

# /usr/local/5pF

A Character Creation System for use with:



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**based upon:** *Five-Point Fudge*, as presented in the *Fudge System Reference Document* (2005 edition).

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## Fudge Legal Notice

**About Fudge:** Fudge is a roleplaying game written by Steffan O'Sullivan, with extensive input from the Usenet community of rec.games.design and other online forums. The core rules of Fudge are available free on the Internet at <http://www.fudgerpg.com> and other sites. Fudge was designed to be customized, and may be used with any gaming genre. Fudge gamemasters and game designers are encouraged to modify Fudge to suit their needs, and to share their modifications and additions with the Fudge community. The Fudge game system is copyrighted © 2000 by Grey Ghost Press, Inc. and is available for use under the Open Game License. See the [fudgerpg.com website](http://www.fudgerpg.com) for more information.

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# 1 Five-Point Fudge: a Character Generation System

"**Five-point Fudge**" is a character creation system for **Fudge**, suitable for newcomers to **Fudge**, both new and experienced role-players. Note that while the version of Five-point Fudge which lives on Steffan O'Sullivan's website<sup>1</sup> may not be freely copied/published, *this* document is derived from the Five-point Fudge rules in the Fudge System Reference Document, and therefore does not suffer the same copying/modification restrictions.

**Five-point Fudge** is specifically aimed at those players who feel lost when first reading **Fudge**. It can be intimidating and confusing at first to read a game with so many options - one doesn't know where to begin. **Five-point Fudge** gives you an easy beginning point: a set way to make a character to see if you might like this game. If you find you do enjoy **Fudge**, you may then want to try subjective character creation - or you may be happy using this system for the rest of your **Fudge** career.

**Five-point Fudge** assumes that you understand basic role-playing terms and basic **Fudge** terms. If not, please read **Fudge** first - at least the character creation chapter.

**Five-point Fudge** is suitable for any genre, but each separate genre requires customized skill lists, gifts, faults, and possibly attributes. The version presented here is for a **Fantasy genre** only, but other genres can be found on the [Grey Ghost Web site](#).

**Note to the reader:** this version of **Fudge** has set skills attributes, gifts, and faults. These lists should not be considered as canon - the reader should remember that everything in **Fudge** is fully customizable, and these lists are offered as an easy introduction to **Fudge** and for use as a basis when crafting a custom set of character creation rules.

## 1.1 Purpose of this document

This document is an adaptation of the Five Point Fudge rules presented in the Fudge System Reference Document. The primary differences between the version and the original are:

- The magic system presented in the original has been removed.
- This version is a live document in the sense that the lists of skills, Gifts, and Faults will be modified over time, as this document matures.
- This document is formatted differently, especially in that it has auto-generated section numbers which may change from version to version. This is different from the core Fudge rules, which have hard-coded section numbers to make cross-referencing from other documents possible.

## 2 Character Points

**Fudge** itself makes no mention of "character points," using the word "levels" instead. This character creation system introduces character creation points, which are different from levels.

The norm in this system is a **five-point character**. A GM may allow her players fewer or more points as she sees fit, of course – see section 5. If you're new to **Fudge**, we recommend you start with five-point characters, and play with them for awhile. You'll then be better able to decide if the power level is right for you.

Each genre has a number of skill groups available. Sample skill groups, intended for the Fantasy genre, are detailed below. Each skill group typically has 15 or more skills, of which the player may choose a certain number, based on the number of points spent in that skill group.

A player can spend his points in any of the groups that he chooses, up to four points in any one group. Each quantity of points spent provides a certain number of skills (of the player's choice) from the appropriate group, at the levels shown below:

Points Spent in Group	Skills in that Group, at which levels		General Skills Point
	Broad Focus	Narrow Focus	
1	3 at Fair	1 at Good	3 at Fair, from any two or

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.panix.com/~sos/fudge.html>

	1 at Mediocre	1 at Mediocre	three groups
<b>2</b>	2 at Good 4 at Fair	1 at Great 1 at Good 1 at Fair	
<b>3</b>		1 at Great 3 at Good 4 at Fair	
<b>4</b>		1 at Superb 2 at Great 3 at Good 3 at Fair	

Note that if you spend only 1 or 2 points in a skill group you can spend your points in either a broad or narrow focus. Because a character with too few skills may be weak in a given campaign, the GM may limit the number of points you can spend on narrowly focused skill groups. (Suggested limit: two points.)

**Examples of point expenditure:** if a player wishes his character to be a dabbler at Combat, he could spend one point on the Combat group. Using a broad focus, he could then choose any three Combat skills to list on his character sheet at Fair and any one at Mediocre. Using a narrow focus, he may choose any two Combat skills: one at Good and one at Mediocre.

**Example 1: one point in Combat**

- One-handed Sword: Fair
- Fast-draw Sword: Fair
- Shield: Fair
- Brawling: Mediocre

**Example 2: a different way to spend one point in Combat**

- Spear: Fair
- Throw Spear: Fair
- Tactics: Fair
- Knife: Mediocre

**Example 3: one narrowly focused point in Combat**

- Bow: Good
- One-handed Sword: Mediocre

If a player spends two points in a skill group, he can choose two skills at Good, and four more at Fair (using a broad focus), or one at Great, one at Good, and one at Fair (using a narrow focus).

**Example 4: two points in Combat**

- One-handed Sword: Good
- Fast-draw Sword: Good
- Bow: Fair
- Tactics: Fair
- Brawling: Fair
- Read Opponent: Fair

**Example 5: two narrowly focused points in Social**

- Fast-talk: Great

Parley/Negotiate: Good

Comaraderie: Fair

And so on. The more points a player spends in a given skill group, the more his character gains both familiarity with a number of skills and greater expertise in some of those skills. For example, a Combat specialist is a professional soldier who will be an expert with a few weapons, but will have also used many other weapons over the course of his career.

