yags

Yet Another
Game System
Core Rules

An Open Source RPG
for tabletop gaming

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What is YAGS?

YAGS is Another Game System, one that is meant to provide a free, generic and modular set of rules for table top roleplaying. YAGS is designed to provide a realistic, but also cinematic, set of rules that allow fast play without compromising on detail when it's needed.

YAGS has a flexible skill based system for determining how competent characters are. There are no levels or classes, and skills cover a wide (technically unlimited) range to allow character growth over a long campaign.

> **Designer's Notes**
> ### What should I read first?
>
> These **Core** rules are meant for game masters or game designers who want a low level view of the rules for YAGS. It is completely setting and genre agnostic, not meant as an introduction to the game.
>
> It is recommended that first time readers start with one of the **Characters** articles, which will provide an introduction to the game as well as provide rules for character generation.

YAGS is modular, and split into a number of different articles so that you can pick and chose which rules are best for your game. The idea is that the core rules are adapted for different settings and genres - there are multiple character articles for example, which tweak character generation to fit that style of game.

This article is the **Core Rules**, which describe the basic system on which everything else is based. It assumes that you know what a roleplaying game is, doesn't include any rules on building characters and only includes descriptions of the most basic skills. For most people, reading one of the *Character* articles first would be a better place to start.

All these rules are available for download for free from the [YAGS website](http://yags.glendale.org.uk/) [http://yags.glendale.org.uk/] .

Genre and style

YAGS is designed to be flexible and generic, but any system will tend to encourage a certain style just by how the rules work. *YAGS* is designed to be fairly realistic, encouraging a low fantasy, gritty style of game with a deadly combat system.

However, realism can be hard to determine, and most people who play roleplaying games have never been shot at, fought a knight with a sword or battled dragons and zombies armed with nothing more than a rusty axe and a chainsaw. Because of this, *YAGS* mixes realism with a form of cinematic realism.

A bullet can kill you, and mooks armed with automatic weapons will always be dangerous regardless of your skill. But there's no reason that a skilled character couldn't take on that group of mooks using careful tactics, making good use of stealth, cover and surprise.

Freedoms

YAGS is Free content. This does not mean that you do not need to pay to download it (though you don't), but that you are free to do what you want with the rules under the terms of the GPL version 2 (just like the free operating system Linux for example). This means that you have:

1. The freedom to read, perform, display or run the work for any purpose.

2. The freedom to study how the work was created, and adapt it to your needs. Access to the work in the preferred form for modification is a precondition for this.

3. The freedom to redistribute copies so you can help your neighbour.

4. The freedom to improve the work, and release your improvements to the public, so that the whole community benefits. Access to the preferred form for modification is a precondition for this.

This does mean you may republish (or even sell) these rules yourself, even if you have modified them. The only limitation is that all published versions of these rules (including modifications) must also be published under the GPL version 2, and that editable, electronic versions must be provided as source.

> **Designer's Notes**
> ### Why Free Content?
>
> A rules system that is Free to modify and distribute can be tailored for use by a group to match their own playing styles. Gamers do this anyway, but *YAGS* is designed to make this easy. You can make changes to the rules and print your own copy - no more need for scribbled notes in the margins.

The Core Mechanics

YAGS has a relatively simple set of basic rules which form the core of the rest of the system. This article provides a detailed description of these core rules for those interested in the basic mechanics or GMs wanting to extend *YAGS*. For character generation, specific skill lists and the like see the **Character** articles.

Terminology

The following terminology is used throughout the **YAGS** rules. Where these terms are used, the specific definitions given here are what is meant.

Ability: A creature's ability to achieve success in a task is equal to an attribute multiplied by a skill, or an attribute multiplied by 4 for a raw attribute check.

Attribute: One of the eight basic numbers which define any creature in YAGS. A typical adult human has a score of 3 in all their attributes.

Die: A single twenty sided die, a d20.

Difficulty: A number which represents how difficult a task is. You must roll your ability + d20 and equal or exceed the difficulty of the task to succeed. A moderate (average) task has a difficulty of 20.

Score: The raw numerical value of any characteristic, unmodified by anything else. A skill score would be a creature's rating in a skill, before it is multiplied by an attribute.

Skill: A skill defines a creature's training and experience in a narrow field. Skills are combined with attributes to determine a creature's ability at a task. A professional level is skill 4+.

Task: An activity that requires an ability check. To make a check, roll 1d20 and add your ability.

Task Resolution

Task resolution is often at the heart of any game system. In the case of *YAGS*, there is a single mechanic which applies to all tasks which is based on an *ability check*. This check is used to determine not only whether you succeed, but also how well you succeed.

The GM should determine the most suitable *attribute* and *skill* combination to use, and set a target level for the task. *Very easy* tasks have a target of 10, *moderate* tasks have a target of 20 and *difficult* tasks have a target of 30. In some cases you may need to make a check just against an attribute (for example, a *Health* check to remain conscious) where no skill is involved.

▶ To make a skill check, you roll **Attribute** x **Skill** + 1d20, and if it equals or exceeds the target difficulty then you succeed.

▶ To make a pure attribute check, then you roll **Attribute** x 4 + 1d20, and if it equals or exceeds the target difficulty then you succeed.

▶ If the d20 rolls a natural '1', then you automatically fail. This is the 'fumble chance', and is normally 1. In some situations, the fumble chance will be higher.

If it is important how well you succeed, then every 10 points by which you beat the target is considered an extra level of success. Simply beating the target is considered a *moderate* success, beating it by 10 or more is a *good* success (2 levels), by 20 or more is *excellent* and 30+ is *superb*.

Sometimes, a skill contest is called for between two or more characters. In this case, instead of trying to beat a set target number, you try to beat your opponent's ability check.

▶ If you are competing against another character, then you both make an ability check, and the highest roll wins. On a tie, the person with the highest skill score wins.

▶ In a skill contest, if one of you rolls a natural '20' then you automatically win as long as your skill score is higher than your opponents.

Skilled Professionals

If you have a score of 4 or higher in a skill, then you are considered to be a professional and have a couple of extra options available to you.

▶ In any non-opposed situation which is predictable, you may assume a roll of '0'. This negates the chance of a fumble, but also means that the task has to be well within your capability.

▶ If such a situation is non-stressful, in that there is not an immediate risk of harm and you can take your time, then you can assume a roll of '10'. This removes the risk of fumbling, but takes twice as long as normal.

▶ If the fumble chance is greater than 1, then the task is automatically considered non-predictable so these options can't be taken.

Whether a task is predictable or stressful is ultimately up to the GM to decide.

