might not immediately make sense if you're reading through these rules in order, and thus haven't gotten to the ability descriptions in the second book yet.

Here's an explanation of Hamper in normal English rather than stat block form:

Except as noted here, Hamper works like a normal strike with whatever weapon you happen to be holding. However, Hamper always has range 1 and recovery 5; these numbers override your weapon's stats.

You need at least two net successes for Hamper to do anything (and it doesn't do damage no matter what). If you get enough successes, you have two choices of what to do:

- ▶ You can postpone the target's next action, moving its initiative token clockwise a number of ticks one less than your net successes.
- ▶ Or, you can penalize one of the listed stats by half your net successes (rounded down). This doesn't last long (five ticks, plus one for each net success you got), but can create a window of opportunity for your allies.

Assist is simpler. If you understand Hamper, you can probably understand Assist too. Any further questions about how to read these stat blocks should be answered in chapter 2 of the **Character Reference**.