The player may choose **any** skills within a given skill group, up to the number listed for the points spent. The player may decide which of those skills are at the listed levels. If the GM doesn't want a character to know a given skill, she should make sure the player understands this before character creation.

Thus there are thousands of player character types available in this system, yet all are easily customized to the player's desires. The possible combinations of spending five points are:

5 different skill groups: 1, 1, 1, 1, 1

4 different skill groups: 2, 1, 1, 1

3 different skill groups: 3, 1, 1 or 2, 2, 1

2 different skill groups: 4, 1 or 3, 2

## 2.1 General Skills Point

A player may spend a maximum of **one point as a General Skills point**. This means you may spend one point and take **any three non-magic skills** at Fair. These skills can be from two or three different skill groups, if desired (there is no point in taking them all from the same group). Note that a General Skills point does not get you as many skills as a broadly focused point (four), but more than a narrowly focused point (two).

## 2.2 Trading Skills

During character creation you may trade one skill for two skills of lesser value. Thus you could trade one Good skill for two Fair skills, or one Great skill for two Good skills. For example, spending two points in a skill group normally gets you 2 Good and 4 Fair skills. You could instead choose 2 Good, 3 Fair, and 2 Mediocre skills.

Skills involved in the trade must all be from the same skill group. **Exception:** with a General Skills point (see above), you can trade a Fair for two Mediocre skills from two different groups. Thus a character could take six Mediocre skills from six different groups with a General Skills point.

No other trading of skill levels is allowed, unless using the expanded trading option in section [5](#).

## 2.3 Broad vs. Narrow skills

The exact definitions of "broad" and "narrow" skill groups will depend on the GM and her idea of the current campaign. Narrow skills normally refer to relative specific training, such as "short sword" or "shooting pistols," whereas broad skills are (obviously) more general, such as "bladed weapons" or "firearms."

Some GMs may require narrow skills for some skill areas and allow broad skills for others. For example, a GM who wants to have a lot of variety in combat may make each weapon (or similar class of weapon) a different skill, whereas the same GM may decide that the broad skill "Survival" is suitable to cover outdoor survival in any terrain type. Contrariwise, another GM may cover melee combat with a generic (broad) "Melee Weapons" skill and yet have narrower skills such as "Survival, Forest" and "Survival, Desert".

Magical skills is an area where GMs are especially likely to differ. Some GMs will treat each specific spell as a separate skill, some will treat Colleges/Schools of magic as narrow skills, and others will treat Colleges/Schools as broad skills. There is no single right or wrong answer, of course - this is all up to the GM.

## 2.4 Skills and technology levels

Some skills must be learned at a "technology level" appropriate for the campaign. For campaigns with only a single overall technology level, this is irrelevant and can be ignored, but for dimension/time-hopping campaigns, or campaigns which otherwise feature multiple widely-varying technology levels, the exact technology level a skill is learned at can become significant. For example, "Electronics, 1950's" is much different from "Electronics, circa 2005", and "Medicine, late 17<sup>th</sup> Century" is much different from "Medicine, late 21<sup>st</sup> Century".

Exactly how the GM defines technology levels is up to her. Some games define a list of tech levels, starting at 0 (stone age/no tech), and incrementing by one for each notable increment along the human history tech line (e.g. Bronze Age, Iron Age, Renaissance, Industrial Age). Other GMs may prefer descriptions like "late 19<sup>th</sup> century" or "earth 21<sup>st</sup> century", or even "ultra-tech."

## 3 The Character Sheet

The normal **Fudge** Character sheet is used. However, under the Skill list, the player should list the points spent. For example, you might begin your skill list with:

**Skill Groups:**

Combat: 2 pts

Scouting: 2 pts

Athletic: 1 pt

### 3.1 To Make a Character

There are many ways to create a character. If you have a concept in mind, scan the skill lists that seem most likely to fit your character. For example, a fighter will obviously need to spend some points in Combat skills, and a thief in Covert skills.

Since you **must** spend points in at least two skill groups, try to think of what other skills, aside from the obvious, would be helpful - or perhaps simply fun - for your character to have.

If you don't have a concept in mind, then toy with skill group linkings. What would a Combat-Scouting combination look like? Probably a "Ranger." How about an Athletic-Covert? Hmm - a James Bond type, perhaps? Knowledge-Social - that might be a merchant or a diplomat, depending on the skills chosen. And so on - this is actually a fun pastime, even if you aren't making a character.

Once you've decided on which skill groups to choose from, jot down the most appealing skills in these groups. The number of skills you want from a given group will tell you how many points you need to spend in that skill group. For example, if only two or three skills appeal to you from a group, spending 1 or 2 narrowly focused points is sufficient. If you really want eight or ten skills all from the same group, you're creating a specialist character: you'll probably have to spend three or four points in that skill group to get that many skills. (Another way to get eight or ten skills, if you don't mind low skill levels, is to use the "trading skills" option, and expect to raise them later with experience points.) A "Jack of All Trades" character rarely spends more than two points in any one group, and is interested in skills from three or more different skill groups.

Once your skills are chosen, you can then set your attributes, Gifts, and Faults. At that point you'll easily be able to see what levels your attributes should logically be, and which Gifts and Faults would go most appropriately with your character.

**A note about magic:** Magic systems vary widely, and are specifically not covered in detail in this document. Most Fudge players seem to use a system where spells are each learned as individual skills. If that is the case in your campaign, then simply adding the spells/skills to a Magic skill group is probably enough to get your magic system working with five-point Fudge.

### 3.2 Attributes

Each game will have a varying number of attributes for the PCs. Here is one suggestion...