Characteristics

As with many game systems, *YAGS* measures the ability of a character in the game using numerical statistics, called *attributes* and *skills*. These numbers don't relate directly to anything in the real world - they are simply a convenient way to compare one character to another.

Since *YAGS* is a game about human comparable characters, the statistics are designed to be easy to use when describing such characters. It is not so simple if used to compare the very small (rodents and insects), or the very large (giant mecha or world ships). These things aren't outside the scope of the game, but their involvement requires some special rules. For the former, see the *Bestiary*, for the latter see the vehicle rules in *High Tech* or *SciFi*.

Attributes

> There's no gene for fate.
>
> -- Vincent, Gattaca

Attributes are the basic characteristics of all creatures in *YAGS*, and are a broad measure of natural talent and potential. There are eight primary attributes - strength, health, agility, dexterity, perception, intelligence, empathy and will - and two secondary attributes - size and move.

These attributes are consistent across all settings and genres, and always work in the same way, though the distribution of values may vary. A fantasy setting with a rigid caste system will have few examples of high attributes simply because of the small numbers of people, the lack of formalised training and inability for gifted people to take up a role befitting their ability. A science fiction setting with a population in the trillions, where people are free to take the job they are best suited for, will have more examples of gifted individuals which the PCs will meet.

Attribute Levels

For humans, attributes tend to range between two and five. Higher values are possible, but rare. The following chart describes the different levels from the point of view of an adult human. Non-human creatures may work on different scales, especially for strength which tends to be much higher for large animals.

Score	Attribute
0	**None.** You have no rateable ability in this attribute, and may not attempt skills which use it.

Score	Attribute
1	**Crippled.** You are crippled, being either very dumb, seriously ill or socially inept.
2	**Poor.** You are noticeably below average, being in the bottom 10% of the population. This is normally the minimum level of attribute it is possible to have.
3	**Average.** You are average, among the middle 80% of the population.
4	**High.** You are noticeably above average in ability, being in the top 10% of the population.
5	**Very high.** You are highly adept at tasks related to this attribute. This is about the highest that people will have naturally, without training.
6	**Exceptional.** You are truly exceptional, and have trained hard to develop your attribute this high. Most people will find it very hard to compete against you.
7	**Incredible.** You are one of a small number of people in your country.
8	**Legendary.** The normal maximum for humans. There may be a handful of people with an attribute this high in the modern world.
9+	**Superhuman.** Beyond what is naturally possible.

Non-humans will of course have different averages and ranges. Wild beasts will tend to have a Perception of 5+, and large animals may well have strengths of 10+.

Attributes are normally purchased during character generation with a point buy system. See the **Characters** article for a particular setting for an explanation of how this is done.

Whether an attribute can be increased after character generation depends on both the setting and campaign style. Since *YAGS* tends to encourage a more realistic view to advancement, attributes can take years of in-game time to increase. Again, see a relevant **Character** article for your setting.

Primary Attributes

Strength: Strength measures a character's ability to hurt, break and lift things. Some effects, such as how much you can carry, are based on the square of your strength.

Health: Health is a measure of endurance and fitness. Checks to remain alive after being injured, resisting poison and avoiding fatigue are all based on health.

Agility: Quickness and acrobatic ability are measured by agility. It is also used for brawling, but not melee or missile weapons. Athletes, cat burglars and martial artists require a good agility.

Dexterity: The dexterity of a character defines their hand-eye coordination, sleight-of-hand, and skill with melee weapons, pistols, thrown weapons and driving. Thieves, warriors and race car drivers need a good dexterity.

Perception: Perception is a measure of general alertness and sensory ability. High perception characters have good senses (vision, hearing) and observational ability. Use of rifles and bows comes under Perception.

Intelligence: Intelligence is a measure of wit, cunning, memory and intuition. Intelligence is used to know and remember things, to study and for logic. Sages, researchers and scientists will use intelligence a lot.

Empathy: Empathy is the ability to understand other people. A high empathy does not necessarily make you charismatic, but a charismatic person will need a high empathy in order to be able to react to and manipulate another's emotions.

Will: Strength of will is used to overcome base instincts, such as fear and lust. If you have a high will, you are more resistant to magic, are less gullible and tend to be a good liar, making it useful for con artists and supernatural investigators.

Though all of these are useful in some settings, some may be more useful in certain settings than others. *Strength* may be more useful in a Fantasy setting than it is in a Science Fiction setting for example.

Secondary Attributes

Secondary attributes aren't part of the standard set of eight attributes, and do not tend to fall within the normal 2-5 range.

Size: Size defaults to five for adult humans, with most adults ranging from four to six. Size governs how much damage a creature can soak up. A blue whale is about size 21. It cannot be raised with experience.

Soak: Soak is a measure of how well you can resist damage. It defaults to 12 for adult humans, and rarely changes.

Move: Your move determines how quickly you can run, both in combat and over long distance. It is equal to size + strength + agility + 1.

Attributes in the Game World

The vast majority of humans will have an average attribute with a score of 3. If you want to randomise an NPC's attributes, then roll a d20 for each one. On a roll of 1-2, they have a score of 2, on a 19-20 they have a score of 4. On any other result they have an average of 3. This means that the average score accounts for about 80% of the population (though most people will have at least one attribute that is non-average).

People such as Newton or Feynman would probably have an intelligence score of eight. The best Olympic athletes in the modern world would probably have similar scores for physical attributes. For humans, scores above five are gained through lots of training and experience - they are not gained due to a chance of birth alone.

Skills

> *The most powerful drive in the ascent of man is his pleasure in his own skill. He loves to do what he does well and, having done it well, he loves to do it better.*
> *-- Jacob Bronowski*

A skill is something which can be learnt and improved through experience and training. Except for a few basic skills, they always default to zero unless specifically learnt. If a skill is zero, then it either can't be used (in the case of many knowledge or science skills), can default to another skill, or is rolled as a straight d20 halved (round down).

In some settings, it may be possible to learn skills almost immediately, through cyborg implants or because the world is some sort of simulation. It is highly suggested that skills above four are very difficult to obtain in such a way.

Skill Levels

Once a skill is learnt, it's level ranges from one upwards. There is no theoretical limit to how high your skill can be, though a practical limit is in the range of 10-15. Skills higher than 15 are considered to be *mythical* - in the realm of supernatural or transcended beings.

High levels of skill allow you to purchase *Techniques*, which are specialisations which enable you to perform tasks which are difficult or impossible to do with just the basic skill.

Casual (1)

A skill of one represents very basic familiarity with a skill. Maybe you took a single skiing lesson, or you spent a couple of weeks in Paris picking up a bit of French.