There are six attributes, described below. The GM may customize this list as she wishes - changing the attributes included, adding or deleting them at will. The six proposed attributes are:

- **Reasoning:** Thinking ability; puzzle-solving; intelligence; mental acuity
- **Perception:** Awareness of the environment; raw ability to notice things
- **Willpower:** Strength of will; psychic stamina; determination; guts
- **Strength:** Physical strength; lifting/carrying capacity; ability to deal damage
- **Agility:** Physical dexterity; adroitness; native talent for physical skills
- **Health:** Fitness; resistance to disease and injury; physical stamina

All attributes start at Fair. Each character may take two free attribute levels, either raising one attribute two levels, or two attributes one level each. (The GM may allow more or fewer free attribute levels – see section [5](#).)

In addition, players may trade levels - that is, lower an attribute to Mediocre in order to raise one other attribute one level, and so on. Also, subject to GM approval, a character may raise an attribute by taking an additional Fault, or by foregoing one of the two free Gifts.

Conversely, a player may forego one of his free two attribute levels in order to take an extra Gift - again, subject to GM approval.

Attributes are not linked to skills in this game, except in the following sense: the player is encouraged to choose attribute levels which make sense, given his skill list. For example, three or more points spent between Combat, Scouting and Athletic skills means that the character would logically be above average in Strength, Agility, and/or Health. If the player decides not to raise at least one of these attributes above Fair, he should have a good story as to why they are abnormally low.

Attributes are used for three things in the game:

1. As very broad skills. There will be times in which no particular skill listed in the rules is appropriate for the task the character is attempting. In these cases, the GM will choose the closest attribute and have the player roll versus the attribute (possibly at a penalty).
2. In certain opposed actions, such as attempting to sneak by a guard (*Move Quietly* skill vs. *Perception* attribute) or a swindle attempt (*Con* skill vs. *Reasoning* attribute) or an attempt to strangle someone (*Strength* attribute vs. *Health* attribute). The GM will think of other cases readily.
3. As a broad handle on who the character is. A high Reasoning, low Strength character has a different flavor from the opposite attribute levels.

### 3.3 Gifts

Each character may start play with a GM-specified number of Gifts (typically two). The following list provides a sampling of common Gifts. For each Fault chosen beyond the GM-specified minimum, the character may have an additional Gift. The GM may limit the number of Gifts available from this method, as things can get a little out of hand ... You may also gain a Gift, with GM approval, by foregoing one of your free attribute levels.

**Certain Gifts, marked with an asterisk (\*)** may be lost if abused. *Contacts*, *Favors Due*, and *Patron* depend on the goodwill of others, and it's possible to push them too far or too frequently. *Good Reputation* can be eroded by inappropriate behavior, and *Rank* can be lost if you break the rules of the organization granting the rank.

- **Ambidexterity:** you can use either hand equally well. Great for those times when you're wounded in an arm ...
- **Attractive:** you're good looking - either handsome, beautiful, pretty, or whatever level you wish. (Warning: the more attractive you are, the more power you have over susceptible people, true, but the more likely you are to be abducted, etc.)
- **Beautiful speaking voice:** +1 to NPC reactions. Also works for a singing voice if you take a Musical skill.
- **Charisma:** people tend to like you, believe you, and are willing to follow your lead.
- **Common Sense:** when you are about to do something incredibly stupid that will harm yourself or the party, the GM will warn you.
- **Contacts \*:** you know some influential or knowledgeable people who can supply you with information.
- **Danger Sense:** the GM will make a Situational roll - on a Good or better result, you'll be warned of some imminent danger.
- **Divine Favor:** the ability to cast Clerical Magic (if available in your campaign). [Costs two Gifts]
- **Empathy with Animals:** animals trust you and domesticated ones tend to obey you. Cruelty to animals nullifies this Gift.
- **Familiar:** only available to characters with some form of magical Gift, like *Magical Power* or *Magical Talent*. You have a magical familiar, which may talk, aid you in spell-casting and other tasks. This is an NPC played by the GM.
- **Favors due \*:** some people owe you favors, which you may collect. Each favor you collect must be approved by the GM.
- **Focused:** you are at +1 to any lengthy task, but don't notice things outside this task, such as that brigand about to skewer you ...
- **Good Memory:** you have an unusually good memory. The player may take notes during the game

and act as if the character remembered them.

- **Good Reputation** \*: you're well known as a hero, healer, leader, fighter for justice, etc.
- **High Status**: you are of the gentry or religious class - or nobility if you take this Gift twice.
- **Innate Magic**: you have an inborn talent for a specific magical ability.
- **Intuition**: you have a feeling about what option to take when confronted with a choice. The GM will make a Situational roll in secret.
- **Lucky**: once per hour (real time), you may reroll a bad dice roll, and choose the better of the two rolls.
- **Magic Resistance**: you are resistant to direct magic: +3 to Willpower in any Opposed rolls versus magic.
- **Magical Power**: the ability to perform magical feats through the study of magic.
- **Never forgets a \_\_\_\_**: fill in the blank with name, face, or whatever the GM will allow.
- **Never Gets Lost**: you always know which way is North, and can retrace your route with a little effort.
- **Night Vision**: you see well in dim light, but not in absolute darkness, of course.
- **Pain Tolerance**: ignore wound penalties at Hurt, and you are only at -1 at Very Hurt.
- **Patron** \*: someone in power likes you. This can be simply a letter of recommendation, or it can be a favor granted.
- **Perfect Timing**: if someone says to open the gate in five minutes, you'll do it within two seconds of that time. Also valuable in performing.
- **Peripheral Vision**: you can see further to the sides than most people - less easily attacked from the side-rear.
- **Quick Reflexes**: not easily surprised by any physical attack, and you adjust quickly to shifting footing.
- **Rank** \*: you have the right to command others in an organized body of soldiers or police.
- **Rapid Healing**: you heal twice as fast from wounds - but not magically fast.
- **Resistant to Poison**: poison has only half effect on you.
- **Tough Hide**: subtract 1 from each amount of damage you take.
- **Veteran**: you're experienced - add one level to each of three skills that are currently at Fair or Mediocre.
- **Wealthy**: you start with more money than the average starting character. This can be in cash and/or equipment.

### 3.4 Faults

Each character must start with a GM-specified number of Faults (normally two). The list below shows a number of potential Faults. Each Fault chosen beyond the mandatory two allows the player to choose an additional Gift for his character or raise an attribute one or two levels, subject to GM approval.

- **Absent-Minded**: your attention tends to wander if bored.
- **Annoying Voice**: you sound terrible. This can take the form of a particularly high pitch, a hard-to-understand gruff sound, or a habit of under-enunciating.
- **Appearance**: your appearance is off-putting in some way, whether ugly or unkempt.
- **Bad Back**: you are limited in what you can lift.
- **Bad Eyesight**: you don't see very well - pick one: poor distance or up-close vision.
- **Berserker**: in combat you go all-out, with no concern for your own life or limb, and even less concern for those around you.
- **Bloodlust**: you love blood. Those who know about this are likely to react negatively to you.
- **Blunt and Tactless**: you have no social skills in dealing with sensitive people.
- **Clumsy**: you tend to drop/spill/bump into/break things at inopportune moments.
- **Code of Honor**: your actions are constrained by your personal behavior code.

- **Color Blindness:** you confuse lots of colors.
- **Combat Paralysis:** you need a Good or better Health roll in order to act in a dangerous situation.
- **Compulsive \_\_\_\_:** You are at -3 Willpower to avoid engaging in some particularly annoying, odious, or potentially behaviour. Some examples include:
  - **Compulsive Carousing:** you are at -3 Willpower to resist a good time.
  - **Compulsive Curiosity:** you are at -3 Willpower to resist exploring something new or unusual.
  - **Compulsive Gambling:** your are at -3 Willpower to resist a gambling game.
  - **Compulsive Generosity:** you are at -3 Willpower to resist giving things away to those perceived to be needier than you.
  - **Compulsive Lying:** you are at -3 Willpower to avoid lying just for fun.
- **Coward:** you take very good care of yourself.
- **Delusions:** the world doesn't work the way you think it does, in some important way.
- **Dependent:** you're responsible for someone unable to care for themselves adequately.
- **Duty:** you must perform active duty a certain amount of time.
- **Dwarfism:** you are very short for your race. This is not the same as the fantasy species of dwarves, but is a genetic condition which can affect members of any species.
- **Easily Distractible:** did you say something?
- **Easy to Read:** you give away your thoughts and feelings to any who care to observe you.
- **Enemy:** there is someone who wants to kill, imprison, or otherwise trouble you.
- **Fanatic Patriot:** your country, right or wrong.
- **Frightens Animals:** you have an aura that animals find terrifying. People who have or work with animals may inherently mistrust you if their animals are unsettled by you.
- **Garrulous:** you won't shut up.
- **Getting old:** and all that implies.
- **Glutton:** you're hungry.
- **Goes Berserk if Wounded:** you're a danger to your friends, even.
- **Greedy:** you want more.
- **Grouchy:** you're usually irritated and try to spread the mood.
- **Gullible:** -3 to Reasoning to believe an unknown "fact."
- **Hard of Hearing:** what?
- **Honesty:** you hate to break a law. See *Truthfulness* for not liking to lie.
- **Humanitarian:** you help the needy for no pay.
- **Idealist:** you're not grounded in reality.
- **Impulsive:** you act before thinking.
- **Intolerant:** you hate a certain type of person.
- **Jealous of Anyone Getting More Attention:** you have to be the star.
- **Lame:** you limp, which can affect speed and agility.
- **Lazy:** you work hard at avoiding work.
- **Lechery:** you're overly fond of the appropriate sex.
- **Loyal to Companions:** you won't abandon, cheat, hide treasure from, etc., the party members. This one may be mandatory.
- **Magic Susceptibility:** you are at -3 to oppose hostile magic.
- **Melancholy:** life is so sad.
- **Miserliness:** you hate to let go of money and other valuables.

- **Mute:** you can't speak.
- **Night Blindness:** you see poorly in dim light.
- **Nosy:** your neighbor's business is yours.
- **Obese:** you waddle.
- **Obsession:** you *must* do it, or have it, or whatever.
- **Offensive Habits:** too many to list. Some of the other Faults listed actually fall under this category, such as *Nosy*, *Grouchy*, *Garrulous*, etc.
- **Offensive Odor:** you stink. Badly.
- **One Eye:** you lack depth vision and can be blindsided, literally.
- **One Hand:** it works overtime.
- **Outlaw:** you're wanted by the law.
- **Overconfident:** you know you can't fail.
- **Owe favors:** you owe someone favors, and they'll ask you for them sometime.
- **Pain Intolerant:** you're at -1 if Scratched, -2 if Hurt, and -3 if Very Hurt.
- **Phobias:** there are lots of these - you're at -3 Willpower to avoid acting out of control in certain situations: snakes, darkness, heights, cats, falling, crowds, spiders, open or closed spaces, magic, loud noises, etc.
- **Poor:** you start with less equipment and cash, and if you don't buy off this Fault, will always lose any you gain.
- **Practical Joker:** you can't resist. Somebody's gonna hurt you someday.
- **Primitive:** you're from a more primitive society and have trouble getting a mental grasp around common technologies. Alternately, you shun technology on moral grounds and refuse to use any items above a certain technology level.
- **Proud:** many things are beneath your dignity.
- **Quick to take offense:** you're thin-skinned.
- **Quick-Tempered:** you blow up when crossed.
- **Quixotic:** you vigorously champion lost causes.
- **Reckless Bravery:** you take no thought for your safety in dangerous situations.
- **Reputation:** you're well known as some sort of louse.
- **Secret:** if it's revealed, you'll be embarrassed, arrested, or worse - maybe that warrant out for your arrest, or your second spouse?
- **Self-defense Pacifist:** you'll fight, but you'll never start a fight - no preemptive strikes.
- **Shyness:** you never want to talk to strangers.
- **Social Stigma:** you're obviously from some low-caste group.
- **Stubborn:** you don't easily admit you're wrong. Has nothing to do with Willpower.
- **Susceptibility to Poison:** you're at -3 to Health in Opposed rolls for poison.
- **Trickster:** you regularly have to take a risk to thwart some villain, even if just a petty one.
- **Truthfulness:** you can't tell a believable lie.
- **Unlucky:** if something bad happens to someone in the party, it's you.
- **Vain:** you're the best-looking and/or finest person in the world. Aren't your companions lucky?
- **Vow:** you're committed to some action.
- **Worry Wart:** you wring your hands a lot.
- **Xenophobia:** you dislike and fear people different from the folks you grew up with.
- **Youth:** you're so young no one takes you seriously. Also, lose one level each from three skills - you just haven't had time to develop everything that well yet. The GM may require that Young characters start with fewer skill points than normal PCs (or lose one level from *each* skill!), and have no skills higher than Fair.