Student (2-3)

If you have studied a skill in school or have had a reasonable amount of practical experience, then you will have a score of two or three. You can succeed at *easy* tasks without much difficulty, but you would struggle if you had to use the skill in a professional job.

Professional (4-7)

Most professionals will have a skill of 4 or 5 in a skill. Many will never go beyond this, since their skills will never be stretched, however a few seasoned veterans will have obtained a level of 6 or 7. Levels beyond this require a real dedicated attempt to further your ability, rather than just simple experience.

Master (8-11)

A master level of skill reflects a true understanding of the skill, and many years of dedicated study and training. Elite

soldiers, leading research scientists and renowned experts in a field would have a Master level of skill.

Skill levels above 9 should be limited to named characters. A generic squad of elite soldiers for example should be limited to skills of 9 or less.

Legendary (12-15)

This level is about the highest that will be found in most worlds, and such a score will only be had by the leaders in a field. Generally, such people will have a good reputation, and will have many decades of training and experience under their belt.

Mythical (16+)

Generally this will be the province of super heroes and other supernatural creatures.

Types of Skills

Talents

The skills available to characters will vary from genre to genre, but *YAGS* has eight core skills, called *talents*, which all humans know to a limited extent. Normally, all starting characters will have a score of 2 in each talent.

The eight talents are athletics; awareness; brawl; charm; guile; sleight; stealth and throw. Since they are core to *YAGS*, they are described in the next section, *Core Skills*. They represent basic skills which everyone picks up in childhood, and many other skills will default to a talent if they are not known.

Knowledges

Knowledges are skills which represent theoretical knowledge which must be learnt. You can only make a check with a Knowledge skill if you already have a score in it. You can not normally learn or practise knowledges unless you have a source to study from.

The following guide gives an indication of what different skill levels represent. Comparisons with the real world are difficult to do, and high levels of knowledge are often best represented by *specialisations* by using *Techniques*.

1: You've seen a TV program on the subject, or listened to some stories.

2-3: You have a layman's interest in the subject, or studied it at school. You will know the common stuff, but have gaps and lack depth and full understanding.

4-5: You have a graduate's level of knowledge, and have a well rounded view of the subject. This is sufficient for most people who use it regularly.

6-7: You have a level of knowledge equivalent to that of a Master's Degree.

8-11: If you have had a formal education, you probably have a Doctorate given your level of knowledge.

12+: This level of skill is held by masters in their field.

Languages

Language skills are treated on a scale from one to four, and are not normally 'rolled' like other skills. Instead, the level of skill gives a guide to how much of a conversation a character can understand.

1: You can recognise the language and know a few words, but cannot put sentences together.

2: You can understand and form basic sentences, and can get by in a market or an inn, where the conversation is straightforward, and you can point at things.

3: You have a good grasp of the language and can hold a decent conversation. It is obviously not your first language however. You probably have an accent, and many uncommon words will be beyond your understanding.

4: You are fluent in the language. You will still have something of an accent if you are a foreigner, but will not have problems communicating. This is the default for a native speaker.

5+: You can speak fluently without any accent, plus you have detailed knowledge of various dialects and really obscure words.

Knowledge of a language may automatically include the ability to read and write it as well. In some settings however (e.g. a medieval society) this will not be the case. Higher levels of language skill than 5 are possible, but will only be held by linguists who are studying the language.

Standard skills

Standard skills are a mixture of knowledge, experience, physical aptitude and common sense. If you have no score in a standard skill, then it can still be used, however the roll (just a straight d20) is halved, and a natural roll of 1 or 2 is considered a fumble.

Skill Difficulties

When making an ability check, there are some common difficulty levels, which are described in the following table. The descriptions assume an average level of attribute - those with an above average attribute will be able to get by with less skill.

Most tasks will be against a fixed target number. If you are competing against another character, then they get a skill check with a modifier. The modifier is given in parenthesis below, and adds to the other person's check.

Type of Task	Target
Very easy. Such a task can be achieved by a person with little or no skill with a good chance of success. A professional will always succeed.	10 (-10)
Easy. Anyone with a small amount of skill will be able to achieve this with a good chance of success, though it will be difficult for someone without any training at all.	15 (-5)
Moderate. Such tasks can be achieved without difficulty by a professional in ideal conditions. Those without proper training can find it difficult however.	20 (+0)
Challenging. People with less than professional level of skill will find it hard to succeed, and it is out of league of someone with only basic familiarity.	25 (+5)
Difficult. Such tasks require a highly skilled person. Anyone with less than professional competence will always fail, and even professionals will be hard pressed.	30 (+10)
Very difficult. A master of the skill can achieve such tasks with confidence, others will fail. About the highest level of difficulty under normal circumstances.	40 (+20)
Extreme. A very difficult task under poor conditions.	50 (+30)
Heroic. Truly heroic.	60 (+40)
Sheer folly. Someone with superhuman level of skill will be hard pressed to achieve this difficulty.	75 (+55)
Absurd. Well beyond what most people could achieve. Above average attributes are required to have even a chance of success.	100 (+80)

Tasks above *Very difficult* will be very rare, and often because of less than perfect conditions, rather than the nature of the task itself.

Absurd tasks should be reserved for when a player tries something totally heroic, which is at the very edge of possibility.

Degree of Success

If the skill check meets the target number, then a normal success is assumed. If the roll was significantly above the target number, then the success was particularly good. The exact result depends on the GM's interpretation but the following can be used as a guide.

A **good** success is 10 points or more above the target. The task is performed with style, completeness or speed.

An **excellent** success is 20 points or more above the target. It was probably performed with two of style, completeness or speed.

A **superb** success is 30 points or more above the required target, and was achieved with style, completeness *and* speed. Anything better than this probably won't be noticed by an untrained witness.

A **fantastic** success is 40 points or more beyond the target.

Anything which is 50 points or more above the target number is **amazing**, and represent as close to perfection as is possible to achieve.

Skill Defaults

Some skills have a *default* - this will often be a *Talent*, but may be a more generic skill or one which covers a similar or related subject. You may choose to use a default skill instead of the real skill at any time.

▶ Your total result (after the die roll) is halved.

▶ Your fumble chance is doubled, or raised to one whichever is worse.

▶ You are unable to make use of any techniques that you know.

Sometimes, using a default may also limit how you can use a skill. Using *Sleight* to diffuse a bomb instead of a *Demolitions* skill is possible, but you couldn't use it to know the type of bomb since that requires specialist knowledge only granted by actually having the skill.