## 4 The Skill Groups

Each genre has its own skill groups. Listed here are eight skill groups for a **Fantasy setting**. The GM may customize these lists, of course, and may even add or delete an entire skill group if desired.

Following the lists is a comprehensive, alphabetical list of the skills, with descriptions and which skill group they appear in.

Some skills appear in more than one skill group. These may be learned by spending points in *either* skill group - there is no reason to learn the same skill from two different groups. The GM may, for purposes of game color, consider differentiating such "duplicate" skills from each other in some minor way.

**Defaults:** Most skills default to Poor, so if a skill isn't listed on your character sheet, your character probably knows it at Poor. Certain skills, such as Magic, are an exception to this - they're not known at all if not listed on the character sheet. Other skills may have a default of Terrible or Mediocre. Skills which have a default other than Poor have the default listed in [brackets].

### 4.1 Athletic/Manual Dexterity Skills

- **Acrobatics/Tumbling:** moving your body gracefully and successfully through difficult maneuvers, such as rolls, tumbles, leaps, springing to your feet, etc.
- **Aerial Acrobatics:** swinging from ropes, chandeliers, vines, trapezes, rigging, etc., safely and accurately.
- **Balance:** keeping one's equilibrium in awkward physical situations, such as tightrope walking, beam walking, crossing a stream on a log, etc.
- **Boating:** small boat handling.
- **Climbing:** climbing, either natural formations such as cliffs and trees, or man-made ones such as stone, brick, etc., (but not sheer) walls.
- **Equestrian Acrobatics:** performing acrobatic mounts, dismounts, trick riding, etc. This skill cannot be higher than your Riding skill.
- **Juggling:** juggling anything you can lift. See also Performing.
- **Jumping:** jumping for distance and accuracy.
- **Knot-tying:** tying functional and/or ornamental knots for various purposes. [Default=Mediocre]
- **Move Quietly:** moving without attracting attention. Opposed by Perception.
- **Riding:** riding and controlling a horse (or other riding animal - specify) comfortably, safely, and with precision.
- **Running:** you practice a lot - better speed than non-runners, as well as distance.
- **Sleight of Hand:** manipulating small objects cleverly in your hands so as to conceal what you are actually doing with them.
- **Sport:** each sport is a separate skill - hurling, lacrosse, etc.
- **Swimming:** moving yourself in water without danger of drowning.
- **Team Acrobatics:** working with others trained in this skill to perform acrobatic maneuvers such as stacking, vaulting, trapeze work, etc.
- **Throwing:** throwing things accurately, but not specifically optimized to do damage. That is, it's not a combat skill, though it could be used as one, with -1 to damage-dealing ability.
- **Throwing:** throwing things accurately, but not specifically optimized to do damage. That is, it's not a combat skill, though it could be used as one, with -1 to damage-dealing ability.
- **Whittling:** carving wood into useful or aesthetic shapes.

### 4.2 Combat Skills

- **Bow:** using and caring for a bow and arrows, either longbow or short bow. [Default=Terrible]
- **Brawling:** fighting without weapons.
- **Club/Mace:** using a club or mace as a combat weapon.
- **Crossbow:** using a crossbow effectively in combat. [Default=Mediocre]

- **Fast-draw:** readying a weapon for combat use effectively instantly. A different skill for each weapon, and some weapons cannot be fast-drawn.
- **Flail:** using a flail as a weapon.
- **Knife:** using a knife in combat, but not necessarily to throw it.
- **Knife Throwing:** throwing a knife accurately and with force.
- **Lance:** using a lance (a type of hand-held spear used from horseback). Does not include the Riding skill.
- **One-handed Axe:** using small axes as combat weapons.
- **One-handed Sword:** using any sword designed to be used with one hand.
- **Pike:** using a very long hand-held spear as a weapon - most useful in formations, especially against cavalry.
- **Read Opponent:** roughly estimating a given opponent's skill level in combat. An exceptionally good result may even reveal a particular combat "style," if appropriate for the setting.
- **Shield:** using a shield or buckler in combat, both on offense and defense. [Default=Mediocre]
- **Sling:** using a sling in combat. [Default=Terrible]
- **Spear:** using a spear in combat, but not including throwing it accurately or powerfully.
- **Spear Throwing:** throwing a spear powerfully and accurately.
- **Staff:** using a staff as a weapon.
- **Tactics:** knowledge of the best way to arrange a group of warriors so as to take best advantage of the situation, terrain, their skills, etc. Also reading an opposing group's tactical sophistication level.
- **Two-handed Axe:** using any two-handed axe designed as a weapon.
- **Two-handed Sword:** using any two-handed sword as a weapon.

There may be any number of other weapon skills, as approved by GM.