Skill Pre-requisites

If a skill has a pre-requisite, then before the skill can be purchased to level one, all pre-requisites must be met. Pre-requisites are always another skill at the specified level.

▶ Before you buy a skill at level one, you must purchase all pre-requisite skills to the specified level.

▶ A skill can never be more than double the level of any of its pre-requisite skills.

▶ You cannot put points into a skill if the next level of skill is not allowed by your current pre-requisites.

Limited Skills

If a skill is limited by another skill, then it cannot be more than half the level of the skill it is limited by. Limited skills are rare, and generally only present in settings where certain knowledges are either very difficult, or in their infancy.

Other Types of Tasks

Long tasks

Sometimes a task is more suited to being resolved with multiple skill checks. This is especially true for challenges which are time critical, or which involve many days or weeks of work.

Such tasks have a difficulty as normal, but require a number of successes to be achieved before the task is complete. For example, disabling a complex trap may be difficulty 20/3,

requiring 3 successes over a base difficulty of 20. It's possible to achieve success with a single roll of 40+. It may require three rolls however.

If a check fails, then no successes are gained towards completion, and the fumble chance for all further checks increases by +1. Two failures in a row result in complete failure, the results of which are task dependant. A fumble counts as a normal failure, and so increases the fumble chance.

Unless stated otherwise, each attempt takes a round. For some tasks, the time period might be anything from minutes to months.

Competitive Tasks

Where two people are competing against each other and you don't want to resolve it with a single skill check, then it is treated similar to a *long task*, with both sides attempting to be the first to achieve a set number of successes.

Each turn, both make a skill check and the winner gets to have the *advantage*. On the subsequent turn if the winner already has the advantage, then they win a success and lose their advantage. If the loser has the advantage, then they simply lose it. Repeat until one side gains enough successes.

If it is a physical task, then the loser may gain a point of fatigue to prevent their opponent gaining a success. Their opponent does not lose their advantage when this is done however.

An alternative to being the first to a certain number of successes can be a set number of turns. Whoever has the most successes at the end wins.

Team Competitive Tasks

When teams of people are competing against each other (for example, in a sport), then similar rules to standard competitive tasks are used. Each turn, one person from each team is chosen to make the skill test. Each time a person does so, they take a point of fatigue. This prevents one person completely dominating the game and forces each team to share the work.

The winner may be the first to a given number of success, or the most successes after a set number of turns.

Artistic Tasks

Artistic tasks include ballet, gymnastics, painting, singing, playing a musical instrument or writing a book. You are not so much competing against some challenge, but being compared to others.

A target of 10+ is something bearable, 20+ is something quite decent. Make a single roll for something short, two for something of medium length, and three or more for longer pieces of work. The overall quality is the lowest roll. A full symphony or ballet performance might be five rolls.

For every level of *mastery* that you have in the skill, you may make one re-roll during the whole performance. You may re-roll a single check more than once, and take the best roll each time.

If you are making five rolls for a ballet performance, and have 7 levels of mastery, you could re-roll the first two twice, and the others once, or any combination. You choose to re-roll or not after each roll.

Practice

They say that practice makes perfect, and in **YAGS** skills definitely progress over time. However, sometimes you want to practice not a skill, but a particular task or routine with a level of dedication not normally needed.

As a circus performer, you may want to practice a difficult acrobatic routine to perfection. As a bank robber, you may want to mock up a full scale replica of the bank and practice getting in and out. As a driver, you may want to practice a particular race track in order to shave off the last few tenths of a second.

Such practice montages are common in films, and also done in real life, so **YAGS** allows short term bonuses for very specific tasks.

The bonus applies to what you practised, and what you practise must be as close to what you will do on the day as possible. If it involves breaking into a house by climbing over a flint wall, up a drain pipe, jimmying open a window and picking the lock on the chest inside, then practising by climbing a cliff and opening a different type of lock isn't going to help.

If you practised everything perfectly, then on the day find that the drainpipe has been removed, you still get the bonus for the flint wall, opening the window and the lock, but have to make a standard athletics check for climbing the wall of the house.

If the drainpipe is there, but it's wet and slippery due to rain (which you hadn't practised on), then you can still have your bonus but you can't consider that action to be non stressful).

Quick Practice

If you have a few weeks, then each week you spend in practice gives you a +1 bonus to any applicable skill checks you make on the day. If you spend at least a week in practice, then you also have -1 to any fumble chances for those checks (which will normally mean that you can't fumble). More importantly, if you can't fumble, for anything where you don't deviate from the plan, you may treat the situation as non stressful without having to take extra time.

The practice must be continuous, and the bonus is good for a month after you stop practising. The maximum bonus you can gain is +3.

Long Practice

If you have longer than a few weeks, then each month that you spend in practice grants you +1 to your skill (not roll) when performing the routine, as well as -1 to any fumble chances. You may also consider tasks within the planned routine to be non-stressful, without having to spend more time.

The maximum bonus is equal to your skill, so you can't do better than double your skill. A circus acrobat with a skill of 6 and an *Agility* of 4 would get an effective +4 to their roll for each month (+24 after 6 months)

It can be assumed that people who perform the same routine as part of their job will gain this bonus over time.

For each month where you fail to practice, you lose one point of bonus.

Techniques

A *Technique* is a specialisation of a skill, and may provide bonuses or allow some particular special action to be attempted. A skill may have several techniques associated with it, and some techniques can be used with more than one skill. In the latter case, the technique only needs to be purchased once - it can then be used with any skill which uses it, as long as the skill is of sufficient level.

A technique has a cost associated with it, which is the number of experience points which need to be spent to buy it. A level 6 technique costs 6 points to buy. The cost of the technique is also the minimum skill level that must be achieved before the technique can be purchased. If you do not have the required skill at a sufficient level, then the technique can't be bought.

Finally, a technique may have a prerequisite. These are the techniques which must be known before this technique can be learnt.

Some techniques will be based on a skill group rather than a skill. In this case the technique can be purchased when *any* skill in that group reaches the technique's level, but it can only be used with those skills of sufficient level.

Designer's Notes
Skill Complexity

Familiarities, Specialisations and Masteries add a layer of complexity to the system but avoids having to need multiple different skills for similar tasks. It would be possible to simply have a *History* skill, or a *Science* skill, and ignore specialisations altogether.

However, this was viewed as being too unrealistic for the game. Specialisations which allow you to buy a default skill which covers all topic areas, and then just a few points in individual study areas seemed like a suitable compromise.

Familiarity

Some skills require *Familiarities*, which are techniques of a fixed cost for that skill. Such a skill always has a default familiarity, but will list other familiarities which can be purchased.

For example, *Driving* assumes skill at driving a typical car, but has familiarities for *Motorbikes*, *HGVs*, *Tanks*, *Buggies* and the like. If you don't have the right familiarity, then you have to default to the standard skill and your rolls are halved.

Most familiarities will be 2 points, though for complex skills they might be 4 points.

Specialisations

Many knowledge skills allow *Specialisations*. Normally, the difficulty of a knowledge task is based on how specialised a bit of knowledge is. Knowing when the *Civil War* started is a specific bit of knowledge from late English history, so might be difficulty 30.

If you were specialised in *English History* or *Military History*, or *17th Century* then it becomes easier, maybe difficulty 20. For a specialisation in *The English Civil War*, such a piece of knowledge is obvious.

Different specialisations will tend to focus the knowledge you do know. Whilst a success with a *English History* specialisation will tell you about the politics of the war, and what happened to Oliver Cromwell after the war, a *Military History* specialisation will give you more information about the battles fought.

There is no limit to how many specialisations you can have with a skill, or how broad or narrow they can be.

Masteries

Masteries are levelled specialisations, and are often used for competitive or artistic skills. For tasks which have an artistic component, they allow you to perform feats with grace, precision and perfection. For competitive actions, they provide specialist training to increasing levels of details. For example,

Ballet and *Gymnastics* are masteries based on *Athletics*. For *Games*, masteries can include *Chess*, *Go* or *Backgammon*.

A *Mastery* has a base cost of 1 point, but can be bought up to any level as per the normal limits for techniques. If you buy a Mastery at level 1, buying it at level 2 costs one extra point - you don't need to buy a whole new technique.

Each level of mastery gives you a +1 bonus when attempting tasks related to it.

In a competitive skill check where two characters are directly competing against each other (e.g., in a game of chess, but not in an art contest), if one person has a lower mastery level than the other, then they suffer a +1 to their fumble chance per level of difference. If they have no mastery levels, then the penalty is +2 per level of difference. This represents the master's ability to force their opponent into bad decisions, or take better advantage of the slightest mistake.

Size

Start with the part where Jayne gets knocked out by a 90-pound girl, 'cause... I don't think that's ever getting old.

-- Wash, Serenity

How large a creature is can be measured in a number of ways - height, length and mass being the common criteria. In *YAGS*, the *Size* attribute is a measure of the creature's capacity to absorb damage, and how easy it is to hit. In general, the *Size* of a creature will increase logarithmically with its mass - every +5 increase in *Size* represents a ten fold increase in mass.

Adult humans range in *Size* from 4 (a small, slim woman) to 6 (a heavyweight boxer or stereotypical Norse warrior). Anything other than the default of 5 represents the extreme edge of human variation. The biggest effect it has is to provide a little bit more (or less) capacity to resist damage. The default character generation rules also put upper and lower limits on *Strength* for noticeably large or small characters.

The scale is based around an average of a 70kg human male. A *Size* 10 creature would be 700kg, a *Size* 15 creature 7 tonnes, and a *Size* 20 creature 70 tonnes. Some examples are as follows.

Size	Mass and examples
0	**7kg.** A large house cat.
1	**11kg.** 1 year old child, a small dog (e.g., a beagle).
2	**18kg.** 5 year old child.
3	**28kg.** 10 year old child, a medium dog (e.g., a boxer).
4	**44kg.** Small adult, lightweight woman, a wolf.
5	**70kg.** Typical adult. This size constitutes most of the adult human population. Anyone outside of this average is very noticeably large or small.
6	**111kg.** Heavyweight boxer, stereotypical barbarian warrior.
7	**176kg.** Donkey, black bear.
8	**279kg.** Lion.
9	**442kg.** Riding horse, grizzly bear.
10	**700kg.** War horse, prehistoric cave bear. Also, a family car.
11	**1.1t.** Rhino. Also, an SUV or small tank.
12	**1.8t.** Great white shark, anything up to about 2 tonnes in mass. Also, a typical tank.
13	**2.8t.**
14	**4.4t.** Triceratops. Also, a large tank.
15	**7t.** Elephant.
16	**11t.**
17	**17t.**
18	**28t.** Apatosaurus. The largest land animals known.
19	**44t.**
20	**70t.**
21	**110t.** Blue whale.

Each point of *Size* allows a creature (including PCs) to take one wound before dying. A warhorse can take about twice as much damage as a man, an elephant about 3 times. The details are a bit more complex (small weapons have less effect on large targets) however, and a full description of how wounds and damage works is left for the **Combat** article.

Vehicles and other constructs are actually treated a little differently from creatures, in that their *Size* is actually based on the volume of the vehicle, rather than its mass. Obtaining real-world figures for the mass of animals is quite simple, but volumes are rarely given. Finding the volume of a vehicle or building is relatively straightforward, but finding a sensible value for its mass can be hard (especially when a vehicle's mass can change drastically depending on whether it is empty or loaded). However, creatures and vehicles should approximate to the same *Size* for any given size. A *Size* 5 vehicle is assumed to be one cubic metre, again increasing by a factor of 10 for each +5.

To get an idea of how large vehicles and objects scale, the following examples may help.

Size	Vehicle examples
5	Motorbike.
10	Family car.
16	Train carriage.
17	F-16 fighter.
22	Free Trader (Traveller).
26	Boeing 747.
28	Bismark.
32	USS Enterprise CVN-65.
44	Star Destroyer (Star Wars).
80	Death Star (Star Wars).
94	Skylark of Valeron (EE 'Doc' Smith).
110	Earth

The ability to absorb damage is also slightly different for vehicles, in that weapons designed to harm people are far less effective against vehicles, but again this is described elsewhere in the **High Tech** article.

Tiny Creatures

Though **YAGS** bottoms out at *Size* zero, there are plenty of creatures smaller than this (actually, the majority of creatures are significantly smaller, but very few are interesting from a story point of view).

A *Tiny* creature is one tenth the mass of a Size 0 creature. Each extra level of *Tiny* reduces the mass a further tenfold. *Tiny* creatures are automatically killed if successfully hit by a creature of larger *Size*. If it is important, each level of *Tiny* gives Size -5.

Every level of *Tiny* adds +5 to the difficulty to hit the target in melee. For missile combat, take the worst of +5 or doubling the range penalty per level. See the **Bestiary** article for a full description of *tiny creatures*.

Movement

How far and fast you (or any creature in **YAGS**) can move depends on your attributes, skill and how much you are carrying. There are two types of movement - combat movement which covers short distances over a period of a few seconds, and overland movement which covers walking, hiking or running for minutes or hours at a time.