### 4.3 Covert/Urban Skills

- **Barroom Savvy:** like Urban Survival, but very specific to barrooms.
- **Climbing:** climbing, either natural formations such as cliffs and trees, or man-made ones such as stone, brick, etc., (but not sheer) walls.
- **Detect Lies:** telling when someone is lying. Opposed by Lies/Pretense.
- **Detect Traps:** determining if a given area has a trap of some sort set, and what type.
- **Disarm Traps:** deactivating a trap without harm. This may or may not cause noise, however ...
- **Disguise:** passing for someone else under visual inspection. There is a penalty for serious inspection, of course. Opposed by Reasoning, though no roll is needed if the observer has no reason to be suspicious.
- **Find Hidden:** locating concealed doors, compartments, catches, etc.
- **Forgery:** making fake documents and/or signatures that look authentic.
- **Infiltrate:** slipping into a guarded camp, either by pretending to have a right to be there or simply by avoiding all contact.
- **Lip reading:** seeing what people are saying by watching their lips move.
- **Move Quietly:** moving without attracting attention. Opposed by Perception.
- **Pick Locks:** opening locks without the correct key. Penalty of -1 with improvised lockpicks. Difficult locks may have an additional penalty.
- **Pick Pockets:** removing items from an individual's pockets, belt, purse, etc., without them noticing it. Opposed by Perception. [Default=Terrible]
- **Poisons:** knowledge, use, preparation, and dosage of various poisons.
- **Shady Contacts:** knowledge of the underworld, or, in a strange city, at least general underworld habits and likeliest places to contact fences, etc., without offending them.

- **Streetwise:** Savoir-Faire for the lower classes.
- **Tailing:** following someone without their noticing. Opposed by Perception.
- **Urban Survival:** the skill of the urban poor: where to find free or cheap food, shelter and clothing; what parts of the city to avoid, who not to offend, etc.
- **Ventriloquism:** "throwing your voice" so as to make it sound as if it comes from somewhere else. Also disguising your voice.

#### 4.4 Knowledge Skills

- **Alchemy:** knowledge of and the ability to create elixirs and talismans of magical power. See Magic. [Default=None]
- **Arcane Lore:** knowledge of occult things - otherworldly stories, legends, etc.
- **Area Knowledge:** knowledge of a given area. The larger the area, the more shallow the knowledge.
- **Astrology:** this is either simple astronomy or an actual potent forecasting and divination tool - ask the GM.
- **Botany:** broad knowledge of plants - their habitats, growing needs, uses, dangers, etc. See Herb Lore, Farming, Basketry, Poisons, etc., for more specific skills.
- **Evaluate Goods:** a general skill to assess the value of something. It won't be as accurate as a specific Professional skill (for example, a Potter will be a better judge of Pottery than someone with this skill, but as a broad skill allows a good general knowledge.
- **First aid:** administering emergency medical treatment knowledgeably.
- **Geography:** broader than Area Knowledge, Geography is the knowledge of general topography, terrain nature, biomes, etc.
- **Heraldry/Court Rituals:** knowledge of signs, symbols, and devices used to denote rank and family of the nobility. Also knowledge of court rituals, such as how many trumpet calls to announce a king as opposed to a duke, etc.
- **Herb Lore:** knowledge of, preparation of, dosage of, and dangers of using herbs as medicinal agents. While it may tell you which herbs to avoid, this skill does not go into specific poisons - see Poisons for that skill. See Botany for a broader knowledge of plants.
- **Herb Lore:** knowledge of, preparation of, dosage of, and dangers of using herbs as medicinal agents. While it may tell you which herbs to avoid, this skill does not go into specific poisons - see Poisons for that skill. See Botany for a broader knowledge of plants.
- **History:** knowledge of historical figures and events. This can be a broad and shallow skill, such as World History, or a narrower and deeper skill, such as history of a specific state.
- **Language:** speaking and understanding a language. Every character knows their native language well at no cost - take this skill to learn foreign languages. Each language learned is a separate skill, though some similar languages may not require separate skills in order to make oneself understood (e.g. Terran Swedish and Danish). [Default=None]
- **Legal Process:** knowledge of legal matters. [Default=Terrible]
- **Legends/Stories:** knowledge of legends and stories, either as a source for entertainment, wisdom, or clues to treasure hunting, etc.
- **Literacy:** reading and writing. Each language is a different skill. Some languages are similar enough that skill in one language can allow one to read (at least partially) a related language.
- **Medicine:** diagnosing and treating injuries and diseases in humans and other sentient beings.
- **Politics/International:** knowledge of the international situation in a given area, and of the internal politics of states within that area. May be for a broad area, such the entire known world, or a more focused area, such as Europe. In the latter case, the knowledge is more detailed.
- **Thaumatology:** the knowledge of magic spells, results, abilities, etc. Does not require any Magical Ability. [Default=None]
- **Theology/Myths/Rituals:** knowledge of a specific religion's beliefs, dogma, and rituals. It may also be Comparative Theology, in which case the knowledge is broader - covers more than one religion - but shallower.
- **Veterinarian:** diagnosing and treating animal injuries and diseases.

- **Weather Sense:** predicting the weather for the near future.
- **Zoology:** knowledge of animal behaviour, habits, diets, capabilities, etc.

## 4.5 Magic Skills

**Note:** Magic *spells* as skills are inherently dependent on the magic system used in your game, and are not covered here. Here is a short list of skills which are commonly required by wielders of magic...