Your basic *Move* score is equal to your *Size + Strength + Agility* + 1, which is 12 for a typical adult human.

Combat Move

A character can move a distance in metres equal to half their *Move* score (round down) each round of combat without any penalty. For an average person, this is 6m/round. This is normally considered a free action.

Running

A character can *run* at their full move each round. For an average human, this is 12m/round. This is effectively a light jog, and can be kept up over long distance. Moving this far

in combat counts as an action, and restricts what else the character can do - see the combat article for full details.

If running for a long time, the character will gain one point of fatigue every *Health x Athletics* minutes. A character with a *Health* of 3 and an athletics of 2, will gain one point of fatigue every 6 minutes.

Each level of fatigue reduces base movement by 2 (and also reduces combat move by 1). If you reach *Exhausted*, then any form of movement is considered a full action (you cannot attack, defend or do anything else that round) and you cannot run or sprint.

Sprinting

A character can *sprint* at a speed equal to twice their Move score plus their athletics score each round. For a typical adult with a move of 12 and an athletics score of 2, this would be 26m/round. Basically, a person could run the 100m in just under 20s.

A modern Olympic athlete, with an *Agility* of 8 and a *Strength* of 4 has a *Move* of 18. Assuming an athletics of 15, they can sprint at 51m/round, which is pretty close to the current world record.

A sprinting character gains a point of fatigue every round. All fatigue, wound and stun penalties reduce total movement when sprinting.

Overland Movement

> *If you don't know where you are going, any road will get you there.*
>
> -- Lewis Carroll

Overland movement is where round to round movement isn't important, but distance travelled over the course of an entire day is. A day is divided into six *watches* of 4 hours each.

In good conditions over average terrain, a character can be expected to travel a distance in kilometres equal to their move score each watch. This equates to about 3km/h. A character will gain one level of exhaustion each watch when moving at this speed. If a character is riding a horse (or similar creature), then they gain exhaustion every other watch.

Modifiers to this (weather, type of terrain etc) are possible, but aren't described here. See the wilderness article for full details.

Encumbrance

The amount that a character can carry increases according to the square of their strength, and the load they are carrying is measured in kilogrammes. Any rule that requires a character to be *Unencumbered* must be carrying less than their *Strength* in load.

Load	Effects
Str	**Unencumbered.** A character carrying up to their Strength is considered to be completely unencumbered, and never suffers penalties.
S^2	**Lightly (0).** A character carrying more than their Strength, is lightly encumbered. They are only at penalties in certain weight critical situations (such as swimming).
$2 \times S^2$	**Moderately (1).** A character carrying up to twice the square of their Strength is at -1 to Agility. They are also unable to sprint.
$4 \times S^2$	**Heavily (2).** The character has a -2 penalty to Agility, -1 to Dexterity, and cannot run or sprint. Their base movement is halved.
$8 \times S^2$	**Greatly (3).** A greatly encumbered character suffers a -4 penalty to Agility and -2 to Dexterity, and cannot run or sprint. Their base movement is halved.
+	**Over encumbered.** Character cannot move, all agility checks are automatically zero and -2 to dexterity.

Each level of encumbrance gives a character a -5 penalty to all rolls to resist fatigue. A character always has a minimum move of 1, until they become over encumbered. Agility and dexterity can never be reduced below zero. If reduced to zero, then a character can still make agility and dexterity checks, just at zero ability.

Armour and other clothing may have a load which is different to its weight. In which case, use the load value when wearing the armour. It will often be lower due to being designed to be worn comfortably.

Core Skills

There are eight core skills in **YAGS**, which are called *Talents*. These are known by virtually all characters (at least, human ones), since they represent basic ability. These skills are described in the general skill lists, but what follows is a very detailed look at how these skills can be used.

It should be noted that the following is rules heavy, and in some cases may be best use as guidelines rather than hard and fast rules (even more so than normal). A lot of what is described are core activities - such as running, fast talking, spotting things and the like.

When looking at skill difficulties, it should be remembered that for these skills, the majority of people will have an ability of 6 (3 x 2) - an average roll of 17. A skill check of *moderate* difficulty will be failed 65% of the time.

Athletics

> *We call ourselves runners. We exist on the edge*
> *between the gloss and the reality. The mirror's edge.*
> *-- Faith, Mirror's Edge*

Racing down an ally, leaping from roof top to roof top, climbing rapidly up walls or swinging across chasms on ropes - these are all tasks for which the *Athletics* skill is vital. It covers a wide range of athletic, acrobatic and gymnastic feats, including running, swimming, jumping and climbing. It can provide bonuses in combat, but only if you specialise in certain acrobatic styles of fighting.

Running

Generally, if you want to run then you don't need to make a skill check. However, sometimes life has a habit of throwing obstacles in your path which can end up testing your skill to the limit. How fast you can run is based on your *Move* score, and is recapped below.

Action	Distance/round
Careful (x1/2)	1/2 MOVE
Standard	MOVE
Running (x2)	MOVE x 2
Sprinting (x3)	MOVE x 2 + Athletics

Racing across clear terrain with nothing in your way is considered trivial, and you don't need to make a skill check to succeed. On the other hand, trying to dodge through crowds of people on a broken and icy footpath can require a lot of skill and luck. If the path is not clear and easy, then an *Agility x athletics* check is needed each round. The difficulty is modified by how fast you are moving - halved if moving carefully, doubled if running and tripled if sprinting.

Obstruction	Target
Clear path. No obstructions, a completely clear path.	0
Light obstruction. A typical lightly crowded street, or through a wood. Running is easy, unless you fumble and trip up.	5
Moderate obstruction. A busy street, a warehouse full of crates, across rubble or through dense woods.	10
Heavy obstruction. A busy market, or through thick foliage.	20
Unstable. Unstable footing, such as rubble, crumbling rock or swaying rigging.	+5/+10
Narrow. Narrow or uneven footing, such as a narrow ledge or ground with many holes or cracks.	+5/+10
Slippery. Additionally to the other modifiers, if the surface is icy, oil covered or otherwise lacking in grip.	+5/+10
Windy. If any of the other modifiers apply, and it is windy, add a further +5.	+5

Racing across rooftops might count as *light obstruction* (5) to avoid chimneys and aerials, with +5 for unstable (roof tiles will likely break) and +5 for uneven footing, for a total of 15. This goes up to 30 if you run, 45 if you sprint. If you need to jump gaps between roof tops, then this counts as extra *obstructions*.

If you fail, you make no progress that round. If falling could be dangerous, make a second check at the same difficulty - failure again means that you fall and suffer the consequences. You can choose to succeed either failed check by gaining a point of *Fatigue*, as long as success was possible in the first place.

Climbing

Whenever you must climb a complex obstacle, an *Agility x Athletics* check is required. Unless you are trying to perform the feat quickly, climbing a ladder or flight of stairs will rarely require a skill check.

During combat, a simple *climb* manoeuvre can be performed as part of a move action by making an *Agility x Athletics* check.

Target	Obstruction
10	**Very easy.** Get onto or over a chair or bench. Getting under a table or similar shelter is also very easy.
15	**Easy.** Get onto a table or object of similar height. Climbing under and through a table, assuming there are no chairs in the way.
20	**Moderate.** Climb/jump over a table or object of similar size. Also, climbing over a fence no higher than you are.

On success, all of these can be performed as a standard movement action at no penalty during combat. Failure results in no or partial movement, and loss of further attacks and defences that round.

To perform these actions as a full round action, halve the difficulties.

Long climbs

When climbing things which require more than a round to complete, the difficulty is more based on the complexity of the task than the time it takes to complete.

Normally, you can speed climb a distance equal to quarter your *Move* each round. Make a *Strength x Athletics* check each round, failure means no distance is climbed, and make an *Agility x Athletics* check at the same difficulty or fall. Alternatively, the second check can be ignored if you take a level of *Fatigue*.

Optionally, you can move ten times this distance every minute, making a check each minute. This is slower, but reduces the number of rolls and hence the chance of fumbling.

For longer climbs, a roll every 15 minutes can be made, at *Move* x 50. Again, speed is traded for reliability. Over these distances, a failure can be ignored by gaining a level of *Exhaustion*.

Target	Surface being climbed
10	**Very easy.** Ladders, very easy slope or tree.
15	**Easy.** Trees with plenty of branches, cliff with lots of ledges and handholds, scaffolding or similar structure.
20	**Moderate.** Typical cliff, on to the roof of a modern detached house (via garage, drain pipes etc).
30	**Difficult.** Smooth cliff or brick wall of a modern house.
40	**Very difficult.** About the hardest most cliffs will be in general, though they may have sections which are harder than this.
50	**Severe.**
60	**Very severe.**
70	**Extremely severe.** About the hardest naturally occurring climbs.

If you want to climb carefully, halve speed, and on failure half the difficulty of the second check (the first check is still the same however).

Awareness

> *To begin with, our perception of the world is deformed, incomplete. Then our memory is selective. Finally, writing transforms.*
>
> *-- Claude Simon*

If your *Perception* is your ability to see or hear things, then *Awareness* is your ability to notice that you have. A person with a high *Awareness* doesn't have better eyesight, but they are better at taking note of their surroundings. As such, it may be combined with *Intelligence* to remember what you previously may have seen or heard.

Often, it will be used for noticing things that are in plain site, such as searching a scene for clues or noticing something out of the ordinary. In these cases, make a *Perception x Awareness* check at one of the following difficulties.

Target	Example
10	**Obvious.** Notice something obvious, such as a knife laying next to a dead body.
20	**Tricky.** Something in plain sight, but not immediately obvious. A torn note on a desk, a wet pair of shoes on someone who hasn't been outside.
30	**Subtle.**

To spot something, make a *Perception x Awareness* check according to the table below.

Situation	Modifier
Spot a standing person. Base difficulty to see a person who is standing in the open, making no attempt to hide themselves.	+0
Distance 50m - 100m. If the target is over 50m away, then increase the difficulty by +5.	+5
Distance over 100m. If the target is 100m away or more, then increase the difficulty by +10. Each doubling (200m, 400m) adds a further +10.	+10
Size above 5. Each point of size of the target above 5, reduce the difficulty by 5. If they are smaller, then increase the difficulty by 5 per point.	-5/pt
Half cover. If the target is hidden in half cover.	+10
90% cover. If the target is almost entirely hidden.	+20

Brawl

This is the default skill for all forms of melee combat, but is mostly concerned with combat involving either no weapons, or small or improvised weapons such as knives, bottles, chairs and clubs.

Brawl includes punching, kicking, dodging, wrestling, biting, grapples and throws. By default, there are no 'martial art' skills in **YAGS** - instead particular fighting styles are modelled as techniques (based on brawl) which grant special abilities or bonuses.

Brawling is covered in detail in the combat article, so is not described in depth here.

Charm

> *Charm is a way of getting the answer yes without asking a clear question.*
>
> *-- Albert Camus*

Charm is your ability to make friends and influence people, and includes such things as small talk, flirting, telling jokes or simply being nice. *Charm* is generally based on *Empathy*. It does not have to be sincere, but is generally about getting another person to like you.

If you wish to impress someone, make a *Empathy x Charm* check, and your result will determine what they think of you. *Charm*'s big advantage is that it isn't resisted

Target	Reaction
0	**Dislike (-1).** You manage to annoy or upset the person such that they dislike you. They are unlikely to help you, and may hinder you depending on their personality.

Target	Reaction
10	**Neutral.** You haven't upset them, but you haven't impressed them either. Whether they help or hinder you will depend on their personality.
20	**Liked (+1).** You made a good impression, and the person has had their opinion of you improved. They will probably be willing to help you, or spend time in your company, as long as it doesn't cost them too much.
30	**Impressed (+2).** You have really impressed them, and they will make an effort to aid you, or to keep you happy. It requires a few minutes of chat for someone to be Impressed by you.
50	**Awed (+3).** They are taken with you, and will go out of their way to try and help you, even if it involves effort on their part. This requires up to an hour of your time to awe someone like this.
75	**Love (+4).** You have made a deep connection with the person, and they will try their best to impress you and make sure that you return their affection. An evening.
100	**Besotted (+5).** You have the person eating out of your hand. They will do anything for you. A few evenings.

The above results are the best first impression possible, and assumes that the person didn't know anything about you before hand. If you are a hated enemy, or have just done something they consider unpleasant, then they may start with a reaction of -1 or worse. If you have any modifiers for good (or bad) appearance, status or reputation then these may modify your *Empathy* for this roll.

How much time is spent making that first impression also limits how good the result can be. A quick introduction won't get you better than a *Liked* result, whatever the roll.

The better the impression you make, the more likely the other person is to like you, however even a *Love* result won't cause them to give you all their wealth (at least, not immediately).

Guile

> *If one is to be called a liar, one may as well make an effort to deserve the name.*
>
> *-- A A Milne*

The purpose of *Guile* is to deceive others, whether it is by direct lying or misdirection. *Guile* is also used to determine if others are lying. It uses a wide variety of attributes, depending on what you are attempting to do.