- **Alchemy:** knowledge of and the ability to create elixirs and talismans of magical power. See Magic. [Default=None]
- **Literacy:** reading and writing. Each language is a different skill. Some languages are similar enough that skill in one language can allow one to read (at least partially) a related language.
- **Thaumatology:** the non-magical knowledge of magic spells, their results, abilities, etc. Unlike spell casting, this skill does not require any magical ability. [Default=None]

## 4.6 Professional Skills

- **Animal Handling:** managing animals in many situations.
- **Animal Training:** training animals for specific tasks.
- **Armorer:** making, altering, and repairing armor. [Default=Terrible]
- **Artist:** creating aesthetically pleasing art in a given medium. Each medium is a separate skill.
- **Basketry:** making baskets and other woven products from bark, grasses, and other plant materials. Includes a knowledge of materials, market prices, etc.
- **Bookkeeping:** knowledge of accounting practices - requires Literacy and some math ability.
- **Bowyer/Fletcher:** making bows and arrows, including harvesting the appropriate material. [Default=Terrible]
- **Carpentry:** working with wood, to make anything from houses to furniture to cabinets.
- **Computer operation:** General usage of current computer technologies. [Default=None]
- **Computer programming:** Ability to tell computers what to do (assumes familiarity with the given computer type, proper tools available, etc.). [Default=None]
- **Cooking:** preparing tasty and nourishing food.
- **Counseling/Priest:** comforting the afflicted, restoring good emotional health, helping people through grief, etc.
- **Courtesan:** professional pleasure giving.
- **Dancing:** dancing aesthetically. See Performing.
- **Engineer:** designing and making tools, structures, sewer systems, etc.
- **Falconry:** training and controlling a raptor for sport and hunting.
- **Farming:** raising crops and/or livestock, and everything associated with that: soil preparation, planting, weeding, tending, harvest, drying, storage, markets, etc.
- **Gambling:** gaming for money. Note that some gambling includes games of skill, and others games of chance - this skill helps largely with the former, and knowledge of the latter, including a good estimate of the odds. Also the ability to cheat at games, and spot cheaters.
- **Inn Keeping:** the knowledge of running a hotel or inn: includes kitchen, bar-keeping, maid service, stable, etc.
- **Jeweler:** making and evaluating jewelry. Includes assessment of gems, gold, silver, etc.
- **Leatherwork:** working with leather - includes tanning, preparation, tooling, sewing, etc.
- **Masonry:** working with stone.
- **Merchant:** broad knowledge of what it takes to be in the business of selling or trading, either retail or wholesale.
- **Musician:** mastery of an instrument (which may be voice). Each instrument is a different skill. See Performing.

- **Performing:** stage presence - actively entertaining people. You'll need another skill to actually entertain with, such as Juggler, Storyteller, Musician, etc. A musician without the Performing skill may be skilled at producing music, but lacks "audience connection" and won't be as popular as a musician with good Performing skill.
- **Pottery:** making pots, plates, bowls, etc., from clay. Includes the ability to assess the value of other potters' work, knowledge of good clay sources, etc.
- **Seamanship:** assisting in any task on a large sailing vessel.
- **Shiphandling:** directing seamen to correctly handle a large sailing ship. Includes piloting and navigation skills. [Default=Terrible]
- **Shopkeeping:** running a shop of some sort - knowledge of basic bookkeeping, sources of materials, rotation of stock, general prices, sales techniques, etc.
- **Smithy:** working metal into tools, weapons, ornaments, etc. [Default=Terrible]
- **Tailor:** turning cloth into clothes, as well as mending clothing. Can also make other items out of cloth, such as tents.
- **Teaching:** imparting knowledge or skills to others. The effective level of the Teaching skill cannot normally surpass the level of the skill the teacher is teaching.
- **Teamster:** handling an animal or team of animals pulling a wagon, carriage, coach, etc.
- **Theater:** the skills and knowledge associated with the theater: acting, directing, management of props, sets, the house, the stage, etc. Not the same as pretending to be someone else offstage - see Lie/Pretense for that skill.
- **Weaving:** spinning yarn from wool or plants, then making cloth from yarn.
- **Whittling:** carving wood into useful or aesthetic shapes.

Many others possible...

**Note:** if a player spends 3 or 4 points in Professional Skills, he may claim skills from **any** skill group as part of his Professional skills, subject to GM approval. Not all skills will qualify! E.g., a 3-point Animal Handler can make a strong claim that Riding (Athletic) is in his Professional skill group, but an animal handler doesn't necessarily know any combat skills.

#### 4.7 Scouting/Outdoor Skills

- **Boating:** small boat handling.
- **Camouflage:** blending in with your surroundings so you don't stand out. Primarily used in natural settings - use Disguise in urban settings. (However, a case could be made for using Camouflage skill to hide in an alley, for example.)
- **Camping:** similar to Survival, but requires some tools, such as blankets, pots, an axe, a tent, etc. In return, it allows greater comfort and quality of life in the wild.
- **Fishing:** catching fish for food, sale, barter, or sport.
- **Hide Traces:** hiding any traces that people or animals used an area. This includes hiding tracks as well as camping areas.
- **Hunting:** hunting and killing animals for food, hides, sport, or whatever.
- **Knot-tying:** tying functional and/or ornamental knots for various purposes. [Default=Mediocre]
- **Map Sketching:** creating reasonably accurate and readable maps from observation.
- **Mimic Animal Noises:** making a noise which sounds like a specific animal.
- **Move Quietly:** moving without attracting attention. Opposed by Perception.
- **Navigation:** finding your way based on the stars, position of the sun, map-reading, etc.
- **Observation:** trained ability to notice and remember things - conscious application of Perception and memory. The player's notes are the character's memory.
- **Survival:** surviving in the wilds (per major terrain type, e.g. woodlands, desert, suburbia). Includes basic fire making, food procurement, and shelter construction. Won't be fancy, but you'll be alive.
- **Tracking:** following animals or sentient beings in terrain where they might leave traces. Of limited use in urban areas, it is more a nature skill.

- **Trail Blazing:** finding an optimum route through wilderness, and marking your trail, either obviously or subtly.
- **Woods Lore:** knowledge of woodland animals, plants, cycles, etc.

## 4.8 Social/Manipulative Skills

- **Barroom Savvy:** like Urban Survival, but very specific to barrooms.
- **Barter/Haggle:** raising or reducing prices, depending on whether you're selling or buying. Opposed by the other person's Barter/Haggle skill.
- **Bluff:** misleading people into thinking you will perform an action you have no intention of performing. Opposed by Reasoning.
- **Camaraderie:** being entertaining in social settings, such as at a bar, at a party, around a campfire, etc., which can gain someone's confidence and approval.
- **Con:** making people believe in some plan or product you are pushing.
- **Etiquette:** knowledge of good manners in any society, and the ability to carry them out. Not as specific as Savoir-Faire, but gives a broader base for knowledge.
- **Fast-talk:** convincing someone of something, which, upon reflection, they may realize isn't true. Fast-talk doesn't create lasting belief - see the Con skill for that. Opposed by Reasoning.
- **Flatter:** making people like you by complimenting them to the point they begin to trust your judgement. Opposed by Willpower.
- **Flirt/Vamp:** arousing sexual interest in an appropriate subject, for whatever reason. Opposed by Willpower.
- **Interrogate:** extracting information from an unwilling subject. There are two basic types of interrogators: those who get their subjects to trust them, and those who psychologically abuse them. Choose one type. Opposed by Willpower.
- **Intimidate:** psychologically brow beating someone else into doing your will. Does not involve any physical component. Opposed by Willpower.
- **Lie/Pretense:** dissembling your true intentions, origins, or role from others. Opposed by Detect Lies.
- **Oratory:** keeping the focus of a group of people through speaking, and attempting to sway them to your point of view. Opposed by group's average Reasoning-1.
- **Parley/Negotiate:** reaching a compromise solution.
- **Persuade:** convincing an individual of your point of view. Opposed by Reasoning.
- **Repartee:** delivering witty sayings, usually double entendres, which cannot be construed as libelous but carry hidden insults or stings.
- **Salesmanship:** selling someone something. Opposed by Willpower.
- **Savoir-Faire:** functioning smoothly, without social blunders, in any upper or middle class setting.
- **Storytelling:** entertaining by recounting stories, either from your past or from other sources. Storytelling without the Performing skill is more likely to be successful in a bar or other personal setting than in a professional setting.

## 5 Campaign Power Levels

The default power level of *Five-point Fudge* is near the middle range of what different GMs want in their campaigns. It produces potential heroes: characters above the norm in abilities and experience, but not (yet) powerful heroes.

This middle range is deliberate, as it makes it fairly easy to customize the rules up or down to suit most needs. So if the characters created here seem too weak or too powerful to your tastes, this section is for you.

### 5.1 More Powerful Characters

You have a few options to make more powerful characters using *Five-point Fudge*. The most obvious is to grant the players six-point characters (or even higher). You can do this with the existing point descriptions as they are, or add a 5-point option, which looks like:

For Six-Point+ Characters Only:

Points Spent in a Group	Skills at Level
5	2 at Superb 2 at Great 3 at Good 4 at Fair

**Note:** this option should **not** be used with five-point characters, as there is a requirement that all characters must have skills from at least two different skill groups.

**Less obvious but probably better** for the players is to give them five-point characters with **five free levels** after character creation, subject to GM approval. That is, once a player has made a normal five-point character, he can then submit five skills to the GM for approval to raise one level each. (Or, if the GM is willing, a skill could be raised two levels, taking up two of the free levels in one skill.)

The GM may veto certain skill raises, however - it can be unbalancing to have too many Superb skills in a single character, for example. It can also be unfair to the specialized fighters in a group if the non-fighters are allowed to raise their combat skills to Great or Superb. However, if the GM has a combat-intensive campaign in mind, this may be the only way the party can survive...

Another way to help characters is to allow them more than two free attribute levels and/or more than two free Gifts.

Yet another way to help characters is to expand the rules for trading skills (see section 2.2). This option creates more choices for the players, which can be good or bad, depending on your players. It's good in that character creation becomes more flexible, but bad in that the choices can overwhelm someone making their first **Fudge** character. It's probably best not to use it for your first character, and possibly not at all. If using this suggestion, **do not use narrowly focused Points** and add the following rule to the *Trading Skills* section:

You may also trade two skills of the same level for one skill at one level higher (all skills involved must be in the same skill group). For example, you could trade two Fair skills for one Good skill. This type of trading, two skills for one skill of the next level higher, is restricted, however: **you may not do this more than twice in any one skill group**. The GM may set more severe restrictions, such as no more than once per skill group, or no more than two such trades for the whole character, whether in the same skill group or two different skill groups.

## 5.2 Less Powerful Characters

If you are running a long-term campaign, you may wish to start your players with less powerful characters, so they can experience development through their own efforts.

The most obvious way to do this is to allow the players to have only **four-point characters**. If you do this, do not allow anyone to spend four points in a single skill group - each character should always have skills from at least two groups.

Another way to reduce the power level is to disallow narrowly focused points, as they are a cheap method of adding higher skill levels to a character.

A further way to limit power, even with five-point characters, is to disallow 4 points in a single group, or even 3 points. This means a character will have a broad range of skills, but none of them very high.

This idea can be carried even further: allow a player to spend 2 points in a skill group, for example, but only if he spends them as if he were spending points on two different groups. For example, a player might spend one point on Combat Skills, taking three skills at Fair and a fourth skill at Mediocre. Then he could spend another point on Combat Skills, taking three *different* skills at Fair and an eighth skill at Mediocre. Thus, the player would have spent 2 points on Combat Skills, but would have 8 skills overall instead of six - but have them at a lower level.

Yet another way to create less powerful characters is to reduce the number of free attribute levels to one or zero, and/or to reduce the number of free Gifts to one or zero.

Finally, you can select from the suggestions above and create your own restrictions. For example, you might allow five-point characters, not allow more than three points in any one skill group, grant them only one free attribute level, and disallow narrowly focused points. Or you might allow four-point characters, and not allow

a player to spend more than two points in any one skill. And so on.

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