Simple lies

Simple lying requires a *Will x guile* check against the opponent's *Empathy x guile*. It basically entails keeping calm, not saying more than you should and not showing your true emotions.

This assumes that you are trying to keep things simple, and restricting the information you are providing.

Obviously, if you wish to tell if someone is lying, then you make the *Empathy* check, and they make the *Will* check. If you exceed their roll, then you know if they are lying or telling the truth. If you fail, then you will randomly think they are being truthful or liars. If the target's roll was positive, you think they are truthful, otherwise you think they are lying. Neither party knows whether they succeeded or not.

On a *good* success, you are certain whether the other person is lying or not. However, if the liar gets a *good* success, then you are certain they are telling the truth so this doesn't necessarily help.

Interrogation

Interrogation is more about trying to catch the other person out with logic and evidence, and countering it requires quick thinking. In this case, both sides make a contest of *Intelligence x guile*.

Sleight

> *No performer should attempt to bite off red-hot iron unless he has a good set of teeth.*
>
> *-- Harry Houdini*

Whether you are performing card tricks, picking pockets or entertaining people with your amazing juggling skills, *sleight of hand* can be a useful skill to have. It is a mixture of reflexes, control and distraction, so though it is *Dexterity* based, it may be aided with the use of *Empathy*.

Pick Pocket

If trying to steal an item from a person without them noticing, then a *Dexterity x Sleight* check is required, against the target's *Perception x Awareness*. Modifiers depend on the type of situation.

Bonus	Situation
+10	**Jostling crowd.** A busy and crowded environment, such as the tube during rush hour or around a busy market stand.
+5	**Crowded.** A crowded street, full of distractions but where physical contact between people is fleeting.
-5	**Empty street.**
-10	**Obvious.**

Legerdemain

If you wish to perform simple conjuring tricks then use *Dexterity x Sleight*. Your check is against a static target number to pull the trick off with success - 20 for a simple coin palming trick, 30 for something more complex.

A *Perception x Awareness* check by an observer against your skill roll will enable them to see how you did the trick. If you are simply trying to entertain, then this doesn't necessarily mean you failed.

Stealth

Hey pal. If you're goin' to make that much noise, why don't you just come on out?
-- Unnamed guard, Thief: The Dark Project

Moving silently past guards, hiding in the shadows or otherwise trying to avoid being seen all comes under *Stealth*.

To find a place to hide, you use *Perception*. To move quietly, you use *Agility*. If in doubt and both are required, make a single check with *Agility*.

A *Stealth* check opposes the *Perception x Awareness* of the person you are trying to avoid, and the observer's roll is modified according to distance and situation.

Throw

Don't throw those bloody spears at me.
-- Never said by Lieutenant Bromhead, Zulu

Hurling a spear into your enemy, chucking a grenade through a doorway, catching a ball or juggling several all come under the *Throw* skill.

Throw is generally based on *Dexterity*. If throwing at someone, then it's considered an attack and they may get a dodge plus the difficulty will be modified by range (+1 per metre for typical objects). A doorway is about difficulty 10 to throw something through, a window 15, a car window about 20.

Catching something like a ball, which was thrown to you, is about 10, modified by +1 for each point the thrower missed you by on their attempt to throw.

Genres and Settings

Technology

Some things are limited by the type of technology available. Limits affect both equipment that can be purchased, and also what skills can be learnt. In some cases, a skill may exist in different time periods, but be used quite differently.

Tech Levels

The level of technology of a culture is roughly determined by its *Tech Level*, which ranges from TL 0 (the stone age) through to TL 8 (modern day) and beyond. This is a crude method of determining a culture's technological capability, but is meant to be quick and simple.

0: Stone Age

Pre-technological civilisation with the barest minimum of sticks and stones, as well as knowledge of fire. Culture, language and possibly religion will arise at some point during TL 0.

1: Bronze Age

The ability to work metals. The civilisations of the 'Ancients', covering several thousand years. Includes the Greeks, Celts, Egyptians and other cultures.

2: Iron Age

The ability to work iron and stone. Many iron age cultures were also seafarers. The early Roman period and the post-Roman (Dark Ages) period.

3: Medieval (1000-1450)

Steel, heavy cavalry and early experimentation with gunpowder mark TL 3. In Europe, TL 3 was the age of castles and knights, monasteries and books, as well as the rise of the feudal system and early glimmerings of science. The Romans were pretty much at TL 3 as well.

4: Renaissance (1450-1750)

The Age of Reason and the Enlightenment mark the dawn of science, though it doesn't really reach full bloom until TL 5. Gunpowder, sailing ships, astronomy and mathematics all make their mark on the world.

5: Steam (1750-1900)

In this period the secrets of the universe begin to unravel, with the Industrial Revolution transforming society and science transforming the way we try to understand the world. What are to become the basic foundations of chemistry (the periodic table), biology (evolution) and physics (electricity, magnetism and atomic theory) are worked out during TL 5.

6: Mechanical (1900-1945)

This is the start of the *Modern* age, with mass production beginning to take over from manual labour, the mechanisation of warfare and ultimately a full understanding of the power of the atom.

The generic character generation rules for **YAGS** work from TL 6 onwards. Before this, many of the academic and scientific skills require re-working.

7: Nuclear (1945-1980)

Many TL 7 inventions actually came about at the end of TL 6, with the jet engine, nuclear bomb and computers. In TL 7 these things become mainstream. Electronics and medicine really start to revolutionise society, and the beginnings of space exploration. It wasn't until TL 7 (1972 to be precise) that anyone knew what the Earth looked like.

8: Information (1980-2020)

At the time of writing, this is the present day.

9+: The Future (2020+)

TL 9 and beyond represent science fiction, so exactly what technology is available will depend greatly on the background being modelled.

By default, TL 9 is assumed to be relatively hard SF. Miniaturisation of computers, greater capability of phones, human cloning and genetic screening and more compact power sources are probably the main areas of improvement.

Nano-technology will be used in material construction and medicine but not much beyond that, and there may be more space based development. TL 9 will go on to at least 2050, maybe 2100 depending on the pace of development. Technology beyond that is impossible to predict.

Future History

Technology levels of 9+ will be very campaign dependant. Generally, 9 - 10 can be viewed as Cyberpunk style of science fiction, with limited space travel and most stories happening on Earth.

From 10 to 12 might cover early interstellar travel, depending on how difficult it is in the setting. Human societies in SF like *Babylon 5*, *Blakes 7* or the *Honor Harrington* series would be of this level.

TL 13 - 15 starts to see super-science based societies, with massive orbital structures and weapons capable of devastating planetary civilisations.

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